

*Mr Fall (Ottawa) to FCO*

*No. 124 Telegraphic [PREM: Anglo-German Relations]*

*Confidential*

OTTAWA, 13 February 1990, 2.59 p.m.

From PS/FCO for Powell, No 10.

1. The Secretary of State would be grateful if you could pass the following note from him to the Prime Minister.

Begins

I had a long talk yesterday with Shevardnadze, who was in a melancholy and fatalistic mood. He is gloomy about German unification but accepts that it is going to happen. He also thinks that a united Germany will ask for the withdrawal of Soviet troops and clearly thinks this too will have to happen. In that case he foresees the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact and argues half-heartedly that NATO too should be dissolved but he went on to argue that a united Germany could become a threat to its neighbours if Kohl and Genscher, whom he trusted, were replaced by something like the Republicans. I said all the more reason to bind the Germans in by having them as part of NATO, with American troops on German soil. He seemed to half accept this.

We are this morning, after our Quad breakfast, close to agreement on meetings of Four plus Two, to begin soon after 18 March with preparatory exchanges before then. Shevardnadze agreed last night to put this to Moscow and we await that reply. This would be a big step forward, achieved by a firm front among the Americans, French and ourselves. Quite apart from its own importance, it should be an effective rebuttal of the charge that we have been pushed to the margin of events.

Genscher will talk to you at length about the emotions of the Germans at coming together after so long a division, about their irreversible commitment to democracy and to Europe, and their rejection of neutrality. He will stress that the swift pace of events has been dictated by the collapse of the GDR, which is certainly occurring though not as fast as he says. He is too clever to share the indignation shown by Kohl and the German press about our recent public statements. Indeed he continually thanks me for our understanding. But our influence in the new Four plus Two process will certainly in part depend on our willingness to sound welcoming and constructive, while continuing to restate in public and private what we believe to be the essentials of European security.

Ends.