

*Informing but I think
we should preserve.*

*a copy to me & to
Mr Alexander (No 10)*

Immediate 13D

GRS 54φ

SECRET

FM PARIS 14162φZ OCT 8φ

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 852 OF 14 OCTOBER 198φ

INFO ROUTINE BONN, WASHINGTON, MODUK (AUS(D STAFF), DS 5, ACDS(OPS)),
JEDDA, KUWAIT, BAGHDAD, ABU DHABI, DUBAI, DOHA,
BAHRAIN, MUSCAT AND AMMAN.

INFO SAVING TO UKMIS NEW YORK, MOSCOW, E TEL AVIV, UKDEL NATO,
CAIRO AND DAMASCUS.

2. Repeat immediate to Rome for

P.S.

Amr.

YOUR TELEGRAM NO 1624 TO WASHINGTON: IRAN/IRAQ: NAVAL COOPERATION

1. MINISTER SPOKE ON 14 OCTOBER ALONG THE LINES SUGGESTED TO ROBIN, POLITICAL DIRECTOR AT THE QUAI. HE REINFORCED THE POINT THAT BILATERAL TALKS COULD LEAD TO CONFUSION AND POSSIBLY ILL-CONSIDERED ACTION.
2. ROBIN SAID THAT THE FRENCH POSITION REMAINED UNCHANGED. THEY WERE READY TO HAVE BILATERAL NAVAL TALKS WITH THE AMERICANS AND BRITISH, BUT NOT TRILATERAL CONVERSATIONS. AT THE PRESENT TIME THEY CONSIDERED THAT THE FRENCH, US AND BRITISH HAD DONE ENOUGH BOTH BY DECLARATION AND BY ACTION TO DETER INTERRUPTION OF TRAFFIC THROUGH THE GULF. IF THE SITUATION, DETERIORATED AND THERE EMERGED A REAL THREAT TO FREE MOVEMENT OR WORSE, ROBIN GAVE HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT THE FRENCH MIGHT BE READY TO RECONSIDER THEIR PRESENT ATTITUDE. BUT THEY THOUGHT THAT THE ACTIONS TAKEN SO FAR AND THE CONTINGENCY PLANNING IN HAND WERE SUFFICIENT AND THESE COULD BE ADEQUATELY COORDINATED ON A BILATERAL BASIS.
3. THE FRENCH HAD A POLITICAL OBJECTION TO TRILATERAL COOPERATION AT THIS STAGE. IT WOULD INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF THE WEST'S ACTIONS IN THE GULF AND WOULD INEVITABLY BECOME KNOWN TO THE GULF STATES AND TO THE SOVIET UNION. THE FRENCH MADE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN ACTION TAKEN TO DETER INTERRUPTION OF MOVEMENT IN THE GULF AND ACTIONS WHICH MIGHT PROMOTE THE RESTORATION OF WESTERN INFLUENCE IN THE GULF AREA.
4. JAMES SAID THAT THE FRENCH WERE SURELY NOT OPPOSED TO A GREATER DEGREE OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN THIS AREA. IN THE PAST THEY HAD CRITICISED THE AMERICANS FOR NOT DOING ENOUGH. ROBIN SAID THAT THE FRENCH WISHED TO WEIGH CAREFULLY THE REPERCUSSIONS THAT ANY INCREASE IN AMERICAN INFLUENCE WOULD HAVE ON THE SOVIET UNION. ANYTHING THE AMERICANS DID WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY A SOVIET RIPOSTE. THIS PREOCCUPIED THE FRENCH.

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/5.ROBIN SAID

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5. ROBIN SAID THAT THEY WOULD TAKE CAREFUL NOTE OF BRITISH VIEWS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF TRILATERAL COOPERATION. WHEN JAMES PRESSED ROBIN TO RE-CONSIDER THE FRENCH ATTITUDE, ROBIN SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT AND THE FACT THAT THE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER WERE LEAVING TODAY FOR CHINA MEANT THAT THERE WAS LITTLE CHANCE OF A CHANGE UNLESS THE SITUATION DETERIORATED DRAMATICALLY.

6. THE FRENCH ATTITUDE DESCRIBED ABOVE WAS ALSO REFLECTED IN A CONVERSATION I HAD WITH THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR YESTERDAY. HARTMAN TOLD ME THAT THE REACTIONS THE AMERICANS HAD RECEIVED WERE ALL CONSISTENT WITH THE VIEW THAT THE FRENCH WERE PREPARED TO HAVE BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS BUT NOT TRILATERAL.

7. THE ABOVE SUGGESTS THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT ARE CONCERNED TO MAINTAIN AN APPEARANCE OF INDEPENDENCE IN THE GULF AREA AND TO AVOID BEING SEEN TO BE IN TOO CLOSE NAVAL OR MILITARY COLLABORATION WITH THEIR ALLIES, PARTICULARLY THE AMERICANS. THIS IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH A READINESS TO MAINTAIN CLOSE AND CONFIDENTIAL CONTACTS WITH THE U.S. NAVY IN WASHINGTON AND POSSIBLY ON THE SPOT.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

HIBBERT.

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

LIMITED
HD/PLANNING STAFF
HD/MED
HD/DEF D
PS
PS/LPS
PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS
SIR A ACLAND
SIR J GRAHAM
MR BULLARD
LORD BRIDGES
MR P H MOBERLY
MR BRAITHWAITE

[NOT ADVANCED]

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