



MO 27/4

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARYNORMANDY LANDINGS

You will recall that, at lunch at the Anglo-German Summit, Chancellor Kohl raised the question of the reaction in Japan and Germany to the celebration of the Normandy landings. I wanted to mention that Dr Woerner also raised this with me.

2. It is, of course, entirely right that we should be celebrating the 40th Anniversary of D-Day on the basis now planned and that we should ensure that the celebration is given proper publicity. It is, however, important that whatever speeches there are at the various events should strike the right tone. I have in mind particularly what the Americans may say. I hope that we can avoid too much of the flavour of the triumph of good over evil or any denigration of the German Army, which is obviously a sensitive issue in Germany. Instead the themes might be the sacrifice made to secure freedom and democracy in Western Europe, upon which so much that is positive has since been built, and the continuing joint commitment of North America and Europe to the defence of these values.

3. I hope we can bring to bear in this direction whatever influence we have.

4. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

WAH
Ministry of Defence
14th May 1984