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TO IMMEDIATE, F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1234 OF 2 NOVEMBER

ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT: 29/30 NOVEMBER

1. THE RECENT FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT HAS AGAIN PROVIDED AN OBJECT LESSON ON HOW TO CREATE A REASONABLY POSITIVE PUBLIC IMPRESSION OF A MEETING AT WHICH THERE WAS LITTLE ADVANCE ON SUBSTANCE. AT YOUR MEETING WITH CHEYSSON ON 19 SEPTEMBER IT WAS AGREED TO PICK OUT SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS ON WHICH TO FOCUS PUBLIC PRESENTATION AT THE ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT. THE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEETING ON 5 NOVEMBER MAY LIKE TO GIVE SOME CONSIDERATION TO THIS ASPECT OF THE SUMMIT. ALTHOUGH IT WILL BE RIGHT TO POINT TO EXISTING COOPERATION ON EG. AIRBUS, THE EFFECT WILL BE GREATER IF APPARENTLY NEW DECISIONS CAN BE ANNOUNCED EVEN IF THEY ARE LARGELY PROCEDURAL.

2. THE FOLLOWING IDEAS MERIT CONSIDERATION:-

(A) A BILATERAL WORKING GROUP TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF CLOSER BILATERAL COOPERATION ON TORPEDOES. (SUCH COOPERATION WAS RECENTLY NOTED BY THE BRITISH CONTROLLER OF THE NAVY DURING A VISIT TO FRANCE.)

(B) A POLITICAL STATEMENT ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY OF A COMMON EUROPEAN STANDARD FOR DES TRANSMISSION. THIS COULD POINT TO AGREEMENT ON MAC AND CALL ON THE INDUSTRIES TO REDOUBLE THEIR EFFORTS TO SEEK A TECHNICAL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF A STANDARD FOR SOUND (IE D2 AS COMPARED TO C)

(C) THE REACTIVATION OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH ECONOMIC COMMITTEE FOLLOWING THE FONTAINEBLEAU AGREEMENT THERE WOULD BE LESS RISK NOW OF THIS CUTTING ACROSS BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON EC FINANCING. EAST/WEST AND WEST/WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE COORDINATION OF UK AND FRENCH VIEWS AN IMPORTANT IF DIFFICULT GOAL. WITH THE CHANNEL FIXED LINK EMERGING AGAIN AS A SUBJECT OF ACTIVE DEBATE, BILATERAL RELATIONS NEED CAREFUL HANDLING. MORE POSITIVELY, AS THE UK ECONOMY CONTINUES TO RECOVER THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO STIMULATE INTEREST IN INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION AND CROSS INVESTMENT. OCCASIONAL BROAD-RANGING BILATERAL DISCUSSION AT SENIOR OFFICIAL LEVELS OF UK AND FRENCH APPROACHES TO THE EC COULD USEFULLY UNDERPIN MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, NOW THAT THERE IS LESS RISK OF DIRECT CONFLICT OVER FINANCE.

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(D) A STATEMENT ON THE DESIRABILITY OF ENCOURAGING EXCHANGES OF ALL KINDS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, EG. YOUTH EXCHANGES, TOWN TWINNING. SUCH EXCHANGES CAN HELP TO IMPROVE PUBLIC ATTITUDES: AND A SUMMIT STATEMENT COULD ALSO HELP US AGAINST FURTHER FRENCH BUDGET CUTS (AS OVER TEACHER EXCHANGES).

FRETWELL

STANDARD (PALACE)

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