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[FRAME GENERAL]

TO PRIORITY F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 397 OF 10 MAY

INFO BONN, ROME, WASHINGTON, TOKYO, MOSCOW, UKREP BRUSSELS
INFO SAVING OTTAWA, ATHENS, BRUSSELS, COPENHAGEN, DUBLIN, THE HAGUE,
LUXEMBOURG

MITTERRAND PRESS BRIEFING

SUMMARY

1. AS REPORTED IN THE FINANCIAL TIMES OF 10 MAY, MITTERRAND HELD AN INFORMAL PRESS BRIEFING FOR SELECTED CORRESPONDENTS ON 9 MAY. MY TWO IFTS (NOT TO ALL) REPORT THE MAIN POINTS ON THE COMMUNITY AND ON SDI/EUREKA, POINTS ON GATT AND ECONOMIC SUMMITS FOLLOW BELOW, TOGETHER WITH PRELIMINARY COMMENT. mt

DETAIL

2. ON GATT, MITTERRAND SAID LITTLE NEW. HE CLAIMED THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN SURPRISED BY KOHL'S ESPOUSAL OF THE US PROPOSAL FOR A DATE SINCE THERE HAD BEEN NO FRANCO-GERMAN POSITION ON THE ISSUE. FRANCE WAS READY TO PARTICIPATE IN A NEW GATT ROUND IN 1986 ON 3 ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS: PROGRESS ON INTERNATIONAL MONETARY REFORM, AGREEMENT ON THE AGENDA (IT WAS UNACCEPTABLE THAT AGRICULTURE SHOULD DOMINATE THE EARLY STAGES JUST BECAUSE THIS DOSSIER WAS READY), AND CONSULTATION OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES., HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT THAT EUROPE SHOULD BE THE PLAYTHING OF US DOMESTIC POLICY, PARTICULARLY OVER AGRICULTURAL TRADE.

3. ON ECONOMIC SUMMITS, MITTERRAND SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THEY WERE USEFUL, THEY HAD BECOME DENATURED. IF THE RULES WERE NOT CHANGED BEFORE TOKYO, HE COULD NOT EXCLUDE A FRENCH BOYCOTT. (THE FRENCH PRESS NOTES THAT HE MADE SIMILAR NOISES AFTER WILLIAMSBURG).

COMMENT

4. THIS UNUSAL MEDIA PRESENTATION WAS NO DOUBT INSPIRED BY THE MIXED RECEPTION GIVEN TO MITTERRAND'S PERFORMANCE IN BONN. HE SEEMS TO HAVE HAD 4 AIMS:

1) TO SCOTCH SUGGESTIONS OF ANY SERIOUS RIFT IN THE FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONSHIP. ADMITTEDLY THERE HAD BEEN DIFFICULTIES AT BONN, BUT FRANCE AND GERMANY REMAINED CLOSE PARTNERS AND AT THE HEART OF EUROPE'S FUTURE (THE DESIRE TO EMPHASIS THIS MAY LIE BEHIND A SLIGHT ANTI-BRITISH FLAVOUR). ON THE SUBSTANCE OF FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS, INCIDENTALLY, THERE ARE INCREASING SIGNS THAT THE FIRST GERMAN TRIBUTE TO FRENCH POST-BONN IRRITATION WILL BE AGREEMENT BY KOHL TO ABANDON LONG-STANDING AND WELL-FOUNDED GERMAN OBJECTIONS TO THE FRENCH MILITARY OBSERVATION SATELLITE PROJECT. THERE ARE ALSO SUGGESTIONS THAT KOHL AND MITTERRAND WILL MEET TWICE MORE BEFORE MILAN (FIRST ON 28 MAY).

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II) TO DEFUSE EXPECTATIONS, WHICH HE HIMSELF HAD BUILT UP, OF A SURPRISE PROPOSAL ON INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN THE COMMUNITY. AND OF A GREAT LEAP FORWARD IN MILAN.

III) TO ASSERT AGAIN HIS CLAIM TO BE A FIRM DEFENDER OF EUROPEAN INTERESTS, REFUSING TO BE TRAMPLED UNDERFOOT BY THE AMERICANS. HE IS QUOTED AS DENYING ANY DESIRE TO PLAY DE GAULLE, BUT THE IMAGE IS ONE HE WILL WISH TO CULTIVATE, SO LONG AS HE CAN DEMONSTRATE THAT IT IS BASED ON SOUND REASON AND NOT SIMPLE POSTURING.

IV) ON SDI, TO STRIKE A TYPICALLY FRENCH INDEPENDENT POSTURE WHILE NOT CUTTING FRANCE OFF FROM A SHARE OF THE US MANNA: AND TO KEEP THE PRESSURE UP ON THE FRG TO SUPPORT EUREKA.

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