

Mr Smith⁽¹²⁾
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BAFO 002/09

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TELELETTER

GRS : 580

TO : FCO

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Mr Fisher
Mr Clare
cc News Dept
No sympathy from the
BA Herald. And no
mention of the Islanders'
rights.
M. Clare

FILE/REF : 300/492/1 DATE : 9 FEBRUARY 1982

FOLLOWING FOR : C C BRIGHT ESQ, SAMD, FCO

COPY TO (BY BAG) : M W GROWCOTT ESQ, PORT STANLEY

FROM : M HICKSON, BUENOS AIRES

FALKLANDS : B A HERALD EDITORIAL

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED
QUOTE THE TOUGH APPROACH UNQUOTE IN THE BUENOS AIRES HERALD
OF 9 FEBRUARY:
BEGINS

NEW ARGENTINE GOVERNMENTS, NO MATTER THEIR PROVENANCE OR THEIR
IDEOLOGY, HAVE AT LEAST TWO THINGS IN COMMON: THEY ALL ASPIRE TO
REDUCE THE INFLATION RATE AND THEY ALL STRIVE TO ESTABLISH, ONCE
AND FOR ALL, UNQUESTIONED ARGENTINE SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ISLANDS
KNOWN IN ENGLISH AS THE FALKLANDS AND IN SPANISH AS THE MALVINAS.
THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS NO EXCEPTION BUT, UNLIKE MOST OF ITS
PREDECESSORS, IT SEEMS WILLING TO ACCEPT THE RISKS ANY SERIOUS
ATTEMPTS TO DO EITHER ENTAIL. IT HAS, IN CONSEQUENCE, MADE TOUGHNESS
ITS HALLMARK, INFURIATING POLITICIANS AND LABOUR UNION LEADERS AND
DISMAYING STATE EMPLOYEES WITH ITS ECONOMIC POLICIES AND SPREADING
A CERTAIN UNEASE AMONG DIPLOMATS AND PLEASURABLE ANTICIPATION
AMONG LOCAL NATIONALISTS WITH HINTS THAT ITS FALKLANDS/
MALVINAS APPROACH WILL BE FAR TOUGHER THAN ANYTHING WE HAVE SEEN
SO FAR.

BESIDES THE ATTENDANT HISTORICAL RIGHTS AND THE INFINITE PATIENCE FAR SHOWN BY ARGENTINA, THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT THE MALVINAS SITUATION IS SERIOUSLY INTERFERING WITH OUR SECURITY IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC, IS LIMITING OUR ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL PLANS, INCLUDING ONES RELATING TO ANTARCTICA, AND BEARS MOREOVER IN A MOST NEGATIVE FASHION ON OUR DISPUTE WITH CHILE OVER THE BEAGLE. LOOKING AT THE SUBJECT FROM AN INTERNATIONAL, OR WESTERN, VIEWPOINT, THE BRITISH PRESENCE THERE DEPRIVES ARGENTINA OF ITS PROPER PARTICIPATION IN THE DEFENCE OF THE REGION AGAINST CONSTANT SOVIET PENETRATION, AND AS THE STATE DEPARTMENT ITSELF HAS BEEN OBSERVING FOR SOME TIME, THIS MAKES ANY STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE AREA VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE OR OF DOUBTFUL VALUE. SO IF IT IS BORNE IN MIND THAT IT IS NOT ONLY THIS COUNTRY WHICH FINDS ITSELF DAILY MORE PREJUDICED BY BRITAIN'S INEXPLICABLE OBSTINACY, IT SEEMS EASY TO PREDICT THAT AN INITIATIVE INVOLVING FORCE COULD COUNT NOT ONLY ON THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY OF THE THIRD WORLD, BUT ALSO ON THE SUPPORT, OR AT LEAST THE INTERESTED TOLERANCE, OF NATO, HOWEVER MUCH THE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET MAY SHOW FORMAL SOLIDARITY WITH BRITAIN. FOR THE REST, THE FACT THAT ARGENTINA DOES NOT DEPEND ON THE APPROVAL OF ANY PARTNER OF THE UNITED STATES IN ORDER TO JOIN A DEFENSIVE PACT LIKE NATO - OR AN ECONOMIC ONE LIKE THE COMMON MARKET - COMPLETELY RULES OUT ARGENTINA'S NEED FOR A TREATY LIKE THE ONE SPAIN HAS JUST SIGNED WITH BRITAIN OVER GIBRALTAR - A TREATY WHICH WAS IMPOSED ON MADRID PRECISELY BY THE POSSIBILITY OF A BRITISH VETO ON ITS ENTRY INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY OR NATO.

ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES, THESE FAVOURABLE PROSPECTS FOR BUENOS AIRES IN CONNECTION WITH THE MALVINAS CONSTITUTE ONE OF THE MAIN BASES OF ARGENTINA'S FORTHCOMING DIPLOMATIC ACTION, AND THEY ARE ALSO BEING CAREFULLY EVALUATED OVERSEAS. THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL ADVANTAGES WHICH THE REGIME WOULD DERIVE FROM THE RECOVERY OF THE MALVINAS WOULD BE MERELY ADDITIONAL, ALTHOUGH NO LESS INTERESTING THEREBY TO THOSE IN POWER TODAY. AS IF THAT WERE NOT ENOUGH, SUCH ADVANTAGES COULD BE CARRIED OVER INTO THE ROME NEGOTIATIONS ON THE BEAGLE - FROM BUENOS AIRES' POINT OF VIEW, BECAUSE THEY WOULD STRENGTHEN ITS POSITION IN THE SOUTH, AND FROM CHILE'S AND THE VATICAN'S BECAUSE A GREATER READINESS TO LISTEN TO THEIR PROPOSALS MIGHT BE EXPECTED OF A GOVERNMENT WITH THE MALVINAS IN ITS HANDS....

ENDS

SIGNED : M HICKSON

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