

GRS 410

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AMENDED DISTRIBUTION

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FM OSLO
TO ROUTINE FCO
TELNO 163
OF 220915Z JULY 86

*What do you think?
It seems reasonable.*

OSLO TELNO 157: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORWAY: GIFTS

1. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT, EARLIER THIS YEAR, WE CONSIDERED THE FEASIBILITY OF COMMISSIONING TWO PAINTINGS TO HANG IN THE NEWLY REFURBISHED ROYAL NORWEGIAN YACHT, OF RESPECTIVELY HMS DEVONSHIRE (ON BOARD WHICH THE PRESENT KING AND HIS FATHER TRAVELLED TO BRITAIN IN 1940, AND THE PRESENT KING RETURNED TO NORWAY IN 1945) AND HMS NORFOLK (ON BOARD WHICH THE THEN KING RETURNED IN 1945). HOWEVER, THE APPROPRIATE FUNDS COULD NOT BE FOUND TO ENABLE THE PICTURES TO BE PRESENTED TO THE KING AT THE TIME OF THE RE-COMMISSIONING OF HIS YACHT.

*SAT
for once
I agree
with you.
CR*

I RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED THAT THIS DECISION WAS INEVITABLE AT THE TIME ALTHOUGH, AS I SAID IN MY LETTER OF 21 JANUARY TO LADY YOUNG, I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE GOODWILL BENEFIT OF SUCH A PRESENTATION WOULD BE QUITE DISPROPORTIONATE TO THE RELATIVELY SMALL COST INVOLVED.

*Done
Ho.*

2. HOWEVER, THE PRIME MINISTER'S FORTHCOMING VISIT, AND THE LUNCH WHICH THE KING WILL GIVE FOR HER ON 12 SEPTEMBER, CREATE A NEW SITUATION. THE LUNCH WOULD BE A FIRST-CLASS OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PRIME MINISTER ^{ER} TO MAKE A PRESENTATION OF THIS NATURE TO THE KING. IT WOULD NOT ONLY BE HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS AND APPROPRIATE IN THE TERMS SET OUT IN MY TELNO 6, BUT WOULD ALSO BE A LASTING MARK OF THE FIRST BILATERAL VISIT BY A BRITISH PRIME MINISTER SINCE NORWAY'S INDEPENDENCE IN 1905. AS STATED IN OUR TELNO 157, A GIFT IS NOT NECESSARILY EXPECTED DURING PRIME MINISTERIAL VISITS TO NORWAY: BUT IT WOULD BE ALL THE MORE APPRECIATED FOR THAT.

3. IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE COST TO A MINIMUM, ONE RATHER THAN TWO PICTURES MIGHT BE PRESENTED. THE SUBJECT WOULD BE HMS DEVONSHIRE, IN WHICH THE KING TRAVELLED IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. THE TOTAL COST WOULD BE AROUND £400 - A ROCK BOTTOM PRICE FOR A MARINE ARTIST OF THE CALIBRE OF ROGER FISHER, WHO WOULD, I UNDERSTAND, BE WILLING TO UNDERTAKE THE COMMISSION PROVIDED HE CAN BE GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD SOON. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS COST WOULD NOT BE DISPROPORTIONATE IN THE CONTEXT OF A PRIME MINISTERIAL VISIT TO A CLOSE ALLY, AND CERTAINLY NOT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COST OF THE VISIT AS A WHOLE. I VERY MUCH HOPE THEREFORE THAT YOU WILL CONSIDER URGENTLY THE POSSIBILITY OF THE PRIME MINISTER MAKING THIS PRESENTATION, WHICH I STRONGLY RECOMMEND.

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4. A DECISION ON THE PAINTING IS RELEVANT TO THE QUESTION OF A GIFT FOR MRS BRUNDTLAND (POINT (19) IN OUR TELNO 157). IF A PRESENTATION IS MADE TO THE KING, IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO TO GIVE A SMALL GIFT TO HER HOSTESS: I BELIEVE THAT WOULD IN ANY CASE BE A WORTHWHILE AND MUCH APPRECIATED GESTURE.

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