

RESTRICTED

FM PRAGUE

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 236

OF 191435Z MARCH 90

AND TO INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, BONN, WARSAW, BUDAPEST, VIENNA
AND TO INFO PRIORITY EAST BERLIN

VISIT TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA BY WEIZSACKER AND GENSCHER

SUMMARY

1. SUCCESSFUL VISIT BY WEIZSACKER BURIES THE HATCHET DEEPER. CZECHOSLOVAK SUPPORT FOR A UNITED GERMANY WITHIN EXISTING FRONTIERS. GENSCHER IN TALKS WITH DIENSTBIER. FRG NON-COMMITTAL ON SITING OF EBRD IN PRAGUE.

DETAIL

2. FRG PRESIDENT WEIZSACKER PAID A SYMBOLIC ONE-DAY VISIT TO PRAGUE ON 15 MARCH, 51 YEARS TO THE DAY SINCE HITLER'S ONLY VISIT. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY GENSCHER, WHO HAD TALKS WITH DIENSTBIER WHILE WEIZSACKER WAS CLOSETED WITH HAVEL. THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS DISCUSSED THE OPENING OF CULTURAL CENTRES AND NEW BORDER-CROSSING POINTS. DIENSTBIER ASKED FOR WEST GERMAN SUPPORT FOR THE SITING OF THE EBRD IN PRAGUE, TO WHICH THE GERMANS REPLIED NON-COMMITTALLY.

3. AFTER THESE PRIVATE SESSIONS HAVEL AND WEIZSACKER MADE SPEECHES, BOTH ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF POST-WAR RAPPROCHEMENT IN DEFTLY DRAFTED TERMS. HAVEL SAID THE BLAME FOR HITLER'S TAKEOVER OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA LAY NOT ONLY WITH THE SUDETEN GERMANS AND THE GOVERNMENTS OF FRANCE AND BRITAIN, BUT ALSO WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S OWN LEADERSHIP, WHICH HAD NOT DARED RISK THE SACRIFICES RESISTANCE WOULD HAVE BROUGHT. NEGLECT OF MINORITY RIGHTS HAD ALIENATED CITIZENS OF GERMAN ORIGIN WHO CONSEQUENTLY COLLUDED WITH HITLER. BUT THEY WERE NOT COLLECTIVELY GUILTY, AND THE EXPULSION OF THE GERMAN POPULATION AFTER THE WAR HAD BEEN IMMORAL, THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS A NEW TOTALITARIANISM.

4. THE FRG HAD STARTED THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IRON CURTAIN, SAID HAVEL, AND EUROPE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR THAT. IF A UNITED GERMANY CONFIRMED THE VALIDITY OF ALL EXISTING BORDERS AND DEALT WITH THE NEO-NAZI PROBLEM, THEN EUROPE NEED NOT BE AFRAID

OF IT. GERMANY COULD THEN BE A USEFUL MOTOR FOR PAN-EUROPEAN UNIFICATION.

5. WEIZSACKER SAID IT WAS STILL NECESSARY TO OVERCOME DEEP-SEATED CZECHOSLOVAK DISTRUST OF GERMANY. HE THANKED HAVEL FOR MAKING HIS FIRST TRIP ABROAD TO BERLIN AND MUNICH AND HOPED A BRIDGE OF UNDERSTANDING WOULD BE BUILT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE THANKED CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND HAVEL, FOR SUPPORTING GERMANY'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

COMMENT

6. THIS WAS GENSCHER'S FIRST VISIT TO PRAGUE SINCE THE REVOLUTION. WE MAY BE ABLE TO PICK UP MORE ON THE REAL SUBSTANCE OF THIS VISIT AT AN EC BRIEFING ON 19 MARCH.

LAING

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION

172

MAIN

159

LIMITED
EED
JAU/EED
WED
SOVIET D
KIEV UNIT
ACDD
ECD(E)
MAED
ECD (I)
SECPOL D
PUSD
CSCE UNIT
NEWS D
INFO D
NAD
PLANNERS
RESEARCH D
RMD
CRD

ECONOMIC ADVISERS
LEGAL ADVISERS
CLAIMS D
PS
PS/MR MAUDE
PS/MR WALDEGRAVE
PS/PUS
MR P J WESTON
MR GILLMORE
MR TOMKYS
MR BAYNE
MR BROOMFIELD
MR GREENSTOCK
MR GOULDEN
MISS SPENCER
MR LING
MR GORE-BOOTH
MR BEAMISH
MR KERR
MR TAIT.

PAGE 2
RESTRICTED

ADDITIONAL 13.

BERLIN/INNER GERMAN(WIDE)
PS/NOIO.

NNNN