

RESTRICTED

FM BONN 201430Z DEC 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1084 OF 20 DECEMBER

INFO SAVING CGS IN THE FRG, CICC(G), BMG BERLIN, UKDEL NATO, ATHENS, EMBASSY BRUSSELS, COPENHAGEN, DUBLIN, THE HAGUE, LUXEMBOURG, PARIS, ROME, UKREP BRUSSELS, WASHINGTON, MOSCOW, EAST BERLIN.

MY TELEGRAM NO 1079: HAMBURG LAND ELECTION 19 DECEMBER.

SUMMARY

1. IN A SURPRISING RESULT, THE SPD REGAINED THE OVERALL MAJORITY WHICH THEY HAVE TRADITIONALLY HELD IN HAMBURG BUT HAD LOST LAST JUNE. THE CDU CAME A POOR SECOND. THE GREENS REMAIN IN THE HAMBURG PARLIAMENT, THOUGH WITH ONE SEAT LESS. THE FDP, IN ANOTHER CATASTROPHE FOR THE PARTY, FELL WAY SHORT OF THE 5 PER CENT NEEDED TO REENTER THE HAMBURG PARLIAMENT. THE RESULT IS NOT A RELIABLE GUIDE TO PROSPECTS FOR THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS IN MARCH, BUT WILL HAVE GIVEN THE BONN COALITION PAUSE.

DETAIL

2. THE PROVISIONAL OFFICIAL RESULT, WITH JUNE FIGURES IN BRACKETS, WAS:

SPD	51.3 PER CENT	(42.7 PER CENT)
CDU	38.6 PER CENT	(43.2 PER CENT)
GREENS	6.8 PER CENT	(7.7 PER CENT)
FDP	2.6 PER CENT	(4.9 PER CENT)
OTHERS	0.7 PER CENT	(1.5 PER CENT)

THIS GIVES THE SPD 64 SEATS (55), THE CDU 48 (56) AND THE GREENS 8 (9).

3. FOR THE REASONS GIVEN IN MY TUR, THE SPD WERE EXPECTED TO TAKE OVER AGAIN FROM THE CDU AS THE LARGEST PARTY IN THE HAMBURG PARLIAMENT, BUT NOT TO REGAIN AN OVERALL MAJORITY. THE RESULT IS A TRIUMPH FOR MAYOR VON DOHNANYI WHO RAN A SHREWD TACTICAL CAMPAIGN.

4. THE SPD'S SUCCESS IS BEING VARIOUSLY ATTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

- (A) THE RESULT LAST JUNE MUST HAVE BEEN CAUSED PARTLY BY A SUBSTANTIAL PROTEST VOTE AGAINST THE DYING SPD/FDP GOVERNMENT. THE 6 PER CENT HIGHER TURNOUT THIS TIME SUGGESTS THAT LAST TIME SPD VOTERS STAYED AWAY.
- (B) THE STRONG PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE CAMPAIGN OF HELMUT SCHMIDT WHO IS HAMBURG'S FAVOURITE SON AND REMAINS, ACCORDING TO THE POLLS, THE FRG'S MOST POPULAR POLITICIAN.
- (C) SKILLFUL SPD EXPLOITATION OF THE NEW FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES, ESPECIALLY THE PROPOSED RENT INCREASES AND CUTS IN EDUCATION GRANTS.
- (D) CONCERN AT THE DANGERS FOR THE CITY IN CONTINUING TO HAVE A HUNG PARLIAMENT: THIS MAY HAVE LED VOTERS TO SUPPORT THE PARTY MOST LIKELY TO WIN AN OVERALL MAJORITY.

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5. THE CDU ADMIT THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT, AND ATTRIBUTE THE RESULT MAINLY TO THEIR FAILURE SO FAR TO CONVINCE THE ELECTORATE THAT THEIR ECONOMIC MEASURES ARE JUSTIFIED. THEY WILL BE IN NO DANGER NOW OF COMPLACENCY ABOUT THE FEDERAL ELECTION. BUT FEW PEOPLE ARE DRAWING PARALLELS BETWEEN THIS RESULT IN A TRADITIONAL SPD STRONGHOLD AND THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FEDERAL ELECTION. THE CDU ARE CLAIMING THAT THEIR OWN SHARE OF THE HAMBURG POLL REMAINED HIGHER THAN IT TRADITIONALLY HAS BEEN AND THAT THE EXTRAPOLATION NATIONALLY OF THIS PERFORMANCE WOULD GIVE THEM AN OVERALL MAJORITY IN THE BUNDESTAG. MOREOVER, THE ELECTORATE'S APPARENT DESIRE FOR WORKABLE MAJORITIES (PARAGRAPH 4 (D) ABOVE) WOULD WORK AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN FAVOUR OF THE CDU/CSU.

6. FOR THE FDP, TO HAVE THEIR SUPPPORT CUT BY HALF WHEN THEY WERE ALREADY BELOW THE 5 PER CENT HURDLE IS A DISASTER, AND ANOTHER NAIL IN THE COFFIN OF THEIR HOPES TO REMAIN IN THE BUNDESTAG IN MARCH. THE GREENS, BY CONTRAST, HELD MOST OF THE VOTES THEY WON LAST JUNE (WITH A LOWER PERCENTAGE IN A HIGHER TURNOUT). THIS IS NO MEAN ACHIEVEMENT, GIVEN THE STRENGTH OF THE SPD AND CDU CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THEM. BUT THEY ARE AT THEIR STRONGEST IN THE BIG CITIES, AND CANNOT YET BE SURE OF MAKING IT INTO THE BUNDESTAG. FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO ABOVE ADDRESSEES EXCEPT CGS, CICC(G), AND BMG BERLIN.

TAYLOR

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

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NEWS D	PS/MR HURD	CABINET OFFICE