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FM WASHINGTON 171705Z APR 82
TO FLASH F C O
TELEGRAM NO 1333 OF 17 APRIL

MIPT : FALKLANDS

1. CLARK SAID THAT GALTIERI AND COSTA-MENDEZ HAD BEEN COMPLETELY OVERRULED BY THE JUNTA WHO ARE MAKING QUITE UNACCEPTABLE PROPOSALS. HE HAD THEREFORE SENT HAIG INSTRUCTIONS AT 2 AM THIS MORNING TO HAVE A MEETING WITH THE JUNTA, LEAVE THEM IN ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBT THAT THE AMERICANS REALISED WHICH SIDE WAS BEING INTRANSIGENT AND WHICH SIDE THEY WOULD BE ON IF THE TALKS BROKE DOWN. IF THE JUNTA REMAINED ADAMANT, HAIG WAS TO RETURN HOME IMMEDIATELY. IT WOULD BE THE END OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. CLARK DID NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THE TIMETABLE WOULD BE FOR INDICATING TO THE WORLD THE US VIEW ABOUT WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF THE TALKS; NOR WHEN OR IN WHAT FORM THE AMERICANS WOULD INDICATE THAT HENCEFORTH THEY WERE ENTIRELY ON OUR SIDE.

3. CLARK EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN AT THE STORY ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES TODAY THAT BRITISH OPINION IS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE AMERICANS FOR THEIR NEUTRAL STANCE. HE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THIS BECAUSE AMERICA WAS HELPING IN ALL SORTS OF WAYS BUT HAD TO REMAIN NEUTRAL IN PUBLIC WHILE THE TALKS WERE GOING ON.

4. I REPLIED THAT THE NEW YORK TIMES GAVE A FAITHFUL ACCOUNT OF BRITISH OPINION. THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND MANY

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AGAINST ARGENTINE AGGRESSION AND WERE PREPARED TO TAKE
ACCORDINGLY: IT WAS AGAINST THIS STAGNANT SUPPORT THAT THE
AMERICAN ATTITUDE LOOKED HIGHLY DISAPPOINTING.

5. I ADDED THAT THE STATE OF BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY AND PUBLIC
OPINION MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IF THERE IS ANY SUGGESTION OF
THE AMERICANS GOING BACK TO LONDON AND URGING US TO MAKE FURTHER
CONCESSIONS. SPEAKING PERSONALLY I SAID THAT ANYTHING LIKE THIS
WOULD BE QUITE OUT OF THE QUESTION. THE INTRANSIGENCE OF THE
ARGENTINES WAS SUCH THAT THEY WOULD NEVER MOVE UNTIL THE AMERICANS
MADE CLEAR WHICH SIDE THEY WERE ON AND THAT THEY WERE NOT PREPARED
TO ACQUIESCE IN THE ARGENTINE AGGRESSION AND WERE READY TO TAKE
ALL MANNER OF STEPS AGAINST THE ARGENTINES.

6. CLARK ASSURED ME THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD NO INTENTION OF TRYING
TO SET THE PRIME MINISTER TO MAKE ANY FURTHER MOVE. HE WAS FULLY
AWARE THAT IT WAS THE ARGENTINES WHO WERE MAKING THE
NEGOTIATIONS IMPOSSIBLE.

7. CLARK SAID THAT THE AMERICANS WERE WORRIED THAT ANY ALTERNATIVE
ARGENTINE REGIME WOULD BE A COMMUNIST ONE. I SAID THAT IF THE
ARGENTINES SUCCEEDED IN THEIR PRESENT ENTERPRISE THE SOVIETS WOULD
TAKE CREDIT FOR IT AND HAVE AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT POSITION IN THE
SOUTH ATLANTIC.

8. CLARK SPOKE ABOUT THE OLD ALLIANCE AND US/UK RELATIONS. I SAID
THAT THESE WERE CERTAINLY IMPORTANT BUT WHAT WAS AT ISSUE WAS A
MATTER OF DIRECT INTEREST TO THE US. IF THE ARGENTINES GOT AWAY
WITH VICTORIOUS AGGRESSION THERE WOULD BE ENHANCED INSTABILITY
THROUGHOUT THE HEMISPHERE. CLARK SAID HE AGREED AND ADDED THAT IT
WOULD NOT BE CONFINED TO THE AMERICAN HEMISPHERE.

9. CLARK EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE POSSIBLE DAMAGE THAT ARGENTINE
AIR POWER MIGHT DO TO OUR FORCES. HE WAS NOT SPECIFIC BUT IS
REFLECTING QUITE A WIDESPREAD VIEW IN WASHINGTON THAT THE ARGENTINES
CAN BE A SERIOUS THREAT TO US FROM THE AIR.

10. CLARK ALSO SAID IN ANSWER TO MY ENQUIRY THAT THE SOURCE OF THE
STORY THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT TAKE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST US IN
THE SOUTH ATLANTIC WAS A PIECE OF CUBAN INTELLIGENCE. ACCORDING TO
THIS THE SOVIETS HAD ASSURED THE ARGENTINES THAT THEY WOULD BE
PREPARED TO SINK ONE OF OUR SHIPS IF THEY WANTED. I SUGGESTED THAT
THIS MIGHT WELL BE A PIECE OF DISINFORMATION AND THAT ON THE FACE
OF IT IT SEEMED UNLIKELY THE RUSSIANS WOULD BECOME INVOLVED IN

OF IT IT SEEMED UNLIKELY THE RUSSIANS WOULD BECOME INVOLVED IN DIRECT ACTION WITH A FLEET OF NATO IN THE ATLANTIC. CLARK AGREED. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT THE SOVIETS WERE PROVIDING THE ARGENTINES WITH INTELLIGENCE ABOUT OUR FLEET MOVEMENTS.

21. WE NOW WAIT TO SEE THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING GOING ON BETWEEN HAIG AND THE JUNTA. IF THAT FAILS TO MOVE THE ARGENTINES, THE AMERICANS WILL IMMEDIATELY CONSIDER THE WAY IN WHICH THEY DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY ARE COMING DOWN FIRMLY ON OUR SIDE. I SAID TO CLARK THAT WE WOULD EXPECT THEM TO DO NO LESS THAN THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND. I AM NOT SURE THAT HE TOOK THIS IN COMPLETELY AND IT IS SOMETHING THAT WE MAY HAVE TO TAKE UP WITH HIM AGAIN VERY SHORTLY, DEPENDING UPON DEVELOPMENTS.

HENDERSON

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