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SIC

VISIT OF FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER TO USSR: 14 NOVEMBER
SUMMARY

1. GORBACHEV'S MEETING WITH DUMAS IS THE VEHICLE FOR HIS FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT SINCE LAST WEEK'S EVENTS IN EAST GERMANY. HE UNDERLINES THE SOVIET WARNING AGAINST EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE AND THE EXPORT OF CAPITALISM, BUT BREAKS NO SUBSTANTIVELY NEW GROUND. ECHOED IN SHEVARDNADZE'S SPEECH, TO WHICH DUMAS REPLIES WITH A CAREFULLY BALANCED FORMULATION. NO SURPRISES IN THE TALKS BETWEEN DUMAS AND SHEVARDNADZE. CONTINUING SOVIET PRESSURE FOR RAPID PROGRESS IN CFE AND A FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING. ALSO FOR EALY CONCLUSION OF EC/USSR COOPERATION AGREEMENT. JOINT STATEMENT ON THE NEAR EAST.

DETAIL

2. ON HIS ONE-DAY WORKING VISIT, ROLAND DUMAS HAD A ONE AND A HALF HOUR TET-A-TETE WITH SHEVARDNADZE FOLLOWED BY A WORKING LUNCH WITH SPEECHES, A PLENARY SESSION TO HEAR REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS, AND AN HOUR AND A HALF WITH GORBAHCEV.

MEETING WITH GORBACHEV

3. ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL TASS ACCOUNT, GORBACHEV FOCUSED ON EAST-WEST RELATIONS. - 'WE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN AT A CROSSROADS... WHICH ROAD IS THE WORLD TAKING? TO FURTHER CONFRONTATION, TO THE AGGRAVATION OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE, AN INCREASE IN THE THREAT OF WAR: OR THE PATH OF COOPERATION, MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND THE SEARCH FOR AGREEMENT? IT SEEMS THE CHOICE HAS BEEN MADE. THE TAKS NOW IS TO DEVELOP THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS A NEW PEACEFUL PERIOD IN A CALM AND CONSIDERED WAY.' CHANGES IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE USSR WERE 'VERY DIFFERENT IN THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH THEY STARTED, THEIR ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES, THE LEVEL OF THEIR POLITICAL CULTURE, THEIR HISTORICAL HERITAGE AND SO ON. BUT THEY HAVE A COMMON TENDENCY FAVOURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A COMMON EUROPEAN HOME, FOR THIS BRINGS COUNTRIES CLOSE, MAKES THEM MORE OPEN, CREATES NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR HUMAN RELATIONS AND EQUAL EXCHANGES.'

4. IT HAD BEEN NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THAT RESPONSIBLE POLITICIANS UNDERSTOOD THE SERIOUSNESS AND POSITIVE MEANING OF CHANGES WHICH GAVE GREATER STABILITY TO MUTUAL SECURITY. "BALANCED, CONSTRUCTIVE, IN A WORD ADEQUATE, CONDUCT IS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT IN CONNECTION WITH EVENTS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. THE HELSINKI PROCESS IS UNFOLDING BEFORE US IN ITS SPECIFIC CONTEMPORARY FORMS. AND IT WILL BE VERY DANGEROUS IF SOMEONE TRIES, EVEN IN SOME KIND OF SEPARATE AREA, TO REANIMATE THAT WHICH ALREADY APPEARS TO BE A PAST STAGE OF THAT PROCESS. THIS WOULD REPRESENT ITS UNDERMINING AS A WHOLE. THE DEPTH AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGES DICTATE THE NEED TO STEP UP EFFORTS TO MOVE TOWARDS EACH OTHER, BOTH FROM THE WEST AND THE EAST. THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO DESTROY THE ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. LET THEM TRANSFORM THEMSELVES BY TAKING INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS INTO ACCOUNT, TO FIND THEIR OWN PLACE IN THIS NEW SITUATION AND TO WORK TOGETHER. IT IS USELESS TO CLAMOUR ABOUT VICTORY "IN THE COLD WAR," ABOUT THE FAILURE OF SOME OR ANOTHER SOCIAL SYSTEM: ONE NEEDS TO ANALYSE EVERYTHING REALISTICALLY AND TO WORK IN THE REGIME OF A BALANCE OF INTERESTS. WHEN ACCUSATIONS OF "EXPORTING REVOLUTION" ARE REPLACED BY CALLS "FOR THE EXPORT OF CAPITALISM" - THIS IS A DANGEROUS PRODUCT OF OLD THINKING. IT IS TIME TO CONSIDER THAT THE MODERN WORLD DOES NOT CONSIST OF TWO MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CIVILISATIONS, BUT ONE COMMON (CIVILISATION) IN WHICH COMMON HUMAN VALUES AND FREEDOM OF CHOICE ARE THE DOMINANT FACTORS."

MEETING WITH SHEVARDNADZE

5. SHEVARDNADZE SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNION COUNTED UPON THE WEST TO SHOW UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMPLEX SITUATION IN EASTERN EUROPE, AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF FRENCH POLICY. "ATTEMPTS BY CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE FRG TO RAISE THE QUESTION OF GERMAN REUNIFICATION IN THE PLANE OF CURRENT POLICY ARE CAUSING GREAT CONCERN." THIS QUESTION AFFECTED THE IMPORTANT INTERESTS OF MANY EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. SOME WERE TRYING TO CONTEND FOR "THE EXISTENCE OF A SOVEREIGN STATE- THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, AND THE TERRITORIAL-POLITICAL ORDER IN THE CONTINENT AS A WHOLE."

6. DUMAS AND SHEVARDNADZE DISCUSSED THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION AS A WHOLE. BOTH AGREED THAT "THE STRATEGY OF THE COMMON EUROPEAN MOVEMENT FOR THE PERIOD AHEAD COULD BE WORKED OUT AT A NEW MEETING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF THE 35 STATES PARTICIPATING IN CSCE."

SPEECHES

7. AT LUNCH SHEVARDNADZE RETURNED TO EASTERN EUROPE. "THE NEW GDR GOVERNMENT IS TAKING RADICAL STEPS, WHICH WILL, NO DOUBT, BE

CONTINUED. IT HAS A CLEAR PLAN OF ACTION...OUR COMMON RESPONSIBILITY IS TO SUPPORT THIS NEW LINE AND INDEED THE GOVERNMENT WHICH IS TAKING IT...IN THIS COUNTRY, AS IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE, A FUNDAMENTAL RENEWAL OF SOCIALISM IS TAKING PLACE, A SEARCH FOR NEW FORMS OF PROGRESS. WE KNOW FROM OUR OWN EXPERIENCE THAT IN A PERIOD OF MAJOR REFORMS, A NUMBER OF DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS ARISE. THE CARRYING OUT OF REFORMS, THEIR SPEED, CHARACTER, AND DEPTH - ALL THIS IS AN INTERGRAL PART OF THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE OF EACH STATE, ALL PEOPLES. WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT POSSIBLE TO INTERFERE IN ANY WAY IN THESE SPECIFICALLY INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF A SOVERIEGN STATE. BUT ALL OTHERS MUST ACT LIKEWISE AND NOT ALLOW ATTEMPTS TO SPECULATE ABOUT DIFFICULTIES WHICH MAY ARISE, OR TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS OR ADVICE OF ANY KIND. AND IT WOULD BE ALL THE MORE OUT OF PLACE AT THIS DIFFICULT MOMENT TO MAKE STATEMENTS THAT LOOK LIKE AN ENCOURAGEMENT OF EXTREMIST TENDENCIES. THE QUESTION AT ISSUE IS THE TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT OF EUROPE. AND THIS, NOT ONLY FOR THE SOVIET UNION AND FRANCE, BUT FOR MANY OTHER COUNTRIES IS THE SENSITIVE HEART OF SECURITY ON THE CONTINENT. A CONSIDERED AND RESPONSIBLE APPROACH, A REAL EVALUATION OF THE SITUATION IS ALWAYS NECESSARY, BUT ESPECIALLY NOW. EUROPE DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO FORGET THE LESSONS OF ITS HISTORY.'

8. IN REPLY DUMAS SAID THAT THERE WAS NOW AN HISTORIC CHANCE TO OVERCOME THE DIVISIONS OF EUROPE AND TO GIVE PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO DECIDE THEIR OWN DESTINY. HOWEVER THERE WAS ALSO A NEW RISK OF DESTABILISATION. FRANCE AND THE FRG SUPPORTED THE PATH TO EUROPEAN UNITY WHICH WOULD BE AN ELEMENT OF STABILITY ON THE CONTINENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, 'WE DO NOT WISH TO PRESERVE OLD DISAGREEMENTS AND SEE NEW ONES ARISE.' COOPERATION BETWEEN ALL EUROPEANS IN ALL AREAS SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED. 'THE SO-CALLED GERMAN QUESTION SHOULD BE RESOLVED IN THIS DUAL CONTEXT. WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY PEOPLE HAS THE RIGHT FREELY TO DETERMINE ITS DESTINY' - GERMANS LIKE ALL OTHERS. HOWEVER THE DESTINY OF ONE PEOPLE SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED BY OTHERS AS A THREAT OR A RISK. THE CSCE PROCESS HAD PROVIDED A WAY FORWARD. TOGETHER 'WE SHOULD MOVE AHEAD QUICKLY IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT, AS WELL AS IN THE SPHERE OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS. THE RIGHT TO HOPE AND TO SECURITY MUST COMBINE TOGETHER TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS OF A NEW UNITED EUROPE.

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE NEAR EAST

9. THE ONLY DOCUMENT ISSUED WAS A JOINT STATEMENT ON THE NEAR EAST. SEE MY FIRST IFT (NOT TO ALL).

COMMENT

10. GORBACHEV'S REMARKS ON CHANGE IN EASTERN EUROPE HAVE INEVITABLY

CAUGHT THE HEADLINES. THIS IS GORBACHEV'S FIRST PRONOUNCEMENT SINCE THE OPENING OF THE BERLIN WALL, AND IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT HE PERSONALLY SHOULD HAVE LAID ON WITH A TROWEL THE WARNING AGAINST EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE. ALTHOUGH THE FLASHPOINT MAY HAVE PASSED, THIS IS AN EXPRESSION OF CONTINUING CONCERN FOR THE FRAGILE STABILITY OF EAST GERMANY AND EASTERN EUROPE. IN SUBSTANCE, HOWEVER, GORBACHEV HAS NOT DEVELOPED THE SOVIET LINE. HE HAS REITERATED THE LINE OF SOVIET SPOKESMEN OVER THE PAST WEEK AND SOME OF WHAT HE HIMSELF SAID IN EAST BERLIN ON 6 OCTOBER.

11. THE TASS ACCOUNT IS PROBABLY ACCURATE SO FAR AS IT GOES, BUT MUCH LESS THAN THE WHOLE STORY. WE HAVE NO/NO KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT ELSE PASSED BETWEEN GORBACHEV AND DUMAS. THE FRENCH EMBASSY COMMUNITY BRIEFING TODAY BLENDED THE UNIFORMED WITH THE UNINFORMATIVE (SEE MY SECOND IFT). THE EMBASSY SAID THAT THE FRENCH WOULD REPORT ON THE MEETING WITH GORBACHEV TO THE EUROPEAN SUMMIT

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