

UNCLASSIFIED

FM MOSCOW

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 180

OF 030929Z FEBRUARY 90

INFO IMMEDIATE EAST BERLIN, BMG BERLIN, PARIS, WASHINGTON

INFO PRIORITY UKDEL NATO, UKDEL VIENNA, UKREP BRUSSELS

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MY TELNO 148: SOVIET UNION/GDR: THE GERMAN QUESTION
SUMMARY

1. GYSI VISITS MOSCOW. GORBACHEV EXPRESSES UNDERSTANDING FOR THE GERMAN STRIVING TO RAPPROCHEMENT. SHEVARDNADZE COMMENTS ON MODROW PLAN

DETAIL

GYSI VISIT

2. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST GERMAN SED-DPS, GYSI, PAID A SHORT WORKING VISIT TO MOSCOW ON 2 FEBRUARY. HE SAW GORBACHEV AND GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE. ZAIKOV HELD A LUNCH IN HIS HONOUR.
3. ACCORDING TO TASS, GORBACHEV SAID "IN THE SOVIET UNION, THE STRIVING OF GERMANS IN THE GDR AND FRG TOWARDS RAPPROCHEMENT AND COOPERATION IS NOTED WITH UNDERSTANDING. IT IS A NATURAL FACT. THIS WAS DISCUSSED WHEN I SAW MODROW RECENTLY. BUT I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS ONCE AGAIN THE PERNICIOUSNESS OF ATTEMPTS TO WHIP UP PASSIONS ON THIS SCORE, OR TO OVER-SIMPLIFY ONES APPROACH TO IT. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN PROCESS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF OUR COMMON HOUSE IN EUROPE EVEN THE QUESTION OF GERMAN NATIONAL UNITY CAN FIND A SOLUTION. WHETHER THIS TAKES PLACE IN THE CONDITIONS OF A PAN-EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION, SUCH AS PRESIDENT MITTERAND RECENTLY PROPOSED, OR IN SOME OTHER FORM IS FOR HISTORY TO DECIDE. WE HOPE THAT GREAT RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE DISPLAYED IN BOTH GERMAN STATES IN THE SEARCH FOR MEANS AND FORM OF POSSIBLE UNITY, WHICH WOULD NOT OPPOSE THE INTERESTS OF ALL EUROPEAN NATIONS, THE INTERESTS OF PEACE IN THE WHOLE WORLD ... AS GERMAN PROBLEMS (SIC) ARE ACTIVELY WORKED OUT, ALL COUNTRIES, PARTIES AND MOVEMENTS WHO HAVE INTERESTS AT STAKE, PEOPLE ON THE STREETS AND IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES, EVERYONE MUST ACT CIRCUMSPECTLY AND VERY SENSIBLY. OTHERWISE, EUROPE, WHICH HAS ONLY JUST EMBARKED ON THE PATH OF TRUST AND COOPERATION COULD GO UNDER (POGUBIT).
4. ANSWERING QUESTIONS AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, GYSI SAID THAT THE PROCESS OF UNIFICATION OF THE TWO GERMAN STATES WOULD FOLLOW THE PATH OF CONFEDERATION, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN PROCESS, AND

TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE INTERESTS OF THE FOUR GREAT POWERS. AS A FIRST STAGE HE SAW A TREATY-BASED COMMUNITY, WITH RECOGNITION OF SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE.

SHEVARDNADZE ON MODROW

5. THIS MORNING'S PRAVDA PUBLISHES AN INTERVIEW GIVEN BY SHEVERNADZE ON THE MODROW CONCEPT FOR THE ROUTE TO A UNITED GERMANY. THIS SHOULD BE SEEN, SAYS SHEVARDNADZE AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION: INDEED MODROW HAD INVITED THE OTHER EUROPEAN STATES TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS. IT BEARS WITNESS TO A RECOGNITION BY THE GERMANS THAT THE QUESTION DOES NOT JUST AFFECT THEM ALONE.

6. 'I THINK, WIHTOUT EXAGERRATION, THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS VERY WEIGHTY LEGITIMATE INTEREST AND RIGHTS. BEHIND THEM ARE 26 MILLION DEAD, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF RUINED TOWNS AND VILLAGES.' THE RUSSIANS THEREFORE HAD HUMAN AS WELL AS POLITICAL GROUNDS FOR INVOLVEMENT, AND COULD NOT REMAIN DISINTERESTED OBSERVERS. THEY WOULD CONTINUE AN ACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE FRG AND GDR, AND OF THE FOUR POWERS WHO CARRY RESPONSIBILITY FOR GERMAN AFFAIRS, AND WITH ALL INTERESTED COUNTRIES.

7. THE RUSSIANS THOUGHT THE MODROW CONCEPT CONTAINED REASONABLE, FAR-SIGHTED IDEAS. IT WAS BASED ON REALISTIC PREMISES. THERE WAS MUCH THAT THE RUSSIANS COULD AGREE TO, BUT SOME IDEAS NEEDED FURTHER WORK.

8. SHEVARDNADZE STRESSED THAT 'WE HAVE NOT HAD AND DO NOT HAVE ANY PROBLEM WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE TWO GERMAN STATES ... ALSO WE HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH BOTH THE FRG AND GDR. WE WOULD NOT WANT TO STAND IN THE WAY OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE IN THE GDR AND THE FRG.... BUT WE CANNOT BE AFFECTED AND WORRIED BY THE QUESTION OF HOW THE SITUATION IN EUROPE WILL DEVELOP... ALL PEOPLES, ESPECIALLY THE PEOPLES OF THE SOVIET UNION, SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO A GUARANTEE THAT THE THREAT OF WAR WILL NEVER AGAIN RISE FROM GERMAN SOIL.'

9. SHEVARDNADZE SAID THAT THE GERMAN QUESTION WAS NOT SIMPLY A LEGAL, POLITICAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ISSUE. IT DIRECTLY AFFECTED MILLIONS OF PEOPLE. POLITICIANS SHOULD KNOW THEIR FEELINGS. THIS MIGHT BE ACHIEVED BY A REFERENDUM IN ALL EUROPEAN STATES, USA AND CANADA, OR AT THE LEAST BY PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE IN THESE COUNTRIES.

10. HE REPEATED SOVIET FEARS OF NEO-NAZI INTERFERENCE IN EAST GERMANY.

11. RECALLING HIS STATEMENTS IN BRUSSELS, HE SAID THERE WAS A WIDELY HELD VIEW IN EUROPE THAT GERMAN UNITY SHOULD BE SYNCHRONISED WITH THE EUROPEAN PROCESS. IT WAS ALSO NECESSARY FOR THE GERMANS TO RECOGNISE UNCONDITIONALLY THE EXISTING FRONTIERS IN EUROPE. HE REMINDED THE JOURNALISTS THAT THE QA WOULD REMAIN IN FORCE DURING ANY TRANSITION

TO UNITY, THOUGH THIS WOULD NOT MEAN THAT BERLIN WOULD BE ISOLATED FROM THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL AND INTRA-GERMAN EXCHANGES.

12. SHEVARDNADZE ENDED HIS LONG STATEMENT WITH THE PROVISIO THAT THESE WERE ONLY PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS, AND SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS EXHAUSTING ALL THE RUSSIANS WOULD HAVE TO SAY ON THE ISSUES. 'WE WANT THE MOVEMENT OF GERMANS TOWARDS A UNITED FATHERLAND TO TAKE PLACE WITHOUT A CATAclysm, WITHOUT DESTROYING THE EQUILIBRIUM OF EUROPE AND THE WORLD

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