



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

9 November 1983

Possible Seminar of British and FRG Private Secretaries

Thank you for your letter of 7 November about a possible initiative by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. This letter is to let you know that this matter was not raised with me either by the Foundation or by Herr Teltschik during our visit to Bonn.

I was somewhat surprised that Herr Teltschik did not mention it since I sat next to him at dinner and he did revive the idea that I should pay a visit to the Chancellery.

If we receive an approach from the Adenauer Foundation we will of course look at it. But I have to say that John Coles and I are a little sceptical whether either of us would be able to take two days away from the office for this purpose.

F. E. R. BUTLER

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PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 November 1983

Dear Sir,

Possible Seminar of British and FRG Private Secretaries

You should be aware before the Anglo-German Summit of a possible initiative by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Teltschik, Chancellor Kohl's diplomatic adviser, told Christopher Mallaby in Bonn last month that he had recently participated in a seminar in which Private Secretaries of the French President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Finance Minister and some German opposite numbers, spent two days getting to know each other, exchanging information about their working methods and roles and holding brainstorming discussions about certain current matters. This had apparently been very informative and of course had created far closer relationships among the participants. Teltschik said that he thought the Konrad Adenauer Foundation was about to propose something similar between the Germans and the British, and that the Foundation's London office would probably be writing to Robin Butler.

Of course, the German and British Private Office systems are very different. A German Private Secretary may well be an official of Assistant Secretary or Principal rank, but unlike his British counterpart he would not normally keep his job following a change of Minister. To that extent, the German Private Secretary is more 'political' than his British counterpart. In addition, most Ministers in the FRG have larger Private Offices than their British counterparts with specifically 'political' officials drafted in, usually on a temporary basis. They keep an eye on relations with the Party and coalition problems. Kohl's office contains a mixture of officials similar to those at No 10 and in the Cabinet Office together with political chums such as Teltschik.

The interests and outlook of Private Secretaries on the German side would not therefore coincide entirely with those in London. But although a UK/FRG seminar might not be quite as straightforward as a France/FRG seminar, I see no reason

/to adopt



to adopt a negative attitude towards this proposal if it materialises: rather the contrary. Benefits would almost certainly flow both from the process of mutual education and also from the closer relationships which would be built up. I should, however, like to make two further points at this stage. First, you and Robin Butler may wish to discuss the idea with David Goodall, whose responsibilities are rather similar to Teltschik's. And there would be obvious advantage from the FCO's point of view if I could be included. We do not know whether the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, with its close links to the CDU, will propose the participation of the Private Secretary to Genscher, who is of course FDP. But the fact that the Private Secretary to Cheysson participated in the France/FRG seminar would seem to point in the right direction.

I do not think we need take up a firm position now. The purpose of this letter is to suggest that you give the idea a fair wind if it is raised in the margins of the Summit. You may wish to have a word in Bonn with Christopher Mallaby, who himself strongly supports the idea of a seminar.

Genscher
J.

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

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