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FRAME AGRICULTURE

DESKBY 190730Z

FROM UKREP BRUSSELS 181654Z MAY 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1992 OF 18 MAY 1982

INFO ROUTINE BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN THE HAGUE ROME DUBLIN PARIS BONN
ATHENS

AGRICULTURE COUNCIL : 18 MAY 1982

SUMMARY

1. COUNCIL ENDED TEA-TIME WITH ALL THE PRICE-FIXING REGULATIONS VOTED THROUGH AND SCENES OF BITTER RECRIMINATION. THE WHOLE DAY HAD BEEN BRUISING. UNTIL NOON UK FACED INTENSE AND CONCERTED PRESSURE TO ACCEPT THE INEVITABILITY OF VOTING. MR WALKER HAVING TO INTERVENE ABOUT EACH MINUTE TO DEFEND OUR POSITION AND TO TRY TO PENETRATE THE COLLECTIVE DEAFNESS OF SEVEN COLLEAGUES AND GET THEM TO CONSIDER THE DESPERATE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR INTENDED COURSE OF ACTION. A TURNING POINT CAME AROUND NOON, WHEN THE CHAIR ANNOUNCED THAT OUR REQUEST FOR AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD BEEN REJECTED, ALLEGEDLY UNANIMOUSLY, IN THE MARGINS OF THE NATO COUNCIL. VOTING THEN BEGAN ON EACH OF THE 62 REGULATIONS, THE UK SEEKING CHANGES IN SOME AND GAINING A LITTLE HEADWAY. AS THE CHAIRMAN THROUGH THE LUNCH HOUR GABBLED THROUGH THE REQUIRED FORMULAE ON EACH, AND GAINED THE SAME PATTERN OF VOTING ON EACH (ALL 12 IN FAVOUR, UK, GREECE AND DENMARK REFUSING TO PARTICIPATE), MORE COMMISSIONERS CROWDED IN TO SAVOUR THE DELIGHTS OF SEEING THE TREATY OPERATE. OF THEM, AND MANY OF THE 7, ONE COULD SAY WITH TOM ELIOT THAT THEY HAD THE EXPERIENCE BUT SOMEHOW MISSED THE MEANING OF THE EXPERIENCE. FRANCE WERE QUIETLY CONFIDENT THAT THEY COULD JUSTIFY THE PROCEDURE AS CONSISTENT WITH AMINTENANCE OF THE LUXEMBOURG COMPROMISE, BUT DID NOT EXPOSE THEIR RATIONALE TO THE COUNCIL UNTIL ALL WAS OVER. GERMANY BLUSTERED AND HEAPED ABUSE ON THE UK: THEY DID NOT DEIGN TO JUSTIFY THEMSELVES, AND BRUSKED ASIDE UK ATTEMPTS TO DRAW THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE COMMUNITY'S INSTITUTIONS AS A PROCEDURAL GIMMICK. THORN, IN A FINAL SELF-JUSTIFICATION, GAVE AN EXTRAORDINARILY DISTORTED VERSION OF THE MANDATE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. AND SO COUNCIL DISPERSED, ENJOYING THE SWEET AND SOUR SAVOUR OF SELF-CONGRATULATION ON THE DAY'S WORK AND APPREHENSION AS TO THE FUTURE, BUT WITH THE SWEET PREDOMINATING.

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3. IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE IMPORTANCE TO EC POSTS OF THE
DETAIL OF POSITIONS TAKEN BY EACH MEMBER, I REPORT EXTENSIVELY
IN FOLLOWING TELEGRAMS ON THE FORENOON AND AFTERNOON SESSION.
I APPEND TO THE TELEGRAMS REPORTS, MORE OR LESS VERBATIM,
OF MR WALKER'S TWO MAJOR STATEMENTS. SOME SIGNIFICANT COMMODITY
POINTS, AND BITS AND PIECES, WILL BE REPORTED TOMORROW
(NOT TO ALL)

FCO ADVANCE TO:-

FCO - PS/SOFS SPRECKLEY WITNEY
CAB - ARMSTRONG
NO 10 - COLES
MAFF - PS/MIN PS/MIN OF S (C) PS/HAYES HADDON GURD REFERN BROWN
DAFS - CRAMOND
DANI - JACK
WOAD (1) - BEVAN

BUTLER

[ADVANCED AS REQUESTED]

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST.]

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ECD(I)

COPIES TO:-
ADVANCE ADDRESSEES AS LISTED IN
CABINET OFFICE, MAFF, DAFS, DANI,
WOAD