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FM PARIS  
TO PRIORITY F C O  
TELNO 826  
OF 011410Z OCTOBER 85  
INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, WASHINGTON AND BONN.

MOSCOWE TELNO 1276: GORBACHEVS VISIT TO PARIS.

## SUMMARY

1. FRENCH OFFICIALS SAY THAT FRANCE WILL NOT BE TAKEN IN BY THIS NEXT STAGE OF GORBACHEV'S CHARM CAMPAIGN, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT SPACE IS LIKELY TO FEATURE PROMINENTLY, THEY DO NOT EXPECT GORBACHEV TO HAVE MUCH TO ADD TO SOVIET PROPOSALS TO PRESIDENT REAGAN. MITTERRAND WILL LOOK TO THE VISIT TO IMPROVE HIS IMAGE, TARNISHED BY THE GREENPEACH AFFAIR.

## DETAIL

2. GORBACHEV WILL VISIT PARIS FROM 2-5 OCTOBER ACCOMPANIED BY SHEVARDNADZE AND ARKHIPOV AMONG OTHERS. IN PROTOCOL TERMS THE FRENCH WILL TREAT THIS AS THE EQUIVALENT OF AN OFFICIAL VISIT BY A HEAD OF STATE. GORBACHEV WILL REMAIN IN THE PARIS AREA THROUGHOUT. IN ADDITION TO TWO TETE-A-TETES WITH MITTERRAND THERE WILL BE AN ENLARGED MINISTERIAL SESSION, AS WELL AS SEPARATE TALKS WITH FABIUS. GORBACHEV WILL CALL ON THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND HAVE MEETINGS WITH THE FRANCO-SOVIET PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP GROUP AND WITH THE COMMUNIST LEADER MARCHAIS. NO COMMUNIQUE IS PLANNED BUT THERE WILL BE A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE ON 4 OCTOBER WITH SEPARATE INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS BY EACH SIDE, TEXTS OF WHICH WILL HAVE BEEN EXCHANGED IN ADVANCE.

3. FRENCH OFFICIALS ARE RELUCTANT TO BE DRAWN ABOUT THEIR EXPECTATIONS. BUT IN GENERAL THEY CONVEY THE IMPRESSION THAT FRANCE IS BY NO MEANS STARRY EYED AND WILL TAKE A STEADY AND FIRM LINE ON ALL MAJOR SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION. THEY EXPECT SPACE TO FEATURE STRONGLY IN GORBACHEV'S LIST OF PRIORITIES AND DO NOT EXCLUDE THAT HE MAY TRY A GOOGLY OR TWO TO TEST ALLIANCE UNITY. BUT THEY ASSUME THAT THE MAIN THRUST OF THE SOVIET OFFENSIVE HAS BEEN SET OUT IN GORBACHEV'S RECENT LETTER TO PRESIDENT REAGAN AND THAT THE SOVIET LINE IN PARIS WILL BE NO MORE THAN A SET OF VARIATIONS ON THIS. AMONG OTHER ARMS CONTROL SUBJECTS THE FRENCH ARE EXPECTING CDE TO FEATURE FAIRLY PROMINENTLY AND IT IS NOT TO BE EXCLUDED THAT THEY WILL CLAIM TO HAVE MADE PROGRESS DURING THE VISIT ON THIS FRONT

4. THE FRENCH WILL ALSO USE THE VISIT TO RE-ENGAGE THE POLITICAL DIALOGUE WITH THE RUSSIANS ON THE WIDER EAST-WEST CANVAS AS WELL AS ON KEY REGIONAL ITEMS SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL AMERICA. THEY CLAIM THAT THEY INTEND TO TAKE UP HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVELY, INCLUDING A NUMBER OF PERSONAL CASES WHERE FRANCE HAS A LOCUS STANDI.

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5. THE ECONOMIC SIDE OF BILATERAL AFFAIRS WILL BE DEALT WITH LARGELY BY FABIUS. THE FRENCH ARE EXPECTING TO SIGN A ROUTINE RENEWAL OF THEIR FRAMEWORK ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT FOR THE PERIOD 1986-90. THEY HAVE NO GRANDIOSE EXPECTATIONS OF WAYS TO IMPROVE LAST YEAR'S TRADE DEFICIT WITH THE RUSSIANS. BUT THE FIGURES FOR THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR HAVE ALREADY SHOWN A SMALL SURPLUS IN FRANCE'S FAVOUR AND ALTHOUGH THE ANNUAL FIGURE FOR 1985 IS LIKELY TO BE ONCE AGAIN A DEFICIT, THE FRENCH DO NOT EXPECT IT TO BE AS GREAT AS IN 1984. THEY NOTE WITH INTEREST THAT PURCHASES OF CAPITAL GOODS BY THE SOVIET UNION HAVE PICKED UP SIGNIFICANTLY (AND THE PRESS REPORT PROSPECTS OF FURTHER CONTRACTS).

6. ALL IN ALL THE FRENCH ARE FLATTERED TO BE THE FIRST ALLIANCE COUNTRY TO RECEIVE GORBACHEV SINCE HE BECAME GENERAL SECRETARY. MITTERRAND WILL ALSO HAVE BEEN PLEASED BY THE GENERAL TENOR OF REAGAN'S FULL-PAGE INTERVIEW WITH FIGARO YESTERDAY IN WHICH REAGAN STATES HIS CONFIDENCE IN MITTERRAND AS A QUOTE PARTISAN OF A STRONG AND UNITED WEST UNQUOTE WHO HAS NO ILLUSION ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM, AND REAFFIRMS THE TOTAL SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE FRENCH NUCLEAR DETERRENT. IF MITTERRAND CAN HANDLE THE GORBACHEV VISIT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO JUSTIFY REAGAN'S PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, WHILE DOING SOMETHING TO BOLSTER HIS OWN RATHER TARNISHED IMAGE AS A MAJOR PLAYER IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, HE WILL HAVE PROVIDED A WELCOME (IF ONLY TEMPORARY) DISTRACTION FROM DOMESTIC POLITICAL PREOCCUPATIONS. GORBACHEV FOR HIS PART WILL DO WELL IF HE EMERGES UNSULLIED AFTER THE MAULING TO WHICH THE VOCIFEROUS FRENCH HUMAN RIGHTS LOBBY ARE HOPING TO SUBJECT HIM (DESPITE A BAN ON ALL DEMONSTRATIONS IN PARIS THROUGHOUT THE VISIT.)

FRETWELL

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