

UNCLASSIFIED
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TELNO 211
OF 191234Z FEBRUARY 90
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GERMAN UNIFICATION: BRITISH POLICY: MEDIA COVERAGE

SUMMARY

1. PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH TO THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS IS HEADLINE FEATURE IN TODAY'S FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG. OTHER NEWSPAPERS CONCENTRATE ON THE ARTICLES AND EDITORIALS IN YESTERDAY'S BRITISH NEWSPAPERS. OUR ACTION TO COUNTER ALLEGATIONS IN THE SUNDAY TIMES EFFECTIVE.

DETAIL

2. TODAY'S FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG (CONSERVATIVE) LEADS WITH A REPORT FROM LONDON ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH YESTERDAY TO THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS, EMPHASISING HER STATEMENT THAT A CONDITION FOR GERMAN UNITY MUST BE A GUARANTEE BY TREATY OF POLAND'S WESTERN BORDER. IT ALSO NOTES HER COMMENDATION OF THE IDEA THAT SOME SOVIET TROOPS MIGHT REMAIN IN THE PRESENT GDR TERRITORY, AT LEAST FOR A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD. THE REPORT GOES ON TO COVER VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE SECTION OF THE SPEECH DEVOTED TO GERMAN UNIFICATION QUOTING THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARK THAT THERE IS 'NO DOUBT' THAT IT IS GOING TO HAPPEN.

3. IN A SEPARATE COMMENTARY, OBVIOUSLY WRITTEN BEFORE YESTERDAY'S SPEECH, THE FAZ NOTES THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT UNIFICATION BUT ALSO REJECTS ANY TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY IN EC MONETARY POLICY AND THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL UNION. THIS HAS PUT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN A DILEMMA. IT DOES NOT WANT TO LOSE INFLUENCE OVER THE PROCESS OF GERMAN UNIFICATION, BUT IS AT THE SAME TIME LOSING THE OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE IT WITHIN A EUROPEAN CONTEXT. THE COMMENTATOR CONCLUDES THAT THIS LEAVES BRITISH POLICY WITH LITTLE LATITUDE.

4. SEVERAL MAJOR DAILIES CARRY A TRANSLATED EXTRACT FROM THE SUNDAY TIMES EDITORIAL ('UNSPLENDID ISOLATION') OF 18 FEBRUARY. IN EACH CASE THE EXTRACT IS DRAWN FROM THE THIRD PARAGRAPH OF THE EDITORIAL..

5. IN REPORTING YESTERDAY'S UK PRESS COVERAGE OF THE GERMAN QUESTION MOST NEWSPAPERS HOWEVER CONCENTRATE PRIMARILY ON THE SUGGESTION IN THE SUNDAY TIMES THAT THE PRIME MINISTER IS WORKING ON AN ANTI-GERMAN EUROPEAN COALITION TO PUT THE BRAKES ON THE PROCESS OF REUNIFICATION. THE LONGEST REPORT APPEARS IN THE RIGHT-WING TABLOID BILD (CIR 4.3 M) WHICH CONTINUES ITS ANTI-BRITISH CAMPAIGN. THE KOELNER STADT-ANZEIGER (PRO-FDP) SPECIFICALLY MENTIONS A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE EMBASSY YESTERDAY AFTERNOON TO THE EFFECT THAT THE SUNDAY TIMES' ALLEGATIONS WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. I ALSO SPOKE ON 18 FEBRUARY TO BOTH TELTSCHIK (FEDERAL CHANCELLERY) AND KASTRUP (POLITICAL DIRECTOR, AUSWAERTIGES AMT), IN SIMILAR VEIN. OUR STATEMENT WAS CARRIED ON THE GERMAN PRESS AGENCY (DPA) WIRES AND THEREFORE SEEN BY MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF GERMAN NEWSPAPER EDITORS.

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