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Prime Minister

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FEDERAL CHANCELLOR'S VISIT TO LONDON: GERMAN MEDIA REACTIONS

1. THE GERMAN MEDIA GAVE ENTHUSIASTIC AND EXTENSIVE COVERAGE WITH PICTURES TO THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR'S VISIT TO LONDON LAST WEEK, AND THE OVERWHELMING CONSENSUS IS THAT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WAS A SUCCESS. THE AFTER-DINNER SPEECHES AND THE EXCHANGES AT THE CONCLUDING PRESS CONFERENCE WERE FULLY AND FAIRLY REPORTED. INTEREST WAS HEIGHTENED BY THE OCCASION OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S FIRST FOREIGN OFFICIAL VISITOR (MR LYNCH'S VISIT TENDED TO BE OVERLOOKED) AND HER FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH HERR SCHMIDT AS PRIME MINISTER.

2. NEARLY ALL NEWSPAPERS DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS HAVING ESTABLISHED QUOTE THE MUTUAL RESPECT UNQUOTE OF THE TWO LEADERS FOR ONE ANOTHER AND AS HAVING TAKEN PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF GENERAL AGREEMENT ON WORLD AFFAIRS. THE PRIME MINISTER'S DESCRIPTION OF HERR SCHMIDT AS QUOTE BRITAIN'S GREAT FRIEND UNQUOTE WAS WIDELY CITED AND HERR SCHMIDT IS SAID IN QUOTE CONFERENCE CIRCLES UNQUOTE TO HAVE DESCRIBED THE PRIME MINISTER AS QUOTE A HEAD OF GOVERNMENT WHO KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT SHE WANTS WHERE BRITISH INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY AND IN NATO IS CONCERNED UNQUOTE. ONLY DER SPIEGEL STRUCK A DIFFERENT NOTE, CLAIMING THAT AN OBSERVER HAD SAID THAT QUOTE THE TWO HAD SPOKEN CORDIALLY PAST ONE ANOTHER UNQUOTE.

3. AS WAS TO BE EXPECTED, THE PRESS SCRUTINISED WITH PARTICULAR CARE THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENTS ON EUROPE. MOST NEWSPAPERS SEEMED ENCOURAGED BY HER COOPERATIVE APPROACH BUT EXPECTED BRITAIN TO FIGHT FOR HER INTERESTS JUST AS STRONGLY AS BEFORE. ONE OR TWO NEWSPAPERS COMMENTED ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S FRANK, ALMOST BRUSQUE, WAY OF SPEAKING ABOUT EUROPE: THE SUEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG FOR

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EXAMPLE, QUOTING BRITISH OBSERVERS, FOUND THESE REMARKS QUOTE NOTICEABLY HARD UNQUOTE. HERR SCHMIDT IS QUOTED AS SAYING: QUOTE THERE IS A CHANGE OF STYLE IN BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS EUROPE BUT NO CHANGE IN THE BASIC ATTITUDE UNQUOTE. THE PRIME MINISTER'S WARNING ABOUT BRITAIN NOT BEING QUOTE A SOFT TOUCH UNQUOTE IN EUROPE WERE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE PROMINENCE.

4. THERE WAS NOTICEABLY LITTLE COMMENT ON DEFENCE AFFAIRS BUT THIS MAY FOLLOW AFTER THE DEFENCE SECRETARY'S TALKS WITH HERR APEL.

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