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FM MOSCOW  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 1785  
OF 310907Z OCTOBER 88  
INFO IMMEDIATE BONN  
INFO PRIORITY BMG BERLIN, EAST BERLIN  
INFO ROUTINE OTHER CSCE POSTS

*ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED*

MY TELNO 1782 AND BONN TELNOS 1068/1069: KOHL'S VISIT TO MOSCOW  
SUMMARY

1. THERE WAS LESS IN THIS VISIT THAN MET THE EYE. BUT THE GERMANS HAVE SECURED A GOOD POSITION FOR STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC TIES AND DEFENCE EXCHANGES.

DETAIL

2. THE FIRST SOVIET COMMENTS ON THE KOHL VISIT ARE NOW BEING PUBLISHED. THEIR LEITMOTIF IS THAT THE VISIT BEGAN A 'NEW CHAPTER' OF SOVIET-GERMAN RELATIONS. IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE CASE THAT THINGS HAVE COME A LONG WAY IN THE TWO YEARS SINCE KOHL'S FAUX PAS ABOUT GOEBBELS. BUT, ALTHOUGH THE COMMENTATORS ARE AGREED THAT THE INTENTIONS ON BOTH SIDES ARE GOOD, THERE IS OBVIOUS UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF FUTURE RELATIONS. KOHL'S UNCOMPROMISING CHAMPIONSHIP OF REUNIFICATION, BERLIN AND THE RIGHTS OF ETHNIC GERMANS WILL HAVE BEEN A REMINDER OF THE SERIOUS DIFFERENCES THAT REMAIN. GORBACHEV'S RESPONSE SHOWED THAT NEW THINKING HAS NOT GONE FAR ON THE CENTRAL POLITICAL PROBLEM OF EUROPE: DIVIDED GERMANY. KOHL'S WORDS ABOUT SNF WILL HAVE SHOWN THAT PICKING OFF THE WEST GERMANS IN THE MODERNISATION DEBATE WILL NOT BE AS EASY AS THE RUSSIANS MAY HAVE THOUGHT. AND MEYER-LANDRUT'S BRIEFING SHOWED THAT EVEN IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE NOT ALL IS ROSY.

3. GORBACHEV WILL BE SATISFIED TO HAVE SEEN THE PROMISES OF LAST SUMMER ABOUT GERMAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE FOOD-PROCESSING INDUSTRY CONSOLIDATED BY AN INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT. (THE PRESS HAS GIVEN DETAILS OF THE GERMAN FIRMS INVOLVED, WHICH MY COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY.) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OTHER BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WILL ONLY BE SEEN WHEN WE GET A CHANCE TO READ THE TEXTS. HOWEVER, IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE GERMANS CONCLUDED AN AGREEMENT ON NOTIFICATION OF NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS, AT A TIME WHEN THE RUSSIANS ARE TELLING US THAT OUR REQUIREMENTS ARE TOO INTRUSIVE. IT MAY ALSO BE SIGNIFICANT THAT AN INVESTMENT PROTECTION AGREEMENT WAS NOT SIGNED.

4. THE SCHOLZ-YAZOV MEETING AND THE HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO SCHOLZ, INCLUDING THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS A MILITARY ACADEMY, WAS CLEARLY

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IMPORTANT TO THE RUSSIANS. YAZOV HAD BEEN WELL BRIEFED ON SCHOLZ: HIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE GERMAN'S STATEMENTS NO DOUBT CONTRIBUTED TO THE GOOD ATMOSPHERE. HE SHOWED NO FLEXIBILITY ON THE KEY ARMS CONTROL ISSUES, PLAYING OLD GRAMOPHONE RECORDS ON 'TANKS FOR AIRCRAFT' AND THE DEFENCE BUDGET. NONETHELESS HIS ACCEPTANCE OF SCHOLZ'S INVITATION TO VISIT WEST GERMANY, AND FOR THIS TO BE FOLLOWED BY AN AKHROMEYEV VISIT, LEAVES THE GERMANS WELL-PLACED IMMEDIATELY BEHIND THE AMERICANS FOR THE POST-AFGHANISTAN PERIOD. IT COULD ENABLE THE GERMANS TO SPEAK WITH GREATER AUTHORITY IN FUTURE ALLIED DISCUSSIONS ON SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL.

5. THE PATTERN OF ACADEMIC AND TRAINING EXCHANGES AGREED IN PRINCIPLE AND CONTAINED IN THE 'AGREED PRESENTATION' IS AMBITIOUS, BUT TAKE ACCOUNT OF SOVIET NEEDS. THE GERMANS NO DOUBT REGARD IT AS ONE MORE INSTRUMENT FOR DEVELOPING PROFITABLE COMMERCIAL, AS WELL AS POLITICAL, LINKS WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

6. GORBACHEV'S DETERMINED REJECTION OF A NEW 'MARSHALL PLAN' MAY PARTLY STEM FROM HIS RUSSIAN NATIONAL PRIDE. BUT HE IS IN ANY CASE RIGHT TO JUDGE THAT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN THE SOVIET UNION WILL ONLY OCCUR AS A RESULT OF THE RUSSIANS' OWN EFFORTS, AND THAT WESTERN COOPERATION, HOWEVER USEFUL, IS ESSENTIALLY PERIPHERAL.

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