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INFO PRIORITY BONN BRUSSELS UKREP BRUSSELS NIO (BELFAST)
COPENHAGEN THE HAGUE LUXEMBOURG PARIS ROME AND WASHINGTON

THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL: PRESS REACTIONS.

1. THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL DOMINATES THE MAIN IRISH DAILIES AND THE HEADLINES GIVE A FAIR INDICATION OF THE TONE OF THE REPORTS: "THATCHER GOES HOME EMPTY HANDED AFTER BITTER DUBLIN SUMMIT" (IRISH TIMES), "CRISIS SUMMIT A FAILURE - THATCHER'S COMPROMISE" (IRISH PRESS) AND "A SUMMIT DISASTER FOR BRITAIN" (IRISH INDEPENDENT). ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON THE BUDGET PROBLEM. THE BASIC FACTS ARE REPORTED REASONABLY ACCURATELY, THOUGH LITTLE OR NO SYMPATHY IS SHOWN FOR THE BRITISH POSITION AND THERE IS SOME IRRITATION THAT THE BUDGET SHOULD HAVE ABSORBED SO MUCH TIME.

2. THE IRISH TIMES REPORT STATES THAT THE NINE "NARROWLY AVOIDED A MAJOR CRISIS" AFTER TWO DAYS OF "THE MOST BITTER ARGUING SEEN AT A EUROPEAN SUMMIT" AND GOES ON TO SAY THAT "INSTEAD OF GETTING THE BROAD BALANCE SHE HAD DEMANDED, MRS THATCHER IN FACT GOT NOTHING". THE REPORT ADMITS THAT THE OFFER OF £350 MILLION IS STILL AVAILABLE BUT SUGGESTS THAT THE SOLUTION OF WHICH IT COULD FORM PART "IS APPARENTLY CONDITIONAL ON BRITAIN'S GOOD BEHAVIOUR INSIDE THE EEC" AND MENTIONS IN THIS CONTEXT THE FRENCH PRESIDENT'S INSISTENCE THAT PROGRESS MUST BE MADE ON THE CFP, LAMB AND ENERGY BEFORE ANOTHER EFFORT IS MADE TO REACH A COMPROMISE. ON A MORE POSITIVE NOTE, THE IRISH TIMES DESCRIBES THE PRIME MINISTER'S PERFORMANCE AT HER PRESS CONFERENCE AS "SUPREMELY CONFIDENT" AND REPORTS HER REMARKS IN SOME DETAIL. THE SAME PAPER ALSO STATES THAT CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT WAS "REPORTEDLY IMPRESSED WITH MRS THATCHER'S DEFENCE OF BRITAIN'S OIL PRICING POLICY".

3. THE REPORTS IN THE OTHER TWO PAPERS FOLLOW BROADLY SIMILAR LINES ALTHOUGH THE INDEPENDENT IS CHARACTERISTICALLY SENSATIONAL E.G. "BRITISH PREMIER MARGARET THATCHER HAS GONE HOME IN DEFEAT AFTER A DISASTROUS SHOPPING TRIP TO DUBLIN". THE INDEPENDENT AND THE IRISH PRESS BOTH REPORT A FRENCH SPOKESMAN AS SAYING THAT BRITAIN WOULD HAVE TO SHOW A "COMMUNITY COMPORIMENT" IF A SOLUTION TO THE BUDGET PROBLEM WAS TO BE FOUND.

4. THE IRISH PRESS REPORTS THE PRIME MINISTER AS SAYING THAT IRELAND WAS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES THAT REALISED BRITAIN'S PROBLEM AND THAT MR LYNCH'S CHAIRMANSHIP HAD BEEN "VERY GOOD." THE REPORT SUGGESTS THAT HE PLAYED A BIG PART IN HELPING TO AVOID A DISASTER. MR LYNCH HIMSELF IS REPORTED AS SAYING THAT NOBODY COULD BE SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME BUT THAT SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE.

THE IRISH PRESS ALSO MENTIONS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE BED USED BY QUEEN VICTORIA IN 1897 AND DRAWS ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT SHE DECLINED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON THE NORTH AT HER PRESS CONFERENCE.

5. THE IRISH TIMES AND IRISH PRESS REPORT THE STATEMENTS ISSUED BY THE COUNCIL ON THE US EMBASSY SIEGE IN TEHRAN, ENERGY, CONVERGENCE AND CAMBODIA, BUT WITHOUT COMMENT. THE IRISH INDEPENDENT ONLY MAKES BRIEF REFERENCES TO THE STATEMENTS.

6. ALL THREE PAPERS OFFER EDITORIAL COMMENT. THE IRISH TIMES IS UNUSUALLY RESTRAINED BUT CANNOT RESIST BEING SNIDE: "MRS THATCHER IS GIVING HER EEC PARTNERS ONE LAST CHANCE. IF THEY DO NOT COME UP WITH HER £1,000 MILLION, OR MOST OF IT, BY APRIL OF NEXT YEAR, THEY WILL HAVE TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES. SHE IS NOT THREATENING TO LEAVE THE EEC SEMICOLON WORSE THAN THAT, SHE IS THREATENING TO STAY IN IT." THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO SAY: "IF HER PERFORMANCE AT HER PRESS CONFERENCE YESTERDAY IS ANYTHING TO GO BY, THERE ARE PRIME MINISTERS AND FOREIGN MINISTERS AROUND EUROPE TODAY IN A STATE OF SHELL-SHOCK. THE IRISH TIMES SEES LITTLE GROUND FOR HOPE ON THE BUDGET ISSUE BECAUSE OF THE BASIC DEFFERENCE IN APPROACH BETWEEN BRITAIN WHICH IS "ASKING FOR ITS OWN MONEY BACK," AND HER PARTNERS WHO MAINTAIN THAT "OWN RESOURCES" COLLECTED IN THE UK BELONGED TO THE EEC ANYWAY. THE EDITORIAL EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL OFFER "A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN HER CASH DEMAND" AT THE NEXT COUNCIL BUT CONCLUDES GLOOMILY THAT SHE "MEANS TROUBLE" AND SUGGESTS THAT SHE MAY HAVE BEEN TREATED MORE POLITELY THAN SHE DESERVED.

7. THE IRISH PRESS EDITORIAL IS DOWNRIGHT HOSTILE. IT BEGINS BY SAYING THAT THE PRIME MINISTER PROBABLY GOT THE RESULT SHE INTENDED AND THAT SHE CAN NOW GO HOME AND "TRUMPET ABOUT THE INIQUITOUS FOREIGNERS IN EUROPE WHO WON'T GIVE JUSTICE TO THE LONG-SUFFERING BRITISH TAXPAYER." THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE "BRITISH ANTI-EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN SERVED ONLY TO PREVENT THE SUMMIT DOING

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ANY THING USEFUL" AND CLAIMS THAT ALL OUR PARTNERS HAD "REASON TO BE ANNOYED WITH THE STALLING TACTICS." NORTHERN IRELAND IS TORTUOUSLY DRAGGED IN: "OF COURSE, NOTHING GOT DONE ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND THOUGHTHE GERMANS HAVE DIRECT FINANCIAL INTEREST IN THIS MATTER AS THEY ARE OBLIGED TO PAY ON A PER CAPITA BASIS FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF BRITISH TROOPS ON THE RHINE, WHICH TROOPS ARE VERY OFTEN IN THE NORTH AND NOT IN GERMANY AT ALL." THE IRISH PRESS SUGGESTS THAT BRITAIN SHOULD REDUCE THE COST OF NORTHERN IRELAND RATHER THAN CREATING ILL-WILL BY "SERVING FICTITIOUS DEMANDS " ON HER PARTNERS, AND CRITICISES THE PRIME MINISTER FOR REFUSING TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON THE NORTH. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES ON A NOTE OF SELF-CONGRATULATION: "ALL IN ALL, IT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A NON-DISCRIPIT SUMMIT, ALTHOUGH CHARACTERISED BY EFFICIENT ORGANISATION AND A HOSPITALITY THAT EARNS US HIGH MARKS ABROAD."

8. THE IRISH INDEPENDENT EDITORIAL IS LOW-KEY. IT COMPLAINS MILDLY ABOUT THE FACT THAT THE BUDGET PROBLEM DOMINATED THE COUNCIL, EXPRESSES SATISFACTION THAT THERE WAS A WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE AND HOPES THAT EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT ALL RIGHT IN THE END.

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