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BRITISH-GERMAN SUMMIT 30 MARCH : GERMAN MEDIA REACTION

SUMMARY

1. THE SUMMIT DOMINATED THE WEEKEND NEWSPAPERS AND WAS REPORTED EXTENSIVELY IN THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA. SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS COMMENT ON THE GOOD ATMOSPHERE AS EVIDENCE OF THE IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. EDITORIALS CONCENTRATE ON APPARENT DIFFERENCES IN POLICIES ON EUROPEAN UNION.

DETAIL

2. THE SUMMIT WAS THE MAIN NEWS ITEM IN THE MAJORITY OF LEADING GERMAN NEWSPAPERS ON 31 MARCH.

3. REPORTS OF THE JOINT POST-SUMMIT PRESS CONFERENCE FOCUSED ON THE DISCUSSION OF THE THREE 'ESSENTIALS FOR OUR CONTINUED SECURITY' SET OUT BY THE PRIME MINISTER IN HER SPEECH IN CAMBRIDGE ON 29 MARCH: GERMAN MEMBERSHIP OF NATO, THE CONTINUED PRESENCE IN GERMANY OF AMERICAN AND OTHER STATIONED FORCES, AND THE RETENTION BY NATO OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BASED IN GERMANY. MRS THATCHER'S INDICATION THAT SHE WAS PREPARED TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF BRITISH FORCES IN GERMANY WAS NOTED. SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS REPORTED ALLEGED DIFFERENCES OVER THE MODERNISATION OF SNF, WITH KOHL QUOTED AS SAYING THAT CHANGES HAD TO BE MADE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF EVENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE. THE MEDIA ALSO REPORTED THAT THE QUESTION OF A BORDER GUARANTEE FOR POLAND WAS NO LONGER IN DISPUTE BETWEEN BONN AND LONDON, THE LATTER HAVING BEEN REASSURED BY KOHL'S RECENT STATEMENTS. IT WAS NOTED HOWEVER THAT HE HAD ASTONISHED HIS BRITISH HOSTS AT THE KOENIGSWINTER CONFERENCE BY SUGGESTING THAT POLAND SHOULD APOLOGISE FOR THE WRONGS DONE TO THE GERMAN POPULATION THERE IN THE IMMEDIATE POST-WAR PERIOD.

4. EDITORIAL COMMENT CONCENTRATED ON THE FUTURE STRUCTURE OF EUROPE. FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG (CONSERVATIVE) SAID THAT THE ONUS WOULD NOW BE ON THE FRG'S PARTNERS TO PROVE THAT THE WORD 'EUROPE' HAD NOT BEEN A COVER FOR FEAR OF UNITED GERMANY. SUEDEDEUTSCHE

ZEITUNG (INDEPENDENT) COMMENTED THAT KOHL WAS RIGHT TO SAY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER COULD NOT SEEK SIMULTANEOUSLY TO BIND IN THE GERMANS AND CLAIM FREEDOM OF MANOEUVRE FOR THE UK. EUROPE NEEDED NOT AN INSULAR UK BUT ONE COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING EUROPE FROM WITHIN. WESTDEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG (INDEPENDENT) COMMENTED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S CONCENTRATION ON THE CSCE PROCESS CONTRASTED WITH THE CHANCELLOR'S STRESS ON INTEGRATION IN THE EC. GENERAL ANZEIGER (INDEPENDENT) THOUGHT IT OBVIOUS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS COUNTING ON SETTING MOVEMENT THROUGH CSCE AGAINST THE IDEA OF FURTHER EC INTEGRATION. THIS HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING A GERMAN POLICY WHICH MADE ROOM FOR PROGRESS ON BOTH FRONTS, AND THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CREATING SUCH A POLICY WITHOUT THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE FRANCO-GERMAN COOPERATION. ACCORDING TO RHEINDISCHE POST (CONSERVATIVE), KOHL'S INTERNATIONAL STANDING HAD INCREASED IN RECENT WEEKS, WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER'S HAD DROPPED BECAUSE OF PROBLEMS AT HOME.

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