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OF 271420Z JUNE 90
INFO PRIORITY UKREP BRUSSELS
INFO ROUTINE DUBLIN, BONN, ROME, MADRID, THE HAGUE

FRAME GENERAL
DUBLIN EUROPEAN COUNCIL : FRENCH PRESS REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. SOME UNCERTAINTY IN THE FRENCH PRESS ABOUT HOW BEST TO CHARACTERISE THIS COUNCIL. GENERAL MESSAGE THAT IT HAS BEEN RELATIVELY PRODUCTIVE AND HARMONIOUS, BUT THAT, AID TO THE USSR PROVOKED DISSENSION AND THERE WILL BE BATTLES AHEAD ON EMU AND POLITICAL UNION.

DETAIL

2. THE FRENCH PRESS HAS HAD SOME DIFFICULTY IN FINDING A DOMINANT THEME FOR REPORTING ON THE OUTCOME OF THE SUMMIT. WHILE SEVERAL PAPERS OPT FOR HEADLINING DIVISIONS AMONG THE TWELVE ON THE ISSUE OF AID FOR THE USSR, LE FIGARO CARRIES A REFERENCE BY PRESIDENT MITTERRAND TO THE AGREEABLE NATURE OF DISCUSSIONS AT THE SUMMIT, AND THE BUSINESS DAILY, TRIBUNE DE L'EXPANSION STRESSES THAT THE BALL IS NOW IN GORBACHEV'S COURT. THE GENERAL MESSAGE IS THAT THE DUBLIN COUNCIL HAS BEEN PRODUCTIVE AND FOR THE MOST PART HARMONIOUS. THE FACT THAT DECISIONS HAVE BEEN POSTPONED ON THE TWO ISSUES THAT WERE BUILT UP BEFOREHAND AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ON THE AGENDA, AID TO THE USSR AND STRASBOURG'S ROLE AS AN EC SITE, IS PASSED OVER LIGHTLY.

3. AS USUAL SPECIAL ATTENTION IS GIVEN TO MRS THATCHER'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DISCUSSIONS. REPORTING ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTED WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS A 'TIFF' BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND PRESIDENT MITTERRAND OVER RESPECTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION RATES OF THE UK AND FRANCE. SEVERAL OF TODAY'S PAPERS SEE BRITISH RESERVATIONS AS THE MAIN REASON WHY AGREEMENT ON AID TO THE USSR PROVED ELUSIVE. (EG LIBERATION - QUOTE MME THATCHER A IMPOSE LE 'WAIT AND SEE' UNQUOTE, A GOOD EXAMPLE OF FRENCH LINGUISTIC PRAGMATISM EXCLAM). WHILE UK ACQUIESCENCE IN THE CONVENING OF IGCS IN DECEMBER IS NOTED, SOME PAPERS SUGGEST THAT WE ARE SIMPLY KEEPING OUR POWDER DRY FOR WHEN THE REAL BATTLES ON EMU AND POLITICAL UNION GET UNDERWAY. IN EACH OF THESE CASES THE TONE

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OF REPORTING IS FACTUAL OR MILDLY IRONIC RATHER THAN CRITICAL.

4. THE RIGHT OF CENTRE LE FIGARO CARRIES AN INTERVIEW WITH A FORMER UDF MINISTER WHO IMPLICITLY SUPPORTS THE UK POSITION ON AID TO THE USSR AND INTERPRETS FRENCH ZEAL IN THIS AREA AS A REFLECTION OF A COMPULSION TO BE NICE TO CHANCELLOR KOHL.

5. THE COMMUNIST DAILY 'L'HUMANITE' EXPRESSES ALARM OVER WHAT IT SEES AS A DANGEROUS ACCELERATION TOWARDS SUPRANATIONALISM AND ACCUSES PRESIDENT MITTERRAND OF ABANDONING THE NATIONAL INTEREST IN HIS PURSUIT OF POLITICAL UNION.

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