



Showdown in Denmark

Der Spiegel has a [story](#) based on tapes of the behind-the-scenes meetings of world leaders. The headline says it all: **The Copenhagen Protocol: How China and India Sabotaged the UN Climate Summit.** As usual, the French assessment was the most eloquent:

The words suddenly burst out of French President Nicolas Sarkozy: “I say this with all due respect and in all friendship.” Everyone in the room, which included two dozen heads of state, knew that he meant precisely the opposite of what he was saying. “With all due respect to China,” the French president continued, speaking in French.

The West, Sarkozy said, had pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent. “And in return, China, which will soon be the biggest economic power in the world, says to the world: Commitments apply to you, but not to us.”

Sarkozy, gaining momentum, then said: “This is utterly unacceptable!” And then the French president stoked the diplomatic conflict even further when he said: “This is about the essentials, and one has to react to this hypocrisy!”

A hush came over the room. Even the mobile phones stopped ringing. It was Friday, Dec. 18, 2009, at about 4 p.m. That was the moment when the world leaders meeting in Copenhagen abandoned their efforts to save the world.

Presumably, whoever leaked the tapes is trying to put pressure on India and China — this report isn’t going to do anything for their reputation in other developing countries, not to mention in the West.