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PARIS EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT, 18 NOVEMBER

SUMMARY

1. MITTERRAND'S MOTIVES FOR CALLING A SPECIAL MEETING :

- (A) (IMPLICITLY) TO AVOID HAVING THE STRASBOURG COUNCIL HIGHJACKED BY EASTERN EUROPE AND THE GERMAN QUESTION, AND
- (B) (EXPLICITLY) TO SHOW THAT THE TWELVE, LED BY FRANCE, ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED. HIS EYE MAY ALSO BE ON THE MALTA SUMMIT.

DETAIL

2. COMMENTS IN THE FRENCH PRESS, FOLLOWING BRIEFING BY THE ELYSEE, SUGGEST THAT ONE OF MITTERRAND'S MAIN MOTIVES IN CALLING THE 18 NOVEMBER SUMIT IS TO AVOID HAVING THE STRASBOURG COUNCIL TAKEN OVER BY A DISCUSSION OF DEVELOPMENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE, WHEN THE FRENCH WISH TO CONCENTRATE ON INTERNAL EC MATTERS SUCH AS EMU AND THE SOCIAL CHARTER. MITTERRAND IS ALSO SEEN AS WISHING TO SHOW THAT THE TWELVE CAN REGAIN THE INITIATIVE, IN THE FACE OF THE IMPRESSION SO FAR THAT EVENTS MAY BE MOVING TOO FAST FOR THEM.

3. THESE REASONS ARE PLAUSIBLE. IT WOULD APPEAR ENTIRELY NATURAL FOR MITTERRAND TO WISH TO CONSULT HIS PARTNERS AFTER EVENTS HAVE TAKEN SUCH AN EXTRAORDINARY TURN. HE IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN CONSULTED FIRST BY GONZALEZ ON 9 NOVEMBER, AND SHORTLY AFTERWARDS BY HAUGHEY, BOTH OF THEM PROPOSING A SPECIAL MEETING. HE THEN SPOKE ON THE TELEPHONE ON THE EVENING OF 10 NOVEMBER TO KOHL, WHO AGREED THAT, INSTEAD OF THE SUBJECT BEING RAISED AT STRASBOURG AS HE HAD EARLIER REQUESTED, IT SHOULD BE THE PRETEXT FOR A MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. GISCARD'S PROPOSAL ON 12 NOVEMBER FOR A SPECIAL MEETING CAN THUS BE SEEN, BY OBSERVERS FOLLOWING THE ELYSEE LINE, AS A COINCIDENCE RATHER THAN A LEADING IDEA.

4. IT SEEMS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT MITTERRAND WANTS TO BRING THE TWELVE TOGETHER BEFORE BUSH AND GORBACHEV MEET IN MALTA IN EARLY DECEMBER. THE US AND FG EMBASSIES MAKE THIS ASSUMPTION ALSO. THE ELYSEE

BRIEFING BY VEDRINE PUTS THE WEIGHT ON THE STRICTLY EUROPEAN ASPECTS AND DENIES THAT THE MALTA MEETING IS A MOTIVE, BECAUSE THERE IS NO REASON TO SUPPOSE THAT IT COULD TAKE ANY DECISIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE TWO GERMANIES: ON THE CONTRARY, THE SOVIET UNION, LIKE OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, IS A DEMANDEUR AS FAR AS ECONOMIC AND OTHER ASSISTANCE FROM WESTERN EUROPE IS CONCERNED. I CANNOT BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS IS NOT A FACTOR IN MITTERRAND'S THINKING: AND I SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF HE SOUGHT A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BUSH BETWEEN 18 NOVEMBER AND MALTA ON 2/3 DECEMBER. (THE ELYSEE HAVE REVEALED, INCIDENTALLY, THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD A LONG TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH GORBACHEV THIS MORNING.)

5. THE FRG EMBASSY BELIEVE THAT THE IDEA OF INCLUDING THE FOREIGN MINISTERS ON 18 NOVEMBER CAME UP IN A DISCUSSION BETWEEN DUMAS AND GENSCHER BUT, AS ONE WOULD EXPECT, THAT IT WAS NOT AT ALL GENSCHER'S IDEA THAT THERE SHOULD BE SEPARATE DINNERS (THIS MAY BE A COMPROMISE IMPOSED BY MITTERRAND, INSISTING THAT AT LEAST PART OF THE EVENING SHOULD ENABLE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT TO HAVE A DISCUSSION AMONGST THEMSELVES).

6. SEE M I F T (NOT TO ALL) FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS SO FAR AVAILABLE.

FERGUSSON

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ADDITIONAL 12.

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