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FRANCE/FRG : MITTERRAND/KOHL MEETING

SUMMARY

1. MEDIA REPORTS SUGGEST AN AMIABLE BUT INSUBSTANTIAL MEETING. AGREEMENT ON ACCELERATING EC INTEGRATION. KOHL POLITE ABOUT MITTERRAND IDEAS ON EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION, NON-COMMITTAL ON 1990 CSCE SUMMIT.

DETAIL

2. CHANCELLOR KOHL AND PRESIDENT MITTERRAND MET INFORMALLY AT MITTERRAND'S HOUSE IN THE LANDES (SW FRANCE) ON 4 JANUARY. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS THEIR DISCUSSIONS CONCENTRATED ON EAST/WEST RELATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN SECURITY AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. JUDGING FROM WHAT THEY TOLD THE MEDIA, THE ATMOSPHERE WAS GOOD. KOHL SAID THAT THE FRANCO-GERMAN COUPLE WOULD HAVE AN EVEN MORE DECISIVE ROLE IN THE 1990'S THAN IN THE 1980'S NOTABLY IN ACCELERATING EC INTEGRATION.

3. KOHL EXPRESSED POLITE INTEREST IN MITTERRAND'S IDEA FOR A EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION (MY TELNO 2) QUOTE AN INTELLIGENT PROPOSAL UNQUOTE. MITTERRAND SAID THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO GIVE THE DEMOCRATIZING EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES QUOTE A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE UNQUOTE BUT THE EC COULD NOT EXPAND INDEFINITELY. THE CONFEDERATION IDEA WAS A LONG-TERM PROPOSAL. HE SAID THAT A DEMOCRATIC SOVIET UNION COULD BE PART OF THE CONFEDERATION.

4. MITTERRAND AND KOHL INSISTED THAT A EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION WAS QUITE SEPARATE FROM THE QUESTION OF GERMAN UNIFICATION, AND MITTERRAND POINTED OUT THAT KOHL HAD NEVER SPOKEN OF A GERMAN CONFEDERATION. KOHL CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD NOT CONSULTED PARTNERS BEFORE PRESENTING HIS TEN-POINT PLAN: QUOTE THIS IS A GERMAN MATTER. HOWEVER YOU CAN BE CERTAIN THAT MY PROPOSAL CORRESPONDS TO THE SPIRIT OF FRANCO-GERMAN FRIENDSHIP AND CO-OPERATION UNQUOTE. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS A JUSTIFIED FEAR OF REUNIFICATION BUT THERE WAS ALSO

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AN ARTIFICIALLY NOURISHED FEAR. PATIENCE AND A MEASURED STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH WERE NEEDED. HE SAW NO CONTRADICTION BETWEEN PROGRESS TOWARDS A MORE INTEGRATED EC, A WIDER EUROPE AND A REUNIFIED GERMANY. MITTERRAND STRESSED THAT FOR FRANCE THE ESSENTIAL POLITICAL TASK IN EUROPE WOULD REMAIN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EC, IE A STRENGTHENING OF ITS STRUCTURE AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A SHARED POLITICAL WILL.

5. MITTERRAND AGAIN DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN THE INNER-GERMAN BORDER AND EUROPE'S INTANGIBLE NATIONAL FRONTIERS: THE FORMER COULD BE SETTLED BY GERMAN SELF-DETERMINATION.

6. CSCE SUMMIT. ASKED WHETHER HE SUPPORTED MITTERRAND'S PROPOSAL FOR A CSCE SUMMIT MEETING IN PARIS IN 1990, KOHL SAID THAT SUCH A SUMMIT WOULD NEED CAREFUL PREPARATION: QUOTE I SHALL GIVE MY AGREEMENT, INCLUDING ON THE LOCATION OF THE MEETING, WHEN ALL IS CLEAR, BECAUSE WE CANNOT ALLOW OURSELVES A FAILURE. UNQUOTE

COMMENT

7. THE FRENCH WILL HAVE BEEN PLEASED AGAIN TO HEAR KOHL SAYING THE RIGHT THINGS ON EC INTEGRATION BUT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED NOT TO HAVE OBTAINED HIS ENDORSEMENT OF THE PARIS CSCE SUMMIT PROPOSAL AND MORE EXPLICIT APPROVAL OF MITTERRAND'S IDEAS ON EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION. ON THE CONFEDERATION, KOHL SEEMS TO HAVE WANTED RE-ASSURANCE THAT IT WAS NOT A SCHEME DESIGNED TO COMPLICATE AND DELAY GERMAN UNIFICATION: MITTERRAND WAS AGAIN ABLE TO INSIST THAT HE DID NOT SEEK TO BE A BRAKE ON THE GERMANS.

8. WE HOPE TO GET A READ-OUT FROM THE ELYSEE EARLY NEXT WEEK.

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