

UNCLASSIFIED
FM EAST BERLIN
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 25

ADVANCE COPY

OF 091515Z JANUARY 90
INFO ROUTINE BMG BERLIN, BONN, PARIS, WASHINGTON, MOSCOW
INFO ROUTINE UKDEL NATO, ACTOR, CICC(G)
INFO SAVING EASTERN EUROPEAN POSTS, PEKING, UKDEL STRASBOURG
INFO SAVING BRIXMIS

MY TELNO 18 : GDR INTERNAL SITUATION

SUMMARY

1. ROUND TABLE ALMOST COLLAPSES ON 8 JANUARY OVER DISPUTE ABOUT SECURITY. MODROW SUMMONED TO NEXT MEETING ON 15 JANUARY. DEMONSTRATIONS RESUME IN LEIPZIG AND ELSEWHERE. WARNING STRIKE PROTESTING ABOUT PAYMENTS TO FORMER STATE SECURITY OFFICIALS.

DETAIL

2. THE (SIXTH) ROUND TABLE MEETING IN EAST BERLIN ON 8 JANUARY WAS ALMOST ITS LAST. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES EXPLAINED IN MID AFTERNOON THAT PRIME MINISTER MODROW WAS ON HIS WAY TO A CMEA MEETING IN SOFIA AND COULD NOT APPEAR AT 1600 TO SPEAK ON INTERNAL SECURITY. THE ROUND TABLE THEREFORE AGREED TO RECONVENE ON 15 JANUARY, TO HEAR MODROW AND RECEIVE THE SECURITY REPORT WHICH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES HAD EARLIER SAID COULD NOT BE GOT READY UNTIL 29 JANUARY. THERE WAS NO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION OF ANY OTHER SUBJECT.

3. THE BACKDROP WAS MOUNTING SUSPICION THAT THE SED WERE MOUNTING A COUNTER REVOLUTION BASED ON THEIR VIRTUAL MONOPOLY OF POLITICAL ASSETS (BUILDINGS, ETC), THE SECURITY APPARATUS (WHICH ALTHOUGH BEING DISMANTLED STILL HAS 60,000 FULL TIME EMPLOYEES), AND WIDESPREAD POPULAR FEARS THAT NEO-NAZI ISSUE ENCOURAGED BY WEST GERMAN EXTREMISTS SUCH AS SCHONHUBER (WHO WAS REFUSED ADMISSION TO EAST BERLIN ON 8 JANUARY), WAS BEING USED BY THE SED TO JUSTIFY THEIR WISH TO CREATE A NEW STATE SECURITY SERVICE.

4. OPPOSITION SUSPICIONS AT THE ROUND TABLE WERE HEIGHTENED BY THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES INABILITY TO ANSWER SIMPLE FACTUAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FORMER STASI AND THE STAGE REACHED IN DISMANTLING THE DEPARTMENT. THE PROCEEDINGS WERE BROADCAST LIVE ON RADIO AND TV. THE GOVERNMENT'S (SED-PDS) APPROACH BECAME CLEAR : TO PROCEED SLOWLY WITH DISSOLUTION, SAID TO HAVE BEGUN ON 14

DECEMBER AND TO BE COMPLETED (AFTER THE ELECTIONS ON 6 MAY) BY 20 JUNE, OF THE OFFICE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY RETAINING PERSONNEL, BUILDINGS AND MATERIALS FOR AN OFFICE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CONSTITUTION (AND AN EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE). IT WAS CONFIRMED, HOWEVER, THAT TELEPHONE SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT HAD BEEN DISMANTLED.

5. ROLF HENRICH (NEW FORUM) READ OUT A TELEX FROM THE ONS GERA OFFICE TO MODROW AND OTHERS DATED 9 DECEMBER (IE BEFORE DISSOLUTION BEGAN) CALLING FOR ACTION TO 'UNMASK AND PARALYSE THOSE WHO, FILLED WITH HATE, WERE INTRIGUING AGAINST THE STATE'. NEITHER KOCH NOR HALBRITTER (NOR SED-PDS CHAIRMAN GYSI) COULD CONFIRM THAT THIS TELEX HAD BEEN RECEIVED IN BERLIN, BUT NOBODY AT THE ROUND TABLE CAST DOUBT ON ITS AUTHENTICITY. NEUES DEUTSCHLAND (ND) ON 9 JANUARY HAS PRINTED AN ADN REPORT FROM GERA BASED ON A STATEMENT BY THE LOCAL SECURITY CHIEF WHICH ESSENTIALLY CONFIRMS WHAT HENRICH SAID.

6. THE CHURCHMEN WHO 'MODERATED' PROCEEDINGS USED THE ABSENCE OF MODROW (EN ROUTE TO SOFIA) TO PRESERVE THE ROUND TABLE. EVENTUALLY PARTICIPANTS VOTED BY 38-24 TO RESUME ON 15 JANUARY. THE 24 INCLUDED THOSE WHO WANTED TO GO ON TALKING ON 8 JANUARY, AND THOSE WHO HAD HEARD ENOUGH AND WANTED TO ABANDON THE ROUND TABLE THERE AND THEN.

7. DEMONSTRATIONS IN LEIPZIG AND OTHER CENTRES RESUMED AFTER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS ON MONDAY EVENING AFTER THE ROUND TABLE. IN AN ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN CALM AND DISCIPLINE THERE WERE NO SPEECHES IN LEIPZIG (WHERE AT LEAST 100,000 TOOK TO THE STREETS ACCORDING TO WESTERN ESTIMATES : 'TENS OF THOUSANDS' ACCORDING TO THE GDR MEDIA). BUT THE MOOD AND WISHES OF THE CROWD WERE CLEAR FROM THE BANNERS AND CHANTED SLOGANS. THE SED-PDS WERE IDENTIFIED WITH THE ANCIEN REGIME. MODROW AND GYSI WERE CRITICISED. PEOPLE CONSIDERED THAT THE SED WERE PLAYING UP THE FASCIST THREAT FOR MORE THAN IT WAS WORTH. THEY WERE AFRAID THAT THE OPPOSITION WOULD NOT HAVE A FAIR CHANCE AT THE ELECTIONS. AND PEOPLE STILL SAW NO SIGN THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD AN ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE. THE BLACK RED AND GOLD FLAG SYMBOLISING GERMAN FREEDOM AND UNITY (AND OF COURSE THE FRG) WAS MORE PROMINENT THAN EVER.

8. ND HAS REPORTED A WARNING STRIKE AT THE SUHL (SOUTHERN GDR) VEHICLE AND SPORTING GUNS FACTORY ON 8 JANUARY, TO REGISTER 'OUTRAGE' AT TRANSITIONAL PAYMENTS TO FORMER STATE SECURITY OFFICIALS. THE STRIKERS THEN MADE A PROTEST DEMONSTRATION THROUGH THE CENTRE OF SUHL. ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS THE WORKERS, WITH

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POLAND IN MIND, SEE STRIKES AS A WEAPON OF LAST RESORT.

9. COMMENT IN MIFT.

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