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TELNO 380  
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INFO PRIORITY EEC POSTS, UKDEL NATO, MOSCOW, WASHINGTON

VISIT TO LONDON BY PRESIDENT GORBACHEV : GERMAN PRESS REACTION

SUMMARY

1. GORBCHEV'S VISIT REPORTED PROMINENTLY IN THE WEEKEND PRESS, EMPHASISING NOT ONLY THE GUILDHALL SPEECH, BUT ALSO THE INVITATION TO THE QUEEN, AND HIS WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRIME MINISTER. LATER COMMENT ON APPARENT DEGREE OF DISAPPOINTMENT IN WHITEHALL.

DETAIL

2. THE GORBACHEV VISIT TO LONDON WAS THE LEAD ITEM IN THE MAJORITY OF LEADING GERMAN NEWSPAPERS ON SATURDAY (ONLY 2 ARE PUBLISHED ON SUNDAY). WE ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY ON PUBLIC REACTION TO HIS STATEMENTS ON THE PRODUCTION OF ENRICHED URANIUM FOR MILITARY PURPOSES AND ON SNF.

3. ON THE WIDER ASPECTS OF THE VISIT, THE SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG (INDEPENDENT/CONSERVATIVE) COMMENTED THAT, DESPITE BASIC DIFFERENCES, RARELY DO 2 POLITICIANS GET ON AS WELL AS MRS THATCHER AND MR GORBACHEV. THE SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS PIPELINE SEEMS TO RUN NOT FROM WASHINGTON TO LONDON BUT FROM GORBACHEV TO THATCHER. A FAZ (CONSERVATIVE) EDITORIAL SUGGESTS THAT IF PRESIDENT BUSH DOES NOT SET HIS FOREIGN POLICY IN MOTION, MR GORBACHEV WILL WORK WITH MRS THATCHER. ACCORDING TO THE RHEINISCHE POST (CONSERVATIVE) BRITAIN STILL HAS A LOT TO DO TO CATCH UP IN OSTPOLITIK. IT IS NOT CLEAR JUST HOW THE PRIME MINISTER WISHES TO TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN THE DETENTE PROCESS WITHOUT SHOWING THE SLIGHTEST SIGN OF ANY READINESS TO COMPROMISE. DIE WELT (CONSERVATIVE) COMMENTS THAT ALTHOUGH OTHER ALLIANCE PARTNERS AGREE IN PRINCIPLE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S ASSESSMENT OF MR GORBACHEV THEY ARE PREPARED TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE. BY CONTRAST THE PRIME MINISTER IS PURSUING HER OWN COURSE, WHICH SEEMED TO IRRITATE HIM. THE NEWSPAPER ARGUES THAT THERE MUST BE A COMPROMISE POSITION FOR THE PRIME MINISTER WITHOUT HER HAVING TO DROP HER GUARD.

4. ON MR GORBACHEV'S TACTICS IN LONDON, THE WESTDEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG (INDEPENDENT) SUGGESTS THAT HIS GUILDHALL SPEECH BY-PASSED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS BOTH BRITAIN AND THE REST OF THE

WORLD. THIS TACTIC MAY NOT BE NEW BUT IT HAS GIVEN HIM - AND HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN - THE REPUTATION OF BEING PR MASTERS.

5. THERE IS ALSO SOME SPECULATION ON THE TIMING OF THE VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION BY THE QUEEN. DIE WELT SUGGESTS THAT THIS CANNOT TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW IN 1991 OR BEFORE THE PRIME MINISTER HAS VISITED THE SOVIET UNION AGAIN.

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