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TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 126 OF 24 APRIL 1980,

INFO ROUTINE ATHENS, ANKARA, UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON AND CBFC.

VISIT BY THE LORD PRIVY SEAL

1. THE VISIT BY SIR IAN GILMOUR AND LADY CAROLINE GILMOUR WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL. COMING AS IT DID AT A TIME OF FRUSTRATION OVER THE LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARDS A RESUMPTION OF INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS THE VISIT WAS ESPECIALLY WELCOME. THE LPS' RECEPTION, BOTH BY GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS, COULD NOT HAVE BEEN WARMER. THE TROUBLE TAKEN AND THE GENUINELY CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE TALKS SHOWED THE PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE WHICH CYPRIOTS ATTACHED TO THIS FIRST VISIT BY A SENIOR MEMBER OF HMG. WHEN I SAW ROLANDIS YESTERDAY HE WAS FULL OF ENTHUSIASM FOR THE WAY IN WHICH THE TALKS HAD BEEN CONDUCTED.

2. I HOPE THAT THE VISIT WAS AS USEFUL TO THE LORD PRIVY SEAL AS TO US. THE CONTENT OF THE FORMAL TALKS ON BOTH SIDES WAS LARGELY PREDICTABLE AND UNDERLINED THE CONCLUSION THAT THE TWO COMMUNITIES WILL NOT BY THEMSELVES FIND A SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. BUT THE CYPRUS FOREIGN MINISTER WAS READY TO GO FURTHER IN PRIVATE. HE SAID THAT HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER THROUGH THE GREEK AND TURKISH REPRESENTATIVES TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, DESPITE PRESS LEAKS OVER HIS RECENT TALK WITH ERKMEN. ON SUBSTANCE ROLANDIS SAID THAT HE WELL UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ESSENTIAL BARGAIN MUST BE A TRADE-OFF BETWEEN THE RETURN OF TERRITORY TO THE GREEK CYPRIOTS AND THE DETAILS OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY DOUBTED WHETHER THE GREEK CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT COULD AT PRESENT PUT ACROSS AND MAKE STICK THE SORT OF CONCESSIONS WHICH WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR A SETTLEMENT ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES.

3. ROLANDIS TOLD ME YESTERDAY THAT HE HAD BEGUN TALKING TO KYPRIANOU ABOUT THE NEED TO SHOW MORE FLEXIBILITY OVER THE CONSTITUTION IF THERE WERE SIGNS OF A MOVE BY THE TURKISH SIDE ON TERRITORY. THE PRESIDENT HAD NOT YET EXPRESSED A FIRM VIEW ON THIS. I TOLD HIM OF THE LPS' IMPRESSION (REFLECTED AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE) THAT WHEN THE ARGUMENTS WERE BOILED DOWN TO THEIR ESSENCE THERE WAS NO SUBSTANTIAL OBSTACLE TO A RESUMPTION OF TALKS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. THE LPS' TALK WITH MR DENKTASH HAD SHOWN THAT THEORETICALLY BOTH SIDES VIEWED THE CONTENT OF THE TALKS (THOUGH NOT OF COURSE THE AIM) IN A SIMILAR MANNER. BUT THERE WAS OF COURSE THE QUESTION WHETHER THE TURKISH SIDE WANTED TALKS AT ALL AT THIS TIME. WE AGREED TO KEEP IN TOUCH IN CASE THERE WAS SCOPE FOR ANY POSITIVE FOLLOW-UP TO THE LPS' TALKS.

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4. THE ONLY JARRING NOTE HAS BEEN THE INTERPRETATION BY THE GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS OF WHAT THE LPS SAID AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ABOUT THE TURKISH QUOTE INVASION UNQUOTE. THE PRESS HAVE SEIZED ON SIR IAN GILMOUR'S EMPHASIS ON THE NEED TO GET AWAY FROM THE TYRANNY OF WORDS AND HIS COMMENT THAT QUOTE INVASION UNQUOTE MEANS DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE. THEY SUGGEST THAT HIS REMARKS IMPLY A CYNICAL AND INDIFFERENT ATTITUDE BY BRITAIN TOWARDS THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. IN THE SHORT TERM THIS IS UNFORTUNATE, BUT IT MAY PROVE SALUTARY FOR THE GREEK CYPRIOTS TO REALISE THAT WE ARE IN NO DOUBT THAT NEITHER PARTY HAS ALL THE RIGHT ON ITS SIDE.

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