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HOUSTON SUMMIT: FRG PRESS REACTION

SUMMARY

1. MIXED ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS, WITH CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON THE NEED TO CONVERT THE HOUSTON CONCLUSIONS INTO CONCRETE POLICIES IN THE KEY AREAS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE SOVIET UNION, AGRICULTURE IN THE URUGUAY ROUND AND THE ENVIRONMENT.
2. COMMENTS ARE MIXED: MOST PAPERS REPORT KOHL'S COMMENT THAT HE WAS 'SATISFIED' WITH THE RESULTS OF THE SUMMIT, WHICH PROVIDE A GOOD BASIS FOR HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW. THE FAZ AND OTHER PAPERS COMMENT THAT IT IS, HOWEVER, UNCLEAR HOW THIS GOODWILL IS TO BE TRANSFERRED INTO CONCRETE AGREEMENTS, SINCE IT MUST BE THE RUSSIANS THEMSELVES WHO CREATE THE GENUINE FREE MARKET CONDITIONS WHICH OFFER THE ONLY WAY OUT OF THEIR ECONOMIC PLIGHT. DIE WELT ARGUES THAT IT WAS ONLY THE INSISTENCE OF THE US, JAPAN AND THE UNITED KINGDOM WHICH AVOIDED A DECISION TO GRANT UNCONDITIONAL AID. IN A REFLECTION OF WAIGEL'S COMMENTS IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE AT HOUSTON, THE FAZ SAY THAT IT WOULD BE NONSENSICAL FOR THE WEST TO PUMP IN LARGE SUMS OF MONEY IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH REFORM, ADDING THAT ILL-JUDGED ASSISTANCE COULD ACTUALLY HAVE THE PERVERSE EFFECT OF DELAYING ESSENTIAL REFORMS.

GATT AGRICULTURE

3. COMMENTS ON THE HOUSTON CONCLUSIONS GENERALLY DRAW ATTENTION TO THE LIKELY DIFFICULTY IN MAKING THE COMPROMISE STICK. THE ECONOMIC DAILY HANDELSBLATT SUGGESTS THAT A FURTHER COLLISION BETWEEN US AND COMMUNITY VIEWS AT THE TNC IS STILL QUITE POSSIBLE. IT REPORTS THE 'CONCERNED' RESPONSE OF THE GERMAN FARMERS UNION.

ENVIRONMENT

4. REFLECTING THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT'S DISAPPOINTMENT, A NUMBER OF PAPERS NOTE THE LACK OF CONCERTED ACTION ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND NOTE THAT AGREEMENT ON THE TIME FRAME FOR A WORLD CLIMATE CONVENTION MERELY ADDS ANOTHER DATE TO AN ALREADY LONG LIST. KOHL'S FAILURE TO

ACHIEVE HIS OBJECTIVE OF MAKING CO2 EMISSIONS A PRIORITY ITEM AT THE
SUMMIT IS SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED.

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OF 131900Z JULY 90

INFO ROUTINE EC POSTS, WASHINGTON, OTTAWA, TOKYO

*X now seems
to be the common
theme in Europe**mb*THE HOUSTON ECONOMIC SUMMIT: ITALIAN PRESS REACTION

SUMMARY

1. FULL BUT LOW KEY AND FACTUAL ITALIAN PRESS COMMENT ON THE HOUSTON SUMMIT.

DETAIL

2. THE HOUSTON IS COVERED EXTENSIVELY IN ALL THE MAJOR ITALIAN NEWSPAPERS. MOST CARRY SEVERAL ARTICLES FOCUSING ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE MEETING. BUT COVERAGE IS GENERALLY LOW KEY AND FACTUAL. THE SUMMIT IS SEEN AS HAVING AVOIDED MAJOR DISAGREEMENTS, BUT AT THE EXPENSE OF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON SOME ISSUES. IN PARTICULAR, THE OUTCOMES ON ENVIRONMENT, ON AGRICULTURE AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE, AND ON THIRD WORLD DEBT ARE DESCRIBED AS ONLY MINOR ADVANCES.

3. MOST ITALIAN NEWSPAPERS NOTE WITH APPROVAL THE REFERENCE IN THE SUMMIT'S CONCLUSIONS TO THE CRAXI REPORT ON THIRD WORLD DEBT. BUT SOME ALSO EMPHASISE THE LOW ITALIAN PROFILE AT THE SUMMIT: DELORS IS QUOTED AS DESCRIBING ITALY AS HAVING MADE LITTLE IMPACT, AND A TEXAS NEWSPAPER AS CALLING THE ITALIAN TEAM THE 'INVISIBLE DELEGATION'.

4. THERE IS LITTLE COMMENT ON THE UK'S ROLE ALTHOUGH SOME ARTICLES NOTE OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMPROMISE ON AGRICULTURE.

5. EDITORIALS FOCUS ON TWO THEMES. ON THE FIRST, THE PROS AND CONS OF AID FOR THE SOVIET UNION, THEY CONCLUDE THAT THE KOHL-MITTERRAND-ANDREOTTI LINE WAS THE RIGHT ONE, ALTHOUGH IT FAILED TO CARRY THE DAY. THE SECOND MAIN THEME IS THAT THE SUMMIT CONFIRMED THE DECLINE OF US LEADERSHIP AND THE EMERGENCE OF AN INDEPENDENT, POWERFUL, AND DYNAMIC EUROPEAN VOICE WITH INDEPENDENT PRIORITIES AND POLICIES, AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE EVENTUAL US CLIMB-DOWN OVER AGRICULTURE.

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