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CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON

FR WASHINGTON: EURCOM 22 NOV 63

TO BRUSSELS: MARCOM -- --

ATTN: MR. DORANG.

FOR BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON PRES. JOHNSON, PLEASE CONSULT YOUR CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTORY. MATERIAL HERE CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH HIS OUTLOOK AND PROBABLE POLICIES.

TEMPERAMENT. PRES. JOHNSON HAS BEEN DESCRIBED VARIOUSLY AS VIGOROUSLY POWER-SEEKING, EGOTISTIC, HARD DRIVING, AMBITIOUS, RUTHLESS AND A WHOLLY POLITICAL ANIMAL. ALL THESE DESCRIPTIONS ARE IN SOME DEGREE TRUE. HE IS ABOVE ALL CONCERNED WITH THE MECHANICS OF POLITICS. HE WAS ONE OF THE 2 OR 3 BEST MAJORITY LEADERS IN THE HISTORY OF THE SENATE. HE EXPECTS RESULTS AND IS NOT SYMPATHETIC TO THOSE WHO CANNOT PRODUCE QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY. WHILE HE IS A MASTER OF DOMESTIC POLITICS, HE IS NOT EQUALLY CONVERSANT WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS--EXCEPT FOR WHAT HE HAS ABSORBED THROUGH CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION AND IN GOODWILL VISITS ABROAD.

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POLICIES. PRES. JOHNSON IS THE FIRST PRESIDENT FROM THE SOUTH SINCE THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR. HE IS MORE BASICALLY CONSERVATIVE THAN PRES. KENNEDY, BUT NOT SUBSTANTIALLY SO. HE IS CONSIDERED TOO "LIBERAL" BY OTHER SOUTHERNERS. HE WILL PROBABLY PRODUCE NO MAJOR CHANGES IN DOMESTIC POLICIES. IN FOREIGN POLICY HE MAY PROVE MORE IMPATIENT THAN PRES. KENNEDY BUT HIS BASIC POLICIES WILL NOT SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFER. HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT THE KENNEDY ROUND, ALTHOUGH A DEFINITELY "HARD" LINE CAN BE ANTICIPATED. HE KNOWS NO NEGOTIATION BUT HARD AND VIGOROUS NEGOTIATION. SIMILARLY, HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY AND ITS FURTHER CONSOLIDATION, ALTHOUGH HE STILL NEEDS A GREAT DEAL OF EDUCATION REGARDING ATLANTIC AFFAIRS. HE HAS BEEN RECEPTIVE IN GENERAL TO FORMATION OF A FEDERAL EUROPE AND THE ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP CONCEYT. HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO TAKE A FORCEFUL POSITION AGAINST THOSE IN EUROPE WHO OPPOSE PARTNERSHIP AND CLOSE ALLIANCE WITH THE U.S.

AS A GUIDELINE, IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT PRES. JOHNSON WILL WITHOUT FAIL SEE MAJOR ISSUES IN BASIC POLITICAL TERMS.

IN SUMMARY THE FOLLOWING MIGHT BE EXPECTED IN A JOHNSON FOREIGN POLICY: 1) SUPPORT OF ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP AND STRONG OPPOSITION TO ALL THOSE WHO OPPOSE IT. 2) LESS WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE SOVIETS. 3) CONTINUED PRESENCE IN EUROPE OF SUBSTANTIAL U.S. MILITARY STRENGTH. 4) ADDED ATTENTION TO AND EMPHASIS ON LATIN AMERICA (A LONG-TIME AREA OF PERSONAL INTEREST). 5) SUPPORT OF KENNEDY ROUND, BUT A HARD AMERICAN POSITION WITHIN IT. 6) INCREASED PRESSURE ON ALLIES RE NATO DEFENSE CONTRIBUTION, AID AND TRADE.

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PERSONNEL. PRES. JOHNSON IS A MAN OF AND FROM THE CONGRESS.

HE IS THE CHOSEN PROTEGE OF THE LATE HOUSE SPEAKER SAM RAYBURN.

HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO DRAW FROM CONGRESS STAFF MEMBERS AND FRIENDS TO FILL HIS ADMINISTRATION. MANY OF THESE WILL PROBABLY BE ((XM)) MCGEORGE BUNDY, ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, TED SORENSON, PIERRE SALINGER. CABINET MEMBERS MOST IN DANGER OF THEIR JOBS ARE MACNAMARA, DILLON, RUSK--FIRST TWO BECAUSE OF THEIR REPUBLICAN PARTY MEMBERSHIP.

FROM THE MOMENT HE ENTERS THE WHITE HOUSE, PRES. JOHNSON WILL BE CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH HIS 1964 NOMINATION AND ELECTION. BECAUSE OF THIS, HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW A GENERALLY MORE CONSERVATIVE LINE THAN IF HE FACED A FULL FOUR YEAR TERM. UNLIKE PRES. KENNEDY HE CANNOT COUNT ON FULL SUPPORT FROM ALL NORTHERN INDUSTRIAL STATES. HE MUST THUS ATTEMPT TO HOLD THE SOUTH FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY WHILE AT THE SAME TIME NOT ALIENATING THE INDUSTRIAL NORTH.

NOTE: THIS GREATLY AIDS ROCKEFELLER'S CHANCES FOR REPUBLICAN NOMINATION AND LESSENS GOLDWATER'S WHO CAN NO LONGER SHOOT AT "LEFTIST" TARGET. ABOVE ALL, THE REPUBLICAN MOST STRENGTHENED IS RICHARD NIXON WHO UNDOUBTEDLY WILL SEEK NOMINATION AGAIN.

SUMMARY. JOHNSON HAS POTENTIAL TO BE A GREAT PRESIDENT. HE WILL NOT BE AFRAID TO USE THE FULL POWERS OF HIS OFFICE, IF ABLE TO CONSOLIDATE HIS POSITION IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. HE WILL PROBABLY BE FAR MORE SUCCESSFUL WITH CONGRESS THAN PRESIDENT KENNEDY, AS HE IS WILLING TO USE ALL--REPEAT ALL--MEANS AT HAND IN GAINING OBJECTIVES. PRES. JOHNSON WAS SOUGHT AND PREPARED FOR THE PRESIDENCY ALL HIS LIFE. IT IS NOW IN HIS GRASP AND HE WILL NOT LET THE OPPORTUNITY PASS.

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ONE WARNING: IT IS PROBABLE THAT STAFF MEMBERS MAY BE CHOSEN LESS FOR THEIR SENSITIVITY TO DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS THAN FOR THEIR LOYALTY, BRUTE EFFICIENCY AND DRIVE. WE WILL SEND NEXT WEEK FULLER AND MORE CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF PROSPECTS FOR JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING VOTING RECORD AND POSITIONS ON ALL MAJOR LEGISLATION AND ISSUES.

REGARDS.

VAN DYK

CONFIRM EARLIER CONVERSATION THAT BOBBY BAKER SCANDAL UNLIKELY TO TOUCH PRES. JOHNSON IN VIEW OF HIS POSITION AND EARLIER SENATE ATTEMPTS TO PLAY IT DOWN.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCORMICK IS NOW NEXT-IN-LINE TO THE PRESIDENCY BUT HE WILL NOT ACQUIRE ANY POWERS IN ADDITION TO THOSE HE ALREADY HAS--VERY LITTLE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

REGARDS, WEIL.

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