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FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY

MR RIDLEY'S INTERVIEW IN THE SPECTATOR

SUMMARY

1. GERMAN PRESS REPORTS INTERVIEW PROMINENTLY. MUCH QUOTATION FROM IT. ANGER AND INDIGNATION THE MAIN REACTION BUT ALSO A SUPERIOR, SOMETIMES HUMOROUS DISMISSIVENESS. GENSCHER'S PRIVATE REACTION IS DISMISSIVE.

DETAIL

2. IN THE RELAXED SETTING OF A PARTY YESTERDAY EVENING, GENSCHER SAID TO MISS NEVILLE-JONES, CLAPPING HER ON THE SHOULDER 'THE WHOLE THING IS SO RIDICULOUS, IT WILL NOT HAVE ANY EFFECT'. TELTSCHIK, WHEN I MENTIONED MR RIDLEY'S WITHDRAWAL, SMILED AND SHRUGGED HIS SHOULDERS. HAVING GIVEN THE SHARP REACTION IN MINISTER OF STATE STAVENHAGEN'S STATEMENT (MY TELNO 845) THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS EVIDENTLY DECIDED TO DISMISS THE AFFAIR AND PLAY IT COOL.

3. TODAY'S GERMAN PRESS, LIKE LAST EVENING'S TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAMMES, REPORTS MR RIDLEY'S INTERVIEW PROMINENTLY AND EXTENSIVELY. THERE IS MUCH QUOTATION FROM THE INTERVIEW. MR RIDLEY'S WITHDRAWAL IS NOTED, AND SOME PAPERS REPORT THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS AT QUESTION TIME. MANY PAPERS REFER TO THE SPECTATOR'S CARTOON OF KOHL WITH A HITLER MOUSTACHE. THE STATEMENT BY STAVENHAGEN IS WIDELY REPORTED.

4. THE MAIN THEME OF THE MANY LEADERS IN TODAY'S PRESS IS ANGER AND INDIGNATION. THERE IS ALSO A SUPERIOR AND SOMETIMES HUMOROUS DISMISSIVENESS. TYPICAL OF THIS IS LAMBSDORFF'S REMARK THAT MR RIDLEY MUST HAVE BEEN DRUNK OR NOT HAVE RECOVERED FROM ENGLAND'S DEFEAT IN THE WORLD CUP. OR THE LEADING ARTICLE IN THE BONN GENERAL ANZEIGER, WHICH CONCLUDES THAT WHAT MR RIDLEY SAYS WILL IN FUTURE BE WORTH LESS - IF IT EVER HAD ANY WEIGHT. THE MAJOR NEWSPAPERS DIE WELT AND SUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG SAY MR RIDLEY'S RETRACTION IS NOT ENOUGH. GERMANY'S MOST SERIOUS CENTRE RIGHT NEWSPAPER, THE FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG, SAYS MR RIDLEY MUST BE OUT OF HIS MIND. THE SUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG SEES WIDER SIGNIFICANCE IN MR RIDLEY'S REMARKS, SAYING THAT THEY CANNOT BE DISMISSED AS THE ECCENTRIC VIEWS OF A LITTLE ENGLANDER. MANY NEWSPAPERS SEE MR RIDLEY AS CLOSE TO THE PRIME MINISTER. THE EDITOR OF THE CENTRE RIGHT DUSSELDORF NEWSPAPER RHEINISCHE POST SAYS MR RIDLEY'S SCANDALOUS ALLEGATIONS REVEAL A LOT ABOUT THE THOUGHTS OF GERMANY'S BRITISH FRIENDS.

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