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FM BONN

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INFO PRIORITY UKDEL NATO

INFO ROUTINE UKREP BRUSSELS, WARSAW, BUDAPEST, VIENNA, PRAGUE, ACTOR

OUR TELNO 1169 : THE GERMAN QUESTION

SUMMARY

1. CRITICISM OF LACK OF CONSULTATION OVER KOHL'S PLAN. SPD FURTHER QUALIFY THEIR SUPPORT. MORE PRESS COMMENT.

DETAIL

2. THE BUNDESTAG YESTERDAY PASSED A CAOLITION MOTION SUPPORTING KOHL'S TEN-POINT PLAN. THE SPD HAD TABLED A SEPARATE MOTION CALLING FOR THE PLAN TO INCLUDE A FINAL RECOGNITION OF POLAND'S PRESENT WESTERN BORDER AND A COMMITMENT AGAINST MODERNISATION OF SNF.

3. SPD CHAIRMAN VOGEL AND VOIGT REPORTEDLY INITIALLY DECIDED TO OFFER UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT TO KOHL'S PLAN AFTER IT HAD BEEN GREETED WITH STRONG APPLAUSE BY SPD POLITICIANS. THE LEFT WING OF THE SPD ARE NOW CRITICISING VOGEL AND QUESTIONING HIS LEADERSHIP FOR ALLOWING KOHL TO HIJACK POLICIES WHICH THEY CONSIDER TO BE THEIR OWN. THERE ARE ALSO THOSE WHO SEE THE GDR AS A SOCIALIST STATE THAT OUGHT TO BE PRESERVED.

4. THE FDP ARE REPORTED TO HAVE JUDGED THAT KOHL'S STATEMENT ON 8 NOVEMBER TO THE BUNDESTAG HAD RECOGNISED THAT POLAND'S BORDERS SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT INTO QUESTION AND THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO REPEAT IT. BUT FDP CHAIRMAN LAMBSDORFF CRITICISED THE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT CONSULTING THE FOUR POWERS AND THE GDR OVER THE PLAN. LAMBSDORFF SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS ITSELF GUILTY OF WHAT IT HAD OFTEN ACCUSED THE AMERICANS OF: ACTING WITHOUT CONSULTATION. HORST EHMKE, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE SPD PARLIAMENTARY PARTY, QUESTIONED THE FACT THAT THE AUSWAERTIGES AMT HAD NOT BEEN BROUGHT IN AND THAT GERMAN AMBASSADORS HAD BEEN ACTIVATED AFTER THE EVENT.

5. THE SUEDEDEUTSCHE (INDEPENDENT) COMMENTS THAT KOHL'S PLAN HAS HAD THE EFFECT OF CONFUSING RATHER THAN CALMING. WHAT WAS SURPRISING WAS THE RETURN TO THE LANGUAGE OF THE COLD WAR, RATHER THAN THAT THE PLAN DID NOT PLEASE THE RUSSIANS AND THEIR ALLIES. THE CHANCELLOR

HAD CLEARLY UNDERESTIMATED GORBACHEV'S CONVICTION THAT REUNIFICATION WAS NOT ON THE AGENDA. BOTH IN THE WEST AND IN THE EAST THERE WAS REGRET THAT THE CHANCELLOR HAD NOT GIVEN HIS WORD ON THE PRESENT EUROPEAN BORDERS. EVEN THOSE WHO WISHED TO SEE THE GERMANS COMING CLOSER TOGETHER DID NOT WANT ANY ARGUMENTS ABOUT BORDERS. THE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE (RIGHT OF CENTRE) NOTES THAT WESTERN REACTION HAS BEEN ALMOST UNANIMOUS IN STATING THAT REUNIFICATION WAS NOT ON THE AGENDA. THIS CAUTION REFLECTED FEARS THAT GORGACHEV COULD FALL BECAUSE OF THE GERMAN QUESTION. BUT POLLS SHOWED THAT 85 PER CENT OF FRENCH PEOPLE BELIEVED THAT REUNIFICATION WAS SAFE, PROBABLE AND DESIRABLE. BONN'S POLICIES MUST BE BASED ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF THIS 'PROCESS OF NORMALISATION'.

6. THE FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU (LEFT OF CENTRE) SAYS THAT THE CHANCELLOR'S PROPOSAL HAD NOT BEEN RECEIVED WELL ANYWHERE. THE WORLD WAS SWEATING AT THE PROSPECT OF AN 80 MILLION-STRONG GERMAN REICH: ALTHOUGH MISTRUST IN THE GERMANS OF TODAY MIGHT BE UNFAIR, IT WAS A POLITICAL REALITY. THE MOVEMENT FOR FREEDOM IN EASTERN EUROPE GAVE RISE TO GREAT HOPE BUT WAS ALSO A TEMPTATION: THE GERMANS WERE DUTY BOUND TO PROCEED WITH CAUTION. THE WAY THE PLAN WAS DRAWN UP NOT ONLY SNUBBED ALL PARTNERS BUT ALSO CONFIRMED EVER PRESENT SUSPICIONS ABOUT THE GERMANS.

COMMENT

7. THE SPD NOW THINK THEY TRIPPED OVER THEIR FEET IN RUSHING TO SUPPORT KOHL'S PLAN: THEY MISSED THE CHANCE TO CRITICISE KOHL AND COMPLICATE THE ISSUE BY INTRODUCING THE QUESTION OF POLAND'S BORDERS AND DISARMAMENT. KOHL IS ALSO FACING CRITICISM FOR FAILING TO CONSULT HIS FRIENDS AND ALLIES. BUT THESE FACTORS MAY BE SHORT-LIVED. UNLESS OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS (EG ECONOMIC COLLAPSE IN THE GDR), KOHL'S PROPOSALS WILL REMAIN THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S DEUTSCHLANDPOLITIK.

NEVILLE-JONES

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