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GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO GERMANY: 9-10 NOVEMBER

SUMMARY

1. SUCCESSFUL VISIT WITH NO SURPRISES. SIGNATURE OF UMBRELLA TREATY ON BILATERAL RELATIONS AND TREATY ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION. ECONOMIC COMMISSION SET UP TO GIVE ADVICE ON RESTRUCTURING SOVIET ECONOMY. KOHL UNDERTAKES TO LOBBY WESTERN PARTNERS FOR AID TO SOVIET UNION. SOVIET CONCERN ABOUT REMAINING TROOPS IN EX-GDR.

DETAIL

2. PRESIDENT GORBACHEV PAID HIS FIRST VISIT TO UNITED GERMANY FROM 9-10 NOVEMBER, ACCOMPANIED BY FOREIGN MINISTER SHEVARDNADZE, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS SITARYAN AND CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF, GENERAL MOISSEEV. ON 9 NOVEMBER HE HAD LUNCH WITH PRESIDENT VON WEIZSAECKER (PLUS WIVES), AND THEN HAD TALKS WITH KOHL (WHILE HIS SOVIET COLLEAGUES MET THEIR GERMAN OPPOSITE NUMBERS). THEN CAME A PLENARY DISCUSSION, AFTER WHICH KOHL AND GENSCHER SIGNED THE TREATY ON GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS, PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION. AT THE SAME TIME SITARYAN AND HAUSSMANN (ECONOMICS MINISTER) SIGNED THE TREATY ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND SHEVARDNADZE AND BLUM (LABOUR MINISTER) SIGNED A LABOUR AGREEMENT. IN THE EVENING THERE WAS A FORMAL DINNER. AFTER EARLY MORNING MEETINGS ON 10 NOVEMBER WITH PARTY LEADERS LAMSDORFF (FDP), WAIGEL (CSU), AND VOGEL AND LAFONTAINE (SPD), GORBACHEV THEN VISITED KOHL'S HOME REGION IN THE RHEINLAND PALATINATE, WHILE GENSCHER TOOK SHEVARDNADZE TO HALLE.

3. KASTRUP, THE MFA'S POLITICAL DIRECTOR, BRIEFED EC HEADS OF MISSION ON 12 NOVEMBER. HE SAID THAT BOTH GERMANY AND THE SOVIET UNION REGARDED THE NEW PHASE IN BILATERAL RELATIONS AS INSEPARABLE FROM THE PROCESS OF PAN-EUROPEAN INTEGRATION. IT WAS CLEAR THAT

THE RUSSIANS UNDERSTOOD THE NEW OPPORTUNITIES WHICH WERE NOW ARISING AS A RESULT OF THE RECENT CHANGES IN EUROPE. GORBACHEV'S AFTER-DINNER SPEECH ON 9 NOVEMBER HAD BEEN 'MOST REMARKABLE', WITH MUCH EMPHASIS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST BETWEEN NATIONS. GORBACHEV HAD REFERRED TO THE GERMANS' FAITH IN THE POSSIBILITY OF DEMOCRACY IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE RUSSIANS' FAITH IN THE PERMANENCE OF GERMAN DEMOCRACY, WHICH HAD LEARNED THE LESSONS OF ITS NAZI PAST. THE GERMANS FELT THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR SIMILAR EXPERIENCE OF BUILDING DEMOCRACY OUT OF DICTATORSHIP THEY HAD MUCH TO OFFER THE SOVIET UNION.

ECONOMIC

4. IT HAD BEEN AGREED THAT A BILATERAL ECONOMIC WORKING GROUP SHOULD BE SET UP QUICKLY TO GIVE ADVICE TO THE SOVIET UNION ON RESTRUCTURING ITS ECONOMY. ANOTHER WORKING GROUP WOULD DISCUSS HOW TO PROCEED WITH THE 400 ODD TREATIES CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND EX-GDR. AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, KOHL HAD STRESSED THE NEED TO GIVE ACTIVE SUPPORT TO SOVIET REFORM PROCESSES AND HAD UNDERTAKEN TO APPEAL TO GERMANY'S WESTERN PARTNERS FOR CONCRETE HELP FOR THE SOVIET UNION. KASTRUP SAID HE WAS NOT SURE WHETHER THIS WOULD INCLUDE FOOD AID, BUT DID NOT RULE THAT OUT. HE ADDED, IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION, THAT SOVIET EXPECTATIONS OF KOHL AS CHAMPION OF THEIR INTERESTS EXTENDED BEYOND THE ECONOMIC SPHERE TO THE MORE GENERAL QUESTION OF THE CREATION OF A NEW PAN-EUROPEAN STRUCTURE. HE ALSO IMPLIED INDIRECTLY THAT KOHL'S HELP COULD BE SEEN AS A FAVOUR IN RETURN FOR WHAT GORBACHEV HAD DONE TO PROMOTE THE UNIFICATION OF GERMANY.

REMAINING SOVIET FORCES IN THE EX-GDR

5. THERE HAD BEEN MUCH DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REMAINING SOVIET FORCES IN THE FORMER GDR. GORBACHEV'S CONCERN HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY EVIDENT DURING HIS SPEECH AT DINNER ON 9 NOVEMBER. THERE WERE TWO PROBLEMS: THE DIFFICULTIES ARISING FROM THE SOVIET TROOPS' INDISCIPLINED BEHAVIOUR (DRUGS, DRINK, CRIME), AND THE ANIMOSITY FELT BY THE POPULATION OF THE EX-GDR TOWARDS THE 'BAYONETS WHICH HAD UPHELD A HATED REGIME'. IT HAD BEEN CLEAR TO THE GERMANS THAT ANY HUMILIATING INCIDENTS CONCERNING SOVIET SOLDIERS MIGHT CAUSE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR GORBACHEV DOMESTICALLY, BY PROVIDING AMMUNITION FOR OLD THINKERS, WHO WERE UNHAPPY WITH RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY. GENSCHER AND STOLTENBERG HAD EMPHASISED THAT THEY WANTED TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE RUSSIANS OVER ALL THIS, AND HAD

URGED THAT THE MIXED COMMISSION TO BE SET UP AS A RESULT OF THE TREATY ON STATIONING AND WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET FORCES SHOULD MEET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

GULF

6. SHEVARDNADZE HAD BEEN PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE CHANCES OF A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT. OTHERWISE NOTHING NEW.

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7. SHEVARDNADZE REPORTED ON HIS RECENT DISCUSSION WITH BAKER ABOUT HOW TO WORK OUT A COMPROMISE ON THE PROBLEM OVER THE KIEV MILITARY DISTRICT. HE DID NOT GO INTO DETAIL BUT SAID THAT BOTH SIDES AGREED ON THE NEED TO TALK TO THE RELEVANT PARTIES, ESPECIALLY TURKEY.

8. SHEVARDNADZE TRIED TO GET THE GERMANS INVOLVED AS INTERMEDIARIES BETWEEN THE US AND SOVIET UNION IN RESOLVING THE OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES OVER CSBMS. GENSCHER REFUSED, MAKING IT CLEAR THAT THIS WAS NOT A GERMAN PROBLEM. KASTRUP SAID THAT SHEVARDNADZE HAD SEEMED INTENT ON FINDING SOLUTIONS TO THE REMAINING AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT.

INTERNAL

9. GORBACHEV HAD MADE CLEAR DURING HIS BREAKFAST WITH LAMBSDORFF THAT HE WAS VERY PREOCCUPIED WITH THE NATIONALITIES QUESTION AND THE TENDENCY TOWARDS WHAT HE CALLED 'THE LEBANONISATION' OF EUROPE. HE HAD INDICATED THAT THE UNION TREATY WOULD BE PUBLISHED SOON.

COMMENT

10. NO CONCRETE RESULTS, OTHER THAN THE AGREEMENT TO SET UP THE SPECIAL ECONOMIC COMMISSION TO ADVISE ON THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE SOVIET ECONOMY. THE GERMAN PUBLIC REACTION REFLECTED SYMPATHY FOR THE CURRENT SOVIET PREDICAMENT BUT WAS RELATIVELY LOW KEY: THERE WAS NONE OF THE EUPHORIA OF GORBACHEV'S FIRST VISIT IN JUNE 1989.

11. NONETHELESS, THE VISIT IS CLEARLY REGARDED BY THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AS HAVING MADE A WORTHWHILE CONTRIBUTION TO THE BUILDING UP OF RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH KOHL CONTINUES TO REGARD AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TASKS CONFRONTING

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