

SECRET

FM F C O 241915Z DEC 79
 F L A S H WASHINGTON
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 1982 OF 24 DECEMBER
 INFO IMMEDIATE TEHRAN

f. Ash

PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK
 ROUTINE BONN PARIS ROME TOKYO BERNE OTTAWA OTHER EEC POSTS
 MODUK (HEAD DEFENCE SALES).

IRAN: ECONOMIC MEASURES.

1. PLEASE TRANSMIT IMMEDIATELY THE FOLLOWING REPLY TO THE US COMMUNICATION CONTAINED IN FCO TELNO 452 TO BONN.
2. BEGINS: HMG ARE GLAD TO BE ABLE TO SEND AN AFFIRMATIVE REPLY TO THE AMERICAN REQUESTS, BUT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACT BEFORE DECEMBER 27. WE WILL SEND A FURTHER MESSAGE THEN, EXPLAINING HOW WE ARE IMPLEMENTING THE MEASURES HERE. MEANWHILE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THERE WILL BE NO PUBLICITY: WE WISH TO AVOID EXPOSING THOSE OF OUR CITIZENS STILL REMAINING IN IRAN TO GREATER RISK. ENDS.
3. YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT WE ARE CONCERNED BY THE SERIOUS LEAK IN THE WASHINGTON POST, WHICH IS IN BREACH OF THE ASSURANCES WE HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED. IF THERE IS A FURTHER LEAK IN THE NEXT DAY OR SO, WE AGREE GENERALLY WITH THE DEFENSIVE PRESS LINE PROPOSED: IF WE HAVE TO USE THIS LINE, WE WOULD OMIT THE WORD FINANCIAL BEFORE MEASURES, AND WOULD SPELL OUT THE LINK WITH THE HOSTAGES. BUT OUR CLEAR PREFERENCE IS FOR STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY, WHICH IS THE BASIS ON WHICH WE HAVE ACTED WITH OUR BANKS.
4. BACKGROUND: REASONS FOR DELAY UNTIL DECEMBER 27 ARE
 - A. PUBLIC HOLIDAY ON BOXING DAY
 - B. DEPARTURE OF SOME EMBASSY STAFF FROM TEHRAN ON MORNING OF 27TH.
5. COPY RECIPIENTS SHOULD TAKE NO ACTION ON THIS TELEGRAM UNTIL RECEIPT OF FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

GARRINGTON

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