

GR 500

SECRET

FM FCO 051240Z DEC 79

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1789 OF 5 DECEMBER

*Prime Minister*

②

*Handwritten initials*

6.12.79

IRAN.

1. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO SEEK AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO VANCE AND TO MAKE TO HIM THE FOLLOWING POINTS, EMPHASISING THAT THEY COME FROM ME:

(A) ON THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US, WE SEE LITTLE PROSPECT OF ANY EARLY POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE RELEASE OF HOSTAGES. ALTHOUGH THE VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL EXERCISES OF CONDEMNATION/DEMAND FOR THE UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF HOSTAGES (BY THE NINE, BY THE COMMONWEALTH, BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND NOW BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL) HAVE CLEARLY BEEN WORTH DOING, THEY SEEM TO HAVE HAD LITTLE EFFECT ON THOSE IN CHARGE OF EVENTS IN IRAN, EXCEPT POSSIBLY TO DETER THEM FROM PUSHING THEIR ANTI-AMERICAN COURSE TO EVEN GREATER EXTREMES.

(B) WE HAVE THROUGHOUT SUPPORTED UNEQUIVOCALLY THE AMERICAN REFUSAL TO SEND THE SHAH TO IRAN AND THEIR INSISTENCE ON THE UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. WE ADMIRE ENORMOUSLY THE COMBINATION OF FIRMNESS AND RESTRAINT WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE DISPLAYED IN THE FACE OF A SERIES OF OUTRAGEOUS PROVOCATIONS. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS APPROACH STILL OFFERS THE BEST, PROBABLY THE ONLY, WAY OF GETTING THE HOSTAGES OUT UNHARMED, EVEN IF THAT MAY MEAN A LONG HAUL. WE JUDGE THAT THIS HAS ALSO BEEN MR VANCE'S VIEW (YOUR TELNO. 3872).

(C) WE REALISE HOWEVER THAT THE US MAY IN THE DAYS AHEAD FEEL THE NEED TO TAKE FURTHER ECONOMIC ACTION AGAINST IRAN TO REINFORCE THE DECISIONS ON OIL AND THE FREEZING OF ASSETS: AND THAT, IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES SUCH AS THE KILLING OF SOME OF THE HOSTAGES, THERE WOULD BE GREAT PRESSURE TO BEYOND ECONOMIC MEASURES.

(D) WE ASSUME THAT IN ANY SUCH EVENTUALITY (FURTHER ECONOMIC MEASURES TO INCREASE THE PRESSURE ON IRAN OR RETALIATION AFTER HARM TO THE HOSTAGES), THE UNITED STATES WOULD LOOK TO ITS MAIN WESTERN ALLIES AT LEAST FOR MORAL SUPPORT AND PERHAPS ALSO FOR

S E C R E T

MORE THAN THAT. ALMOST ANY ACTION THAT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT TAKE, WHETHER OR NOT ACCOMPANIED BY REQUESTS FOR PARALLEL ACTION BY THE MAIN WESTERN COUNTRIES, WOULD HAVE DIRECT AND SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS FOR THEM AS THE FREEZING OF ASSETS HAS HAD ALREADY. WE FOR OUR PART WOULD LIKE TO BE IN A POSITION TO RESPOND POSITIVELY, AND NOT JUST TO POINT OUT THE DIFFICULTIES OF WHICH THE AMERICANS WOULD ALREADY BE FULLY AWARE.

(E) IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WE BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE IN ALL OUR INTERESTS IF THE UNITED STATES FELT ABLE TO SHARE THEIR THINKING ON THE WAY AHEAD AND THE VARIOUS OPTIONS AS THEY SAW THEM WITH THEIR PRINCIPAL ALLIES. A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO INITIATE THIS PROCESS WOULD BE AT THE QUADRIPARTITE MINISTERIAL DINNER IN BRUSSELS ON 12 DECEMBER.

2. YOU SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT I HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THIS APPROACH WITH EITHER THE FRENCH OR THE GERMANS AND AM AT THIS STAGE MERELY ASKING VANCE FOR HIS OWN REACTIONS. I DO HOWEVER ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THEIR BEING BROUGHT IN AT AN EARLY STAGE. I HAD SOME BRIEF DISCUSSION WITH FRANCOIS-PONCET AND GENSHER IN THE MARGINS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AT DUBLIN FROM WHICH I GOT THE DUAL IMPRESSION OF FIRM SUPPORT FOR US POLICY BUT A CERTAIN NERVOUSNESS AT OUR JOINT IGNORANCE OF THE WAY THE AMERICANS PLANNED TO PLAY THE HAND FROM NOW ON.

3. PLEASE CONSULT VANCE AS TO WHETHER IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO GO OVER THE SAME GROUND WITH BRZEZINSKI, AND WHETHER THE SITUATION IS SUCH THAT WE OUGHT NOT TO WAIT UNTIL NEXT WEDNESDAY.

CARRINGTON

FILES  
HD/MED  
HD/DEF D  
HD/PLANNING STAFF  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD  
MR BULLARD  
LORD BRIDGES  
MR J MOBERLY

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10  
DOWNING ST]

2  
S E C R E T