

UNCLASSIFIED

FM BONN

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 377

OF 101445Z APRIL 89

INFO ROUTINE MOSCOW, WASHINGTON, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, UKDEL VIENNA
INFO ROUTINE UKDIS GENEVA, MODUK

SIC

MODUK FOR DACU

GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO LONDON : FRG REACTIONS : ARMS CONTROL

SUMMARY

1. GORBACHEV'S GUILDHALL SPEECH TOOK THE GERMAN WEEKEND HEADLINES, BUT PRESS COMMENT IS UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT HIS ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVE. DEFENCE MINISTER SCHOLZ DISMISSES THE SPEECH AS MAINLY PROPAGANDA. EVEN SPD REACTION IS QUALIFIED.

DETAIL

2. HEADLINES IN SATURDAY'S GERMAN NEWSPAPERS STRESSED GORBACHEV'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE USSR WOULD STOP ITS ENRICHED URANIUM PRODUCTION FOR MILITARY PURPOSES. DIE WELT (CONSERVATIVE), HOWEVER GAVE TOP PLAY TO GORBACHEV'S WARNING THAT, IF NATO MODERNISED ITS SNF, THIS WOULD AFFECT CFE/CSBMS AND THE GENERAL SITUATION IN EUROPE. THE CORRESPONDENT NOTED THAT EXPERTS' EXPECTATIONS OF NEW INITIATIVES FROM GORBACHEV WERE NOT FULFILLED. STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG (LIBERAL/LEFT OF CENTRE) COMMENTED THAT GORBACHEV'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON ENRICHED URANIUM DID NOT ADVANCE EITHER DISCUSSION IN THE WEST OR CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS, BUT GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF 'PURE ACTIONISM'. THE BONN GENERAL ANZEIGER (INDEPENT/CONSERVATIVE) SAW THE ANNOUNCEMENT AS AIMED AT THE SNF MODERNISATION DECISION.

3. SCHOLZ HAS DESCRIBED PART OF GORBACHEV'S ANNOUNCEMENT AS PROPAGANDA. IN A RADIO INTERVIEW ON SATURDAY, HE SAID THE CESSATION OF ENRICHED URANIUM PRODUCTION HAD 'NO VERY RELEVANT SIGNIFICANCE' IN DISARMAMENT TERMS. IT WAS WELCOME AS A SIGN OF GOOD WILL, BUT PUBLICITY-ORIENTATED. THE SOVIET UNION ALREADY HAD SO MUCH ENRICHED URANIUM THAT IT DID NOT NEED MORE.

4. SCHOLZ ALSO CRITICISED GORBACHEV'S CLAIM THAT MOSCOW HAD NO NUCLEAR MODERNISATION PLANS AS PRIMARILY PROPAGANDIST AND POLITICAL PRESSURE ON THE NATO STATES. IN THE EAST, SNF MODERNISATION HAD BEEN

CARRIED OUT LONG AGO. GORBACHEV'S STATEMENTS ABOUT THE EFFECT ON THE VIENNA TALKS WAS FAMILIAR SOVIET PROPAGANDA, WHICH WAS NOT APPROPRIATE TO THE NEW ERA OFTEN PROCLAIMED BY GORBACHEV.

5. SPD FOREIGN POLICY SPOKESMAN VOIGT SAW IN GORBACHEV'S REMARKS A CONFIRMATION OF HIS PARTY'S FEARS ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF SNF MODERNISATION ON THE VIENNA TALKS. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT GORBACHEV'S CRITICISM WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CONVINCING IF HE HAD ANNOUNCED THE DISMANTLING OF THE SOVIET SUPERIORITY IN LAND-BASED SNF IN EUROPE.

MALLABY

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION

189

MAIN 182

.EAST WEST SOVIET AFFAIRS
LIMITED

SOVIET D

ADDITIONAL 7

.EAST WEST SOVIET AFFAIRS

NNNN