

GRS 210

CONFIDENTIAL

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TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 114 OF 28 JANUARY 1982

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, ROUTINE BONN, ROME AND UKDEL NATO

MY TELNO 49: DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE POLISH PEOPLE

1. TODAY'S FRENCH PRESS CARRIES REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT MITTERRAND WILL AFTER ALL ASSOCIATE HIMSELF, IF WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM, WITH THE DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE POLISH PEOPLE. IT IS PLANNED THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL RECORD A BRIEF MESSAGE FOR SCREENING IN THE TELEVISED "SHOW FOR POLAND" ON 31 JANUARY.
2. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY HAD EARLIER TOLD US THAT THE QUAI D'ORSAY WAS DISTINCTLY UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE IDEA OF FRENCH PARTICIPATION. (WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS HAD BEEN CLEARLY EXPRESSED IN TWO FRENCH COREUS.) THE AMERICANS SUBSEQUENTLY RENEWED THEIR REPRESENTATIONS AT THE ELYSEE.
3. THE ASSISTANT DIPLOMATIC ADVISER AT THE ELYSEE HAS NOW CONFIRMED TO US THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL TAKE PART. HE SAID THAT THE DECISION WAS TAKEN RELUCTANTLY AND AFTER MUCH DEBATE WITHIN THE ELYSEE. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISTASTE THERE AT THE IDEA THAT PRESIDENT MITTERRAND SHOULD BE ASSOCIATING HIMSELF WITH AN EVENT SO DIRECTLY ORCHESTRATED BY THE AMERICANS. IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE STRONG AMERICAN REACTION OF DISAPPROVAL TO THE CONCLUSION ON 23 JANUARY OF THE FRANCO/SOVIET GAS CONTRACT, AND IN PARTICULAR TO THE TIMING OF THE SIGNATURE JUST BEFORE THE HAI G/GROMYKO ENCOUNTER OF 26 JANUARY WAS THE FACTOR WHICH TIPPED THE BALANCE IN FAVOUR OF FRENCH PARTICIPATION.

HIBBERT

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