

GRS 830

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MR. R. BUTLER.  
No 10 D.S.

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DESKBY 031600Z

FM PARIS 031406Z MAY 84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 534 OF 3RD MAY

INFO IMMEDIATE MOD (PERSONAL FOR VCDS (P AND L))

MY TELEGRAMS NUMBERS 495 AND 496: 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
NORMANDY LANDINGS.

SUMMARY.

1. SIR WILLIAM HESELTINE AND I DISCUSSED A REVISED PROGRAMME FOR THE QUEEN'S VISIT ON 6 JUNE WITH GENERAL SAULNIER IN THE ELYSEE THIS MORNING. HE IS STILL MAKING HEAVY WEATHER OVER ALLEGED PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES IN THE MORNING'S PROGRAMME. SIR W HESELTINE WILL DISCUSS WITH MR ROBIN BUTLER THE POSSIBILITY OF THE PRIME MINISTER BEING BRIEFED TO SAY A WORD TO MITTERRAND ON THIS TOMORROW.

DETAIL.

2. FOLLOWING SIR W HESELTINE'S RECONNAISSANCE VISIT ON 27 APRIL AND SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION WITH THE QUEEN, HE JOINED ME IN PUTTING A NEW PROGRAMME TO THE ELYSEE THIS MORNING. THIS MET THE REQUIREMENTS IN THE FRENCH NOTE RECEIVED ON 24 APRIL. IT DROPPED THE PROPOSED CEREMONIES AT ARROMANCHES AND IN THE CANADIAN CEMETERY IN THE MORNING. THE ARROMANCHES CEREMONY WAS MOVED TO 1900 HOURS AFTER THE OFFICIAL FRENCH CEREMONIES. IT PROVIDED FOR THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH TO ACCOMPANY PRESIDENT MITTERRAND AND TRUDEAU TO THE CANADIAN CEMETERY AT 1830 HOURS. THE CIVIC RECEPTION AT THE HOTEL DE VILLE IN CAEN IN THE MORNING WAS MODIFIED TO BECOME A TOURIST VISIT TO THE ABBAYE AUX HOMMES, WHERE WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR IS BURIED, AND TO THE HOTEL DE VILLE WHICH FORMS PART OF THE SAME COMPLEX OF BUILDINGS. BY ANY REASONABLE STANDARD THIS REVISED PROGRAMME MET THE STATED FRENCH PREOCCUPATIONS AND SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASILY ACCEPTED.

3. GENERAL SAULNIER HOWEVER SPENT OVER AN HOUR COMPLAINING OF THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE MORNING PROGRAMME WOULD PRESENT. HE PAID VIRTUALLY NO ATTENTION TO THE REST OF THE DAY AND INCIDENTALLY CONFIRMED AGAIN THAT THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY OVER THE PRINCE OF WALES' VISIT TO RANVILLE ON 5 JUNE. FOR THE MORNING VISIT TO CAEN HE SAW SERIOUS BUT UNSPECIFIED SECURITY DIFFICULTIES AND EVEN CLAIMED AT ONE POINT THAT EXPENSIVE WORK WOULD BE NEEDED ON THE PORT TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ROYAL YACHT. HE REPEATEDLY CLAIMED THERE WERE NO DIFFICULTIES OF PROTOCOL OR PRINCIPLE IN OUR PROPOSALS BUT

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THAT HE COULD NOT BE SURE THE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS COULD BE OVERCOME. DETAILED ARGUMENT POINT BY POINT EVENTUALLY LED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE EXPENSIVE WORK NEEDED TO THE PORT CONSISTED IN THE RESURFACING OF A SHORT STRETCH OF ROADWAY: AND THE SECURITY PROBLEMS INVOLVED ONLY THE SHORT DRIVE DIRECTLY FROM THE ROYAL YACHT TO THE HOTEL DE VILLE AND BACK. BUT SAULNIER INSISTED HE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SAY UNTIL NEXT WEEK WHETHER THESE DIFFICULTIES COULD BE OVERCOME.

4. PRESSED TO SAY WHAT ALTERNATIVE HE COULD SUGGEST FOR A MORNING PROGRAMME SAULNIER COULD ONLY PROPOSE ARRIVING BY AIR IN THE AFTERNOON. SIR W HESELTINE REMINDED HIM THAT OUR PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT HAD ALREADY BEEN TURNED UPSIDE DOWN ONCE AND SAID HE COULD NOT PREDICT THE QUEEN'S REACTION IF THE REVISED VERSION, ADAPTED TO MEET THE STATED FRENCH DEMANDS, WAS AGAIN DEEMED UNACCEPTABLE. AT THIS SAULNIER BACKED OFF A LITTLE AND SAID THAT IF IT WAS THE QUEEN'S FIRM WISH TO ARRIVE IN THE ROYAL YACHT THE FRENCH WOULD HAVE TO FIND WAYS OF RESOLVING THE CONSEQUENTIAL DIFFICULTIES. BUT HE RESERVED HIS POSITION UNTIL EARLY NEXT WEEK ON WHETHER THIS COULD ACTUALLY BE DONE.

5. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES I THINK THAT, DESPITE HER MANY OTHER PREOCCUPATIONS, IT WOULD BE RIGHT FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO HAVE A BRIEF WORD WITH MITTERRAND TOMORROW, PERHAPS OVER LUNCH. HE MAY STILL NOT REALISE FULLY HOW AWKWARD A SITUATION HE AND HIS STAFF ARE CREATING. THE ONLY EXPLANATION OF THE PETTYFOGGING DIFFICULTIES WHICH ARE BEING RAISED OVER THE MORNING'S PROGRAMME IS THAT SOMEONE IN THE ELYSEE WANTS TO PREVENT THE OPPOSITION MAYOR OF CAEN AND HIS CLOSE ASSOCIATES DERIVING ANY POLITICAL BENEFIT FROM PARTICIPATION IN A ROYAL OCCASION EVEN OF A TOURIST CHARACTER.

6. SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION BETWEEN SIR W HESELTINE AND MR BUTLER I THINK THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT SAY SIMPLY THAT WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE COMMEMORATION OF 6 JUNE, A MAJOR EVENT IN ANGLO-FRENCH HISTORY. THE QUEEN'S ARRIVAL IN THE ROYAL YACHT AND

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PARTICIPATION IN VARIOUS EVENTS WILL SYMBOLISE THE BRITISH ROLE IN THE 1944 LANDINGS. WE REALISE THAT THERE WILL BE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS FOR THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES TO DEAL WITH ON 6 JUNE, BUT WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THEY CAN BE OVERCOME SO THAT THE QUEEN CAN ARRIVE IN CAEN AND BRIEFLY VISIT ONE SITE IN A CITY WHICH SADLY HAD TO BE ALMOST DESTROYED BY BRITISH AND CANADIAN FORCES IN THE NORMANDY BATTLE.

FCO PLEASE ADVANCE COPIES TO:-

SIR W. HESELTINE - BUCKINGHAM PALACE  
MR R BUTLER - NO 10.

FRETWELL

**(ADVANCED AS REQUESTED)**

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