

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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SUBJ: DEGAULLE'S VISIT TO GERMANY
NATUS
1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE CHARGE LATE YESTERDAY, [REDACTED] DESCRIBED KIESINGER'S MOOD ON THE EVE OF DEGAULLE'S VISIT TO BONN AS "UNENTHUSIASTIC." HE HAS BEEN AMONG THE CLOSE ADVISERS OF THE CHANCELLOR WHO HAD

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By [REDACTED], NARA, Date 8/13/92

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BEEN PUZZLED FOR SEVERAL DAYS AS TO HOW MOST PROFITABLY TO UTILIZE THE TWO PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT DEGAULLE SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE, AS WELL AS THE VARIOUS MINISTERIAL LEVEL DISCUSSIONS, BUT HAD FOUND THAT THEY WERE BARREN OF ANY NEW IDEAS. CERTAINLY THERE WOULD BE NO SURPRISES FROM THE GERMAN SIDE.

2. IN ANALYZING DEGAULLE'S PRESENT STATE OF MIND TO HIS STAFF, THE CHANCELLOR HAD DESCRIBED HIM AS CURRENTLY SUFFERING FROM A "DOWNFALL OF THE WEST" COMPLEX (UNTERGANG DES ABENDLANDES). DEGAULLE SEEMED TO BE SEEING EVERYTHING GOING TO PIECES AS HIS OWN POLICIES EITHER FAILED OR STAGNATED.

3. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF PARTICULARLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE ASPECTS OF FRENCH POLICY ON WHICH THE CHANCELLOR INTENDED TO QUESTION DEGAULLE WITH SOME DIRECTNESS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE WOULD ASK HIM WHAT HE WAS REALLY GETTING AT IN THE MIDDLE EAST; IT DID NOT MAKE ANY SENSE TO KIESINGER. THE CHANCELLOR ALSO INTENDED TO SAY HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND DEGAULLE'S POSITION ON VIET NAM, AND TO OBJECT SPECIFICALLY TO HIS REFERENCES TO THE SO-CALLED "VIET NAM SCANDAL." KIESINGER ALSO WOULD POINT OUT THAT ALL FIVE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION STRONGLY

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FAVORED UK ENTRY INTO THE COMMON MARKET, AND THIS WAS A FACT WHICH
THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT FELT TO BE CRUCIAL. IF DEGAULLE COUNTERED WITH
HIS USUAL ARGUMENT THAT BRITISH ENTRY WOULD DESTROY THE ESSENTIAL NATURE
OF THE EEC AND TURN IT INTO NOTHING MORE THAN A FREE TRADE AREA,
THAN THAT AT THE PRESENT TIME IN VIEW OF THE INABILITY OF THE
PRESENT MEMBERS, FOR WELL-KNOWN REASONS, TO MOVE AHEAD TOWARDS ANY
SORT OF REAL POLITICAL INTEGRATION. OTHER STANDARD SUBJECTS WOULD
ALSO OBVIOUSLY BE DISCUSSED, SUCH AS EASTERN EUROPEAN POLICY AND
TACTICS, ON WHICH THE FRG AND FRANCE NOW SAW PRETTY MUCH EYE TO
EYE, ALTHOUGH THE CHANCELLOR WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE WAY IN
WHICH THE FRENCH SEEMED TO BE FLIRTING WITH THE SOVIETS.

4. THE VARIOUS MINISTERS PRESENT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY FIND SOME THINGS
TO TALK ABOUT, AND A FEW OF THEM COULD MAKE SOME ENCOURAGING REPORTS
AT THE USUAL WIND-UP SESSION WHEN IT WAS CUSTOMARY FOR THE PRINCIPALS
TO ASK THE MINISTERS TO SUMMARIZE THEIR SIDE CONVERSATIONS. FRANCO-
GERMAN COOPERATION IN THE SCIENTIFIC FIELD HAD BEEN REASONABLY
SUCCESSFUL IN THE PAST YEAR, AND CULTURAL COOPERATION WOULD AS
USUAL SUPPLY A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF FROSTING FOR THE CAKE. THE DEFENSE
MINISTERS WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, HAVE MUCH NEW TO ADD IN VIEW OF THE
UNCERTAIN GERMAN BUDGET SITUATION.

5. [REDACTED] ADDED THAT KIESINGER HAD ABSOLUTELY NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT
DEGAULLE. HE REGARDED HIM AS AN OLD MAN SET IN HIS WAYS, WITH CON-
SIDERABLE CAPABILITY FOR DOING DAMAGE. HE HAD TO BE DEALT WITH,
HOWEVER, AS A LEADER OF FRANCE - A COUNTRY WITH A CONTINUINGLY
CRITICAL ROLE TO PLAY IN EUROPE. (1-34X3)

COMMENT:

6. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE PRESENT DEGAULLE VISIT IS REGARDED BY
THE CHANCELLOR AND HIS ADVISERS AS ESSENTIALLY A BURDEN RATHER THAN A
PLEASURE. WITH HIS USUAL POLITICAL ADEPTNESS, THE CHANCELLOR WILL
UNDOUBTEDLY USE THE OCCASION TO ENHANCE HIS PUBLIC IMAGE AS A
STATESMAN CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH A WORLD FIGURE IN A GRACIOUS AND
ELOQUENT MANNER ON A COMPLETE BASIS OF EQUALITY. WHATEVER MAY HAVE
BEEN HIS FEELINGS SIX MONTHS AGO WHEN HE FIRST ASSUMED OFFICE, THE
CHANCELLOR TODAY HAS NO ROMANTIC ILLUSIONS ABOUT DEGAULLE, SUCH AS
WERE ENTERTAINED BY FORMER CHANCELLOR ADENAUER, AND IS REALISTIC IN
HIS APPRAISAL OF HIS CURRENT OBJECTIVES AND TACTICS. HOWEVER, AS A
MAN PERSONALLY STEEPED IN FRENCH CULTURE STEMMING FROM AN AREA IN
GERMANY STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY FRANCE, KIESINGER IS STILL TEMPERAMENT-
ALLY DISPOSED TO GIVE FRANCE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT WHENEVER
POSSIBLE. HILLENBRAND

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