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FM BONN

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 328

OF 151851Z MARCH 90

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, PARIS, MOSCOW, BM BERLIN, EAST BERLIN
INFO PRIORITY UKDEL NATO

THE ALLIES AND GERMAN UNIFICATION

SUMMARY

1. FRG PRESS REFLECTS WIDESPREAD FEELING IN BONN THAT FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS CURRENTLY VERY TENSE. CONCERN TOO ABOUT US ATTITUDE ON POLISH WESTERN BORDER. UK UNSCATHED SINCE YOUR VISIT.

DETAIL

2. OFFICIAL SOURCES HERE HAVE FOR SOME TIME BEEN ADMITTING TO REAL DIFFICULTIES IN THE FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONSHIP, CAUSED PRIMARILY BY KOHL'S FAILURE TO ADOPT A MORE SATISFACTORY POSITION ON THE POLISH WESTERN BORDER, AND EXACERBATED BY THE HARDENING OF IT ANNOUNCED ON 2 MARCH (MY TELNO 266). SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE THIS WEEK QUOTED AS EVIDENCE OF THIS MALAISE THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN FOR THE POLES TO BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PART IN DISCUSSION AMONG THE SIX OF THE POLISH/GERMAN BORDER. THE 'GENERAL ANZEIGER' OF 15 MARCH SPEAKS OF THE FRENCH HAVING BEEN IRRITATED ENOUGH TO PUT ON THE BRAKES, AND ARGUES THAT THERE HAS BEEN A CONSCIOUS FRENCH DECISION TO STOP REFERRING TO 'TWO PLUS FOUR', TO REMOVE THE IMPLICATION THAT GERMAN INTERESTS HAVE PRIORITY. 'DIE WELT' SIMILARLY NOTES THAT KASTRUP'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON 14 MARCH DID NOT USE THE TERM 'TWO PLUS FOUR'. MITTERRAND IS REPORTED TO HAVE TELEPHONED KOHL ON 14 MARCH, TO STRESS HIS WISH TO REPAIR THE RELATIONSHIP, BUT THE OVERALL IMPRESSION REMAINS ONE OF CONTINUING TENSION. MITTERRAND'S RECEPTION THE SAME DAY OF LAFONTAINE, KOHL'S LIKELY SPD CHALLENGER IN NEXT DECEMBER'S FEDERAL ELECTION, IS ALSO REPORTED, ALONG WITH THE COMMENT THAT THEY REACHED A LARGE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT ON GERMAN UNIFICATION.

3. THE 'GENERAL ANZEIGER' OF 15 MARCH ATTRIBUTES TO US SOURCES A SUGGESTION THAT THE AMERICAN LINE ON THE WESTERN POLISH BORDER IS EXPECTED TO HARDEN CONSIDERABLY DURING NEXT WEEK'S POLISH STATE VISIT TO WASHINGTON. THIS CHIMES WITH REPORTS FROM AUSWAERTIGES AMT SOURCES THAT THE FRG EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAS FOR OVER A WEEK BEEN PREDICTING A TOUGHER US LINE ON THAT SUBJECT, IN RESPONSE TO MOUNTING PRESSURE IN CONGRESS.

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4. THE UK BY CONTRAST HAS THIS WEEK ESCAPED UNFAVOURABLE MENTION, IN PART WITHOUT DOUBT BECAUSE OF THE WARMTH CREATED BY YOUR RECENT VISIT (MY TELNO 315).

MALLABY

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.BERLIN/INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS
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