

OUT TELEGRAM

29.10.80 29

	Classification and Caveats SECRET-BURNING BUSH/DEDIP	Precedence/Deskby IMMEDIATE
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ZCZC  
GRS  
CLASS  
CAVEATS  
DESKBY  
FM FCO  
PRE/ADD  
TEL NO

1 ZCZC  
2 GRS  
3 SECRET-BURNING BUSH  
4 DEDIP  
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6 FM FCO 291615Z OCT 80  
7 TO IMMEDIATE WARSAW  
8 TELEGRAM NUMBER  
9 FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM HEAD OF PLANNING STAFF  
10 QUADRIPARTITE MEETING OF POLITICAL DIRECTORS, 27 OCTOBER  
11 1. The Secretary of State may wish to have a short account of  
12 the Quadripartite discussion on Iran/Iraq on 27 October.  
13 2. Our new move of circulating in advance a list of questions  
14 about Western action helped to focus discussion on policy. The  
15 French will now circulate a note of the points agreed ad  
16 referendum on 27 October and of those on which there was no  
17 agreement. We shall be free to comment on the formulations used.  
18 The next meeting will be on 13 November in Paris.  
19 3. There was general agreement that stalemate persisted in the  
20 war; that the four should continue for the moment to leave others  
21 to lead in mediation efforts; that the Russians were still  
22 keeping their options open; and that it would not be in Western  
23 interests for the Soviet Union to be a party to any new arrangement  
24 concerning territory or navigation in the Gulf after the war.  
25 4. In discussion of Naval matters, there were differences on

*mf* Read in full.

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File number	Dept S/S Office	Distribution Limited - Head of Planning Staff PS Sir J Graham Mr Bullard cc M Alexander, No 10
Drafted by (Block capitals) C L G Mallaby		
Telephone number 233 4333		
Authorised for despatch <i>RmjL 29/X</i>		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	



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2 whether action would be appropriate only after an interruption of  
3 shipping in the Gulf. The Americans seemed to envisage that  
4 action might be necessary when interruption was only threatened.  
5 The conclusion was that there would be no Naval action before  
6 political decisions by governments; that high level consultations  
7 between the four and maybe Australia and New Zealand would be  
8 needed before the decisions were taken; and that the need for  
9 these consultations would arise if anything happened which im-  
10 pinged on freedom of navigation. This implies that consultations  
11 would take place in the event of an interruption or if an  
12 interruption was threatened. It was thought that the  
13 consultations might take place among Heads of Government and/or  
14 Foreign Ministers. The French agreed after some discussion that  
15 a quickly convened meeting of the four Political Directors might  
16 be an element in the consultations and that contact between  
17 Christopher and the three Ambassadors in Washington could be borne  
18 in mind as a possibility.  
19 5. The French suggested some further guidelines: that we should  
20 not allow an event which threatened shipping in the Gulf to pass  
21 without any Western reaction; that we should act speedily if such  
22 an event took place; that we should not act punitively or in  
23 retaliation but in order to restore freedom of navigation; and  
24 that we should act to the degree necessary to achieve this result  
25 but no more.  
26 6. The French displayed a strong preference for taking Naval  
27 action alone in response to certain types of incident, for instance  
28 if a merchant vessel was involved which belonged to France or a  
29 country friendly to France or was carrying oil for France. They  
30 recognised that a broader threat to shipping would require action  
31 by all the Western Navies in the area. It was pointed out in  
32 discussion that the nearest Naval units to an incident involving a  
33 single tanker would be the right ones to take action.  
34 7. The Americans firmly opposed our MOD's insistence on Naval

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convoying of tankers as the right way to keep the Gulf open. The Americans argued that escorted convoys would not work for vast tankers which had to keep 18 miles apart, and that convoying in narrow Straits would be difficult. They advocated their sectoral approach, under which each Navy would have responsibility for a designated area of water. They suggested that this would allow for a kind of convoying if necessary: merchant ships could be seen through one sector by the Navy responsible there and handed on to another Navy when entering the next sector. The Americans did not give a straight answer when asked whether they were satisfied that merchant vessels would be persuaded to enter the Gulf under these Naval arrangements. (We are going over these matters again with MOD.) The best conclusion the Quadripartite discussion could reach was that only the Navies could reconcile these important differences about the best type of Naval action and that the Naval talks, which the French still insist should remain bilateral, should be speeded up and should take account of the Political Directors' discussion.

8. There were differences about whether the agreement of littoral states would be needed before any Naval action. The elastic formulation agreed upon was that we should secure the agreement of the littoral states. The French argued that some, for instance Kuwait, might prefer not to be consulted before Naval action. The Americans also revealed that, while preferring to act jointly with friendly Navies, they might do so alone if necessary: the main thing was that the US intended to keep shipping moving in the Gulf.

9. In a discussion about the hostages, the Americans said that they had no intention, if there was a deal, of supplying to Iran military equipment not already contracted for. But military goods worth \$400 million were already waiting to go. There were three categories. The first was sophisticated equipment which the US had decided not to deliver even before the hostages were seized;

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1 this would not be released. The second category was spares and  
 2 less advanced equipment; this would be released. The third was  
 3 major pieces of equipment belonging to Iran which were being  
 4 overhauled or modernised in the US. Here decisions would be  
 5 taken case by case. The French argued against the US going too  
 6 far too fast in rebuilding relations with Iran. US support for  
 7 Iran as well as Israel could create the feeling that the  
 8 Americans were anti-Arab on everything. The American reply was  
 9 that domestic opinion would not allow the US again to become the  
 10 protector of Iran. The US wanted to be the protector of  
 11 Israel and of Saudi Arabia, while trying also to keep Iraq away  
 12 from the Soviet Union.  
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15 CARRINGTON

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