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M CANBERRA 310335Z JAN 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 86 OF 31 JANUARY

INFO SAVING WASHINGTON, BONN, PARIS AND UKDEL NATO.

MS.

MY TELEGRAM NUMBER 75 : VISIT OF MR FRASER

1. IN ANTICIPATION OF MR FRASER'S TALKS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON 4 FEBRUARY YOU MAY CARE TO HAVE A FEW REFLECTIONS ON AUSTRALIA'S RECENT CONDUCT IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO ANGLO/AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS.

2. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE IS A QUITE IMPRESSIVE CATALOGUE OF HELPFUL AUSTRALIAN ACTIONS OVER RECENT MONTHS. THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE ARE:

A. READY AUSTRALIAN AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMONWEALTH CEASEFIRE MONITORING FORCE IN RHODESIA. (THEY ALSO HELPED WITH TRANSPORT FOR THE FIJI CONTINGENT.)

B. THE AUSTRALIAN DECISION TO SEND A TEAM OF OBSERVERS TO THE RHODESIAN ELECTIONS. IT IS ALSO HELPFUL THAT, IF WE HAVE TO ACQUIESCE IN RAMPHAL'S INDEPENDENT INITIATIVE ON OBSERVERS, THE AUSTRALIANS SHOULD HAVE NOMINATED A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CALIBRE OF SHANN WHO MAY BE RELIED UPON TO USE HIS INFLUENCE IN THE INTERESTS OF A TRUE AND BALANCED REPORT.

C. THE OPENING OF AN AUSTRALIAN LIAISON OFFICE IN SALISBURY.

D. THE PROMPT AUSTRALIAN AGREEMENT TO TAKE CHARGE OF OUR INTERESTS IN TEHRAN SHOULD THE NEED ARISE.

E. THE ROBUST AUSTRALIAN REACTION TO EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN. ON THIS MR FRASER'S POLICY AND PROMONCEMENTS ARE VERY CLOSE TO THOSE OF THE PRIME MINISTER. THERE ARE ALSO THE AUSTRALIAN OFFERS TO COOPERATE WITH THE AMERICANS OVER SURVEILLANCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND TO PROVIDE THE AMERICANS WITH ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

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3. AS AGAINST THIS, I RECOGNISE THAT MR FRASER HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN AS TACTFUL OR CONSIDERATE AS HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN ON THE SUBJECT OF RHODESIA, ESPECIALLY IN HIS HANDLING OF THE MEDIA AT LUSAKA. BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT HIS INTENTION HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN TO HELP PRODUCE A POSITIVE RESULT, EVEN IF HE ALSO WANTED HIS SHARE OF THE CREDIT. I BELIEVE HE IS ALSO MORE CONSCIOUS THAN BEFORE OF THE IMMENSELY DELICATE TASK WE HAVE IN RHODESIA AND WILL TREAD MORE WARILY ON THAT ACCOUNT. IF HE HAS SOMETIMES ATTEMPTED TO NUDGE US IN ONE DIRECTION, HE HAS ALSO ATTEMPTED TO NUDGE THE LEADERS OF, EG, THE FRONT LINE STATES IN THE OTHER. HE TAKES PRIDE IN AUSTRALIA'S DEMONSTRATED ABILITY TO EXPRESS ITS OWN POINT OF VIEW AND NOT AUTOMATICALLY TO FOLLOW US OR THE U S : BUT THE EMPHASIS IN THAT SENTENCE IS ON "AUTOMATICALLY".

4. RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, MOST RECENTLY OVER THE MANUFACTURING BEEF QUOTA, REMAIN AN ISSUE OF CONTINUING CONCERN HERE. BUT, IN HIS PRESENT MOOD, I WOULD EXPECT MR FRASER TO MENTION THIS ONLY IN PASSING. THE AUSTRALIANS ARE WELL AWARE OF OUR HELPFUL ROLE AND NOWADAYS GIVE US READY CREDIT FOR IT.

FCO PSE PASS SAVING TO ALL.

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

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