

FRANCE
Lx Bc
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147476
MDLIAN 6581

CONFIDENTIAL
FM EAST BERLIN
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 501
OF 221900Z DECEMBER 89
INFO PRIORITY PARIS, BONN, BMG BERLIN
INFO ROUTINE MOSCOW, UKDEL NATO, UKREP BRUSSELS
INFO SAVING BUDAPEST, BUCHAREST, BELGRADE, PEKING, WARSAW, PRAGUE
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MY TELNO 496: VISIT BY PRESIDENT MITTERRAND TO EAST BERLIN AND THE
GDR: 20-22 DECEMBER

SUMMARY

1. MITTERRAND RAISES FRANCE'S PROFILE AS A MAJOR PLAYER IN THE
EVENTUAL SOLUTION OF THE GERMAN QUESTION.

DETAIL

2. ON 21 DECEMBER THE FOLLOWING BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED:

- A GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME ON ECONOMIC INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNICAL
COOPERATION FOR THE PERIOD 1990-94 (BY EXTERNAL ECONOMIC
RELATIONS MINISTERS BEIL AND RAUSCH)
- ON AVOIDANCE OF DOUBLE TAXATION (BY GDR FINANCE MINISTER
FRAU NICKEL AND FOREIGN MINISTER DUMAS)
- ON ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION (BY GDR ENVIRONMENT MINISTER
REICHELT AND DUMAS)
- ON YOUTH EXCHANGES (FOREIGN MINISTERS)
- ON FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WORK OF CULTURAL CENTRES AND AN
EXCHANGE OF LETTERS ON THE OPENING OF NEW CENTRES IN BOTH
COUNTRIES. AT PRESENT THERE ARE CENTRES IN EAST BERLIN AND
PARIS: IN LEIPZIG, MITTERRAND INDICATED THAT THE FRENCH
INTENDED TO OPEN A NEW CENTRE THERE. DRESDEN, TWINNED WITH
STRASBOURG, IS ANOTHER CANDIDATE.

3. MITTERRAND MADE A FIVE-HOUR VISIT TO LEIPZIG ON 21 DECEMBER
WHERE HE VISITED THE (KARL MARX) UNIVERSITY AND, ACCOMPANIED
BY THE FAMOUS CONDUCTOR PROFESSOR KURT MASUR, VISITED THE
GEWANDHAUS, AND BOTH THE THOMAS CHURCH (WHERE J S BACH WORKED
FOR MANY YEARS) AND THE NIKOLAIKIRCHE (THE WEEKLY MEETINGS THERE

TO PRAY FOR PEACE WERE SIGNIFICANT IN LAUNCHING THE GDR'S PEACEFUL REVOLUTION).

4. IN LEIPZIG MITTERRAND SAID THAT GERMANS IN BOTH STATES MUST DECIDE ON GERMAN UNITY FOR THEMSELVES, IN FREE ELECTIONS., TAKING INTO ACCOUNT HOWEVER, THE EUROPEAN BALANCE. FRANCE WOULD NOT THEN OPPOSE GERMAN UNITY AND WOULD ALWAYS BE ON THE SIDE OF THE PARTY OF FREEDOM. HOWEVER POST-WAR REALITIES COULD NOT BE ERASED AT A STROKE. IT WAS NECESSARY TO BRING FORWARD GERMAN AND EUROPEAN UNITY TOGETHER. THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE TO STRENGTHEN ITSELF TO INVOLVE EVERYBODY IN THE GERMAN QUESTION. AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ON 22 DECEMBER IN BERLIN HE SAID: JE NE SUIS PAS DE CEUX QUI FREINENT.

[I am not one of those who is putting on the brakes]

5. MITTERRAND, WHOSE MAIN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN LEIPZIG WAS A MEETING WITH OVER A THOUSAND STUDENTS, WAS ASKED ABOUT VISAS. HE EXPRESSED HIMSELF AMBIGUOUSLY BUT IN FAVOUR OF EARLY NEGOTIATIONS ON ABOLITION 'WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN HOUSE'.

6. THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENTS AND THE VISIT TO LEIPZIG WERE PRECEDED BY A WORKING BREAKFAST WITH PRIME MINISTER MODROW. ON HIS RETURN FROM LEIPZIG, MITTERRAND HAD AN (EXTENSIVE ACCORDING TO NEUES DEUTSCHLAND (ND)) EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH SED-PDS CHAIRMAN GREGOR GYSI, BEFORE HOSTING A RECEPTION (WHICH I ATTENDED) FOR ABOUT A THOUSAND PEOPLE REPRESENTING THE 'POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL LIFE' OF THE GDR.

7. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR GAVE A COMMUNITY BRIEFING (FULL REPORT BY BAG) ON 22 DECEMBER. MME TIMSIT'S ACCOUNT WAS UNUSUALLY INTERESTING ALTHOUGH NO FUNDAMENTALLY NEW POINTS EMERGED. MITTERRAND HAD COME TO LISTEN AND LEARN. HE WANTED TO GAUGE THE MOOD OF THE PEOPLE AND DECIDE FOR HIMSELF HOW BEST FRANCE COULD BE INVOLVED. THE AGREEMENTS SIGNED COVERED AREAS OF GREATEST OPPORTUNITY. MITTERRAND THOUGHT CULTURAL AND YOUTH EXCHANGES WERE A VERY HIGH PRIORITY. HE HAD SPONTANEOUSLY INVITED A THOUSAND YOUNG PEOPLE TO VISIT FRANCE IN 1990 AS GUESTS OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. ARRANGEMENTS WOULD NOW BE MADE CONCENTRATING ON THE STUDENTS IN LEIPZIG WHO HAD IMPRESSED MITTERRAND WITH THEIR INTEREST IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES. MITTERRAND THOUGHT THAT THE POLITICAL SITUATION WAS VOLATILE. INTELLECTUALS OPPOSED TO GERMAN UNITY WERE TRYING TO STAGE A COUNTER REVOLUTION VIA A REFORMED SED-PDS.

8. ALTHOUGH BOTH SIDES WANTED TO EXPAND TRADE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION (AND MITTERRAND HAD BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY) THE GDR WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE ON A NEW LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK BEFORE FRENCH COMPANIES WOULD COMMIT THEMSELVES. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER LUFT SEEMED FIXED ON 49 PER CENT ONLY FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES BUT BEIL SEEMED PREPARED TO BE FLEXIBLE. THERE HAD BEEN NO AGREEMENTS ON CREDIT.

COMMENT

9. MITTERRAND'S OBJECTIVE WAS TO ASSERT FRANCE'S ROLE AS A MAJOR PLAYER IN CENTRAL EUROPE, IN PARTICULAR OVER THE SOLUTION OF THE GERMAN QUESTION. HIS TIMING IMMEDIATELY AFTER KOHL'S VISIT TO DRESDEN IN THE LAST MONTH OF THE FRENCH EC PRESIDENCY WAS GOOD. HE HAS RAISED THE FRENCH PROFILE HERE SUBSTANTIALLY. THE CONCLUSION OF AN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT FOR 1990-94 SUGGESTS THAT THE FRENCH EXPECT THE GDR TO EXIST AS A STATE AT LEAST THAT LONG. THIS, TOGETHER WITH HIS VISIBLE SUPPORT FOR GERLACH, MODROW AND GYSI, WILL BE A SOURCE OF COMFORT TO ALL THOSE WHO WANT TO PRESERVE THE GDR AS A SEPARATE STATE. ND'S HEADLINE ON 22 DECEMBER IS 'GDR AND FRANCE AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EUROPEAN BALANCE OF POWER'. IN LEIPZIG, MITTERRAND SALUTED THE PLACE (NIKOLAI CHURCH) WHERE THE PEACEFUL REVOLUTION STARTED, AND IN PARTICULAR KURT MASUR WHO (IT IS NOW CLEAR) MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE PREVENTED A BLOODY REVOLUTION BREAKING OUT ON 9 OCTOBER. IN A SKILFUL EVOCATION OF GREAT GERMAN CULTURAL FIGURES CONNECTED WITH LEIPZIG AT THE TIME OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION (GOETHE, LESSING AND FICHTE), MITTERRAND SET OUT FRANCE'S POSITION ON GERMAN UNITY. FRANCE WOULD NOT OPPOSE ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT AFTER FREE ELECTIONS (IE AFTER 6 MAY 1990) PROVIDED THAT THE INTERESTS OF OTHER PEOPLES IN EUROPE WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. I THINK HE SEES A CSCE CONFERENCE IN LATE 1990 IN PARIS AS THE SETTING FOR ESTABLISHING THE NEW ERA.

10. THE GUESTS AT MITTERRAND'S RECEPTION WERE MAINLY PEOPLE FROM CIRCLES WHICH FAVOUR A SEPARATE GDR (THE CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES, ESTABLISHED POLITICAL PARTIES, AND INTELLECTUALS IN THE NEW OPPOSITION GROUPS). SED-PDS CHAIRMAN GYSI (WHO KNOWS FRANCE WELL) TOLD ME IT HAD BEEN A VERY GOOD VISIT. ON THE OTHER HAND I SEE THAT MITTERRAND IS ATTRACTING PRAISE FROM WEST GERMAN POLITICIANS WHO FAVOUR EARLY REUNIFICATION. THIS IS PERHAPS THE MEASURE OF HIS SUCCESS.

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ADDITIONAL

13

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~~PS/NO 10.~~

SAVING

7

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