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ANGLO-GERMAN CONSULTATIONS: 2 MAY: GERMAN PRESS COVERAGE

SUMMARY

1. THE GERMAN PRESS REPORTS BILATERAL RELATIONS AS EXCELLENT, BUT CONCENTRATES ON THE CONTINUING ABSENCE OF AGREEMENT ON BRITAIN'S EC BUDGET CONTRIBUTION, WHICH IT FINDS DISHEARTENING.

DETAIL

2. PRINTERS STRIKES HAVE PREVENTED THE PUBLICATION OF HALF OF TODAY'S GERMAN PRESS. DETAILED COVERAGE OF THE CONSULTATIONS IS GIVEN IN THE BONN GENERAL ANZEIGER, THE STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG AND DIE WELT, AND IN SHORTER PIECES IN SOME REGIONAL PAPERS. THEY REFER TO 'EXCELLENT BILATERAL RELATIONS' AND 'FRIENDLY AND USEFUL TALKS'. THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON IS QUOTED IN THE NEUE RUHR ZEITUNG AS SAYING THAT ANY BILATERAL PROBLEMS CAUSED BY THE BRITISH PRESS CAMPAIGN TO CAST KOHL IN THE ROLE OF SCAPEGOAT FOR BRITAIN'S ISOLATION AT THE BRUSSELS SUMMIT HAD BEEN SORTED OUT IN 'EXPLANATORY TALKS'. THE PRESS CONCENTRATES HOWEVER ON THE LACK OF AGREEMENT OVER BRITAIN'S EC BUDGET CONTRIBUTION, SAID TO HAVE DISHEARTENED IF NOT SURPRISED THE GERMAN SIDE. (THIS EMPHASIS WAS NOT SO APPARENT IN THE MORE BALANCED REPORTS ON TELEVISION LAST NIGHT).

3. GENSCHER IS SAID TO HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT BRITAIN PASSED UP AN 'HOUR OF DESTINY' IN FAILING TO ACCEPT THE OFFER OF THE NINE AT THE BRUSSELS SUMMIT OF 1000 MECU FOR 5 YEARS. THIS WAS THE LAST WORD, AND THE GERMANS EXPECTED BRITAIN NOW TO MAKE A MOVE. BRITISH MINISTERS ARE REPORTED AS HAVING HELD RIGIDLY TO THEIR POSITION, AND HAVING INSISTED THAT THE FIRST MOVE COME FROM THE OTHER NINE. THE PRIME MINISTER IS SAID TO HAVE EMPHASISED THAT HER ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE WAS VERY SMALL, AND TO HAVE DRAWN ATTENTION TO BRITAIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO EUROPE, INCLUDING THE RHINE ARMY, BRITISH FISHING WATERS, AND THE OPENING OF THE BRITISH MARKET TO THE EC. THE GENERAL ANZEIGER ALSO QUOTES THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE: 'WE HAVE DONE MORE FOR EUROPE THAN ANY OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRY. WE HAVE ALWAYS BEHAVED CORRECTLY AND WE ALWAYS KEEP OUR WORD. WE ARE PREPARED TO GO ON BEING NET CONTRIBUTORS, BUT WITHIN FAIR LIMITS.' OTHER PAPERS IMPLICITLY CONTRAST ALLEGED BRITISH INFLEXIBILITY WITH CHANCELLOR KOHL'S APPEAL FOR EUROPEAN UNION IN HIS SPEECH IN OXFORD. THE SPEECH IS QUOTED EXTENSIVELY IN DIE WELT.

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4. COVERAGE IS ALSO GIVEN TO THE BROAD MEASURE OF AGREEMENT ON BOTH SIDES ON THE NEED TO GIVE NEW LIFE TO THE WEU, WHILE ENSURING THAT RELATIONS WITH THE AMERICANS IN THE ALLIANCE DID NOT SUFFER. SOME PAPERS SUGGEST THAT BRITISH MINISTERS WERE LESS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE IDEA THAN THEIR GERMAN COUNTERPARTS. THE GENERAL ANZEIGER ALSO REFERS TO DISCUSSION OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS AND OF THE LIBYAN PEOPLE'S BUREAU SIEGE. THE STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG CLAIMS THAT BRITAIN WILL PRESENT IDEAS FOR REVISING THE VIENNA CONVENTION AT THE JUNE ECONOMIC SUMMIT.

5. THE JOINT DECLARATION ON BILATERAL RELATIONS IS MENTIONED IN TWO PAPERS. THE GENERAL ANZEIGER NOTES THE CONVICTION OF THE TWO HEADS OF GOVERNMENT THAT DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES WILL FURTHER THEIR COMMON INTERESTS AND MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE CREATION OF A EUROPE WHICH CAN FACE THE CHALLENGES OF THE LAST YEARS OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

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