

CONFIDENTIAL

157

3502

CSL AW

X24

ER Copy

ACTION COPY

0
9
8
7
6
5
4
3

RR UKMIS NEW YORK

GRS 631

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 031652Z JUNE 82

TO IMMEDIATE BOGOTA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 119 OF 3 JUNE

INFO ROUTINE UKMIS NEW YORK

FALKLANDS: COLOMBIAN MESSAGE

1. THE COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR DELIVERED TO URE TODAY A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT TURBAY TO THE PRIME MINISTER IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

BEGINS

IN YOUR REPLY TO MY MESSAGE OF 21ST MAY, YOUR EXCELLENCY STATED THAT THE UNITED KINGDOM HAD A SPECIAL INTEREST IN LATIN AMERICA AND CERTAINLY HAD NO DESIRE TO CREATE A CHASM BETWEEN THIS PART OF THE WORLD AND YOUR COUNTRY.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MALVINAS WAR WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE FINAL BATTLE COULD BE A TERRIBLY CRUEL ONE, CAUSING A FEARFUL DEATH TOLL. THIS REGRETTABLE OCCURRENCE WOULD HAVE MOST HARMFUL REPERCUSSIONS IN LATIN AMERICA, AND WOULD BRING ABOUT DIFFICULT TO HANDLE SITUATIONS IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN MOST OF THE COUNTRIES IN THIS HEMISPHERE AND GREAT BRITAIN.

YOUR EXCELLENCY IS WELL AWARE OF WHAT COLOMBIA'S POSITION HAS BEEN, AND HOW WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY VOTED TO ABSTAIN FROM CONDEMNING YOUR COUNTRY AT THE ORGAN OF CONSULTATION OF THE RIO DE JANEIRO TREATY OF RECIPROCAL ASSISTANCE. IN VIEW OF THIS STAND, COLOMBIA FEELS THAT SHE CAN URGE YOUR EXCELLENCY TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF REACHING AN HONOURABLE PEACE AGREEMENT WITH ARGENTINA, THUS AVOIDING THE UNNECESSARY HOLOCAUST OF MANY INNOCENT LIVES. THE ENDING OF THIS WAR, WITHOUT GIVING RISE TO UNNECESSARY AND DAMAGING TENSIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND LATIN AMERICA, LIES IN YOUR HANDS AS RULER AND DEPENDS ON YOUR

CONFIDENTIAL

DECISIONS.

HOPING THAT YOUR EXCELLENCY WILL BEAR THIS FRIENDLY SUGGESTION IN MIND.

ENDS

2. IN THANKING THE AMBASSADOR, URE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF COLOMBIA'S RESTRAINED ROLE IN THE OAS AND SAID THIS ADDED WEIGHT TO ANY COMMUNICATION FROM THE COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT. THE LETTER WOULD BE TRANSMITTED PROMPTLY AND THE AMBASSADOR COULD BE SURE THAT IT WOULD BE VERY CAREFULLY STUDIED. HE COULD ASSURE HIS GOVERNMENT THAT NO-ONE COULD BE MORE ANXIOUS THAN MRS THATCHER AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO AVOID UNNECESSARY BLOODSHED. BUT IT WAS THE ARGENTINE INVASION WHICH HAD STARTED THE BLOODSHED, AND IT WAS THEIR DEPARTURE WHICH COULD END IT. URE WENT ON TO REFER TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S BROADCAST LAST NIGHT AND HER OFFER TO THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE THEM TIME TO WITHDRAW IN GOOD ORDER IF THEY DECLARED PROMPTLY THAT THAT WAS THEIR INTENTION. IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT MORE WE COULD DO: THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION OF LEAVING ARGENTINE TROOPS ON THE ISLANDS, WHICH WOULD IN ANY CASE BE CONTRARY TO SCR 502.

3. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE UNDERSTOOD OUR POSITION BUT THAT HE HOPED THAT WE WOULD STILL FIND OUR WAY TO OFFER THE ARGENTINES THE PROSPECT OF SOME ROLE IN THE FUTURE OF THE ISLANDS. HE SAID HE THOUGHT HE HAD DETECTED A HARDER ATTITUDE ON THIS IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S BROADCAST LAST NIGHT. HE HAD ALSO REPORTED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER APPEARED TO BE WORKING TOWARDS THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE FALKLANDS INTO A US/UK MILITARY BASE.

4. URE SAID HE THOUGHT THE AMBASSADOR MIGHT HAVE MISINTERPRETED THE LAST POINT: IN REFERRING TO THE POSSIBILITY OF US PEACE-KEEPING FORCES, MRS THATCHER WAS REFERRING TO THE PROSPECT OF INTERNATIONALISING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SECURITY OF THE FALKLANDS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LEAVING A MASSIVE BRITISH GARRISON IN PERPETUITY. CLEARLY THERE HAD TO BE SOME SAFEGUARD AGAINST A REPETITION OF ARGENTINE AGGRESSION. AS REGARDS AN ARGENTINE ROLE IN THE FUTURE OF THE ISLANDS, THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED IN A PERIOD OF CALM DELIBERATION AFTER THE END OF HOSTILITIES, BUT THE ARGENTINES

CONFIDENTIAL

3502 - 1

SURELY HAD ONLY THEMSELVES TO BLAME IF THE ISLANDERS WERE LESS ATTRACTED TO THIS PROSPECT NOW THAN BEFORE THE OCCUPATION. THE AMBASSADOR APPEARED TO RECOGNISE THESE FACTS.

5. WE ARE CONSIDERING THE QUESTION OF A REPLY TO TURBAY'S MESSAGE.

PYM

3
CONFIDENTIAL