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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 342

OF 191448Z MARCH 90

INFO IMMEDIATE EAST BERLIN, BM BERLIN

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EAST BERLIN TELNO 201 : GDR ELECTION

SUMMARY

1. KOHL ON HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ELECTION, WHAT MADE IT POSSIBLE, AND THE WAY FORWARD. OUTCOME WIDELY SEEN AS SUBSTANTIAL PERSONAL SUCCESS FOR HIM. LAFONTAINE SAYS WAIT AND SEE IF KOHL CAN DELIVER.

DETAIL

2. SPEAKING ON TELEVISION YESTERDAY EVENING, KOHL SAID THAT THIS HISTORIC EVENT HAD BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY THE PEACEFUL REVOLUTION IN THE GDR, THE SUPPORT OF THE FRG'S WESTERN ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE US, AND BY GORBACHEV'S PERESTROIKA. THE EAST GERMANS HAD VOTED AGAINST ANY FORM OF EXTREMISM AND IN FAVOUR OF UNITY WITH THE FRG, A LIBERAL CONSTITUTION AND A SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY. THE BEST COURSE NOW WOULD BE FOR THEM TO STAY AT HOME AND HELP REVIVIFY THEIR HOMELAND. THE FIRST PRIORITY WAS TO MAKE A REALITY OF ECONOMIC, MONETARY AND SOCIAL UNION. IN PARALLEL WORK WOULD PROCEED ON THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF UNIFICATION IN THE TWO PLUS FOUR CONTEXT, FOR COMPLETION BY THE LATE AUTUMN. ONLY THEREAFTER WOULD COME UNIFICATION.

3. FOR THE SPD VOGEL (PARTY CHAIRMAN) ATTRIBUTED THE PARTY'S DEFEAT IN THE ELECTION TO THE WIDESPREAD PERCEPTION OF THE CDU AS THE PARTY BEST PLACED TO PRODUCE THE MATERIAL GOODS. LAFONTAINE (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN) SAID THAT KOHL HAD PROMISED A GREAT DEAL. IT REMAINED TO BE SEEN IF HE COULD DELIVER.

4. PRESS COMMENT STRESSES THAT THE RESULT REFLECTS A PERSONAL VICTORY FOR KOHL AND SUPPORT FOR HIS POLICIES OF SWIFT UNIFICATION VIA ARTICLE 23 AND THE INTRODUCTION OF MONETARY AND SOCIAL UNION. IN A TYPICAL COMMENT 'WELT' (CONSERVATIVE) SAID THE VOTE WAS ONE IN FAVOUR OF UNITY AND IMMEDIATE CONCRETE HELP, BUT ALSO A PERSONAL SUCCESS FOR KOHL, WHO HAD ACTIVELY INVOLVED HIMSELF IN THE ALLIANCE FOR GERMANY'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND HAD COME TO BE SEEN AS

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THEIR STANDARD BEARER. MANY VOTED FOR HIM RATHER THAN THE ALLIANCE ITSELF. LAFONTAINE AND HIS POLICIES BORE SOME OF THE BLAME FOR THE SPD (EAST)'S POOR RESULTS.

5. THE ''FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU'' (SPD) SAYS THE EAST GERMANS VOTED NOT FOR THE FORMER CDU BLOCK PARTY IN THE GDR BUT FOR THE CDU IN THE FRG. WHICH THEY IDENTIFIED WITH PROSPERITY AND SWIFT UNIFICATION. IT WAS NOW UP TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC TO SATISFY EAST GERMAN EXPECTATIONS. ''HANDELSBLATT'' (FINANCIAL DAILY) TAKES A SIMILAR LINE, BUT POINTS OUT THAT HARD WORK WILL BE NEEDED TO PRODUCE THE DESIRED UPSWING IN THE GDR ECONOMY, IN ADDITION TO THE LEGISLATION NEEDED TO OPEN IT UP.

6. SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS POINT OUT THAT THE EXODUS FROM THE GDR WILL ONLY COME TO AN END ONCE ITS INHABITANTS BECOME CONVINCED THAT EFFECTIVE ACTION IS BEING TAKEN TO IMPROVE THEIR ECONOMIC SITUATION.

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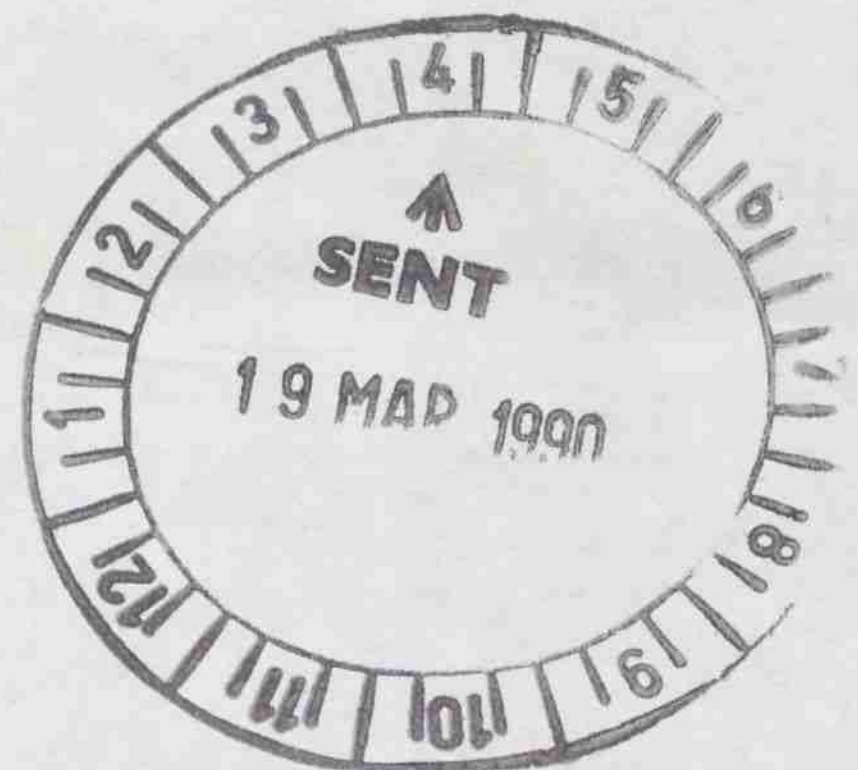
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