

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 215  
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DESKBY 200900Z  
FM OTTAWA 192152Z DEC 80  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 551 OF 19DECEMBER

*ha  
Paul*

FOR PRIME MINISTER FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

1. I HAD A USEFUL DISCUSSION WITH TRUDEAU OVER LUNCH TO-DAY. AFTER EMPHASISING THAT YOU AND MINISTERS STOOD BY THEIR PREVIOUS UNDERTAKINGS AND WANTED TO DO WHAT THE CANADIAN GOVT AND PARLIAMENT WANTED, I DESCRIBED THE LIKELY PARLIAMENTARY DIFFICULTIES ON THE LINES WE AGREED AND URGED ON TRUDEAU THE NEED TO TAKE THE ISSUE SLOWLY SO AS TO HELP US CONDITION PARLIAMENT TO ACQUIESCE.

2. TRUDEAU WAS CLEARLY UNWILLING TO ACCEPT THAT DELAY WOULD IN FACT LEAD TO GREATER CHANCES OF ACCEPTANCE, UNDERLINED THE CONSTITUTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE AND URGENCY OF WHAT HE WAS PROPOSING AND INDICATED HIS DETERMINATION TO PRESS ON WITH A VIEW TO GETTING THE RESOLUTION TO WESTMINSTER IN MARCH AND TO HAVING IT ACCEPTED OR REJECTED IN THE CURRENT PARLIAMENTARY SESSION. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN THE EVENT OF REJECTION HE WOULD APPEAL TO PUBLIC OPINION IN BOTH BRITAIN AND CANADA AGAINST THE OBSTRUCTION OF BACKBENCHERS AT WESTMINSTER BUT LEFT UNDISCLOSED WHAT FURTHER ACTION HE WOULD TAKE.

3. THE DISCUSSION WAS FRIENDLY. I LEFT IT THAT I WOULD REPORT TO YOU AND MY COLLEAGUES AND THAT WE WOULD CONSIDER WHAT FURTHER STEPS WE COULD TAKE TO IMPROVE THE CLIMATE AT WESTMINSTER AND THAT WE WOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH HIM AGAIN.

4. A FULLER REPORT IS CONTAINED IN MY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING TELEGRAM.

FORD

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