

GRS 350

(COLLAR)
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FM BONN

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 010

OF 081005Z JANUARY 87

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INFO SAVING CONSULATE GENERALS IN FRG

FRG ELECTION CAMPAIGN

SUMMARY

1. CAMPAIGN HAS ENTERED FINAL PHASE. COALITION STILL FIRM FAVOURITES TO WIN.

DETAILS

2. WITH LESS THAN 3 WEEKS TO GO TILL POLLING DAY ON 25 JANUARY, THE MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES ARE NOW PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS. THE LAST FEW DAYS HAVE SEEN MAJOR RALLIES ATTEMPTING TO ROUSE THE VOTERS FROM POST-CHRISTMAS LETHARGY: THE SPD IN KASSEL ON 3 JANUARY, THE CDU PLUS STRAUSS IN DORTMUND ON 4 JANUARY WITH A MASSIVE DISPLAY OF RAZZMATAZZ (WHICH HAS SAID TO HAVE COST DM 4.5 MILLION) BEFORE A CROWD OF ALMOST 60,000 PEOPLE, AND THE FDP WITH THEIR TRADITIONAL EPHANY GATHERING IN STUTTGART ON 6 JANUARY. THE GREENS SCORN SUCH EVENTS AS MERE SHOWBIZ, BUT THEIR OWN MORE GRASSROOTS-ORIENTATED CAMPAIGN HAD ALSO BEEN GETTING UNDER WAY THIS WEEK.

3. FOR THE COALITION PARTIES, THE GREATEST FEAR IS STILL THAT THEIR SUPPORTERS WILL REGARD THE RESULT ON 25 JANUARY AS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION AND NOT BOTHER BRAVING THE WINTER WEATHER TO VOTE. THEY ARE SPARING NO EFFORT TO DRIVE HOME THE MESSAGE THAT EVERY VOTE IS NEEDED TO AVERT THE SPECTRE OF A 'RED/GREEN' MAJORITY. BUT SHORT OF MASS ABSENCES BY COALITION VOTERS, THE PROSPECT OF SUCH A RESULT IS REMOTE. WHILE THE GREENS CAN EXPECT AN INCREASED SHARE OF THE VOTE, PERHAPS AS HIGH AS 10 PER CENT, THE SPD ARE STILL IN SERIOUS DISARRAY. RAU IS GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS, BUT CONCENTRATING PRIMARILY ON GETTING A GOOD SCORE ON HIS HOME GROUND IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA, WITH AN EYE TO THE POST-MORTEM FEUDING WITHIN HIS PARTY WHICH IS BOUND TO FOLLOW HIS DEFEAT.

4. WITH THE ELECTION RESULT ITSELF SEEMINGLY NOT IN DOUBT, INFIGHTING WITHIN THE COALITION PROVIDES THE MAIN INTEREST. THE ARGUMENTS BEING DEPLOYED BY CSU AND FDP IN PARTICULAR HAVE LESS TO DO WITH THE OSTENSIBLE TASK OF DEFEATING THE SPD AND GREENS THAN WITH STAKING OUT GROUND FOR COALITION NEGOTIATIONS AFTER VICTORY. THE CSU, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE CONTINUING THEIR ATTACKS ON GENSCHER, WHO IS RESPONDING VIGOROUSLY (SEE MY SAVING TELNO 02 ON HIS RECENT /MUNICH).

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MUNICH SPEECH, NOT TO ALL). STRAUSS MAY IN FACT HAVE DONE THE FDP A GOOD TURN BY PUTTING THE SPOTLIGHT ON GENSCHER, ONE OF HIS CHIEF ELECTORAL ASSETS, AND ON THE FOREIGN POLICY AREA FOR WHICH HE IS RESPONSIBLE.

BULLARD

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BONN WILL PASS TO BMG BERLIN AND CICC(G)

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