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CALL ON GENSCHER : THE FOUR POWERS AND THE GERMAN QUESTION

SUMMARY

1. GENSCHER EMPHASISES RISK OF NEGATIVE REACTIONS IN WEST GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION IF FOUR POWERS DISCUSS GERMAN QUESTION AS DISTINCT FROM BERLIN. DESCRIBES LATEST THINKING ON THE PROPOSED 'CONTRACTUAL COMMUNITY' BETWEEN THE TWO GERMAN STATES, INCLUDING THAT THE FRG MIGHT SEEK AFTER THE GDR ELECTIONS A TREATY WHICH INTER ALIA WOULD INDICATE WHAT STAGES WOULD FOLLOW AFTER 'CONTRACTUAL COMMUNITY'.

DETAIL

2. WHEN I CALLED ON GENSCHER TODAY, I GAVE HIM (IN LINE WITH YOUR TELNO 024) THE OUTLINE OF THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S APPROACH TO YOU ON 10 JANUARY AND OF YOUR ORAL COMMENTS ON THAT OCCASION. I POINTED OUT THAT THE OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH OF SHEVARDNADZE'S MESSAGE, WITH THE SUGGESTION OF A NEW FOUR POWER EXCHANGE, WAS TENTATIVE IN STYLE. I SAID THAT (DESPITE GENSCHER'S EARLIER IMPRESSION) THE SOVIET APPROACH TO US AND THE AMERICANS HAD PROPOSED AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AT THE LEVEL OF 'SPECIAL ENVOYS OR THE FOUR AMBASSADORS' AND FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD NOT BEEN MENTIONED.

3. GENSCHER SAID THAT, AS HE HAD TOLD YOU IN BRUSSELS LAST MONTH, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD NO OBJECTION TO FOUR POWER TALKS ABOUT THE BERLIN INITIATIVE, WHICH MIGHT BE AT A LEVEL LOWER THAN AMBASSADORS. HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE CARE WITH WHICH YOU HAD REACTED INITIALLY TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR. HE AGREED THAT THE TALKS NOW PROPOSED BY THE RUSSIANS WOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE ON 11 DECEMBER, SINCE THE GERMAN QUESTION WOULD NOW BE THE SUBJECT. GENSCHER SAID THAT, IF THE IMPRESSION AROSE IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC THAT OTHERS WERE NEGOTIATING ABOUT AFFAIRS OF THE GERMANS, THAT COULD BRING A WAVE OF NATIONALISM HERE, A PHENOMENON THAT WAS VIRTUALLY ABSENT AT PRESENT. HE RETURNED TO THIS POINT SEVERAL TIMES. GENSCHER SAID HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE THREE WESTERN ALLIES AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC ABOUT THE REPLY TO BE GIVEN TO THE SOVIET APPROACH.

4. I SAID THAT WE WERE AWARE THAT THERE COULD BE NEGATIVE REACTIONS IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC TO FOUR POWER DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE GERMAN QUESTION AS A WHOLE. AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAD AN INTEREST IN HANDLING THE RUSSIANS IN A WAY WHICH WOULD NOT INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF THEIR BECOMING GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE GDR. THE THREE WESTERN ALLIES COULD MAINTAIN A DIALOGUE WITH THE RUSSIANS ABOUT THE BERLIN INITIATIVE, WHILE CONSIDERING HOW TO REPLY TO THE SOVIET APPROACH. GENSCHER SAID THAT BILATERAL CONTACTS BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL WESTERN ALLIES AND THE SOVIET UNION DID NOT CAUSE PROBLEMS.

5. I ASKED GENSCHER ABOUT THE LATEST THINKING IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE FRAMEWORK TREATY THAT WOULD BE THE BASIS OF THE 'CONTRACTUAL COMMUNITY' (VERTRAGSGEMEINSCHAFT) BETWEEN THE TWO GERMAN STATES, SINCE THAT WAS THE PARTICULAR MATTER WHICH THE RUSSIANS HAD SINGLED OUT FOR PROPOSED FOUR POWER EXCHANGES. GENSCHER SAID THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S THINKING ON THIS HAD ADVANCED IN RECENT DAYS. KOHL'S AND HIS LATEST IDEA (WHICH BOTH HAD TODAY REFERRED TO IN PUBLIC) WAS THAT THERE MIGHT BE TWO DOCUMENTS TO FORM THE BASIS FOR THE 'CONTRACTUAL COMMUNITY'. THE FIRST MIGHT BE 'A PRAGMATIC BRINGING TOGETHER' OF THE VARIOUS INTENDED FIELDS OF COOPERATION, NOTABLY ECONOMIC BUT ALSO THE ENVIRONMENT. SUCH A DOCUMENT WOULD SIMPLY SAY THAT COOPERATION IN THESE FIELDS WOULD BE DEVELOPED RAPIDLY. ITS STATUS WOULD BE SUCH THAT IT DID NOT REQUIRE RATIFICATION, AND THUS NEED NOT BE CONSIDERED BY THE PRESENT UNDEMOCRATICALLY APPOINTED EAST GERMAN PARLIAMENT. AFTER THE GDR ELECTIONS THERE COULD BE A SECOND DOCUMENT, THIS TIME A PROPER TREATY REQUIRING RATIFICATION. THIS DOCUMENT MIGHT SET THE AIMS FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO GERMANIES AFTER THE STAGE OF 'CONTRACTUAL COMMUNITY'. I ASKED GENSCHER WHETHER HE MEANT THAT SUCH A TREATY MIGHT MENTION CONFEDERAL STRUCTURES OR A FEDERATION AS THE FUTURE AIM. GENSCHER SAID THAT THIS WOULD BE FOR CONSIDERATION. THE PRESENT GDR GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT AGREE TO SETTING THE FUTURE DIRECTION IN THIS WAY, AND MUCH WOULD DEPEND ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE GDR GOVERNMENT AFTER THE ELECTIONS. THERE WAS MUCH THINKING TO DO IN BONN AND I WOULD BE KEPT CLOSELY INFORMED.

COMMENT

6. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GERMANS WILL TRY TO DISSUADE US FROM AGREEING TO THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR FOUR POWER DISCUSSIONS. I BELIEVE GENSCHER IS RIGHT THAT SUCH TALKS WOULD CAUSE NEGATIVE REACTIONS IN GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION. AT THE SAME TIME WE HAVE A CLEAR INTEREST IN UPHOLDING FOUR POWER RIGHTS IN RELATION TO GERMANY AS A

WHOLE, AS WELL AS BERLIN. AS SEEN FROM HERE, THE BALANCE OF
 ADVANTAGE AT PRESENT LIES IN AVOIDING DAMAGE TO OUR PUBLIC STANDING
 HERE, SINCE THAT WOULD SEVERELY REDUCE OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE
 GERMANS AND A NATIONALISTIC MOOD HERE WOULD MAKE EVENTS EVEN MORE
 UNPREDICTABLE. FOR THE TIME BEING, GIVEN ESPECIALLY THE TENTATIVE
 WORDING OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL, IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO HOLD IT AT
 ARM'S LENGTH, WHILE USING FOUR POWER CONTACTS ABOUT BERLIN MATTERS
 AND BILATERAL CONTACT WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN EAST BERLIN
 (WHOM I AM TRYING TO SEE AGAIN) TO MAINTAIN DIALOGUE WITH THE
 RUSSIANS. BUT WE MIGHT IN DUE COURSE WANT FOUR POWER CONTACTS ABOUT
 WIDER GERMAN MATTERS. THAT ASIDE, THE NEW IDEA OF A TREATY BETWEEN
 THE TWO GERMAN STATES FORESEEING A FUTURE FEDERATION COULD ACCORD
 WITH OUR POSITION ON THE GERMAN QUESTION (SET OUT IN THE NATO AND EC
 STATEMENTS LAST MONTH) ONLY IF THE GERMANS HAD MEANWHILE OPTED IN
 FREE SELF-DETERMINATION FOR UNITY.

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ADDITIONAL

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