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Israel

Telegram¹ from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon², to the Israeli Foreign Ministry

FRG–GDR

Restricted/Urgent

Bonn, 14 November 1989

Under separate cover, priority “Immediate”, a survey on relations between the FRG and the GDR³.

Below a paragraph [*of background information*] in preparation for the question in the Knesset:

The question of the reunification of Germany is of interest to Israel only in the context of a rise in German nationalism.

The question of unification is perhaps on the “almost messianic” agenda in Germany but is certainly not on the practical agenda. No one is dealing with it as a practical problem and feelings are very mixed. My recommendation is thus to avoid dire predictions about a powerful wave of German nationalism. I would remind you of the statement by the Republican leader Schönhuber⁴ about the East German refugees, “Soll das⁵ Pack drüben bleiben” (it would be better that the gang should stay there). If Schönhuber, who has no qualms about exploiting nationalist feelings for his political needs, is not adopting this issue, there is reason to assume that nationalism and reunification in the Germany of today do not necessarily go hand in hand.

¹ Coded telegram (incoming, translated from Hebrew): Israel State Archives MFA9537/11. Addressed to Europe division 1.

² Benjamin Navon (*1933), dodis.ch/P57507, Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, 1989–1993.

³ Telegram No. 114 from Benjamin Navon to Europe division 1, from 14 November 1989, in the same file.

⁴ Franz Schönhuber (1923–2005), dodis.ch/P54840, journalist and politician of the FRG, founder and later chairman of The Republicans.

⁵ In the original: SOLL GSD PACK DRUEBEN BLEIBEN. The letters “GSD” are most likely a spelling mistake for “das”.