

*Prime Minister*

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

*A thoughtful piece,  
certainly worth reading.  
German reunification is an  
area where we have to  
say one thing and  
think another. CDP 11/x.*

11 October 1984

*Dear Charles,*"The German Question"

I enclose a copy of Sir Julian Bullard's important despatch of 5 October on the German Question, with its enclosed memorandum and annex. The Foreign Secretary believes that the Prime Minister will find these papers of interest.

We shall of course take account of them in preparing briefing for the Prime Minister's meeting with Chancellor Kohl at the Summit meeting in Bonn on 2 November.

*Yours ever,**Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street



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cc: SPC

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

15 October, 1984

"The German Question"

Thank you for sending me with your letter of 11 October Sir Julian Bullard's despatch of 5 October on the German Question.

The Prime Minister has read this with interest.

C. D. POWELL

Colin Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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"THE GERMAN QUESTION"

SUMMARY

1. "Deutschlandpolitik" and "Die Deutsche Frage" have occupied press and public attention since the Ambassador's arrival. The despatch encloses a Memorandum on these matters and an Annex on the recent history (paragraph 1).

2. "The German Question" remains open in German emotions as well as legally. We must take seriously our position in relation to "Germany as a Whole". Recent events have been exploited by the Russians in Eastern Europe. The Federal Republic may want further confirmation of the support of the Allies for the goal of German unity. Despite the Soviet Union's opposition to change, the post-war political order in Europe may one day need to be adjusted (paragraphs 2-5).

3. Britain, France and the United States are particularly involved. We are entitled to ask the Germans to take care not to undermine the Allies in Berlin (paragraph 6).

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BRITISH EMBASSY,  
BONN.

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5 October 1984

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign &  
Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office  
LONDON SW1A 2AH

Sir,

"THE GERMAN QUESTION"

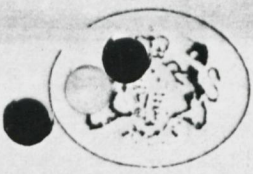
1. I hope shortly to send you my first impressions of the Federal Republic of Germany. Meanwhile I should like to comment on one subject which has occupied press and political attention here more than any other since my arrival a month ago. It goes under the names of "Deutschlandpolitik" and "Die Deutsche Frage", names as heavy with echoes for a German as the words "Battle of Britain" are for me. The enclosed memorandum by my Chancery defines these terms and describes what it is and is not realistic to imagine might be meant by them. The recent history is summarised in an Annex.

2. In this covering despatch, I should like to make four points. The first is that in the Federal Republic of Germany, quite apart from the situation in international law, in an emotional sense "The German Question" is very much open. Many citizens of this country would echo the words used by Genscher to the General Assembly of the UN that "history has not yet spoken its last word on the division of the German people". From my very brief visit to the GDR in July I would judge that the same is true in that country also. (The difference of course is that in the East the regime thinks otherwise). "The German Question" is therefore a real one, not just a newspaper headline.

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3. Second, it follows that we (and the French and the Americans) should continue to take seriously the special position in which we find ourselves in relation to "Germany as a whole". This means avoiding Andreotti's error of supposing that a concept which has lost most of its meaning for us has no significance for the Germans either. As that episode has shown, reluctance to pay the customary verbal toll can provoke a German demand for a higher payment in more up to date currency. We were very fortunate to have had at hand, in the Joint Declaration issued by the Prime Minister and Chancellor Kohl only last May, a sentence about the division of Germany which brought balm to the German soul without giving any precise commitment: "It is the belief of successive British governments that real and permanent stability in Europe will be difficult to achieve so long as the German nation is divided against its will". When she comes here for the next Anglo-German Summit in a month's time, the Prime Minister may find herself pressed to be more explicit. British Governments have of course in the past repeatedly endorsed, in carefully chosen terms, the goal of German unity.

4. Third, this situation is pregnant with implications for the future. In the short term the Federal Government will try to maintain the very considerable activity in inner-German relations which has come to be seen as normal. In Eastern Europe, I imagine, and perhaps especially in Poland, the latest events will have reawakened atavistic fears of what Andreotti called Pan-Germanism and thus helped the Russians in their current campaign to tighten discipline within their own camp. In Western Europe, conversely, the Germans may try to sharpen up the language in which the Alliance traditionally endorses the long-term goal of German unity, starting at the December meeting of Foreign Ministers. For very many years ahead, the Soviet Union will

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not allow German reunification under any circumstances. There will no doubt be further occasions, like the veto on the Honecker visit, when Moscow will intervene to prevent major moves in inner-German relations. To try to envisage a world where the Soviet Union might allow such a change is of course a hazardous business. But looking very much further ahead, far beyond my own diplomatic career, I have to say that I believe that the sentence quoted in paragraph 3 above is correct. By this I mean that the statesmen of Europe will in my view one day have to address themselves to "The German Question" in a very concrete form, namely the question what adjustments to the post-war political order in Europe might need to be considered in order to give a political shape to the common aspirations of the divided German people.

5. Fourth and last, there are the implications for Berlin. The point here is that the abnormality of Berlin is part of the evidence, and not the least part either, that "The German Question" is indeed still open: not just as an unhealed wound in the German psyche, but juridically and politically. Moreover Britain, France and the United States are involved in this situation up to the hilt. My American colleague said to me the other day that the Allied position in Berlin makes us trustees for the future of the German nation. If this sounds far-fetched, let me recall that you yourself have recently signed and sent to an English court a certificate stating "that Germany is a State for the purposes of Part I of the State Immunity Act 1978, and that the persons to be regarded for the purposes of Part I of the said Act as the government of Germany include the members of the Allied Kommandatura of Berlin, including the British Military Commandant, currently Major General Bernard Charles Gordon Lennox". But equally, our exposed position in Berlin - exposed politically as well as in the military sense - entitles us to ask the Germans not to undermine it, nor allow the authorities in Berlin to undermine

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it, by careless talk or ill considered actions based on short-term considerations. This too is ground likely to be covered at the Anglo-German Summit next month.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at NATO and the UN in New York and Geneva, in the NATO and EC capitals; in East Berlin, Moscow, Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest and Sofia; in Stockholm, Helsinki, Vienna and Berne; and to the GOC in Berlin, the British Consuls-General in the Federal Republic and the Commanders' in Chief Committee (Germany).

I am Sir,  
Yours faithfully

*J L Bullard*

J L Bullard

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MEMORANDUM: "DEUTSCHLANDPOLITIK" AND "THE GERMAN QUESTION"

1. The calling off of Honecker's visit to the Federal Republic, and the storm over Andreotti's "Pan-Germanism" remarks make this a good moment to take stock. "Deutschlandpolitik" comprises policy towards the German Democratic Republic and the future of the German nation, ie as opposed to that of the Federal Republic alone. "The German Question" ("Die deutsche Frage") is that of the division of Germany, the legal situation and the future. The special position and problems of Berlin are central to both. We, like the Americans and French, are intimately involved through our responsibilities for Berlin and "Germany as a whole"; through our relationship to the Federal Republic and because the future of inner-German relations may be a crucial element in the future development of Eastern Europe and hence of the whole East-West relationship.

2. The background of developments in recent years is set out in an Annex. The covering despatch and this memorandum are concerned with the future and largely pick up the thread of debate following Mr Maxey's Valedictory Despatch from East Berlin, dated 20 June. What are now the possibilities and probabilities in Inner-German relations? What are the implications for the Germans and for us?

3. As already reported, the reaction in the FRG to the setback over Honecker's visit has been remarkably calm. The West Germans are used to setbacks in relations with the GDR and in arrangements for meetings with Honecker at Chancellor level. It is universally realised that Moscow was responsible: it is widely sensed that the policy of the GDR itself is essentially unchanged and that the ground gained in Inner-German relations has not been lost. This is only a set-back, not a final closing of the door.

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4. The Deutschlandpolitik consensus of the main political parties in the Federal Republic is also largely undisturbed. This is still essentially the policy of "small steps", first promulgated by Brandt and Bahr, by which the two German states might gradually increase the scope of their contacts and pragmatic cooperation; ordinary Germans on both sides might more easily visit or contact each other, and the lot of the East Germans might be improved. Behind this lay the concept of "Wandel durch Annäherung" or "Change through rapprochement" - the hope that as mutual contact increased the nature of the East German state might start to change by contagion. Behind that, for every Federal Government lies the obligation laid down in the "Basic Law" - to achieve in free self-determination the unity and freedom of Germany.

5. In recent years little has been heard of "Wandel durch Annäherung". It was too apparent that the GDR, under Honecker's skilled direction and under the tight military and economic grip of Moscow, was consolidating itself ever more as a separate state, in which new generations were growing up which had never known a united Germany and which knew the Federal Republic through TV and through visitors - much as most British know the United States. The Kohl-Genscher government continued the policy of dialogue and "small steps" but Kohl added a special rhetorical effort to revive, amongst West Germans particularly, the consciousness of a common German nationhood and to reassert the long-term aspiration of reunification.

6. It is important to realise just how long-term and indeed nebulous this aspiration is. No significant party or organisation in the Federal Republic - even the Greens or the "League of Expellees", ie Germans driven after the war from what are now Polish and Soviet territories - sees reunification as more than a distant dream, or can chart a way forward by which it can be reached. Indeed for many West Germans, particularly

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perhaps South Germans or Rheinlanders still affected by the anti-Prussian tradition so marked in Adenauer, reunification is not even a dream and the GDR is merely a repellent Communist monstrosity.

7. Yet the consensus in favour of more dialogue and contact with the GDR is now very widely based. It is seen as a duty owed to the East Germans and particularly as a contribution to easing wider East-West tensions. It is recognised, despite setbacks such as the October 1980 raising of the minimum exchange rate for visitors to the GDR, to have been modestly successful in the 12 years since the Quadripartite Agreement and the FRG-GDR Basic Relations Treaty - particularly in the expansion of Inner-German trade, and in the increased ability of West Germans and West Berliners to visit relatives and friends in the GDR. This consensus is sometimes summoned up by Federal politicians in the formula "Deutschlandpolitik = Europapolitik = Friedenspolitik". At a comfortable level of abstraction this combines the coming together of the two sides of divided Germany, European unification, and the pursuit of peace by the reconciliation of East and West.

8. Beneath its bland generality, this formula hides contradictions. It embraces the day to day policies of the Federal Government in its relations with the GDR, in its efforts to strengthen the European Community and Genscher's hyperactive efforts to promote East/West dialogue. It embraces the Government's unexceptionable, though vague, long-term aims. But in the middle ground between the short-term policies and the long-term goals it covers over more problems and practical contradictions than most West Germans generally wish to admit or to face up to. How is the building of a special relationship with the GDR to be combined with increased unity within the European Community, and how far can the Federal Republic give a lead in dialogue and cooperation with the East while remaining in the centre of the convoy

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within the Western Alliance? How far can increasing cooperation with the GDR and Eastern Europe expect to be viewed with benevolence by Moscow as a contribution to dialogue, to economic progress and to restraint on Reaganite anti-Communism, rather than as an insidious undermining of the Brezhnev doctrine and of Soviet control over the East Europeans? What is meant by "Europa" in "Europapolitik"? Can it really at one and the same time be both the forging of a stronger pillar of one side of the NATO alliance and the aim of creating an undivided Europe of East and West?

9. To the Federal Government these are not so much contradictions as inevitable problems of balance and of evolution. But it has long been aware that its policy has a capacity to arouse distrust and alarm in both East and West - a distrust it works hard to dispel. Genscher declares that Bonn's policy is predictable, firm and long-term and thus an element of reliability and stability in the heart of Europe. The Allies are told by the CDU/CSU that the Federal Government is pursuing not so much the policy of its SPD/FDP predecessor (however much that may seem to be the case in the fields of Deutschlandpolitik and Ostpolitik) as that of Adenauer, ie that any policy towards the East can only succeed on the basis of a firm anchorage in NATO and the European Community. Towards Moscow, Genscher speaks of the Federal Republic's wish to find new ways of "dialogue, cooperation and reconciliation of interests" in a "European peace order", including the Soviet Union. It is repeatedly stressed that it is realised that there is no special road to German reunification and that this can only come about as part of a general reunification of the whole of Europe, in which the old national states will have lost much of their significance and the Soviet Union will have lost its suspicion and fear of the West.

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10. It is a noble, though notably long-term vision, with which the Federal Republic's allies can sympathise. They are all pledged not only to the defence of Berlin but to support for the eventual reunification of a free democratic Germany. But there are some potential dangers in the middle ground.

Efforts to give a lead in East-West relations can lead to FRG initiatives not being fully concerted within the alliance.

For instance before the Honecker visit was called off Genscher was hinting at a joint FRG/GDR initiative for an East-West declaration of renunciation of force. Another point to watch is that efforts to foster a sense of common Germanness could encourage naive self-delusion as to the scope for common effort with the GDR. It is part of the Federal Government's rhetoric not only that the two German states have inherited from history a common conviction that "never again must war start from German soil" but that from history and geography they must recognise a shared responsibility for peace, within and across their respective alliances, a "Verantwortungsgemeinschaft".

11. These however are only points to watch. There is no danger in the foreseeable future that the Federal Republic's diplomacy will go off the rails in some nationalist or neutralist direction: Moscow's intervention over the Honecker visit will have acted as a sobering reminder, if any was needed, of the realities of Soviet veto powers over the GDR. We can accept without reservation assurances that its Deutschlandpolitik and Ostpolitik have as indispensable foundations the Federal Republic's firm embedding in the Western Alliance and European Community. The Federal Republic is not alone in having a policy with individual features or in pursuing particular interests, and our rights and responsibilities for Berlin and for Germany as a whole help ensure that the degree of consultation on most Inner-German issues is very close.

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12. As seen from Bonn, the medium- and long-term dangers posed to Moscow by Bonn's Deutschlandpolitik and Ostpolitik are immensely greater. The GDR is not only of major economic importance but constitutes the lynchpin of Soviet power in Eastern Europe - particularly since the weakness and unreliability of Poland has been so graphically illustrated. It also constitutes the guarantee that the Germans will remain divided and never pose a third military challenge to the Soviet Union. The Soviet military, economic and political means of control of the GDR remain overwhelming. But the astonishingly open tussle of wills between East Berlin and Moscow over the Honecker visit seems to indicate that the issue was not entirely one-sided and that Moscow may indeed have long-term grounds for concern. It appears the GDR now has enough self-confidence not only to assess its own interests as requiring continued or expanded links of many kinds with the FRG, but to try to defend them against the displeasure of Moscow. Hitherto Moscow seems to have had great confidence in Honecker's ability to combine exemplary bloc loyalty with relatively flexible management of the GDR's relations with the Federal Republic. Now there seem to be doubts.

13. The problem is not confined to the GDR. Traditionally German trade, industrial standards and culture have been important in Eastern Europe. From Moscow it may seem that something of this influence could return, as the limitations of the Soviet economic and ideological models become even clearer. Yet the Federal Government's policy of peaceful dialogue, trade and contacts is difficult to contest except, as now, as a hypocritical cover for "revanchism". Even then the Soviet Union itself needs West German trade and finance and to try to influence German opinion. The Soviet attempts to exert more centralised control over the East bloc and its Western contacts may perhaps owe a good deal to deep-rooted fears of the magnetism of the West German economy and the effectiveness of its diplomacy.

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14. What are the immediate prospects for Inner-German relations? So far the indications from this side agree with those reported from East Berlin by Mr Everard. Both sides now have to move more cautiously but both wish to continue to maintain and develop their contacts as far as the wider East-West context will allow. A visit by Honecker and a Cultural Agreement may have to wait a while. But if US/Soviet relations ease Honecker might be able to come in the next year or two; perhaps at short notice to avoid a build-up of speculation. Meanwhile prospects for new agreements on immediate practical issues, such as measures to clean up rivers flowing from the GDR into the Federal Republic, may be little affected. The calling off of Honecker's visit under Soviet pressure and the uproar over Andreotti's remarks may both, by the publicity they have aroused, have further contributed to the already observable swell of revived interest in the Federal Republic in Germany's past, in the GDR and in the future of the German nation. The verdict still stands that this must all be seen in terms of development in the relations between two German states, rather than as even the preliminary steps towards eventual reunification. The division into two states is firm and stable for the foreseeable future. The power of the Soviet Union and the interests of the GDR's own rulers are a fully adequate guarantee against any dramatically destabilising developments.





## THE GERMAN QUESTION: RECENT HISTORY

1. After the 1971 Quadripartite Agreement and 1972 Basic Relations Treaty the Federal Republic and the GDR expanded their trade and contacts until the Afghanistan set-back to East-West relations. In October 1980 the GDR sharply cut its intake of West Berlin and West German visitors by increasing and extending the daily minimum exchange requirement. Days later Honecker in a speech at Gera set out far-reaching policy demands in relations. A mini-detente in 1981 culminated in Chancellor Schmidt's meeting in December with Honecker at Werbellinsee, outside Berlin, but was cut short by the imposition of martial law in Poland.

2. The fall of the SPD-FDP coalition in the autumn of 1982 was watched with apprehension by the GDR. Chancellor Kohl's first government policy statement in October 1982 laid stress on Deutschlandpolitik, but Genscher continued as Foreign Minister and Strauss, then a traditional GDR bogymen, was not in the Federal Cabinet. Although at first the new government stressed the need for a more adequate quid pro quo whenever the FRG made concessions to the GDR, it soon became clear that policy towards the GDR would be largely marked by continuity and pragmatism.

3. Relations with the GDR developed quickly, particularly after the Federal Government had been consolidated by its election victory of May 1983. Kohl saw this as a way of showing the West German public that INP stationing, then the subject of heavy Soviet propaganda and very active campaign by the domestic peace movement, would not cause an end to East-West dialogue. In July Strauss produced a bombshell by setting up a DM 1 billion bank credit for the GDR, guaranteed by the Federal Government, and by visiting the GDR himself. This showed the Kohl government was largely free of risk from its right wing in developing relations with the GDR. The credit was shortly followed by a marginal





GDR concession concerning the minimum exchange requirement for western visitors. Chancellor Kohl visited Moscow in July 1983 and spoke openly of German aspirations for eventual peaceful reunification.

4. Relations continued to improve in the latter half of 1983. High level political visits in both directions; a 40% increase in GDR citizens under pensionable age allowed to visit the Federal Republic in urgent family circumstances; a noticeable improvement in the treatment by GDR officialdom of West Germans visiting the GDR; a start to the removal of self-firing devices along the inner-German border; resumption after 8 years of negotiations for agreements on culture and technology and on legal assistance; new negotiations on a number of environmental questions; Postal Agreement re-negotiated and extended for 5 years.

5. The Bundestag confirmation in November 1983 of the INF deployment decision did not produce the 'ice-age' which Honecker had earlier threatened. Only days later Honecker's line at the SED 7th Central Committee meeting was the very different one of 'damage limitation'. Negotiations between the Berlin Senat and the East Germans about the Berlin S-Bahn suburban railway were concluded remarkably smoothly. The 9 February joint recommendation on Deutschlandpolitik by the CDU/CSU/FDP/SPD parliamentary parties was met by only mild criticism by the GDR of its alleged 'revanchist' implications. A press leak revealed that Volkswagen were near completion of a DM 600 million car engines contract with the GDR to run from 1988-93. Chancellor Kohl and Honecker met in Moscow on 14 February at Andropov's funeral and issued a declaration stressing the importance of East-West dialogue. Some 25,000 citizens were permitted to leave the GDR ('Ausreisewelle') and difficult cases of asylum seekers in the Federal Permanent Representation in East Berlin and elsewhere were settled, largely by GDR concessions.



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6. There was already speculation that Honecker might reinstate the visit to the Federal Republic which he had deferred in 1983. Interest was increased by occasional notes of concern in the Western press, particularly in Washington, as to where all this inner-German dialogue was leading. Kohl attempted in his State of the Nation speech on 15 March to damp down the rising tide of expectations about a visit and what it might produce, and recalled the vast gulf between the West and East German political systems. He stressed that to strive for the nation's reunification was primarily to strive for its freedom; and that there was no special way to German reunification other than through the long-term achievement of unity for the whole of Europe. Little apparent effect on expectations. It was noted that the GDR seemed reluctant to copy Warsaw and Moscow in a new campaign of criticism of 'revanchism' and 'militarism' in the Federal Republic.

7. On 25 July Minister of State Jenninger announced simultaneously a Federal Government guarantee for a further bank loan (DM 950 million) to the GDR and a further reduction in the Minimum Exchange Requirement for visitors, and other small travel concessions, by the GDR. On 27 July Pravda printed a critical article on relations between the two German States. At first the GDR appeared to be resisting Soviet pressure to put off the visit, but on 4 September said it would not go ahead.

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