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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

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INFO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 011545Z UKM'S NEW YORK AND OTTAWA (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY) UKDEL NATO WASHINGTON UKREP BRUSSELS INFO ROUTINE PARIS MOSCOW BMG BERLIN EAST BERLIN C10010 INFO SAVING ATHENS EMBASSY BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN DUBLIN THE HAGUE LUXEMBOURG ROME ANKARA LISBON MADRID OSLO REYKJAVIK STOCKHOLM HELSINKI VIENNA BERNE UKDEL STRASBOURG WARSAW GG'S IN THE FRG

TEMPORARILY RETURNED J. Gray 16/6/2015

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RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)  
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

MY TWO IPT'S : CHANCELLOR KOHL

1. THE NEW CHANCELLOR (BORN 1930) IS LITTLE KNOWN OUTSIDE GERMANY. HE IS WELL DISPOSED TOWARDS THE UK, HAVING VISITED LONDON IN 1976 AND AGAIN LAST JANUARY, WHEN HE HAD TALKS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER MINISTERS. HIS TWO CHILDREN HAVE RECENTLY BEEN STUDYING IN BIRMINGHAM. BUT HIS CONTACTS WITH THE UK HAVE OTHERWISE BEEN LIMITED, AS THEY HAVE WITH ALMOST ALL OTHER COUNTRIES. HE HAS TRIED TO DEVELOP HIS CONTACTS WITH THE US, WHICH HE VISITED LAST YEAR. AS A DISCIPLE OF ADENAUER HE HAS A STRONG COMMITMENT TO THE FRANCO GERMAN RELATIONSHIP. HE SPENDS HIS HOLIDAYS IN AUSTRIA.
2. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN HARD TO SEE KOHL BECOMING CHANCELLOR. HE SEEMED FATED TO BE OVERTAKEN BY ONE OF HIS CDU/CSU RIVALS, WITH MORE OBVIOUS QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE JOB, AND AT THIS STAGE IT IS HARD TO SEE IN HIM THE MAKINGS OF AN OUTSTANDING CHANCELLOR. HE CAN BE SENTIMENTAL, DIDACTIC,  
HE IS IMPATIENT BUT NOT INCISIVE. HE READS WIDELY BUT NOT DEEPLY. HE PUTS EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR REFLECTION TO RECHARGE HIS BATTERIES BUT THERE CAN BE AN AIR OF SUPERFICIALITY ABOUT HIM AND HE CERTAINLY LACKS SCHMIDT'S BREADTH OF VISION. HIS PUBLIC IMAGE IS POOR, AND FOR SOME REASON HE REMAINS UNPOPULAR EVEN AMONG SOME SECTORS OF THE ELECTORATE WHO SHARE HIS MODERATE OUTLOOK.
3. NEVERTHELESS KOHL HAS MORAL SENSE, MORAL SERIOUSNESS AND HUMAN WARMTH. HE HAS A STEADY DETERMINATION AND A STRONG POLITICAL INSTINCT.  
HE COMES ACROSS MUCH BETTER IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION THAN IN FORMAL MEETINGS OR PUBLIC OCCASIONS. HE IS A BIG, GENIAL MAN WITH A RELAXED AND REASSURING MANNER. HIS FATHER WAS A MINOR OFFICIAL AND HE IS PROUD OF HIS SIMPLE ORIGINS. HIS MOTHER HELD THE FAMILY TOGETHER. HE HIMSELF WORKED AS A STONE MASON TO GET THROUGH COLLEGE. HE SEES HIMSELF AS ONE OF THAT FIRST GENERATION OF GERMANS WHO CAME INTO POLITICS YOUNG IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE WAR WITH A BELIEF IN DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW. HIS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE HAS CONVINCED HIM THAT MODERATE CONSERVATISM IS THE RIGHT WAY.
4. POLITICS HAVE BEEN HIS WHOLE LIFE. HE HAS RISEN THROUGH THE CDU BY HARD WORK AND POLITICAL INSTINCT RATHER THAN INTELLECTUAL

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OR ANALYTICAL ABILITY. HE PRIDES HIMSELF AS A GENERALIST. HIS STRENGTH IS TO SURROUND HIMSELF WITH ABLE SUBORDINATES. HE IS AN EXCELLENT MANAGER. THIS HELPS TO EXPLAIN HIS SUCCESS AS MINISTER PRESIDENT IN RHINELAND PALATINATE FROM 1969-1976. BUT HE NEVER MANAGED TO RISE CLEARLY ABOVE HIS RIVALS FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CDU/CSU: ALTHOUGH AS CDU/CSU CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE IN THE 1976 FEDERAL ELECTIONS HE CAME WITHIN A WHISKER OF UNSEATING SCHMIDT AND THE SPD/FDP COALITION, HE WAS UNABLE TO GATHER SUFFICIENT SUPPORT FOR RENOMINATION AS CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE IN THE 1980 FEDERAL ELECTIONS. HAD THE SPD/FDP COALITION LASTED THE COURSE, HE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE FACED ANOTHER TOUGH FIGHT FOR THE NOMINATION IN 1983. BUT THE FACT THAT HE HAS BEEN CHAIRMAN OF THE CDU FOR ALMOST 10 YEARS IS A SIGN THAT HE POSSESSES CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL SKILLS. HIS EFFECTIVENESS AS A PUBLIC SPEAKER AND PERFORMANCE AS A LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE BUNDESTAG HAVE IMPROVED OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, AND HE MAY GROW INTO THE JOB OF FEDERAL CHANCELLOR.

5. KOHL SEEMS TO HAVE NO CLEAR AIMS ABOUT WHAT TO DO WITH POWER. HE TALKS ABOUT A NEW BEGINNING BUT FINDS IT HARD TO DEFINE THIS. AS I REPORTED IN MY TELNO 779, HE IS UNLIKELY TO INTRODUCE RADICAL CHANGES IN POLICY. EVEN IN ECONOMIC POLICY, WHERE DIFFERENCES WITH THE PREVIOUS SPD/FDP GOVERNMENT ARE LIKELY TO BE MOST PRONOUNCED KOHL TAKES PAINS TO STRESS THAT HE STANDS FOR THE SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY, BUT NOT THE MARKET ECONOMY ALONE. WHILE HE PLACES STRESS ON THE NEED TO GIVE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE ITS HEAD, HE ALSO EMPHASISES FAMILY WELFARE, IMPLYING THAT HE WOULD NOT WISH TO CUT SOCIAL EXPENDITURE.

6. KOHL HAS ALWAYS BEEN UNDERESTIMATED AND SCHMIDT'S CLAIMS THAT HE WILL PROVE A DISASTER SEEM UNJUSTIFIED. HE MAY NOT FILL THE CHANCELLORSHIP WITH THE STYLE OR INTELLECTUAL DISTINCTION OF SOME OF HIS PREDECESSORS. HE MAY NOT MASTER THE DOSSIERS IN DETAIL. BUT HE IS LIKELY TO RUN A TIGHT SHIP AND HIS LONG STANDING PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP WITH GENSCHER SHOULD HELP TO KEEP THE COALITION TOGETHER.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES EXCEPT CGS IN THE FRG.

TAYLOR  
F.CO | WH  
WED

[PASSED AS REQUESTED]

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