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INFO ADDRESSEES PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADORS

MIPT: CALL ON SOVIET PRESIDENT, 17 NOVEMBER

COMMENT

1. GORBACHEV WAS EXTRAORDINARILY RELAXED AND WARM - ESPECIALLY IN HIS REFERENCES TO THE PRIME MINISTER - AND MAINTAINED A JOCLAR BANTER FROM START TO FINISH. HE LOOKED IN THE PINK. NO SIGN OF THE FATIGUE AND GREYNESS OF MID-SUMMER: FULL OF BOUNCING CHARM, AS HE WAS AT LAST WEEK'S KREMLIN RECEPTION. THERE WERE NO/NO FLASHES OF ANGER. HE DELIVERED HIS DIGS - ON OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE, ALLEGED GERMAN REVANCHISM AND WESTERN EXUBERANCE OVER THE DEMISE OF SOCIALISM - WITH A VERY LIGHT TOUCH. EVEN ON GERMAN REVANCHISM HIS TONE WAS NO MORE THAN ADMONITORY
2. GORBACHEV DARTED TO AND FRO AT HIGH SPEED, AS MIPT INDICATES, BUT HIS THRUST WAS:
 - A) VERY STRONG EMPHASIS ON NON-INTERFERENCE, BUT NO/NO SUGGESTION THAT ANY WESTERN GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING A CONTRARY ATTITUDE.
 - B) SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE EFFECT OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN THE WEST - ON REUNIFICATION (HIS POINTS ABOUT MITTERRAND AND ABOUT GERMAN 'REVANCHISM') AND ON THE COLLAPSE OF SOCIALISM (THE IDEOLOGY POINT). BUT HE SHOWED APPRECIATION THAT WESTERN LEADERS HAD DOMESTIC FACTORS TO CONSIDER, AS HE DID. IT WAS EVIDENT THAT HE HAD SOUGHT AND RECEIVED EXPLANATIONS FROM THE FRENCH AND GERMANS.
 - C) AGREEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING THE DIALOGUE. HE RARELY SEES AMBASSADORS (I BELIEVE THIS WAS ONLY THE SECOND CALL BY A BRITISH AMBASSADOR ON THE SOVIET LEADER SINCE KRUSCHEV'S DAY), AND HIS DECISION TO RECEIVE THE PM'S MESSAGE IN PERSON WAS A SIGN OF HIS ATTITUDE. HIS TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS AND OTHER CONTACTS WITH WESTERN LEADERS HAVE CLEARLY HELPED TO SUSTAIN HIS PRESENT CONFIDENCE.
 - D) INTEREST IN MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING DIFFERENT CHANNELS, SUCH AS EXCHANGES BETWEEN NATO AND WARSAW PACT GENERALS.
 - E) DETERMINATION TO PRESS AHEAD WITH CHANGE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE SOVIET UNION, HOWEVER PAINFUL AND HOWEVER STRONG THE CRITICISM. HIS

REMARKS ABOUT THE ''COLOSSAL DIFFICULTY'' OF THE PROCESS AND FEELING ''FOOLISH'' WITH HONECKER WERE STRIKINGLY FRANK.

3. I THINK GORBACHEV IS CONFIDENT THAT HE HAS GOT OVER ANOTHER HUMP, BUTR REMAINS WARY OF THE WEST GERMANS. HE WILL CONTINUE TO STAMP FIRMLY ON REUNIFICATION TALK.

4. PERHAPS WE COULD :LOOK FOR FURTHER WAYS OF FURTHER DEVELOPING THE MILITARY DIALOGUE TO WHICH GORBACHEV ATTACHES IMPORTANCE (HE HAS DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND HERE, AS WELL AS POLITICAL ONES, AS HIS DIPLOMATIC ADVISERS INDICATED TO ME BEFORE GENERAL YAZOV'S VISIT TO THE UK IN JULY). HE NEED TO GET HIS GENERALS, WHO ARE PROBABLY SORE AT THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING GENERALLY, OUTOF THEIR BUNKERS AND INTO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

BRAITHWAITE

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