

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 385
CONFIDENTIAL

FM OTTAWA 151900Z JUL 81
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 371 OF 15 JULY
INFO WASHINGTON (FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY)
SAVING TO UKRAE & NATO

MS

SUMMIT: MR TRUDEAU'S POSITION

1. AS BACKGROUND TO THE TALKS THE PM MAY NOW HAVE WITH MR TRUDEAU ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL TIMETABLE IN THE MARGINS OF THE SUMMIT, YOU MAY LIKE A BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF HIS POLITICAL POSITION HERE, WHICH I GIVE WITH SOME DIFFIDENCE, HAVING BEEN SO SHORT A TIME IN CANADA.
2. DESPITE THIS COUNTRY'S SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND LABOUR PROBLEMS, TRUDEAU'S POLITICAL POSITION IS STRONG, NOT LEAST BECAUSE HIS CONSERVATIVE OPPONENTS ARE WEAK, DISORGANISED AND POORLY LED. EVEN HIS MANY ENEMIES ADMIT THAT IF THERE WERE AN ELECTION TOMORROW HE MIGHT WELL BE RE-ELECTED THOUGH IN MY VIEW THIS IS NOT, AS MR PITFIELD CLAIMS, BECAUSE OF SUPPORT FOR HIS CONSTITUTIONAL PACKAGE. HE HAS THE SOLID STRENGTH OF THE LIBERAL MACHINE, AN UNASSAILABLE MAJORITY IN QUEBEC AND SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT IN ONTARIO, AND THE BACKING OF MOST PEOPLE WHO PASS FOR HAVE-NOT IN THIS PROSPEROUS LAND.
3. ON THE OTHER HAND, AS PITFIELD ADMITTED TO ME ON 30 JUNE (MY TELNO 318) TRUDEAU IS TOTALLY AT ODDS WITH THE WEST (SEE MY TELNO 2 SAVING) AND WITH THE WHOLE BANKING AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY, AS I FOUND LAST WEEK IN CANADA'S LARGEST CITY, TORONTO. HE HAS VERY LITTLE CONTACT WITH THESE TWO AREAS. FEELINGS AMONG HIS OPPONENTS RUN HIGH. SOBER AND INFLUENTIAL CANADIANS ARE BITTERLY CRITICAL OF HIM. THE HEAD OF THE SECOND LARGEST CANADIAN BANK TOLD ME AT A FIRST MEETING LAST WEEK THAT HE WAS 'ASHAMED' OF MR TRUDEAU. THE HOSTILITY TO HIM SPRINGS I BELIEVE FROM A VARIETY OF CAUSES - CONSERVATIVE HOSTILITY TO TRUDEAU'S LEFT-ORIENTATED POLICIES (SIMILAR TO THE HOSTILITY TO FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT IN AMERICAN FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS CIRCLES IN THE THIRTIES) RESENTMENT OF TRUDEAU'S FAILURE

/EVEN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

EVEN TO TRY TO VISIT, UNDERSTAND, AND CONCILIATE WESTERN OR BUSINESS PEOPLE AND OF HIS ABRASIVE STYLE, AND, NOT FAR BELOW THE SURFACE, ENGLISH-SPEAKING RESTLESSNESS WITH A PREDOMINANTLY FRENCH-CANADIAN ADMINISTRATION, LED BY A MAN WHO MAY BE AT HEART A REPUBLICAN AND HAS NO SPECIAL FEELING FOR CANADA'S BRITISH CONNECTION THE CONSTITUTION HAS TENDED TO DRAW US RELUCTANTLY INTO THIS CONFRONTATION, INEVITABLY ON TRUDEAU'S SIDE IF HE GETS THE SUPPORT OF THE COURT. WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO AVOID DOING WHAT HE WANTS ON THE CONSTITUTION BUT WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT IN THIS COUNTRY HE IS HIMSELF A DEEPLY DIVISIVE INFLUENCE DESPITE HIS LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO POLICIES DESIGNED TO UNIFY CANADA.

FCD PSE PASS SAVING TO UKREP NATO

MORAN

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

CANADIAN CONSTITUTION LIMITED

NAD
CCD
P & CD
PCCU
PARLIAMENTARY UNIT
NEWS D
INFORMATION D
PS
PS/LPS
PS/MR RIDLEY
PS/MR LUCE
PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS
SIR E YOUDE
MR DAY
MR URE
LORD N G LENNOX
CABINET OFFICE

COPIES TO:

SIR I SINCLAIR }
MR FREELAND } LEGAL ADVS.
DR PARRY }

PS/CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF
LANCASTER

PS/LORD CHANCELLOR

PS/LORD PRESIDENT

MR H STEEL, LAW OFFICERS' DEPT

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST]

2

CONFIDENTIAL