

SECRET (DEDIP)

BURNING BUSH

FM OTTAWA

DESKBY 120800Z FCO

TELNO 112

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INFO IMMEDIATE BONN, PARIS, WASHINGTON, UKDEL NATO

FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

MEETING OF THE FOUR FOREIGN MINISTERS: SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY

SUMMARY

1. SPECIAL MEETING OF THE QUAD CALLED BY GENSCHER. HE AND BAKER REPORT ON MOSCOW VISITS. FINDS SHEVARDNADZE CONCERNED AT CRITICISM IN SOVIET UNION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF FOREIGN POLICY BUT RELATIVELY RELAXED ABOUT UNIFICATION AND NOT PRESSING CASE FOR NEUTRALITY. RUSSIANS KEEN TO ENSURE THAT FOUR POWER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ARE OBSERVED. GENSCHER FLOATS THE IDEA OF TWO PLUS FOUR MEETING, IE THE FOUR INVITED BY THE TWO GERMANIES TO A MEETING ON GERMAN SOIL. RUSSIANS BEGINNING TO THINK ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF UNIFICATION FOR THEIR TROOP PRESENCE IN THE GDR. FURTHER QUAD MEETING ON 13 FEBRUARY.

DETAIL

2. GENSCHER SAID HE AND KOHL HAD HAD A TOTAL OF 4 ROUNDS OF DISCUSSION IN MOSCOW. HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE WRITTEN ADVANCE INFORMATION HE HAD HAD FROM BAKER. THE ATMOSPHERE IN MOSCOW HAD BEEN VERY OPEN, FRIENDLY AND LEISURELY. GORBACHEV AND SHEVARDNADZE HAD WEATHERED THE PLENUM WELL, THOUGH SHEVARDNADZE WAS MORE AFFECTED BY WHAT HAD HAPPENED THAN GORBACHEV, SAYING THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME THE PARTY WAS CRITICISING THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY, ASKING WHAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WAS DOING WITH RUSSIAN SECURITY. THE PARTY CRITICS HAD SAID THAT IN THE OLD DAYS THERE WAS A FIRM WARSAW PACT ALLIANCE AND ORDER. NOW SOVIET TROOPS WERE BEING WITHDRAWN FROM HUNGARY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND TO A DEGREE FROM POLAND. THERE WAS ALSO CONCERN AT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GDR.

3. IN RESPONSE, KOHL AND GENSCHER HAD GIVEN THEIR ASSESSMENT OF EVENTS IN THE GDR. THE STATE WAS CRUMBLING. INDIVIDUAL CITIES WERE OPERATING AUTONOMOUSLY. MEMBERS OF THE GDR ARMY WERE SEEKING JOBS IN THE BUNDESWEHR. THE EAST BERLIN CITY AUTHORITIES HAD ASKED THE SENAT WHETHER THEY WERE PREPARED TO TAKE OVER THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CITY: WASTE DISPOSAL, FIRE-FIGHTING, AMBULANCE SERVICES, EVEN THE POLICE. IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE RUSSIANS KNEW THIS ALREADY. SHEVARDNADZE HAD BEEN DEEPLY SHOCKED BY WHAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BUT DID NOT DISPUTE IT. GENSCHER HAD DESCRIBED THE PROPOSAL FOR ECONOMIC/CURRENCY UNION. HE AND KOHL HAD ASSURED THE RUSSIANS THAT THE PRESSURE FOR UNIFICATION DID NOT COME FROM THE FRG BUT FROM EVENTS IN THE GDR ITSELF.



4. AS A RESULT OF ALL THESE DISCUSSIONS, GENSCHER SAID THAT RUSSIAN LEADERS HAD MADE CLEAR THEY DID NOT INTEND TO PLACE IMPEDIMENTS IN THE PATH OF UNIFICATION. GORBACHEV HAS SAID THAT BETWEEN THE USSR, THE FRG AND THE GDR, THERE WAS NO DIFFERENCE OF VIEW: THAT IT WAS UP TO THE GERMANS TO DECIDE THEIR FUTURE, TO CHOOSE THE STATE SYSTEM THEY WANTED AND THE SPEED AND CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THEY WOULD ACHIEVE UNIFICATION. GORBACHEV CLAIMED TO HAVE TOLD MODROW THE SAME, THOUGH GENSCHER DOUBTED WHETHER HE HAD DONE SO WITH SUCH CLARITY. GORBACHEV SAID THAT THE SOVIET POSITION SHOULD BE MADE KNOWN TO EVERYBODY IN THE FRG AND THE GDR. UNIFICATION MUST BE AN ORDERLY PROCESS, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE RIGHTS OF THE FOUR POWERS. LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTERESTS WOULD HAVE TO BE BORNE IN MIND. UNIFICATION SHOULD BE EMBEDDED IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT. HENCE THE IMPORTANCE OF A CSCE SUMMIT.

5. GENSCHER SAID THAT THE RUSSIANS SEEMED TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN TWO LEVELS. ONE WAS WHAT THE GERMANS THEMSELVES DECIDED TO DO. THE SECOND WAS THOSE THINGS WHICH AFFECTED FOUR POWER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. GENSCHER HAD SAID THAT MUCH COULD BE DONE BELOW THE LEVEL OF FOUR POWER RIGHTS. DECISIONS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN ABOVE THE HEADS OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE, WHOSE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION COULD NOT BE QUALIFIED IN THAT WAY. BUT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FRG WHOLE-HEARTEDLY ACCEPTED FOUR POWER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, EVEN IF THE IMPORTANCE OF CARRYING THEM OUT HAD CHANGED. SHEVARDNADZE AT THIS POINT BEMOANED THE FAILURE OF SOVIET EFFORTS TO GET A MEETING OF THE FOUR POWERS, THOUGH THEY WERE KEEPING IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH FRANCE, THE US AND THE UK. GENSCHER REPLIED THAT, IN RESISTING A MEETING GOING WIDER THAN BERLIN, THE ALLIES WERE RESPONDING TO GERMAN REQUESTS. THE FRG WERE WILLING TO DISCUSS WIDER ISSUES WITH THE FOUR POWERS BUT THIS COULD ONLY HAPPEN ONCE THERE WAS A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT IN THE GDR. GENSCHER EXPLAINED HIS IDEA AS BEING THAT, ONCE THE ELECTIONS WERE OVER, THE FRG COULD TALK TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN THE GDR AND THE TWO GERMAN GOVERNMENTS MIGHT THEN INVITE THE FOUR TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS WITH THEM. IT WOULD BE BEST IF THESE DISCUSSIONS COULD BE HELD ON GERMAN SOIL. HENCE THE NOTION OF TWO PLUS FOUR. IT WAS CONCEIVABLE TO ENVISAGE POLITICAL DIRECTOR TALKS TO START WITH, WITH MINISTERIAL TALKS TO FOLLOW. BUT GENSCHER AND KOHL HAD ALSO DISCUSSED WITH THE RUSSIANS POSSIBLE PRE-CONDITIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF OTHER COUNTRIES. GENSCHER HAD UNDERLINED THAT GERMANY WANTED AN AGREEMENT ONLY WITH THE FOUR, WHO HAD SPECIFIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, THOUGH HE COULD IMAGINE REPORTING THE RESULT OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS TO A CSCE SUMMIT.

6. GENSCHER SAID THAT SHEVARDNADZE HAD ASKED ABOUT BORDERS. GENSCHER HAD REPLIED THAT HE HAD MADE CLEAR IN HIS SPEECHES THAT, ONCE ELECTIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE GDR, THE FRG WANTED A UNITED COUNTRY CONSISTING OF THE GDR, THE FRG AND BERLIN: NOT MORE, NOT LESS. THAT WOULD CONSTITUTE A GUARANTEE OF BORDERS TO ALL GERMANY'S NEIGHBOURS, WHICH WAS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO POLES.



7. SHEVARDNADZE HAD GONE ON TO TALK ABOUT SOVIET SECURITY INTERESTS (A POINT ALSO RAISED IN SEPARATE GORBACHEV/KOHL DISCUSSION).

SHEVARDNADZE BROUGHT UP THE QUESTION OF THE NEUTRALISATION OF EAST GERMANY, BUT WITHOUT INSISTING ON IT. GENSCHER HAD REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT WANT NEUTRALISATION AND NOTED THAT THE POLISH AND CZECH FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD EXPRESSED OPPOSITION TO THE IDEA. AT THE SAME TIME, THE FRG GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF EXTENDING THE NATO AREA. SHEVARDNADZE HAD THEN SAID THAT THE SOVIET TROOP PRESENCE IN THE GDR WOULD BE A PROBLEM. WHAT GUARANTEE WAS THERE THAT THREE MONTHS AFTER THE ELECTIONS THE GDR WOULD NOT TURN ROUND AND ASK FOR SOVIET TROOPS TO BE REMOVED? GENSCHER HAD REPLIED THAT THAT WOULD BE A MATTER FOR NEGOTIATION WITH THE GDR. WHAT IF THE GDR DID NOT EXIST BY THEN, ASKED SHEVARDNADZE. THEN YOU WOULD NEGOTIATE WITH US, SAID GENSCHER. GENSCHER'S IMPRESSION WAS THAT THIS WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT ISSUE OF ALL FOR THE SOVIET UNION, NOT JUST FOR SECURITY REASONS BUT ALSO FOR DOMESTIC REASONS. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IMMENSELY IMPORTANT FOR THE RUSSIANS TO HAVE THEIR FORCES IN THE GDR FOR A CERTAIN TIME, NOT FOR SECURITY BUT TO SAVE FACE WITH THEIR OWN PUBLIC OPINION.

SHEVARDNADZE HAD SHOWN SIGNIFICANT INTEREST IN QUICK STEPS TO DISARMAMENT. THOUGH HE HAD NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE BUNDESWEHR HE HAD COMMENTED ON THE FACT THAT THE FRG WAS HIGHLY ARMED: IF BOTH THE US AND RUSSIA REDUCED THEIR TROOP LEVELS TO 195,000, THAT WOULD MEAN THAT BOTH SUPER POWERS TOGETHER HAD FEWER TROOPS THAN THE FRG. GENSCHER HAD FOUND THAT DISARMAMENT AND THE IDEA OF A CSCE SUMMIT PLAYED A BIG PART IN SOVIET THINKING FOR TWO REASONS. THEY FORESAW THE COMPLETE BREAK UP OF THE CMEA AND THE WARSAW PACT AND WERE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO TAKE THEIR PLACE. THE RUSSIANS DID NOT CHERISH THE HOPE THAT NATO AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY WOULD BREAK UP.

ON THE CONTRARY, THEY WERE INTERESTED IN AN INCREASINGLY POWERFUL EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. THE RUSSIANS DID NOT APPEAR TO BAULK AT THE IDEA OF THE GDR BECOMING PART OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ONCE GERMANY WAS UNITED. NOR DID THEY APPEAR TO BAULK AT THE CONTINUED PROSPECT OF US TROOPS IN EUROPE. THEY ATTACHED IMPORTANCE TO THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF THE CSCE, WITH MEETINGS OF FOREIGN MINISTERS AND REGULAR SUMMITS, AS A MEANS OF SHOWING THEIR PUBLIC THAT THE WORLD HAD CHANGED IN A WAY WHICH WOULD ENABLE THEM TO JUSTIFY ALL THE CHANGES THEY HAD HAD TO SWALLOW.



8. GENSCHER COMMENTED THAT UNIFICATION WOULD CONFRONT THE SOVIET UNION WITH MAJOR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. BETWEEN 25-45 PER CENT OF THE SOVIET MARKET IN INDUSTRIALISED GOODS WAS TAKEN BY IMPORTS FROM THE GDR, PAID FOR BY THE RUSSIANS EITHER IN ENERGY OR IN ROUBLES. GENSCHER AND KOHL HAD SAID THAT THEY WERE AWARE OF THESE PROBLEMS AND WERE WILLING TO STAND IN AND ASSUME THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES. THE REAL FEAR WAS COLLAPSE AND CHAOS IN THE GDR. A PROCEDURE WAS NEEDED. PERHAPS THE FRG COULD ASSUME THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CITY OF BERLIN, BUT THEN LEIPZIG MIGHT ASK FOR THE SAME TREATMENT. GENSCHER CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE THOUGHT THE RUSSIANS ACCEPTED THAT THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE TO UNIFICATION, WITH ALL IT IMPLIED POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY, BUT THEY STILL HAD NOT THOUGHT THEIR WAY THROUGH THE SECURITY ASPECTS. IF THE WEST HELD FIRM, THEN THE RUSSIANS WOULD IN THE END ACQUIESCE.

9. BAKER SAID HE HAD HAD 4 HOURS WITH GORBACHEV, OF WHICH TWO HAD BEEN SPENT WITH GORBACHEV AND SHEVARDNADZE ALONE. HE HAD THEN SPENT 2 DAYS WITH SHEVARDNADZE ON ARMS CONTROL ISSUES. HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP'S FEARS THAT GERMAN UNIFICATION COULD RESULT IN A RESURGENCE OF RUSSIAN NATIONALISM WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION. HE HAD FOUND THE SOVIET VERY PREOCCUPIED WITH ABSOLUTE EQUALITY BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES ON EVERY ARMS CONTROL DETAIL: THEY DID NOT WANT TO GIVE A JOT MORE THAN THEY RECEIVED. THE RUSSIANS ACCEPTED REUNIFICATION AS INEVITABLE. THEY WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE GERMAN COMMITMENT TO EXISTING BORDERS (GENSCHER INTERJECTED THAT HE HAD EXPLAINED THE POSITION VERY CLEARLY). THEY WERE ALSO WORRIED ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS ON UNIFICATION FOR THE LONGER TERM. WOULD ASSURANCES GIVEN NOW BE VALID IN 5 YEARS' TIME? THE RUSSIANS NEEDED TO BE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS SO AS NOT TO LOSE FACE. THEY KEPT SAYING THEY WERE NOT PASSIVE OBSERVERS. BAKER HAD DRAWN A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE INTERNAL ASPECTS OF UNIFICATION, WHICH ONLY THE GERMANS COULD DECIDE, AND THE EXTERNAL ASPECTS, WHICH WERE A DIFFERENT MATTER. HE HAD EXPLAINED THAT THE FORUM OF THE FOUR POWERS ALONE WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE GERMANS. NOR IN THE US VIEW WAS THE CSCE THE RIGHT FRAMEWORK, THOUGH IT COULD RATIFY AND BLESS SOMETHING ALREADY AGREED. BAKER HAD MENTIONED THE TWO PLUS FOUR IDEA TO GORBACHEV, MAKING IT CLEAR THAT IT COULD ONLY OPERATE AFTER THE 19 MARCH ELECTIONS. GORBACHEV HAD BEEN ATTENTIVE AND INTERESTED, AND SAID THAT THIS MIGHT BE SUITABLE FOR THE SITUATION. HE MADE NO COMMITMENT AND HAD INDICATED HE MIGHT WANT TO SUGGEST A DIFFERENT APPROACH. BAKER HAD SAID THAT THE FRG LEADERSHIP WAS IN FAVOUR OF A UNITED GERMANY REMAINING IN NATO AND THAT THIS WAS THE STRONG VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES. WOULD THE RUSSIANS PREFER A NEUTRAL GERMANY WITH NO US FORCES ON ITS SOIL BUT EXERCISING TREMENDOUS ECONOMIC POWER: OR A GERMANY TIED TO NATO WITH NO EASTWARD PROJECTION? GORBACHEV SAID HE WAS ALREADY CONSIDERING THIS. ANY EXTENSION OF THE ZONE OF NATO WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE.



10. GENSCHER CONFIRMED THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE VERY ANXIOUS NOT TO SEE THE NATO AREA EXTENDED AND WERE EQUALLY KEEN TO KEEP THEIR TROOPS IN EAST GERMANY FOR SOME TIME. THE SECRETARY OF STATE COMMENTED THAT ONE COULD IMAGINE A GENEROUS TRANSITION PERIOD. GENSCHER SAID HE WAS NOT SURE THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD NAME A DATE, EG 1995, FOR THEIR DEPARTURE OR WHETHER THEY WOULD TRY TO CREATE LINKAGE WITH THE PRESENCE OF US TROOPS. THEY WOULD TRY TO DEVELOP THE NOTION OF SECURITY AIMS COMMON TO THE WHOLE OF EUROPE. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT, IF HE WERE A SOVIET GENERAL, HE WOULD BE WORRIED THAT, AFTER THE ELECTIONS, GDR PUBLIC OPINION COULD TURN AGAINST THE SOVIET PRESENCE. GENSCHER SAID THAT, AFTER UNIFICATION, THE GDR STANDARD OF LIVING WOULD INCREASE RAPIDLY. THE DISPARITY BETWEEN THE POSITION OF SOVIET TROOPS AND THE GROWING PROSPERITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE GDR COULD CREATE REAL PROBLEMS.

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