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CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 311700Z JAN 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NO 303 OF 31 JANUARY
AND TO MANILA (FOR PS/S OF S)

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S TRAVEL PLANS

(Standard)

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Monday*

MICHAEL DEEVER, OF THE WHITE HOUSE, HAS TOLD ME THAT IN ABOUT A FORTNIGHT HE WILL BE LEAVING FOR PARIS, ROME AND BRUSSELS TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE PRESIDENTS SUMMER VISITS.

I ASKED WHETHER HE WAS ASSUMING THAT THE NATO SUMMIT WAS GOING TO BE HELD IN BRUSSELS. HE SAID HE WAS. I SAID THAT I DID NOT THINK IT NECESSARILY HAD TO BE HELD THERE. BONN AND LONDON STRUCK ME AS CONCEIVABLE ALTERNATIVES, THOUGH THE FORMER SCARCELY HAD THE ACCOMODATION FOR A SUMMIT. DEEVER SHOWED INTEREST. I REMINDED HIM OF HER MAJESTY'S INVITATION TO WINDSOR CASTLE AND OF THE PROPOSAL WE HAD MADE FOR A VISIT BY THE PRESIDENT BETWEEN THE END OF THE ECONOMIC SUMMIT ON JUNE 6TH AND THE BEGINNING OF THE NATO MEETING ON THE 9TH. WAS THE ITALIAN VISIT GOING TO TAKE UP ALL THIS TIME? QUOTE HELL NO UNQUOTE, DEEVER REPLIED QUOTE WE WANT TO GET IN AND OUT OF ROME AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, SAY FOUR HOURS UNQUOTE. I SUGGESTED TO DEEVER THAT IF THE PRESIDENT'S ONLY VISIT TO EUROPE THIS YEAR WERE LIMITED TO VERSAILLES THE VATICAN, ROME AND PERHAPS BRUSSELS. THIS WOULD NOT BE A VERY GOOD BALANCE. IT WAS ESSENTIAL IN THE UNITED STATES' AND HIS INTEREST THAT THE PRESIDENT GIVE HIMSELF THE CHANCE TO GET HIMSELF ACROSS TO A LARGE SECTION OF THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC NOR SHOULD IT BE OVERLOOKED THAT THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF U.S. CORRESPONDENTS ABROAD WAS IN LONDON; HIS PRESENCE THERE IN AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING ENVIRONMENT WOULD RICOCHET BACK TO AMERICA TO HIS OWN DOMESTIC ADVANTAGE. DEEVER SAID THAT ALL THAT WAS VERY INTERESTING. HE WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO ME ABOUT IT EARLY NEXT WEEK. I WILL TRY TO SEE DEEVER. MY IMPRESSION IS THAT THE HANDLING OF OUR INVITATIONS ILLUSTRATES THE CONFUSION THAT PREVAILS IN THE WHITE HOUSE. GIVEN THE NUMBER OF TIMES WE HAVE RAISED THIS WITH THEM IT WOULD BE TEMPTING TO UPBRAID THEM FOR CAVALIER BEHAVIOUR BUT I DON'T THINK THIS WOULD DO ANY GOOD. WE HAVE TO TAKE THEM AS THEY ARE AND ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN. IF WE CAN HOST NATO THERE SHOULD BE NO TROUBLE, THOUGH I EXPECT THAT WHAT THE PRESIDENT WILL THEN WANT IS TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL FOR A DAY OR TWO AND PERHAPS RIDE A HORSE. IF NATO IS IN BRUSSELS OR ELSEWHERE I THINK WE SHOULD TRY TO SQUEEZE IN A VISIT TO WINDSOR CASTLE, SAY THE NIGHTS OF JUNE 7 AND 8. I AM SURE IT IS DIFFICULT COMING TO A DECISION ON THE PLACE OF THE NATO SUMMIT. BUT I WILL SEIZE THE CHANCE TO SEE DEEVER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN THE SLENDER HOPE OF TRYING TO TIE THEM DOWN A LITTLE MORE FIRMLY. I MIGHT JUST ADD THAT I HAVE ALSO DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT VERY RECENTLY WITH MEESE. HE SPOKE WITH ALMOST THEATRICAL DETACHMENT ABOUT HOW MUCH HE PERSONALLY LIKED ANY CHANCE TO VISIT LONDON FROM WHICH I DEDUCED THAT HIS WAS NOT A DECISIVE VOICE IN THE PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL PLAN. CLARK, I SUSPECT, IS INFLUENTIAL ON THIS SUBJECT. I AM SURE HE WILL HAVE ROOTED HARD FOR THE ITALIAN LEG OF THE JOURNEY. AS YOU KNOW I HAVE SPOKEN TO HIM ABOUT OUR WISHES.

HENDERSON

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