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GERMANYS:

Early Election Forcing Pace of Unity Debate

The advancement of the East German election is already forcing the pace of decisionmaking in Bonn and East Berlin as the unity question increasingly dominates both Germanys' agendas.

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East German Communist leader Gysi canceled today's scheduled trip to Washington, citing the need to prepare his collapsing party for the March election. Gysi has called unification "unstoppable" but cautioned against hasty movement.

3.3(b)(1)

he will fly to Moscow soon, following Premier Modrow who leaves today to meet with President Gorbachev and Premier Ryzhkov. Meanwhile—barely a day after a non-Communist caretaker government was announced—some 100,000 demonstrators in Leipzig called for German unity and an end to Communist rule.

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Also citing the new East German election date, West German Chancellor Kohl has canceled a trip to Latin America scheduled for March.

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Bonn is slowing efforts toward a "treaty community" between the Germanys

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Comment: The continuing prounification demonstrations

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suggest a widespread German belief that the timetable for unification is being telescoped.

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new German initiatives, such as a proposal for a demilitarized East Germany, may be announced soon.

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Modrow and Gysi may try to use their Soviet visits to show their influence with Moscow: they probably will coordinate policy on managing the unification process, including responses to popular demands for reducing the Soviet troop presence in East Germany. Modrow may urge Moscow not to cut oil shipments or Soviet orders for East German goods during the election campaign even though Moscow will be hard pressed to avoid temporary cutbacks. Gysi probably hopes Gorbachev's popularity in East Germany will help slow the Communists' eroding electoral prospects.

6.2(d)

~~Top Secret~~

TCS 2724/90
30 January 1990

103 1

~~Top Secret~~

6.2(d)

The East German Election and Soviet Troop Withdrawals

A freely elected East German government is likely to call for Soviet troop reductions, although Bonn and East Berlin would prefer that any withdrawals occur at a measured pace and be accompanied by some US withdrawals from West Germany. The presence of about 380,000 Soviet troops and their extensive training needs have been a constant burden on East Germans. A sharp reduction in Soviet troops would give a strong impetus toward German unification, which most political parties in East Germany endorse in some form. East German officials are signaling they have no desire to be the sole East European country retaining large Soviet forces.

West German officials will try to facilitate Soviet reductions and may even be forced by domestic political pressures to echo East German calls for a partial withdrawal of Allied forces from West Germany. In a matter of weeks, Foreign Minister Genscher is likely to flesh out his ideas of how Germany fits into collective European security arrangements in order to provide the basis for agreed steps toward unity.

In talks with Moscow, Bonn will reject any formula that legitimizes a continued Soviet presence in East Germany. Bonn would be angered by any indication the US and the Soviets were trying to strike a bilateral deal that indefinitely perpetuated the presence of foreign forces in either German state and will try to block moves in this direction. Kohl government officials nonetheless are sensitive to Soviet security concerns and probably would lobby the US for early reductions in US forces below the 275,000 ceiling in NATO's current CFE proposal. Bonn might also try to reassure the Soviets by suggesting that NATO forces not be deployed in what is now East Germany once unification occurs. Kohl's chief foreign policy adviser stated publicly that East Germany could be "demilitarized."

The NATO Allies would be in a weak position to block a request by Bonn to remove stationed forces from West Germany. London and Paris, in particular, probably would caution against US troop reductions and would link the withdrawal of their own forces in Germany to a formal peace treaty. Stronger resistance, however, probably would be interpreted in Bonn as a threat to its sovereignty and to the spirit of the NATO Alliance.

6.2(d)

~~Top Secret~~
TCS 2724/90
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