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INFO IMMEDIATE BRUSSELS, ROME PRIORITY OTHER EC POSTS

IMMEDIATE
ADVANCE COPY

No 10-25
M. MacFarlane,
Minister for Sport,
Dec

Hd/WED
Hd/Conde D
Hd/CRD
Hd/News D
PS
PS/Coop Young
PS/M. Luce
PS/M. Rosta
PS/PW
Mr. Derek Thomas
Mr. Jenkins
Chief Clerk
Mr. Barnaby

MY TELNO 451 : BRUSSELS FOOTBALL RIOTE

1. THE FRENCH MINISTER FOR YOUTH AND SPORT, WHO HAD TO LEAVE PARIS LATER TODAY, ASKED ME TO CALL THIS AFTERNOON. M. CALMAT SAID HE WISHED US TO KNOW THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT SHARED THE CONSTERNATION AND SHOCK WHICH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY EXPRESSED AT LAST NIGHT'S EVENTS IN BRUSSELS, IN WHICH FRENCH LIVES HAD ALSO BEEN LOST. THEY WERE THEMSELVES STUDYING URGENTLY WHAT MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PREVENT SUCH THINGS OCCURRING AGAIN OR IN FRANCE. THEY WOULD WELCOME OUR VIEWS AND BE READY FOR CONSULTATIONS ON THE SUBJECT BY ANY APPROPRIATE MEANS. (SUBSEQUENTLY CALMAT'S DIRECTOR DE CABINET TOLD ME HIS MINISTER WAS SEEKING CLEARANCE FROM MATIGNON TO PROPOSE AN URGENT MEETING OF COMMUNITY SPORT MINISTERS).

2. I CONVEYED TO M. CALMAT THE MESSAGE FROM MR MACFARLANE (TELECON CONSULAR DEPARTMENT/EMBASSY EARLIER TODAY). I SAID THIS FOLLOWED THE MEETING HELD BY THE PRIME MINISTER THIS MORNING TO CONSIDER IMMEDIATE MEASURES, ALTHOUGH IT HAD BEEN DESPATCHED BEFORE CONFIRMATION OF ANY FRENCH DEATHS.

3. THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE QUAI D'ORSAY HAS SINCE TOLD ME HE HAS CONFIRMATION OF THE IDENTITY OF TWO FRENCH DEAD WHO ARE JEAN FRANCOIS (AGED 45 FROM THE NORD DEPARTEMENT) AND CLAUDE ROBERT (AGED 37 FROM MAINE ET LOIRE). I UNDERSTAND WE SHALL VERY SHORTLY BE INSTRUCTED TO DELIVER APPROPRIATE MESSAGES.

4. CALMAT ASKED WHAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S REACTION WOULD BE IF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL ORGANISATIONS WERE TO SAY THAT THEY WOULD NOT ADMIT BRITISH SUPPORTERS TO FUTURE MATCHES. I SAID I COULD NOT ANSWER THIS HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION BUT REMINDED HIM OF THE CONSULTATIONS ABOUT IMPLEMENTING THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE RECOMMENDATIONS ON SPECTATOR VIOLENCE WHICH MR MACFARLANE HAD HELD WITH HIS EUROPEAN COLLEAGUES, INCLUDING PARTICULARLY THE BELGIAN AND DUTCH ONES, IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS MONTH; AND ALSO OF THOSE WHICH BRITISH AND FRENCH AUTHORITIES HAD HELD, FOR EXAMPLE BEFORE THE FRANCE AND ENGLAND MATCH IN FEBRUARY 1984. IN TACKLING THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS FIRST CONSULTING URGENTLY THE BRITISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION AND THOSE MOST CLOSELY CONCERNED WITH YESTERDAY'S EVENTS. THE WIDER IMPLICATIONS WOULD CERTAINLY BE TACKLED WITH NO LESS VIGOUR AND I WOULD REPORT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S OFFER OF CONSULTATIONS.

5. BY COINCIDENCE SIR OLIVER POPPLEWELL IS IN PARIS AND HAD ALREADY MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO CALL TOMORROW ON FRENCH HOME OFFICE AND FOOTBALL FEDERATION OFFICIALS IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS ENQUIRY INTO THE BRADFORD DISASTER. HE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY EARLY TOMORROW MORNING AND YOU WILL NO DOUBT LET US KNOW IF THERE ARE ANY OTHER POINTS OF WHICH YOU WOULD WISH HIM TO BE AWARE.

PETRIE