

CONFIDENTIAL
UK COMMS ONLY
FM BM BERLIN
TO IMMEDIATE BONN
TELNO 003

OF 091600Z MARCH 1990

AND TO IMMEDIATE FCO

INFO IMMEDIATE MOSCOW, WASHINGTON, PARIS, EAST BERLIN, UKDEL NATO
INFO PRIORITY WARSAW, ACTOR, CICC(G), EC POSTS, BRIXMIS

SIC

MODSH PASS TO CICC GERMANY AND BRIXMIS

GERMAN UNIFICATION: SOVIET VIEWS

SUMMARY

1. MAXIMYCHEV EXPLAINS SOVIET FEARS OF CRISIS AFTER 18 MARCH IF PARTS OF GDR OPT FOR ACCESSION UNDER ARTICLE 23.

DETAIL

2. WHEN I CALLED ON MAXIMYCHEV ON 8 MARCH TO INFORM HIM OF THE CHANGE OF NAME TO BRITISH MISSION, BERLIN, HE SPOKE OF SOVIET WORRIES ABOUT THE PROCESS OF UNIFICATION AFTER THE GDR ELECTIONS.

3. MAXIMYCHEV AGREED THAT PROGNOSSES OF COLLAPSE IN THE GDR HAD SO FAR PROVED EXAGGERATED. HE BELIEVED THAT THE SENAT'S WARNINGS HAD BEEN SINCERE, ALTHOUGH THE SAME MIGHT NOT HOLD TRUE FOR SOME STATEMENTS MADE IN BONN. FOR THE TIME BEING THE COUNTRY WAS RELATIVELY STABLE. BUT THERE WAS GRAVE CONCERN ABOUT THE FUTURE, PARTICULARLY IN THE SOUTH. BERGHOFER, WHOM HE HAD SEEN ON 4 MARCH, FORESAW ONE MILLION UNEMPLOYED THIS YEAR. PRODUCTION WAS FALLING AND THE EXODUS CONTINUED.

4. MAXIMYCHEV SAW A REAL DANGER OF A CRITICAL SITUATION ARISING AFTER 18 MARCH. THE PEOPLE WOULD EXPECT IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENTS. THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO DELIVER MIRACLES. THE MASSIVE AID PROMISED BY CHANCELLOR KOHL REMAINED TIED TO PRECONDITIONS AND WAS NOT MATERIALISING. IF THE GDR ELECTED AN SPD GOVERNMENT, THE WESTERN CDU MIGHT CONTINUE TO WITHHOLD FUNDS. UNDER ARTICLE 23 ANY PART OF THE GDR, EVEN A CITY, COULD DECIDE TO JOIN THE FRG, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE VIEWS OF THE GDR GOVERNMENT. ARTICLE 23 WAS A 'LEVER TO UNDERMINE THE GDR STATE'.

5. I SAID THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WANTED PEOPLE TO STAY IN THE GDR AND ITS POLICIES ON ECONOMIC UNION AND UNIFICATION WERE DIRECTED TO THAT END. MAXIMYCHEV ACCEPTED THIS. HE ALSO AGREED THAT THE GDR GOVERNMENT HAD THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE THE ARTICLE 23 ROUTE. HE DID NOT OBJECT TO THE IDEA OF THE WHOLE OF THE GDR JOINING THE FRG IN THIS WAY. BUT IF THE GDR GOVERNMENT ADOPTED A DIFFERENT POLICY AND SAXONY AND LEIPZIG, FOR EXAMPLE, NEVERTHELESS DECIDED FOR ARTICLE 23, THEN HE BELIEVED THE FOUR POWERS RESPONSIBLE FOR GERMANY SHOULD DECLARE THIS ROUTE TO UNITY INADMISSIBLE. MAXIMYCHEV BELIEVED THAT THIS SCENARIO OF POSSIBLE CHAOS LAY BEHIND SHEVARDNADZE'S MESSAGE (FCO TELNO 328 TO MOSCOW) ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED OVER THIS.

6. I POINTED OUT THAT DEVELOPMENTS SO FAR HAD BEEN ORDERLY AND ONE WOULD HOPE THAT THIS WOULD CONTINUE AFTER 18 MARCH. IN ANY EVENT AN EXTERNAL ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE A FRAMEWORK ON THE INTERNAL ASPECTS OF UNIFICATION WOULD BE VERY BADLY RECEIVED BY THE GERMANS AND COULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. MAXIMYCHEV SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THESE POINTS. HE THOUGHT HOWEVER THAT THE CONCERNS HE HAD DESCRIBED WOULD BE IN THE MINDS OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION AT THE MEETING OF THE SIX ON 14 MARCH. HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE SOVIET LINE WOULD BE AT THESE TALKS, BUT IN HIS VIEW DISCUSSION OUGHT TO GO BEYOND PROCEDURAL MATTERS. TOO MUCH TIME HAD ALREADY BEEN WASTED.

7. I ASKED HOW THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT REGARDED THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN BONN OVER THE POLISH WESTERN BORDER. MAXIMYCHEV SAID THAT GORBACHEV HAD DESCRIBED KOHL'S EARLIER POSITION AS A MISTAKE WHICH HAD NOW BEEN CORRECTED. HOWEVER, A DECLARATION BY THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND PARLIAMENTS WAS INSUFFICIENT EVEN IF FOLLOWED BY BILATERAL GERMAN/POLISH AGREEMENT. THE MATTER COULD ONLY BE SETTLED BY MULTILATERAL TREATY BY THE FOUR OR 35 OR BOTH. BORDERS AND SECURITY WOULD BE THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR A PEACE SETTLEMENT. IN FACT SUCH A SETTLEMENT WOULD REQUIRE ONLY A SHORT TEXT DEALING WITH THESE ASPECTS ONLY.

8. ON SECURITY MAXIMYCHEV FEARED THAT WESTERN INSISTENCE ON GERMANY'S MEMBERSHIP IN NATO WOULD BE A SERIOUS STUMBLING BLOCK. THERE WAS A RISK OF A REPEAT OF THE CONFIGURATION WHICH LED TO THE DIVISION OF GERMANY - NAMELY THE THREE POWERS AND THE FRG AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION. THE FOUR POWERS SHOULD SEEK A COMMON VIEW. OTHERWISE THEY WOULD FIND THEMSELVES STILL ARGUING WHILE UNIFICATION WAS TAKING PLACE. I COMMENTED THAT THE VIEWS OF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES ON THE EXTERNAL ASPECTS OF UNIFICATION WERE WELL KNOWN, BUT THEY ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTERESTS. THERE WAS NO WISH FOR CONFRONTATION.

9. MAXIMYCHEV ADDED THAT WE SHOULD NOT IGNORE THE INFLUENCE OF GERMAN UNIFICATION ON INTERNAL SOVIET POLITICS. A DISAPPEARANCE OF THE GDR IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH EXACERBATED FEARS OF A FOURTH REICH COULD BE THE END OF GORBACHEV.

10. MAXIMYCHEV CONCLUDED BY REGRETTING THAT IT HAD NOT PROVED POSSIBLE TO HAVE INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE FOUR MINISTERS IN BERLIN AS HE HAD PROPOSED. HE AGREED WITH MY SUGGESTION THAT THIS MADE IT ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN CLOSE BILATERAL CONTACTS.

COMMENT

11. AS REPORTED TO FCO BY TELEPHONE, THE US MINISTER SAW MAXIMYCHEV ON 7 MARCH ON INSTRUCTIONS TO PROBE THE BACKGROUND TO SHEVARDNADZE'S LATEST MESSAGE. MAXIMYCHEV TOLD GILMORE THAT THE RUSSIANS FEARED ARTICLE 23 MIGHT ATTRACT NOT ONLY PARTS OF THE GDR BUT ALSO OTHER FORMER GERMAN TERRITORIES (HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED SILESIA, AND POSSIBLY ALSO HAD IN MIND KOENIGSBERG AND ITS ENVIRONS). HE WAS APPARENTLY QUITE EMOTIONAL. AT MY MEETING WITH HIM HE SPOKE SPECIFICALLY ONLY OF THE GDR ALTHOUGH HE DID MENTION AT ONE POINT ARTICLE 116 OF THE BASIC LAW WHICH REFERS TO THE AREAS OF THE GERMAN REICH ON 31 DECEMBER 1937.

12. AS HE SHOWED ON THIS OCCASION MAXIMYCHEV HAS A COOL HEAD. HE SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE DANGER OF A FOURTH REICH. BUT THIS MEETING CONFIRMED THAT, AS SIR RODRIC BRAITHWAITE HAS REPORTED IN HIS TELNO 321, SOME RUSSIANS DO HAVE THESE FEARS AND ARE LOOKING FOR REASSURANCE.

BURTON

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION

14

ADVANCE

44 13

.BERLIN/INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS
.(WIDE)
PS
PS/PUS
MR P J WESTON
MR GREENSTOCK
HD/WED

HD/SOVIET D
HD/NEWS
RESIDENT CLERK
MR S MCCARTHY SEC(NATO/UKP)MOD
WG CDR ANDREWS DCTS NATO MODUK
PRESS SECRETARY NO 10

MRS GLOVER LEGAL ADVISERS

NNNN