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TO PRIORITY F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 279 OF 22 MARCH

ANGLO-GERMAN CONSULTATIONS, 22 APRIL: MINISTERIAL PARTICIPATION

1. IT IS TIME WE GAVE THOUGHT TO THE QUESTION OF WHICH MINISTERS SHOULD ATTEND THESE TALKS. THE CHANCELLOR'S STAFF HAVE TOLD US THAT KOHL WILL BE CONSIDERING THIS QUESTION AS SOON AS THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS INSTALLED, WHICH SHOULD BE ON 30 MARCH. BUT THEY POINT OUT THAT IT IS FOR US, AS HOSTS ON THIS OCCASION, TO SAY WHICH GERMAN MINISTERS WE INTEND TO INVITE, AND THERE WOULD BE ADVANTAGE IN FEEDING IN OUR IDEAS BEFORE THE GERMANS FIRM UP THEIRS. GERMAN OFFICIALS CONCEDE THAT THE DECISION MAY DEPEND IN PART ON WHO THE NEW GERMAN MINISTERS ARE. BUT THEY HAVE AIDED WITH US PRIVATELY THE THOUGHT THAT THIS MIGHT BE A GOOD OCCASION FOR THEM TO BRING NOT ONLY THE TRADITIONAL GROUP OF MINISTERS (FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FINANCE, ECONOMY, DEFENCE) BUT OTHERS IN WHOSE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY THERE IS ANGLO-GERMAN INTEREST AND WHO SHOULD GET TO KNOW THEIR BRITISH OPPOSITE NUMBERS (THEY MENTION RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY, OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT).

2. THE LIST OF MINISTERS TO BE INVITED WILL HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INTER ALIA THE PRACTICALITIES OF THE PROGRAMME. A SINGLE DAY, 22 APRIL, IS AT PRESENT SET ASIDE FOR THE TALKS. IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO INVITE DR KOHL TO STAY OVERNIGHT AT CHEQUERS THE GESTURE WOULD, I SUSPECT, GO DOWN DISPROPORTIONATELY WELL WITH A MAN WHO IS LIKELY NOW TO BE OUR CHIEF GERMAN INTERLOCUTOR FOR A CONSIDERABLE TIME. THIS NEED NOT INHIBIT US FROM INVITING A LARGE GERMAN TEAM: THERE MIGHT, FOR EXAMPLE, BE A PLENARY DINNER, AFTER WHICH THE OTHER GERMAN MINISTERS COULD DEPART FOR BONN LEAVING THE CHANCELLOR AND HIS STAFF BEHIND UNTIL THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

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3. BECAUSE THIS WILL BE THE FIRST MEETING AFTER THE INSTALLATION OF A NEWLY ELECTED FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MY OWN PREFERENCE WOULD BE FOR EXPANDING THE INVITATION SLIGHTLY BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL FOUR, SO AS TO INVOLVE NEW GERMAN MINISTERS AND PROVIDE FOR DISCUSSION OF TOPICAL SUBJECTS. THE NEW GERMAN AGRICULTURE MINISTER, WITH WHOM WE COULD USEFULLY DISCUSS THE EC/US AGRICULTURE WAR AND PRICE FIXING, IS A GOOD EXAMPLE. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY IS RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY, WHETHER RIESENHUBER STAYS OR NOT: THE POST IS TRADITIONALLY HELD BY A YOUNG POLITICIAN WITH A FUTURE AND THERE WOULD BE PLENTY TO DISCUSS.

4. I WILL FIRM UP MY RECOMMENDATIONS AS SOON AS THE NEW GERMAN TEAM IS KNOWN. BUT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF INITIAL THOUGHT COULD BE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION IN THE MEANTIME, SO THAT WE ARE IN A POSITION TO MAKE PROPOSALS TO THE GERMANS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER.

TAYLOR

[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

LIMITED
WED
PLANNING STAFF
PS/MR HURD
LORD BELSTEAD
SIR J BULLARD
MR GOODISON