

**November 20, 1970**

**Memorandum from Department Head Oncken,  
'Establishment of Relations with the People's  
Republic of China and Albania'**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

West German diplomats explore whether or not Bonn could or should normalize relations with China and Albania.

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**Contents:**

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Memorandum from Department Head Oncken

PI-82.07-8300-695/70

Strictly confidential

November 20, 1970<sup>[1]</sup>

To: Mr. State Secretary<sup>[2]</sup>

Subject: Establishment of Relations with the People's Republic of China and Albania

Reference: Memorandum LPI-82.07-138/70-strictly confidential from March 19, 1970

<sup>[3]</sup>

and PI-83.00-220/70-strictly confidential from April 23, 1970<sup>[4]</sup>

Appendixes: 2<sup>[5]</sup>

Purpose: Review of expediency to establish at this point official relations with additional communist states, namely the People's Republic of China and Albania.

Proposal: To ask the operative departments for comments and, if applicable, to establish according contacts with the People's Republic of China and Albania.<sup>[6]</sup>

I.

1) The planning staff suggested in March and April this year in above referenced memoranda (see in appendixes) to establish official contacts with the People's Republic of China and Albania. However, the issue was not pursued further since back then reservations against the proposal existed.

2) Those reservations were as follows:

a) in the case of China:

- the Chinese are not interested in a modification of the current status;
- the establishment of official relations with Beijing could become a strain on our relationship with the Soviet Union.

b) in the case of Albania:

- there do exist more urgent problems;
- official contacts with Albania would currently not foster our policy towards Eastern Europe.

II.

In the meantime, however, the situation has changed:

1) People's Republic of China

Foreign policy activity of the People's Republic of China in recent months has clearly

shown that China is interested in the establishment of diplomatic relations with additional Western states. In recent days, though after dragged out negotiations (due to the Taiwan problem), diplomatic relations were established with Canada<sup>[7]</sup> and Italy<sup>[8]</sup>. Currently Belgium is said to hold talks with the People's Republic of China regarding the exchange of diplomatic representations. (Regarding the issue of aspects pertaining to our contacts that have to take the Taiwan problem into consideration, I refer to the attached memorandum from March 19, 1970.)

Since the United States as well is displaying nuances in its attitudes towards communist China, and our negotiations with the USSR about a "renunciation of force agreement" are concluded, a new discrete attempt can be made to engage into a dialogue with the People's Republic of China.

## 2) Albania

Here the situation has changed as well, compared to the time of the memorandum from April 23, 1970. "An irritation of Belgrade" (see p. 2b of the Albania appendix<sup>[9]</sup>) is now less likely since today Yugoslavia itself is interested in better relations with Albania.

For the Eastern Europe policy of the Federal Republic of Germany an initiation of official contacts with Albania would be no obstacle today (see note of Mr. Foreign Minister<sup>[10]</sup>). Among the states of the European community, France<sup>[11]</sup> and Italy<sup>[12]</sup> have embassies in Tirana for quite some time already.

This year Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland have established diplomatic relations with Albania.<sup>[13]</sup>

## III.

With regard to above suggestions, the Planning Staff endorses the concept that we should systematically expand the scope of our foreign policy operations and opportunities. If we have decided based on this concept to establish, or aim at, relations with all states of the Warsaw Pact, then it would be only within this policy logic that we -in the interest of expansion of our theoretical options and opportunities- also establish contacts with those states, which so far were for various reasons not included in our respective deliberations.<sup>[14]</sup>

Oncken

VS-Bd. 11571 (Planning Staff)

<sup>[1]</sup> The memorandum was drafted by VLR I Sartorius.

<sup>[2]</sup> Submitted to State Secretary Frank on November 23, 1970. He asked for comments from department heads von Staden and Herbst and noted in handwriting: "In my opinion the time has not yet come." Submitted to von Staden on November 24, 1970 who commented in handwriting: "In my opinion Albania neither right time nor necessary. China: definitely not before ratification of the treaty with the Soviet Union. Then to consider, though; although in consultations with the United States."

Submitted to Herbst on November 25, 1970 who commented in handwriting: "Strongly [of the same opinion] as [Department] I Pol."

Submitted to VLR I Schönfeld on November 26, 1970 who instructed to forward to State Secretaries Freiherr von Braun and Frank.

Submitted to von Braun on November 26, 1970 who commented in handwriting: "In my opinion only after ratification of treaties with the USSR and Poland."

Re-submitted to Frank on November 30, 1970.

[3] For the memorandum by Department Head Oncken see document 123 [of AAPD].

[4] For the memorandum by Department Head Oncken see VS-Bd. 11573 (Planning Staff), B 150, File Copies 1970. For an excerpt see footnote 9.

[5] Attached was the memorandum from Department Head Oncken of March 19, 1970. For the memorandum by Oncken of April 23, 1970 see footnotes 4 and 8.

[6] The phrase "and, if applicable, to establish" got crossed out by State Secretary Frank.

[7] The People's Republic of China and Canada established diplomatic relations on October 13, 1970.

[8] The People's Republic of China and Italy established diplomatic relations on November 6, 1970.

[9] Paragraph 2b) from memorandum by Department Head Oncken of April 23, 1970: "Of course, the actual relevance of establishing a contact would require an indirect exploratory move towards Beijing. Our interest to establish official relations with Beijing under acceptable conditions is beyond any question. Although certain deliberations might advise against this, like taking into consideration our American allies, but also friendly Japan, and ultimately Taiwan. Those considerations are a consequence of the difficult bilateral Chinese relations to the countries listed. They do not exist in the case of Albania (though also an irritation of Belgrade might be possible). As far as the ideological aspect is concerned, the establishment of contacts would ultimately result in an initiation of contact with Beijing, without unnecessarily annoying friendly countries." See VS-Bd. 11573 (Planning Staff), B 150, File Copies 1970.

[10] Foreign Minister [Walter] Scheel noted on the memorandum from Department Head Oncken of April 23, 1970 in handwriting with regard to the proposal of exploring opportunities for an establishment of official contacts with Albania: "Right now this would not foster our Eastern European policy." See VS-Bd. 11573 (Planning Staff), B 150, File Copies 1970.

[11] France and Albania restored diplomatic relations on February 25, 1946. The existing legations were elevated to the status of embassies on January 11, 1965.

[12] Italy and Albania established diplomatic relations on May 2, 1949.

[13] Sweden established diplomatic relations with Albania on June 26, 1969, Denmark on April 30, 1970, Switzerland on July 20, 1970, and the Netherlands on November 18, 1970.

[14] This sentence, as well as the words "logic", "expansion", and "theoretical", were highlighted by State Secretary Frank. And marked with questions marks.