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CICC(G) BMG BERLIN CGS HHN FRG

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MY TEL 999: THE FLICK AFFAIR AND POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN THE FRG.

SUMMARY

1. WITH BARZEL'S RESIGNATION, THE GOVERNMENT ARE OUT OF THEIR IMMEDIATE DIFFICULTIES. BUT THE CHANCELLOR HAS WARNED THAT THE AIM OF HIS OPPONENTS IS TO EXPLOIT THE AFFAIR TO TOPPLE HIM AND DISCREDIT HIS GOVERNMENT. KOHL SEEMS CONFIDENT OF HIS POSITION AND HAS CALLED FOR AN EARLY BUNDESTAG DEBATE ON FLICK DONATIONS AND PARTY FINANCES. THE GREENS HAVE ALREADY GREATLY BENEFITTED FROM PUBLIC DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE LETTER.

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DETAIL

2. TO UNDERSTAND THESE EVENTS IT IS IMPORTANT TO BEAR IN MIND THE WAYS IN WHICH POLITICAL PARTIES HERE ARE FINANCED (SEE MIFT) AND TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE VARIOUS ACCUSATIONS AND SUSPICIONS NOW CURRENT (SEE MY SECOND MIFT).

3. THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES HAVE GOT OUT OF THEIR IMMEDIATE DIFFICULTIES. BARZEL HAS GONE. HIS SUCCESSOR AS PRESIDENT OF THE BUNDESTAG (JENNINGER) IS EASY GOING WITH A PROVINCIAL DIRECTNESS AND A LOT OF TALENT. WHEN I SAW HIM AT A SOCIAL EVENT IN BERLIN ON 27 OCTOBER HE WAS RADIATING CONFIDENCE; KOHL TOO, THOUGH THINNER AND OBVIOUSLY EXHAUSTED, WAS SHOWING HIS USUAL RESILIENCE.

4. PUBLIC OPINION HAS STEADIED DOWN A BIT. THERE WERE DAYS LAST WEEK WHEN PART OF THE PRESS SEEMED DEMORALISED, READY TO BELIEVE THAT THE ENTIRE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC HAD BEEN SHOWN TO BE ROTTEN, AND THAT FOR ONCE NEITHER THE LAW NOR THE CONSTITUTION OFFERED ANY GUIDE. WILLY BRANDT PERFORMED A STATESMANLIKE SERVICE BY TELLING THE INVESTIGATORY COMMISSION OF THE BUNDESTAG IN EFFECT THAT HE DID NOT CARE HOW OFTEN HERR VON BRAUCHITSCH HAD WRITTEN THE NAME BRANDT IN HIS GRUBBY LITTLE NOTEBOOK. USEFUL TOO WAS THE REVELATION THAT THE SAME NOTEBOOK INCLUDED THE NAME OF DR ERHARD EPPLER, A PURITANICAL FIGURE, INDEED A SORT OF PROTO-GREEN, FROM THE ANTI-GROWTH AND BACK-TO-NATURE WING OF THE SPD IN BADEN-WURTEMBERG. AS BRANDT SAID, ANY FLICK PAYMENTS 'ON ACCOUNT OF' EPPLER MUST HAVE BEEN FOR DISCREDITING OR DEFEATING HIM, NOT FOR WINNING HIM OVER. THIS HAS HELPED TO PUT THE NOTEBOOK INTO PERSPECTIVE.

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5. BUT THERE IS A LOT OF DYNAMITE STILL LYING ABOUT. FOLLOWING BARZEL'S RESIGNATION THE OPPOSITION, AND ESPECIALLY THE GREENS, HAVE TURNED THEIR GUNS ON THE CHANCELLOR. KOHL HIMSELF HAS PUBLICLY WARNED THAT HIS OPPONENTS ARE OUT TO TOPPLE HIM AND DISCREDIT THE GOVERNMENT. IN PRIVATE, CDU HEADQUARTERS MAKE NO SECRET OF THEIR CONCERN ABOUT THE POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A CAMPAIGN. A GREEN DEPUTY IN THE BUNDESTAG LAST WEEK SUGGESTED THAT KOHL HAD HIS WAY TO THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE CDU "BOUGHT FOR HIM", IE THAT BARZEL WAS BOUGHT OUT OF THE WAY TO MAKE ROOM FOR HIM. BUT KOHL HAS SAID THAT HE KNEW NOTHING OF BARZEL'S FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH FLICK. IN ANY CASE, BARZEL WAS FINISHED AS CDU PARTY CHAIRMAN BY 1973: THERE WAS NO NEED FOR KOHL TO ENCOURAGE FLICK TO BRIBE BARZEL TO GO. KOHL SEEMS TO HAVE DECIDED TO CHALLENGE HIS OPPONENTS HEAD ON. HE HAS CALLED FOR AN EMERGENCY BUNDESTAG DEBATE TO LOOK INTO ALL THE ISSUES RAISED BY THESE LATEST SCANDALS. HE WILL HIMSELF ALSO APPEAR BEFORE THE BUNDESTAG COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY ON 7 NOVEMBER.

6. AS THE WORK OF THE INVESTIGATORY COMMISSION PROCEEDS, OTHER POLITICIANS MAY FIND THEMSELVES EMBARRASSED BY CIRCUMSTANTIAL DETAILS, AS HAPPENED WITH BARZEL. DREGGER, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CDU/CSU PARLIAMENTARY PARTY, MAY BE THE NEXT TO FACE REAL DIFFICULTIES. AS CDU PARTY CHAIRMAN IN HESSE FROM 1967-1982 HE WAS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN DRUMMING UP PARTY DONATIONS AND HIS NAME FIGURES PROMINENTLY IN VON BRAUCHITSCH'S NOTEBOOK. IT WAS PROBABLY THE LIKELIHOOD OF A CAMPAIGN AGAINST HIM THAT LED HIM TO REFUSE THE OFFER OF THE BUNDESTAG PRESIDENCY, A POST FOR WHICH UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES HE WOULD HAVE BEEN WELL QUALIFIED TO HOLD.

7. THE LAUGHING FOURTH PARTY ARE OF COURSE THE GREENS. HAVING NO PAST, THEY HAVE A CAST IRON ROLE AS MR CLEAN. GERMANS OF MY AGE SAY THAT THEY ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY IN EXPLAINING TO THEIR CHILDREN WHY POLITICAL PARTIES NEED MONEY FROM BIG BUSINESS ON TOP OF WHAT THEY GET FROM THEIR MEMBERS AND FROM THE TAXPAYER, AND WHY POLITICIANS ARE PREPARED TO TAKE IT. A MOOD OF DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE ESTABLISHED PARTIES HAS LONG HELPED THE GREENS. THE LATEST SCANDAL HAS INCREASED THIS TREND. IN THE BADEN-WURTTENBERG COMMUNAL ELECTION YESTERDAY THERE WERE MAJOR GAINS FOR THE GREENS, WHO OVERTOOK NOT ONLY THE FDP, BUT IN ONE OR TWO PLACES ALSO THE SPD. THE GREENS SEEM CERTAIN TO MAKE FURTHER ADVANCES IN THE 3 IMPORTANT LAND ELECTIONS NEXT SPRING. THE WHOLE SITUATION IS ALSO AN IDEAL WICKET FOR SCHILY, THE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED LAWYER WHO AT ONE TIME HELPED TO DEFEND MEMBERS OF THE BAADER-MEINHOF GANG AND NOW SITS AS A GREEN IN THE BUNDESTAG.

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8. ALL THIS IS IN THE AIR HERE AS KOHL EMBARKS ON HIS SUMMIT MEETINGS WITH MITTERRAND TODAY AND TOMORROW IN AND AROUND BAD KREUZNACH (HOME GROUND FOR KOHL) AND WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON 2 NOVEMBER IN BONN. WHEN I SPOKE TO KOHL ABOUT THE LATTER IN BERLIN ON 27 OCTOBER IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HIS MIND HAS BEEN ON OTHER THINGS.

BONN WILL PASS SAVING TO CICC(G) BMG BERLIN AND CGS IN THE FRG FCO PLEASE PASS TO ALL OTHER SAVING ADRESSEES.

BULLARD

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[REPEATED SAVING AS REQUESTED]

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