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MOTTRAM, MOD

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UK EYES ALPHA
FM WASHINGTON
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 2769
OF 032200Z OCTOBER 85

ADVANCE COPY

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AND TO IMMEDIATE MODUK (FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY, PUS, AND HEAD OF DEFENCE EXPORT SERVICES)

MY TELNO 2712: MSE

1. THERE WILL BE NO ANNOUNCEMENT, AND I BELIEVE NO DECISION, THIS WEEK. AND IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT AN ANNOUNCEMENT NEXT WEEK WILL BE FEASIBLE.
2. THE ARMY APPEAR TO HAVE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO CONSTRUCT A COMPLETE REBUTTAL OF THE COST EVALUATION GROUP'S ANALYSIS. BUT THEY STILL SEEM DETERMINED TO STICK WITH A RECOMMENDATION FOR GTE.
3. ROCKWELL LOBBYISTS HAVE KEPT UP THEIR PRESSURE ON THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE WHITE HOUSE. BOTH MCFARLANE AND REGAN ARE BEING DRAWN INTO THE DECISION-TAKING PROCESS, AND WE KNOW THAT REGAN HAS ASKED WEINBERGER TO BRIEF HIM BEFORE ANY DECISION IS ANNOUNCED.
4. WE HAVE BEEN STRESSING, TO THE NSC/WHITE HOUSE, THAT UK PUBLIC OPINION WOULD FIND IT PARTICULARLY HARD TO UNDERSTAND A DECISION IN FAVOUR OF THE FRENCH GIVEN THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE FRENCH REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S INVITATION FOR 24 OCTOBER AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE HER PLANS, DESPITE CONSIDERABLE INCONVENIENCE, AND GO TO NEW YORK. I HAVE ALSO POINTED OUT TO MCFARLANE (VIA LEHMAN) THAT A DECISION IN FAVOUR OF PTARMIGAN WOULD GO DOWN PARTICULARLY WELL AT NEXT WEEK'S PARTY CONFERENCE. I AM SEEING WEINBERGER TONIGHT, AND WILL MAKE BOTH POINTS TO HIM.
5. PLEASE ADVANCE COPIES TO POWELL (NO 10), AND MOTTRAM (MOD).

WRIGHT

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ORWRAN 2733