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FM WASHINGTON 292019Z APR 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1170 OF 29 APRIL

YOUR TELNO 708 : VISIT OF ED MEESE

1. THE WHITE HOUSE, WHICH USED TO BE RUN BY A TROIKA (MEESE, BAKER AND DEEVER), IS NOW RUN BY A FOURSOME, JUDGE CLARK HAVING NO LESS INFLUENCE THAN THE OTHER THREE. MEESE HAS GENERAL POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITIES. HE IS CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, IS A MEMBER OF THE CABINET AND VERY CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENT. HIS VISIT AFFORDS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO GET ACROSS TO HIM (AND THROUGH HIM TO THE PRESIDENT) ANY PARTICULAR CONCERNS SHE MAY HAVE ON THE GENERAL STATE OF ANGLO AMERICAN AND TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS AND ANY REFLECTIONS ON THE RUN UP TO THE WILLIAMSBURG SUMMIT.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER WILL NO DOUBT WANT TO TELL MEESE ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR THE BRITISH ECONOMY AND HOW SHE SEES THE LINKAGES BETWEEN OUR OWN AND WORLD RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE US ECONOMY. MEESE, FOR HIS PART, WILL BE WELL PLACED TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW OF THE WORLD, THE CENTRAL PLACE OF CENTRAL AMERICA IN IT, THE GENERAL EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION HERE, RELATIONS WITH CONGRESS, ETC. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE BURNING QUESTION IN THIS TOWN, SO FAR AS BRITAIN IS CONCERNED, FROM WHITE HOUSE TO THE HILL, IS: WHEN IS THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION?

3. I WOULD HOPE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD USE THIS OCCASION TO GIVE MEESE A BROAD SURVEY OF THE CURRENT STATE OF ANGLO AMERICAN RELATIONS IN PARTICULAR AND THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP IN GENERAL. DEEP DOWN, THIS RELATIONSHIP IS FUNDAMENTALLY SOUND AND SECURE, BASED AS IT IS ON INTEREST AND SENTIMENT: - THE JOINT DEFENCE OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN THE NATO ALLIANCE AND THE JOINT SUPPORT OF THE FREE WORLD'S LIBERAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM IN THE GATT, IMF, ETC. WE ALSO SHARE A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP IN BOTH THE MILITARY AND INTELLIGENCE SPHERES. BUT I HAVE GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT WHETHER THE WHITE HOUSE IS SUFFICIENTLY AWARE OF THE AGGRO SET UP IN BRITAIN AND EUROPE BY SOME OF THE MORE RECENT HEAVY HANDED ACTS OF THE ADMINISTRATION. AS I SEE IT FROM WASHINGTON, OUR RELATIONSHIP ON THE SURFACE IS WORSE THAN IT SHOULD BE OR NEED BE AND THIS IS PRIMARILY DUE TO THE HAWKISH ATTITUDES IN CERTAIN PARTS OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION, NOT TO SPEAK OF DIFFICULT PRESSURES ON PARTS OF THE HILL.

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4. THE PIPELINE DISPUTE OF LAST AUTUMN WAS THE MOST GLARING EXAMPLE OF THIS, THOUGH IT IS FAR FROM BEING THE ONLY ONE: AND IT HAS RE-SURFACED IN THE PROCEDURES FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE EXPORT ADMINISTRATION ACT, WHERE THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSALS TO THE CONGRESS HAVE RIDDEN ROUGHSHOD OVER BRITISH AND EUROPEAN CONCERNS. AS A RESULT WE HAVE AN ADMINISTRATION BILL NOW BEFORE THE CONGRESS WHICH IN SOME RESPECTS IS WORSE THAN THE ORIGINAL. PART OF THIS MAY OF COURSE BE TACTICAL VIS A VIS THE CONGRESS, BUT IT MAKES A VERY POOR IMPRESSION WITH ALLIES. THE INF WAS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW TO CONDUCT RELATIONS BETWEEN ALLIES, THE PIPELINE AN OBJECT LESSON IN HOW NOT TO DO SO. THERE ARE, IN ADDITION, A RAFT OF OTHER ISSUES, LIKE AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDIES, ANTI TRUST ACTION AGAINST OUR AIRLINES, ETC, WHICH STIR UP PASSIONS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC. MOREOVER THE PROTECTIONIST ATTITUDES OF THE CONGRESS AND IN SOME CASES THE UNWILLINGNESS OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, HAVE SET UP A GOOD DEAL OF TURBULENCE ON THE QUESTION OF ARMS SALES AND MAKES A NONSENSE OF THE ALLIED POLICY OF THE 'TWO-WAY STREET'.

5. TO SOME EXTENT, THIS IS OF COURSE INEVITABLE, AND, SOME WOULD SAY, IT WAS EVER THUS. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST CAN ARISE BETWEEN THE BEST OF FRIENDS AND MUST BE DEALT WITH BY QUIET DIPLOMACY. BUT THE DANGER, AS I SEE IT, IS THAT IF WE SPEND TOO MUCH OF OUR TIME DEALING WITH EACH OTHER ON CURRENT ISSUES IN A BAD TEMPER THIS MUST INEVITABLY SPILL OVER INTO OUR LARGER CONCERNS AND ERODE THE BASIS OF TRUST WHICH STILL SO HAPPILY EXISTS BETWEEN US. ALREADY, I SENSE, THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP IS HELD IN HIGHER REGARD ON MY SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC THAN ON YOURS.

6. SO MEESE'S CALL ON THE PM PROVIDES A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CLEAR THE AIR: FOR IF MY ADVICE IS ACCEPTED, THE MESSAGE WILL COME FROM ONE FOR WHOM EVERYONE AT THE WHITE HOUSE, FROM THE PRESIDENT DOWN, HAS UNSTINTED ADMIRATION AND THEREFORE WHOSE VIEWS WILL NOT BE DISCOUNTED HERE. SOMEONE MUST TELL THE PRESIDENT 'LIKE IT IS'.

7. PLEASE SEE MIFT.

COPIES SENT TO  
No. 10 DOWNING STREET

WRIGHT  
STANDARD

NAD  
DEFD

GRD  
TRED

GCD

ESID

MR THOMAS

MR HAYES

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1171 OF 29 APRIL

MIPT: VISIT OF ED MEESE

1. AS FOR THE RUN UP TO WILLIAMSBURG, THE WHITE HOUSE HAVE TOLD US THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS SENT MESSAGES TO KOHL AND MITTERRAND STATING THAT HE IS MORE INTERESTED IN SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS ON THE SECURITY RELATED ASPECTS OF EAST/WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS THAN IN THE PUBLIC PRESENTATION. PROVIDED THERE IS REAL PROGRESS MEANWHILE IN THE STUDIES BEING CONDUCTED IN THE OECD, NATO, COCOM, IEA, IT SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT AT WILLIAMSBURG TO NOTE THE IMPORTANCE OF AN AGREED APPROACH AND THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THESE STUDIES, AND TO ENCOURAGE THEIR CONTINUANCE. IF THIS IS ACHIEVED, THERE SHOULD BE NO NEED FOR THE SUBJECT TO BE DIFFICULT OR CONTENTIOUS AT WILLIAMSBURG. IF HOWEVER THE PROCESS IS NOT ADVANCING, THIS WOULD NEED TO BE DISCUSSED. THIS OF COURSE BEGS THE QUESTION OF WHAT WILL BE CONSIDERED HERE TO CONSTITUTE SUFFICIENT PROGRESS. NO MESSAGE HAS BEEN SENT TO US BECAUSE THE AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT, BROADLY, WE SHARE THESE OBJECTIVES.
2. CLEARLY MUCH WILL DEPEND ON HOW THE FRENCH NOW DECIDE TO PAY THIS (PARIS TELEGRAM NO 339 TO YOU). THE PRIME MINISTER MAY THINK IT WORTH IMPRESSING ON MEESE HOWEVER THAT, INDEED, WE SHARE US OBJECTIVES IN THIS AREA AND ARE WORKING IN GOOD FAITH TO CARRY THINGS FORWARD IN THE STUDIES. BUT WE ARE ENGAGED IN A PROCESS OF EDUCATION AND COORDINATION AND MUST NOT EXPECT MIRACLES BY A GIVEN DATE. THE WILLIAMSBURG SUMMIT OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR STOCKTAKING AND ENSURING THAT THE PROCESS IS CARRIED FORWARD. THERE SHOULD BE NO QUESTION OF REPEATING THE EXPERIENCE OF VERSAILLES. WILLIAMSBURG HAS THE INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS. THE MESSAGE WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE EMERGING FROM THE SUMMIT IS ONE OF A JOINT DETERMINATION TO SUSTAIN NON-INFLATIONARY GROWTH IN THE WORLD ECONOMY AND TO BUILD TOGETHER ON THE RECOVERY IN THE US, IMPROVED PROSPECTS FOR GROWTH IN THE BRITISH ECONOMY ETC.
3. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, THE PRIME MINISTER MAY WISH TO TELL MEESE THAT WE THINK IT ABSOLUTELY RIGHT TO HAVE SENT SHULTZ TO THE REGION AND OF OUR STRONG SUPPORT FOR HIS EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS IN LEBANON; AND TO MENTION THE HELP WE HAVE GIVEN IN HOUSING THE US EMBASSY IN BEIRUT.

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4. WITH THE ADMINISTRATION SOMEWHAT EMBATTLED ON EL SALVADOR WITH CONGRESS, SOME GENERAL EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR THE BROAD OBJECTIVES OF US POLICY IN CENTRAL AMERICA, AS SET OUT BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS ADDRESS TO CONGRESS YESTERDAY (MY TELNO 1145) WOULD GO DOWN WELL. INDEED, SUPPORT FOR THE PRESIDENT ON MATTERS OF PERIPHERAL INTEREST TO US WOULD SUGAR THE PILL OF CRITICISM ON MATTERS OF CENTRAL CONCERN TO US.

WRIGHT

STANDARD  
NAD  
WENAD  
MED  
ECD  
ESID  
TRED  
MR THOMAS  
MR HAYES  
MR EGLERTON

COPIES SENT TO  
No. 10 DOWNING STREET

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