

UNCLASSIFIED
FM THE HAGUE
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 429
OF 051700Z DECEMBER 85
INFO ROUTINE UKREP BRUSSELS, ATHENS, BONN, BRUSSELS, COPENHAGEN,
DUBLIN, PARIS, LUXEMBOURG, MADRID, LISBON

LUXEMBOURG EUROPEAN COUNCIL: DUTCH PRESS REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. ALL THE DUTCH NEWSPAPERS DESCRIBED THE RESULTS OF THE SUMMIT AS 'MEAGRE' OR 'MINIMAL'. MANY EXPRESSED DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT. A MINORITY FELT LITTLE ELSE COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, AND SOME EVEN APPLAUDED THE RESULTS. ONLY ONE PIECE WAS VERY CRITICAL OF THE UK. LUBBERS AND VAN DEN BROEK ARE REPORTED AS REASONABLY SATISFIED IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES WITH THE OUTCOME.

DETAIL

2. LEADING ARTICLES IN THE MAIN DUTCH NEWSPAPERS VARIOUSLY DESCRIBE THE OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL AS 'MEAGRE', 'MINIMAL' AND A 'FIASCO'. THE RESULTS OF THE IGC ARE SEEN AS LIMITED, INSECURELY FOUNDED AND SERVING LARGELY TO POSTPONE THE PROBLEMS. THERE IS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE AGREEMENT ON MONETARY COOPERATION DID NOT GO FURTHER AND CRITICISM OF THE FACT THAT MORE PROGRESS TOWARDS MAJORITY VOTING WAS NOT ACHIEVED. DOUBTS ARE EXPRESSED OVER THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE COMMUNITY BEING ABLE ON THE BASIS OF THE AGREEMENT IN LUXEMBOURG TO COMPLETE THE INTERNAL MARKET BY 1992. ONLY ONE PAPER HOWEVER EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE FAILURE TO ENHANCE THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

3. ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD (CENTRE RIGHT) COMMENTS THAT THE BRITISH APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN RIGHT AFTER ALL: WHAT IS NEEDED TO MAKE PROGRESS IS A LITTLE POLITICAL GOODWILL, NOT THE REVISION OF THE TREATY. THE COURSE CHOSEN GENERATED A LACK OF GOODWILL, IF NOT DOWNRIGHT MISTRUST. THE MOST DEPRESSING ASPECT OF THE OUTCOME IS THE SLIDE AWAY FROM PARLIAMENTARY AND DEMOCRATIC CONTROL. NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS WILL NO LONGER HAVE A PROPER GRIP OF WHAT REALLY HAPPENS IN THE EC.

4. THE EDITORIAL IN DE VOLKSKRANT (CENTRE LEFT) SHOWS NO SURPRISE AT THE LIMITED ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COUNCIL: THE REALITY OF EUROPEAN COUNCILS IS THAT THEY CAN ONLY PROCEED BY TAKING VERY SMALL STEPS. GIVEN THE ORIGINAL OPPOSITION TO TREATY REVISION BY THE UK, DENMARK AND GREECE, IT IS A SMALL MIRACLE THAT AT LEAST SOME AGREEMENT WAS REACHED. MRS THATCHER STILL MADE DIFFICULTIES FOR HER PARTNERS IN LUXEMBOURG, BUT AT LEAST SHE DID NOT ISOLATE HERSELF. THE UNCERTAIN PARTNERS ARE NOW DENMARK /AND.

AND ITALY, WITH ITALY'S ATTITUDE PERHAPS BEING THE MORE UNDERSTANDABLE. BY CONTRAST AN ARTICLE BY THE PAPER'S LONDON CORRESPONDENT DESCRIBES THE OUTCOME AS A GREAT SUCCESS FOR THE 'MINIMALISTS' IN THE COMMUNITY, SUCH AS DENMARK AND GREECE, AND A PERSONAL VICTORY FOR MRS THATCHER, THE STRONGEST OPPONENT OF TREATY REVISION. ONCE AGAIN MRS THATCHER'S PERFORMANCE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE IDEAL OF EUROPEAN UNITY WILL HAVE TO AWAIT A NEW INCUMBENT AT NO. 10. THE ATTITUDE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, FOR ALL ITS TALK ABOUT ACTING AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE US AND EUROPE, CONTINUES TO BE THE GREATEST OBSTACLE TO A MORE DYNAMIC EUROPE.

[Roy Jenkins, perhaps!]

5. NRC HANDELSBLAD (CENTRE LIBERAL) COMMENTS THAT THE COMMUNITY HAS EDGED TOWARDS A EUROPE THAT IS MORE POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND MONETARILY UNITED, BUT THE PACE IS NOT FAST ENOUGH TO KEEP UP WITH AMERICAN AND JAPANESE ECONOMIC COMPETITION. THERE IS CAUSE FOR CAUTIOUS SATISFACTION AT THE END OF THE SUMMIT, BUT JUBILATION WILL HAVE TO BE SHELVED FOR QUITE SOME TIME.

6. ALL PAPERS REPORTED THE REACTIONS OF MR LUBBERS AND MR VAN DEN BROEK. MR LUBBERS DESCRIBED THE RESULTS AS 'SUFFICIENT'. 'CONSIDERING THAT AT MILAN THREE COUNTRIES HAD TOTALLY OPPOSED TREATY REVISION, I AM NOT DISSATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS. THE EUROPEAN TREATY WILL BE MODERNISED AND THE COMPLETION OF THE INTERNAL MARKET IS NOW WITHIN REACH. A TREMENDOUS EFFORT WILL HAVE TO BE MADE, BUT AT LEAST THE TAXI METER IS NOW RUNNING'. VAN DEN BROEK DESCRIBED THE OUTCOME AS A 'FORCEPS DELIVERY'. 'THE RESULT IS SOMEWHAT THIN AND VULNERABLE - NO FORCEPS CHILD IS PARTICULARLY ATTRACTIVE AT BIRTH, BUT IT WILL PULL THROUGH'. VAN DEN BROEK HOPED THAT MEMBER STATES WOULD START ACTING AS IF THE REVISED TREATY WERE ALREADY IN FORCE, DESPITE THE FACT THAT PARLIAMENTARY RATIFICATIONS WERE UNLIKELY TO BE COMPLETED FOR TWO YEARS.

MARGETSON

FRAME GENERAL

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