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TO PRIORITY FCO

TEL NO 204 OF 25/8/81

RPTD SAVING EEC POSTS: OTHER NATO POSTS: MOSCOW: NICOSIA.

GREEK GENERAL ELECTION

1. THE GENERAL ELECTION IN GREECE WILL BE ON SUNDAY 18 OCTOBER.

2. ON 24 AUGUST PRESIDENT KARAMANLIS INFORMED RALLIS IN WRITING THAT HE ACCEPTED THE PRIME MINISTER'S RECOMMENDATION THAT

PARLIAMENT SHOULD BE DISSOLVED AND ELECTIONS HELD PREMATURELY ON 18 OCTOBER. HE ACCEPTED THE REASONS PUT FORWARD BY RALLIS AND SUPPORTED BY OTHER PARTIES INCLUDING PASOK, NAMELY DIFFICULT WEATHER CONDITIONS LATER IN THE YEAR AND THE NEED TO AVOID A PROLONGED PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY AND DAMAGE TO COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY IN THE PRE-CHRISTMAS PERIOD.

3. THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER MAKES CLEAR THAT RALLIS WILL SUBMIT HIS GOVERNMENT'S RESIGNATION BY 15 SEPTEMBER AND THEN BE GIVEN A MANDATE TO FORM A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT TO HOLD ELECTIONS. HE IS

LIKELY TO REPLACE HIS MINISTERS OF THE INTERIOR, JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER AND THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE PRESS BY CANDIDATES

ACCEPTABLE TO THE MAIN PARTIES.

THE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE DISSOLVING PARLIAMENT AND PROCLAIMING ELECTIONS IS EXPECTED BETWEEN 19 AND 21 SEPTEMBER.

4. ROUSSOS (MFA SECRETARY GENERAL) TOLD ME ON 24 AUGUST THAT

THE ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD NOT AFFECT MITSOTAKIS'S PLANS TO ATTEND THE INFORMAL MEETING OF EC FOREIGN MINISTERS AT BROCKET HALL.

MITSOTAKIS WOULD HOWEVER POSSIBLY MISS THE 14/15 SEPTEMBER FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL, IN WHICH CASE THEODOROPOULOS WOULD

PROBABLY TAKE HIS PLACE.

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5. AT PRESENT THE TWO MAIN PARTIES APPEAR TO BE RUNNING EACH OTHER CLOSE, WITH MANY VOTERS STILL UNDECIDED. A SURVEY IN A

WEEKLY PERIODICAL, ADMITTEDLY UNSCIENTIFIC BUT REFLECTING GENERAL EXPECTATIONS, GIVES PASOK 28 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, NEW DEMOCRACY 26.5 PERCENT, THE MOSCOW-LINE KKE 12 PER CENT, UNDECIDED 24 PERCENT AND ABOUT 10 PERCENT TO THE SMALL PARTIES.

LLEWELLYN SMITH

STANDARD
SED
WED
NAD
ECD
CABINET OFFICE

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST.]

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

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