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MITTERRAND'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE

SUMMARY

1. MITTERRAND CALLED ON 31 DECEMBER FOR THE CREATION OF A 'EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION' ASSOCIATING ALL THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE - BUT ONLY ONCE EXISTING EC STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED. MESSAGE WELL RECEIVED BY FRENCH COMMENTATORS.

DETAIL

2. IN THE CLOSING HOURS OF THE FRENCH EC PRESIDENCY MITTERRAND USED THE PRESIDENT'S TRADITIONAL NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE TO FLOAT THE IDEA OF A 'EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION' LINKING ALL EUROPEAN STATES.

3. MITTERRAND SAID THAT THE CHOICE WE NOW FACED WAS EITHER FRAGMENTATION AND A RETURN TO THE EUROPE OF 1919, OR THE CONSTRUCTION OF EUROPE. THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED IN TWO STAGES. THE FIRST STAGE WAS FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY OF TWELVE - QUOTE WHICH ABSOLUTELY MUST REINFORCE ITS STRUCTURES, AS HAS JUST BEEN DECIDED AT STRASBOURG. UNQUOTE. AS TO THE SECOND STAGE, QUOTE: BUILDING ON THE HELSINKI ACCORDS, I SHOULD LIKE TO SEE THE CREATION DURING THE 1990S OF A EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION, IN THE REAL SENSE OF THE TERM, WHICH WILL LINK ALL THE STATES OF OUR CONTINENT IN A JOINT, PERMANENT ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC EXCHANGES, PEACE AND SECURITY. UNQUOTE.

4. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT A CONFEDERATION WOULD ONLY BE POSSIBLE ONCE THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE HAD SET UP GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, NOTABLY A MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM, FREE ELECTIONS, FULLY REPRESENTATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION.

5. FOR THE INTERNAL SECTION OF HIS MESSAGE THE PRESIDENT BUILT ON THE IDEA THAT THE FRENCH PEOPLE NEEDED TO LIVE UP TO THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES WHICH THE NEWLY-LIBERATED PEOPLE OF EASTERN EUROPE EXPECTED OF THEM. HE SAID THAT HIS NEW YEAR WISH WAS FOR A FRANCE:

-FREE OF RACISM, WELCOMING ALL THOSE WHO LIVED ON HER SOIL, UNDER THE PROTECTION OF HER LAWS,

- IN THE FIRST RANK OF COUNTRIES FIGHTING AGAINST POVERTY, UNDER-DEVELOPMENT AND POLLUTION, AT HOME AND ABROAD:

- WITH ANY ECONOMY WHICH COULD AT LAST PUSH BACK UNEMPLOYMENT AND MAKE POSSIBLE A FAIRER DISTRIBUTION OF PROFITS:

- WHERE THE GOVERNMENTS'S EFFORTS ON HOUSING, REFORM OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, UNIVERSITIES ETC MET WITH THE TRADE UNION AND POLITICAL SUPPORT WHICH THEY MERITED.

6. MITTERRAND'S MESSAGE HAS BEEN WELL RECEIVED ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM IN FRANCE. YESTERDAY, GISCARD D'ESTAING COMMENTED THAT THE IDEA OF A CONFEDERATION '' HAD EVERY CHANCE OF UNANIMOUS APPROVAL''. DELORS SAID ON FRENCH TELEVISION THAT HE AGREED WITH PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S TWO-STAGE APPROACH. HE THOUGHT THAT ANY CONFEDERATION WOULD LINK WHAT HE HOPED WOULD BY THEN BE ''THE FEDERATION OF THE TWELVE'' TO A WIDER EUROPE OF EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND TO EFTA. QUOTE THIS CONFEDERATION OF 32 OR 33 COUNTRIES COULD NOT HAVE THE SAME LEVEL OF COMMON RULES AS THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY... ONE COULD HAVE COEXISTING A POLITICAL FEDERATION OF THE TWELVE AND A BROADER EUROPE BASED ON A LARGE MARKET WITH ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES AND A CERTAIN DEGREE OF POLITICAL CONCERTATION UNQUOTE.

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