

*From: Munich.*

*From: Munich of 12A  
containing advisory ID  
on ground.*

*12A*

*Mr Wade-Gary  
Mr Hastic-Smith  
Mr DJ. Wright*

SECRET

*MUS  
12A*

*I hope I have covered  
this in the such files  
in future.*

*MS*

*containing*

*17/10*

GRS 359

SECRET

FM FCO 130933Z OCT 80

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1624 OF 13 OCTOBER

AND TO PRIORITY PARIS AND BONN

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK (AUS (D STAFF), DS 5, ACDS (OPS)),

PRIORITY JEDDA KUWAIT BAGHDAD ABU DHABI DUBAI DOHA BAHRAIN MUSCAT

AND AMMAN

INFO SAVING UKMIS NEW YORK MOSCOW TEL AVIV UKDEL NATO CAIRO AND DAMASCUS

YOUR TELNO 4235: IRAN/IRAQ: DEFENCE ISSUES.

1. IT IS REASSURING TO KNOW THAT THE AMERICANS ARE GOING SLOW ON TALKS ON NAVAL COOPERATION WITH THE GULF STATES. ON THE OTHER HAND, BARTHOLOMEW'S PROPOSAL THAT THE OTHER POINTS WE HAVE RAISED WITH THEM SHOULD BE PURSUED IN THE NAVAL TALKS IS NOT PARTICULARLY HELPFUL. THE NAVAL TALKS HERE HAVE BEEN LITTLE SHORT OF A FIASCO. OUR INTERLOCUTORS (CINCUSNAVEUR) ARE ON THE PERIPHERY AND CANNOT SUSTAIN A SERIOUS DIALOGUE. THEY HAVE ANYWAY TOLD US THAT THE PENTAGON NOW WISHES TO TRANSFER THE NAVAL TALKS TO THE LOCAL COMMANDERS IN THE GULF AREA AND THAT MEANWHILE THE PLANNING CONCEPT SET OUT IN THE SECOND US PAPER HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY FOR DEFENSE SO THAT THE LOCAL US COMMANDER ON US MIDWAY CAN DRAW UP AN OPERATIONAL PLAN ON THAT BASIS.

2. IF THIS INFORMATION IS ACCURATE, THE AMERICANS APPEAR TO HAVE TAKEN SCANT ACCOUNT OF THE COMMENTS WE HAVE MADE. YOU SHOULD THEREFORE SPEAK AT AN APPROPRIATELY HIGH LEVEL IN STATE DEPARTMENT AND ALSO IN THE WHITE HOUSE ON THE FOLLOWING LINES:

(A) WE CONTINUE TO HAVE IMPORTANT MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE SECOND US PAPER. IN THE FIRST INSTANCE WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE BASIC PLANNING CONCEPT OF DIVIDING THE SEA AREAS INTO ZONES IS LIKELY, IN THE EVENT OF A SERIOUS INCIDENT, TO PROVIDE SHIPOWNERS WITH THE NECESSARY CONFIDENCE TO RESUME PASSAGE THROUGH THE STRAITS OF HORMUZ AND IN THE GULF. INDEED THE AMERICAN PLAN IS A DESCRIPTION OF WHAT IS BEING DONE AD HOC ALREADY.

(B) WE DO NOT CONSIDER THAT THE LITTORAL STATES COULD ADEQUATELY PROTECT THEIR OWN WATERS IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF REAL DIFFICULTY: THIS APPLIES PARTICULARLY TO THE OMANI RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE KEY PART OF THE STRAITS OF HORMUZ.

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/(O) WE NOTE

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(C) WE NOTE WHAT BARTHOLOMEW SAYS ABOUT AIR COVER. BUT HAVE THE AMERICANS CONSIDERED THE CONSEQUENCES OF DESTROYING HOSTILE AIRCRAFT OVER OR ON THEIR OWN TERRITORY? HOW WOULD THIS SQUARE WITH A NEED FOR DE-ESCALATION? THERE WOULD ALSO BE A NEED FOR LIAISON AND OPERATIONAL CONTROL, WHICH ARGUES FOR CLOSER NAVAL COORDINATION THAN AT PRESENT ENVISAGED.

(D) WE ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT THE AMERICANS APPRECIATE THE VITAL NECESSITY OF ADEQUATE POLITICAL CONTROL. THIS APPLIES IN THE PRESENT SITUATION OF CONTINGENCY PLANNING AND BEGIN UNDERLINING A FORTIORI END UNDERLINING IN A REAL CRISIS.

(E) WE RECOGNISE THAT THE FRENCH HAVE EXPRESSED OPPOSITION TO MULTILATERAL NAVAL DISCUSSION. IN OUR VIEW WE SHOULD NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO IMPRESS ON THE FRENCH THE VALUE OF JOINT PLANNING. THE RISKS OF MISUNDERSTANDING AND MISCALCULATION MUST BE GREATER IF ARRANGEMENTS ARE ONLY DISCUSSED ON A BILATERAL BASIS. THIS IS A SITUATION WHICH POTENTIALLY AFFECTS US ALL, AND HAVING BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE, WE BELIEVE THAT PLANNING AND ACTION MUST BE JOINT.

3. YOU SHOULD ALSO TELL THE AMERICANS THAT, NOTWITHSTANDING OUR MISGIVINGS ABOUT US PLANNING, WE ARE INSTRUCTING THE CAPTAIN OF HMS COVENTRY NOW IN THE GULF TO MAKE CONTACT WITH HIS US AND FRENCH COLLEAGUES. WE ARE DOING THIS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT A CHANNEL FOR COMMUNICATION ABOUT PRACTICAL NAVAL ISSUES REMAINS OPEN. BUT THE CAPTAIN IS BEING TOLD TO RESERVE THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON POLITICAL ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE AND TO MAKE CLEAR THAT NO POLITICAL DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO PUT ANY OPERATIONAL MEASURES INTO EFFECT. MEANWHILE WE ARE CONSIDERING WHAT STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN TO ESTABLISH POLITICAL CONTROL AND WOULD WELCOME AN EARLY INDICATION OF US THINKING. FINALLY WE SHOULD BE GLAD TO LEARN HOW FAR THE US HAVE GOT IN THEIR TALKS WITH THE OMANIS AND SAUDIS.

4. MEANWHILE THE GERMAN MFA HAVE APPROACHED THE EMBASSY IN BONN WITH A SUGGESTION FOR BILATERAL DISCUSSION ON NAVAL CONTINGENCY PLANNING IN THE GULF. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE GERMANS ARE CONCERNED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF PRECIPITATE OR ILL-CONSIDERED AMERICAN ACTION. BUT THE EMBASSY THINK THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE WAY IN WHICH THE AMERICANS ARE HANDLING THIS. WE SEE THIS APPROACH FROM BONN AS A POSSIBLE WAY OF INVOLVING THE FRENCH MORE CLOSELY WITH OUR THINKING. WE SHOULD THEREFORE BE GRATEFUL IF BONN COULD REPLY TO THE GERMANS MAKING THE POINT THAT, WHILE OF COURSE WE WOULD WELCOME BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS, WE WONDER WHETHER THE GERMANS MIGHT NOT SEE ADVANTAGE

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IN OUR DOING THIS BEGIN UNDERLINING A TROIS END UNDERLING WITH THE FRENCH. FOR THE TIME BEING WASHINGTON SHOULD NOT (NOT) MENTION THIS GERMAN APPROACH TO THE AMERICANS.

5. PARIS SHOULD SPEAK TO ROBIN, GIVING HIM A FULL ACCOUNT OF OUR VIEWS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPHS 2 AND 3 ABOVE. THEY SHOULD REINFORCE THE POINT THAT CONTINUED SEPARATE SETS OF BILATERAL TALKS ON THE NAVAL NET ARE A RECIPE FOR CONFUSION, ARE LIKELY TO COMPOUND THE DANGERS OF INADEQUATE POLITICAL CONTROL AND, IF THE WORST CAME TO THE WORST, COULD LEAD TO ILL-CONSIDERED ACTION. OUR STRONG PREFERENCE CONTINUES TO BE TO INVOLVE IN THE NAVY-TO-NAVY PLANNING TALKS ALL THREE COUNTRIES WITH SHIPS IN THE AREA. WE TRUST THEREFORE THAT THE FRENCH WILL RECONSIDER THEIR REFUSAL TO TALK BEGIN UNDERLINING A TROIS END UNDERLINING.

6. OTHER POSTS TO WHOM THIS TELEGRAM IS REPEATED SHOULD TREAT IT AS STRICTLY FOR THEIR PRIVATE INFORMATION ONLY. WE SEE A REAL DANGER THAT WIDE DISCUSSION OF THESE AMERICAN CONTINGENCY PLANS, DISTORTED BY THE SOVIET UNION, MAY HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING, RATHER THAN DECREASING, TENSION, AND PERHAPS EVEN OF PROVIDING IRAN WITH THE TRIGGER OR ETHE EXCUSE FOR SOME WILD MOVE IN OR AROUND THE STRAITS OF HORMUZ.

CARRINGTON

LIMITED

HD/PLANNING STAFF  
HD/MED  
HD/DEF D  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
SIR J GRAHAM  
MR BULLARD  
LORD BRIDGES  
MR P H MOBERLY  
MR BRAITHWAITE

*also copied to Mr Alexander  
10, Darning Street.*

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