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 MR LITTLER }

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**M. CHEYSSON'S VISIT : COMMUNITY BRIEFING**

1. FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER CLAUDE CHEYSSON BRIEFED EC HEADS OF MISSION ON FRIDAY 27 JULY ON HIS VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES FROM 26-29 JULY.

2. POINTING OUT THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST VISIT BY A FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER SINCE 1972 BUT THE FOURTH MINISTERIAL VISIT DURING THE PAST FOUR MONTHS, HE SAID HIS WAS PRIMARILY A POLITICAL VISIT : FRANCE WAS SEEKING CLOSER POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA OUT OF CONVICTION OF THE NEED TO SUPPORT THE FRAGILE ARGENTINE DEMOCRACY.

3. ARGENTINA WAS A TYPICAL CASE OF A DEVELOPING COUNTRY WHICH HAD TASTED ECONOMIC SUCCESS AND WAS FALLING BEHIND. FURTHER ECONOMIC SETBACKS COULD PREJUDICE THE NEW DEMOCRACY. FRANCE'S VIEW WAS THAT INSOFAR AS ARGENTINA WAS PREPARED TO FACE HER RESPONSIBILITIES SHE WAS A COUNTRY WORTHY OF HELP. HE PRAISED THE ROLE OF THE IMF AND THE WORLD BANK IN THIS PROCESS. THE LONDON SUMMIT HAD NOT BEEN AS SUCCESSFUL AS IT MIGHT SINCE IT HAD BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO PRESUADE THE UNITED STATES TO REDUCE HER FISCAL DEFICIT. BUT THE AMERICANS HAD ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE THAT AN OECD COUNCIL MEETING WOULD BE HELD NEXT MARCH TO SEEK SOME SOLUTION. THESE WERE BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECTS HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH PRESIDENT ALFONSIN, FOREIGN MINISTER CAPUTO AND ECONOMY MINISTER GRINSBUN



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4. THE ARGENTINE WERE INTERESTED IN THE COMMUNITY AND IT OUG TO BE POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS, THOUGH WITHOUT LEAVING O THE AMERICANS. HIS VISITS HAD HELPED TO EASE THE FUTURE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND ARGENTINA. HE HAD HEARD NO REFERENCE TO EUROPEAN PRETECTIONISM AND HAD IN FACT BEEN RECEIVED SOMEWHAT OVER-ELABORATELY FOR A FOREIGN MINISTER. IT HAD BEEN A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO BE VERY HONEST AND DISPEL MANY ARGENTINE ILLUSIONS WITH STRAIGHT TALKING. HE HAD FOUND HIS ARGENTINE INTERLOCUTORS REALISTIC, IT WAS SIGNIFICANT THAT HIS LECTURE AT THE ARGENTINE CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS HAD DEALT WITH WORLD ECONOMIC AFFAIRS.

5. DISCUSSIONS OF ARGENTINE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS HAD MAINLY COVERED TRADE PROMOTION. THE ARGENTINES WERE POOR BUSINESSMEN AND HAD NOT WORKED AT THEIR MARKETS. CHEYSSON SAID HE HAD TOLD THEM TO BE MUCH MORE COMPETITIVE, COMMENTING ON THE FACT THAT CHILE SOLD APPLES TO THE COMMUNITY WHEREAS ARGENTINA COULD NOT. HE STRESSED THAT MORE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND ARGENTINA WAS NEEDED AT ALL LEVELS. HE HAD PROPOSED THIS HERE AND WOULD REPEAT IT AT HOME. ONCE THE ARGENTINES REACHED AGREEMENT WITH THE IMF, FRANCE WOULD BE FREER TO HELP THEM. MEANWHILE THE BILATERAL COMMISSIONS WERE WORKING WELL.

6. HE HAD FOUND ALFONSIN CALM AND RELAXED. IN ORDERING POPULAR CONSULTATION OVER THE BEAGLE, HE FELT VERY SURE OF HIMSELF.

7. ASKED ABOUT THE AFTERMATH OF THE BERNE MEETING, CHEYSSON SAID HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE PRUDENCE, CAUTION AND DISCRETION ON THIS SUBJECT. CERTAINLY THERE WAS BITTERNESS ABOUT THE BERNE SETBACK BUT HE FOUND NO ANGER, MERELY AN AWARENESS OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND THE NEED FOR TIME TO PASS. ALFONSIN EVIDENTLY HAD NOT WANTED TO RAISE THE ISSUE AT THE UN THIS YEAR. HE DID NOT RAISE THE QUESTION OF HIS ATTENDANCE WITH CHEYSSON.

8. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD ON SATURDAY 28TH, BEFORE DEPARTURE, CHEYSSON SAID THAT ALTHOUGH FRANCE HAD CONDEMNED ARGENTINE USE OF FORCE AND VIOLENCE IN 1982, SHE HAD NEVER TAKEN ANY POSITION ON THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION. ASKED WHETHER FRANCE WOULD SWITCH FROM ABSTENTION TO A POSITIVE VOTE FOR ARGENTINA AT UNGA THIS YEAR, CHEYSSON REPLIED THAT FRANCE WOULD STUDY THE TEXT OF THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION. ON THE ECONOMY AND FOREIGN DEBT HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT FRENCH ASSISTANCE FOR ARGENTINA WAS CONDITIONAL UPON THE ARGENTINE REACHING AGREEMENT WITH THE IMF.

#### COMMENT

9. CHEYSSON'S VISIT, WITH ITS REITERATION OF THE MESSAGES CONVEYED BY CAMDESSUS AND KOHL, AS WELL AS THE SPANIARDS IN MADRID, MAY BE THE DECIDING FACTOR PERSUADING ARGENTINA TO SETTLE WITH THE FUND AND BEHAVE LIKE A MATURE DEMOCRACY RATHER THAN A SPOILT ADOLESCENT. FROM MEDIA REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH COLLEAGUES AND ARGENTINES HERE (THOUGH NOT UNFORTUNATELY WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS) I WOULD JUDGE THE VISIT TO HAVE BEEN A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THIS PROCESS.