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SUBJ: DEGAULLE'S VISIT TO GERMANY

SANTIZED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 92-224

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1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE CHARGE LATE YESTERDAY, [REDACTED]

[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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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, KIESINGER INTENDED TO ASK WHETHER IT WAS REALLY ANYTHING MUCH MORE 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 CONSIDERABLE 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. (1.4a)(3)

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 TEMPERAMENTALLY DISPOSED TO GIVE FRANCE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT WHENEVER POSSIBLE. HILLENBRAND

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