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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 423 OF 18 MAY

INFO IMMEDIATE BONN

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Re

MIPT: FRANCO/GERMAN SUMMIT

PRESS REACTION

1. TODAY'S PRESS COMMENT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE SUMMIT WAS UNIVERSALLY GLOOMY. THE CONSENSUS WAS THAT DESPITE KOHL'S POLITENESS AND AMIABILITY DIVERGENCES OVER ECONOMIC POLICY REMAIN AS WIDE AS EVER. ALL COMMENTATORS CONCLUDED THAT HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO GIVE EXTRA STIMULUS TO THE GERMAN ECONOMY IN ORDER TO HELP FRANCE OVER ITS DIFFICULTIES. THERE WAS LITTLE DISPOSITION TO BLAME HIM. THE EXCEPTION WAS L'HUMANITE (COMMUNIST) WHICH ATTACKED THE GERMAN RIGHT FOR WEEKING TO EXTEND ITS DOMINATION IN EUROPE.

2. ELSEWHERE THE BRUNT OF CRITICISM WAS DIRECTED AGAINST THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. LE FIGARO (RIGHT WING) ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT OF INDULGING IN ITS HABITUAL SEARCH FOR SCAPEGOATS IN THIS INSTANCE THE GERMANS AND THE AMERICANS. LIBERATION (INDEPENDENT LEFT-WING) NOTED TARTLY THAT FRENCH MINISTERS, HAVING PUBLICLY ATTACKED GERMAN POLICIES, WERE NOW TURNING TO THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT FOR HELP. HOW COULD THEY SHOW SUCH NAIVETY AS TO ASK THE GERMANS TO COMMIT THE SAME MISTAKE AS THEY THEMSELVES DID IN 1981? LE MONDE (INDEPENDENT) CONCLUDED THAT MITTERRAND WOULD BE ISOLATED AT WILLIAMSBURG. THIS MIGHT NOT BE ENTIRELY DISPLEASING HIM. BUT THE RULES OF THE GAME WERE THAT A SUMMIT PARTICIPANT COULD CARRY WEIGHT ONLY IF HIS OWN DOMESTIC ECONOMY WAS IN GOOD SHAPE.

FCO PSE PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES