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FM WELLINGTON 210213Z FEB 85

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 58 OF 21 FEBRUARY

AND TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, CANBERRA, MODUK

YOUR TELNO 317 TO WASHINGTON: US CANCELLATION OF ROLL CALL 85.

1. NEW ZEALAND SECRETARY OF DEFENCE (WHO IS KNOWN TO HAVE CONSISTENTLY ADVISED AGAINST HIS GOVERNMENT'S NON-NUCLEAR WARSHIPS POLICY) TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT HE AND HIS DEFENCE COLLEAGUES FELT OUTRAGED BY THE HIGH-HANDED MANNER IN WHICH THE AMERICANS HAD ACTED OVER THIS CANCELLATION. I DEDUCED FROM OUR CONVERSATION THAT THE NEW ZEALANDERS ARE STILL UNAWARE OF THE AMERICAN PROPOSAL TO MOUNT AN ALTERNATIVE EXERCISE EXCLUDING NEW ZEALAND.
2. THE PEREMPTORY NATURE OF THE UNILATERAL AMERICAN DECISION TO CANCEL (PARA 3 OF YOUR TELNO 317) CARRIES ITS OWN IMPLICATIONS FOR US AS ALLIANCE PARTNERS. CLEARLY OUR DECISION ON THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE EXERCISE SHOULD BE DETERMINED PRIMARILY BY OUR OWN EVALUATION OF ITS USEFULNESS TO THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE. BUT IT IS NOT A SPECIFICALLY ANZUS EXERCISE AND ACTION SUCH AS THE AMERICANS SUGGEST WILL WIDEN THE ANZUS DISPUTE UNNECESSARILY. DISCIPLINARY ACTION SHOULD, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, BE ON A BILATERAL US/NZ BASIS, OR AT LEAST WITHIN THE ANZUS CONTEXT. IT IS ALSO DIRECTLY RELEVANT THAT THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT IS MANIFESTLY EAGER TO CONTINUE ROUTINE DEFENCE COLLABORATION. I SUGGEST THAT IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR US TO TAKE ANY STEPS WHICH CAN BE CONSTRUED AS PUBLICLY WRITING NEW ZEALAND OFF (EVEN TEMPORARILY) AS A MEMBER OF THE WESTERN ALLIANCE.
3. THE CLEAR DANGER WE FACE NOW IS THAT THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT'S ANGLO-SAXON OBSTINACY COUPLED WITH THE US GOVERNMENT'S IMPULSIVE DISCIPLINARY MEASURES, IS LIKELY TO EXACERBATE THE DISPUTE. IT IS SURELY OUR INTEREST AND INTENTION TO MINIMISE WIDER DAMAGE FROM THIS ILL-JUDGED NEW ZEALAND NON-NUCLEAR POLICY AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO

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PERSUADE THEM BACK INTO THE FOLD. BOYCOTTING NZ WILL NOT HELP PERSUADE THEM. WE MAY NOW HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT TO ACCOMPLISH THIS FULLY. BUT I AM NOT PERSUADED THAT TO GIVE EXPLICIT BRITISH APPROVAL TO AN ALLIANCE "DISCIPLINING" OF NEW ZEALAND, WHICH IS WHAT THE ALTERNATIVE AMERICAN EXERCISE IMPLIES, WILL ASSIST OUR BROADER POLICIES. WE OWE NEW ZEALAND AN HISTORIC DEBT OF BLOOD AND HONOUR AND PATIENCE AND SHOULD NOT TOO READILY ACCEPT A HASTY AND SHORTSIGHTED AMERICAN JUDGEMENT OF HOW BEST TO DEAL WITH NEW ZEALAND. THEY ARE NOT EXPERT AT IT.

4. LEAVING THE FALKLANDS AND OTHER HISTORIC MATTERS ASIDE, IT IS PERHAPS ILLUSTRATIVE, AS AN INDICATION OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH NEW ZEALAND, THAT THEY INDICATED IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT RESERVATION THEIR READINESS TO INCLUDE ANY UK CITIZENS IN THEIR OWN NATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY EVACUATION BECOMING NECESSARY IN NEW CALEDONIA. THEY HAD STARTED ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE TO LOCATE AND LIST OUR PEOPLE EVEN BEFORE WE ASKED.

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O'LEARY