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TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1094 OF 17 NOVEMBER 1982

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FOR WED.
MY TELNO. 1078: CLOSER CONTACTS BETWEEN BRITISH AND FRENCH GOVERNMENTS.

1. I AM TOLD THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE MY VIEWS ON HOW THE CONTACTS (REFERRED TO IN PARAS. 7 AND 9 OF MY TUR) BETWEEN THE CABINET OFFICE AND THE ELYSEE MIGHT BE BEST PURSUED.

2. I THINK THE POINT OF DEPARTURE SHOULD BE THAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD SUPPLEMENT, NOT DUPLICATE OR SUPERSEDE, EXISTING CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION. ARRANGEMENTS AT PRESENT ARE FOR MEETINGS:

(A) BETWEEN SIR R ARMSTRONG AND ATTALI (AT THE LAST OF WHICH BIANCO TOOK PART). THE SUBJECTS DISCUSSED INCLUDE COMMUNITY MATTERS, ESPECIALLY THE BUDGET, AND PREPARATION FOR AND FOLLOW UP TO SUMMITS, INCLUDING THE VERSAILLES TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE. THESE MEETINGS HAVE BEEN HANDLED WITH GREAT DISCRETION AND SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITHOUT SIR R ARMSTRONG'S APPROVAL:

(B) BETWEEN HANCOCK AND MOREL, AT WHICH ARE DISCUSSED COMMUNITY MATTERS AND ESPECIALLY THE BUDGET.

THESE ARRANGEMENTS SEEM TO ME TO COVER THE KEY PEOPLE (GIVEN THAT BIANCO SEEMS NOW TO TAKE PART IN THE MEETINGS WITH SIR R ARMSTRONG) AND THE KEY SUBJECTS. WE MIGHT CONSIDER IN DUE COURSE WHETHER THERE IS ANYONE ELSE IN THE ELYSEE WITH WHOM IT WOULD BE VALUABLE FOR THERE TO BE DIRECT CABINET OFFICE CONTACTS ON MORE WIDE RANGING DIPLOMATIC ISSUES OR ON DEFENCE ISSUES. AT THE MOMENT, I DO NOT BELIEVE SUCH CONTACTS WOULD BE FRUITFUL SINCE I AM NOT CONVINCED THAT THERE IS ANY ONE PERSON IN THE ELYSEE WHO CARRIES SUFFICIENT WEIGHT WITH THE PRESIDENT ON THESE ISSUES. THE DIPLOMATIC ADVISER, VEDRINE, WHILE OF THE SAME SENIORITY AS MOREL (THEY ARE BOTH "CONSEILLERS TECHNIQUES"), DOES NOT PLAY THE SORT OF ROLE IN POLICY MAKING WHICH WOULD MAKE HIM VERY USEFUL AS A CONTACT FOR THE CABINET OFFICE. THOUGH COMPARISONS ARE INEVITABLY MISLEADING I THINK HIS ROLE IS CLOSER TO THAT OF MR COLES IN NO. 10 THAN TO THAT OF JUDGE CLARK IN THE WHITE HOUSE. SIMILAR LIMITATIONS BROADLY APPLY TO OTHER CONSEILLERS TECHNIQUES WHO WORK WITH HIM LIKE MLE. GUIGOU OR BOUBLIL.

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3. I THINK IT WOULD BE ODD IF THE SUBJECT OF ELYSEE/CABINET OFFICE CONTACTS WERE NOT MENTIONED AT ALL BETWEEN THE PUS AND GUTMANN GIVEN THAT THEY FORM SUCH A KEY POINT OF THE CLOSER CONSULTATION, BUT I SEE NO NEED FOR THERE TO BE DISCUSSION OF DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS. THE PUS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SPEAKING PERSONALLY TO THE MINISTER ON 16 NOVEMBER, PAYE (ECONOMIC DIRECTOR, QUAI) THOUGHT THAT THE TIME HAD COME TO REVIVE THE INFORMAL BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS OF AN EARLIER PERIOD BETWEEN THOSE MOST CLOSELY CONCERNED WITH COMMUNITY QUESTIONS AT THE QUAI, FCO, SGCI AND CABINET OFFICE BEFORE THEY WERE OBLIGED TO SUBMIT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THEIR MINISTERS. PAYE LOOKED FORWARD TO DISCUSSING THIS WITH EVANS DURING THE PUS/GUTMANN MEETING NEXT WEEK. HE ADDED THAT HE MIGHT ALSO SEE WHETHER MOREL (ELYSEE) WOULD WISH TO TAKE PART IN DUE COURSE IN THE BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS.

4. GRATEFUL IF WED WOULD ARRANGE DISTRUBUTION IN THE LIGHT OF PARA. 2(A) ABOVE.

FRETWELL

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