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NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE : ATTALI MEETING OF 11-12 NOVEMBER

SUMMARY

1. ACCORDING TO CANADIANS, LITTLE DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANCE AT THIS EXPLORATORY MEETING. DISCUSSION REVOLVED AROUND WHETHER AND HOW TO LAUNCH A SUMMIT OR A NEW SUMMIT PROCESS, AND HOW TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF INFORMAL PREPARATION. CANADIANS TRIED TO INJECT REALISM. DIFFICULTY OF PROCEEDING WITHOUT US AND UK RECOGNISED. BUT ATTALI SAID FRANCE READY TO DO SO IF NECESSARY: ENVISAGES FURTHER INFORMAL MEETING, PERHAPS WITH ADDITION OF SWEDEN, IN FEBRUARY, LEADING NO DOUBT EVENTUALLY TO A SUMMIT.

DETAIL

2. MINISTER GOT A DETAILED CANADIAN-FLAVOURED ACCOUNT FROM WRIGHT, MINISTER AT CANADIAN EMBASSY HERE, WHO ATTENDED ATTALI'S MEETING. WRIGHT ASKED THAT WE DO NOT REVEAL TO THE FRENCH THAT HE BRIEFED US FIRST. WE EXPECT TO GET AN ACCOUNT ALSO FROM BOUDIER AT THE ELYSEE LATER THIS WEEK.

3. THE INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES PRESENT (FRANCE, GERMANY, JAPAN PLUS COMMISSION) STARTED WITH A MEETING OF THEIR OWN ON 11 NOVEMBER P.M. THE FIVE NON-INDUSTRIALISED (EGYPT, INDIA, SENEGAL, VENEZUELA, YUGOSLAVIA) JOINED THEM FOR DINNER, AND FOR A MEETING FOLLOWED BY LUNCH ON SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER.

4. THE PRELIMINARY MEETING OF THE INDUSTRIALISED REVEALED THE MAIN LINES OF APPROACH. CANADA (MARCHAND) 'OPEN BUT NOT COMMITTED' STRESSING NEED FOR ANY SUMMIT TO BE INFORMAL, NOT INSTITUTIONALISED, AND WITH NO ORGANIC LINK TO THE G7 SUMMITS. CANADA FLOATED PARTICIPATION BY THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE SOVIET UNION. JAPAN (ENDO) WAS CAUTIOUS AND INCLINED TO DIRECT ACTION TO NEW YORK STRESSING NEED TO AVOID DUPLICATION WITH THE UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DEVELOPMENT (ATTALI STRONGLY DISPUTED THE NEW YORK SUGGESTION, WHICH WOULD END HOPES OF A SUMMIT MEETING). ITALY (VATTANI) PRETTY OPEN TO THE IDEA OF A NEW PROCESS INVOLVING A ROLE

FOR SHERPAS.

5. ATTALI SUMMED UP CHOICE AS

- (I) TO DO NOTHING
- (II) TO SHIFT ACTION TO NEW YORK
- (III) TO CONTINUE INFORMAL TALKS AT PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE LEVEL.
CLEAR THAT HE FAVOURED (III).

6. OVER DINNER THE FIVE NON-INDUSTRIALISED GAVE AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR INITIATIVE. THEY CLAIMED TO ENJOY SUFFICIENT SUPPORT FROM E.G. THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND THE OAU TO GIVE THEM 'LEGITIMACY'. ALL FIVE ALSO BELONG TO A NEW 'GROUP OF FIFTEEN' DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

7. INDIA ARGUED FOR A FULLSCALE NEW PROCESS, INVOLVING A SERIES OF SUMMITS WITH INSTITUTIONALISED PREPARATION. THE REST OF THE FIVE WERE MORE RESTRAINED. CANADA ARGUED FOR SETTING THE DEBATE NOT IN A NORTH/SOUTH FRAMEWORK BUT IN ONE OF INTER-DEPENDENCE: IT SHOULD DEAL WITH OTHER GLOBAL ISSUES (DRUGS, ENVIRONMENT, POLULATION/MIGRATION ETC) AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENT/DEBT. CANADA ALSO STRESSED NEED NOT TO CUT ACROSS ACTIVITIES OF EXISTING INSTITUTIONS, ESPECIALLY THE WORLD BANK, IMF AND GATT. IF A SUMMIT MEETING WERE TO BE HELD, BETTER IN 1991 THAN 1990 (GIVEN THE UN SPECIAL SESSION IN 1990 AND THE URUGUAY ROUND). BUT CANADA, WITH SUPPORT FROM GERMANY (DIECKMAEN), AGAIN QUESTIONED THE IDEA OF LAUNCHING A NEW SERIES OF MEETINGS.

8. OVERNIGHT THE FIVE PRESENTED A DRAFT PAPER SETTING OUT THEIR IDEAS, INCLUDING A NEW SUMMIT PROCESS. DISCUSSION ON THE SECOND DAY WENT OVER THE SAME GROUND: CANADA, WITH SUPPORT FROM GERMANY AND JAPAN, ADVISING THE FIVE IF THEY WANTED TO GAIN INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO 'ARGUE THE CASE FOR A SUMMIT' RATHER THAN FOR A NEW INSTITUTIONAL SERIES. CANADA RECOMMENDED MODEST AIMS AND LANGUAGE, AND STRESS ON INTER-DEPENDENCE IN TACKLING GLOBAL PROBLEMS RATHER THAN A NORTH/SOUTH NEGOTIATION WITH CONFRONTATIONAL CONNOTATIONS. ITALY FAIRLY CONTENT WITH THE FIVE PAPER. ATTALI ABLE TO ACCEPT IT AS IT STANDS BUT RECONGNISING FORCE OF SOME OF THE POINTS MADE BY CANADA AND OTHERS. THE COMMISSION (LAMY) SENSIBLY POINTED TO SOME PROBLEMS:

- (I) PARTICIPATION: NEITHER THE INDUSTRIALISED NOR THE NON-INDUSTRIALISED WERE FULLY REPRESENTATIVE
- (II) THE IMPRESSION GIVEN BY THE FIVE PAPER THAT THE SUMMIT WOULD BE A DECISION-MAKING BODY
- (III) CONCERN LEST THE PROCEEDINGS TAKE ON A CONFRONTATIONAL

NORTH-SOUTH CHARACTER

9. GERMANY ARGUED THAT A SUMMIT MEETING COULD NOT TAKE PLACE WITHOUT THE US AND THE UK. ATTALI DISAGREED. SUCH A MEETING WOULD HAVE LESS WEIGHT, BUT FRANCE WOULD STILL WANT IT TO HAPPEN.

10. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANCE:

(I) ENVIRONMENT

(II) DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT (PRESENTATION BY TRICHET)

(III) DRUGS

(IV) MIGRATION AND POPULATION.

BUT DISCUSSION WAS RELATIVELY THIN AND SERVED AS A COVER FOR DEBATE ON THE PROCESS.

11. KA OF SENEGAL (SENSIBLE) AND DUBEY OF INDIA (OLD STYLE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE THINKING) REPRESENTED THE TWO POLES OF THE NON-INDUSTRIALISED APPROACH.

12. IN CONCLUSION THE FIVE SAID THEY WOULD PREPARE A NEW VERSION OF THEIR PAPER AND PUT IT TO THE FRENCH FOR DISTRIBUTION TO PARTICIPANTS. ATTALI'S SUMMING UP, THAT FURTHER INFORMAL CONTACT SHOULD TAKE PLACE, WAS ENDORSED BY MOST OF THOSE PRESENT. CANADA SAID SHE COULD NOT COMMIT HERSELF, BUT WOULD STUDY THE PAPER AND THEN DECIDE.

COMMENT

13. WRIGHT COMMENTED THAT THE NON-INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES WERE VERY ANXIOUS TO GET THE US AND THE UK ON BOARD, AND WOULD BE LIKELY TO USE THE REVISED PAPER AS A PEG FOR A LOBBYING EFFORT. THEIR CHANCE OF SUCCESS WOULD DEPEND ON HOW MUCH OF THE CANADIAN LINE THEY HAD BOUGHT. (WE, AND THE AMERICAN MINISTER, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT, REMINDED HIM HOW FIRM WERE OUR RESPECTIVE VIEWS ON AVOIDING A NEW PROCESS OF SUMMITRY). THROUGHOUT THE CANADIANS HAD SOUGHT TO INJECT A SENSE OF REALISM.

14. FOR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IT WAS CRUCIAL THAT ALL THE G7 SHOULD BE INVOLVED. BUT, PICKING UP THE CANADIAN POINT ABOUT AVOIDING A DIRECT LINK WITH THE G7 PROCESS, ATTALI AND THE FIVE HAD ALSO DISCUSSED BRINGING IN ONE MORE INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRY, PROBABLY SWEDEN. WRIGHT THOUGHT THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN.

15. ACCORDING TO WRIGHT, ATTALI WILL BE HOPING BY MID-DECEMBER FOR VIEWS ON THE WAY FORWARD FROM PARTICIPANTS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FIVE'S REVISED PAPER. THE PAPER HAS NOT YET EMERGED FROM THE ELYSEE.

HE THOUGHT THAT ATTALI WAS LIKELY TO SEND IT TO THE UK AND THE US WITH A REPORT ON THE MEETING, INVITING COMMENT ALSO. THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAD BEEN HAPPY TO LEAVE THE FOLLOW-UP ORGANISATION TO FRANCE. SO THE NEXT MEETING WOULD PROBABLY TAKE PLACE IN FRANCE, IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH. THERE HAD BEEN NO DISCUSSION OF THE SITE OF AN EVENTUAL SUMMIT. BUT LIBERATION OF 13 NOVEMBER - NO DOUBT BRIEFED BY ATTALI, WHO ENJOINED ALL PARTICIPANTS NOT TO SPEAK TO THE PRESS - WRITES THAT 'IF BY A MIRACLE THERE IS A NORTH-SOUTH SUMMIT NEXT YEAR, THE ELYSEE INTENDS IT TO BE IN PARIS' COPY BY FAX TO BONE, ERD.

FERGUSSON

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