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FM LISBON 211200Z MAY 80
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 141 OF 21 MAY 1980

VISIT OF PORTUGUESE LEADERS.

1. I WENT TO THE AIRPORT YESTERDAY TO WELCOME BACK PROF FREITAS DO AMARAL AND THE REST OF THE PORTUGUESE PARTY. I HAD MET SA CARNEIRO ON HIS RETURN THE DAY BEFORE. FREITAS TOLD ME THAT IN SPITE OF THE UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT THE VISIT HAD BEEN EXTREMELY USEFUL. IN A STATEMENT TO THE PRESS HE SAID THAT THE PORTUGUESE HAD BEEN GIVEN CLEAR CONFIRMATION OF BRITISH SUPPORT FOR PORTUGUESE EC ENTRY AND FOR THE ESTABLISHED TIMETABLE FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THE BRITISH SIDE HAD EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT SIGNATURE OF THE TREATY OF ACCESSION WOULD TAKE PLACE DURING THE NEXT BRITISH PRESIDENCY. ON TEXTILES HE HAD NOTED A GREAT WILLINGNESS ON BEHALF OF BRITAIN TO SOLVE EXISTING PROBLEMS BUT THE PORTUGUESE POSITION REMAINED THAT THEY COULD NOT ACCEPT QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON PORTUGUESE EXPORTS.

2. ALMEIDA MENDES TOLD ME AT THE AIRPORT THAT THE TALKS ON TEXTILES HAD BEEN MOST USEFUL. HE ADDED THAT THEY HAD ALSO HAD A VERY INTERESTING DISCUSSION ON FISHERIES, AN AREA WHERE BRITAIN COULD BE HELPFUL TO PORTUGAL DURING THE ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS.

3. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT ARE CLEARLY DISAPPOINTED WITH THE WAY THINGS HAVE TURNED OUT THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL DISPOSITION TO CRITICIZE US. THE GOVERNMENT'S IRRITATION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DIRECTED MORE AT THE FRENCH FOR THEIR DECISION TO CANCEL THE VISIT TO PARIS. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE DECISION TO CANCEL THE REST OF THE TOUR WAS TAKEN TO DISGUISE THE FRENCH SNUB.

4. THERE HAVE BEEN SUGGESTIONS IN THE PORTUGUESE PRESS THAT THE ACCIDENT COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED IF THE PARTY HAD BEEN GIVEN A POLICE MOTORCYCLE ESCORT. WE HAVE TAKEN THE LINE THAT IT IS NOT USUAL ON THIS TYPE OF JOURNEY FOR AN ESCORT TO BE PROVIDED. THE POINT HAS NOT BEEN RAISED AT OFFICIAL LEVEL.

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5. WHEN I SAW SA CARNEIRO AT THE AIRPORT HE WAS CLEARLY IN GREAT DISCOMFORT BUT PUT ON A BRAVE FACE FOR THE PRESS. HE HAS BEEN ORDERED TO STAY IN BED FOR TEN DAYS. WE KNOW THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT THE ACCIDENT WILL RAISE NEW DOUBTS ABOUT SA CARNEIRO'S HEALTH IN ELECTION YEAR. THEY WERE ALSO SLIGHTLY DISAPPOINTED THAT IT WAS FREITAS AND NOT SA CARNEIRO WHO WAS IN THE LIMELIGHT IN LONDON. NEVERTHELESS, THE PRIME MINISTER'S DECISION TO VISIT SA CARNEIRO IN HIS HOTEL ROOM AND HER KIND OFFER OF AN AIRCRAFT TO FLY HIM BACK TO PORTUGAL WERE BOTH APPRECIATED AND HAVE BEEN WELL PUBLICISED HERE.

6. WHAT WOULD PLEASE THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT GREATLY WOULD BE IF THE PRIME MINISTER COULD FIND THE TIME TO VISIT PORTUGAL BEFORE THE ELECTIONS IN THE AUTUMN.

SHAKESPEARE

FCO/WHITEHALL DISTN.

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[NOT ADVANCED]

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