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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 856 OF 21 SEPTEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, ROME

FALKLANDS AT THE UN

1. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR GUIDANCE ON A NUMBER OF TACTICAL QUESTIONS. GIVEN HIS PASSIONATE INTERVENTIONS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL LAST YEAR, ILLUECA, THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, WILL PROBABLY BE EVEN WORSE FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW THAN WAS THE HUNGARIAN LAST YEAR. WE MAY NOT THEREFORE BE ABLE TO EXERCISE MUCH IF ANY, CONTROL OVER SUCH MATTERS AS THE TIMING OF THE DEBATE. WE SHALL ALSO HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR SHARP PRACTICE VIA THE PRESIDENCY.

2. THE VOTE.

IT WOULD BE WISHFUL THINKING TO BELIEVE THAT WE CAN DOWN-PLAY THE FALKLANDS AT THE UN IN THE WAY IN WHICH THE FRENCH HAVE MADE THE MAYOTTE DEBATE A FORMALITY. WE ARE DEALING WITH ARGENTINA NOT THE COMOROS AND WITH THE LATINS NOT THE AFRICANS. THE ARGENTINES HAVE ALREADY BEEN ACTIVE IN MANY CAPITALS AND HAVE BEGUN THE CAMPAIGN WITH A VICTORY IN THE COMMITTEE OF 24 (MY TELNO 769). I BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL ASSUME A POSITIVE VOTE FROM THE U.S. AND THAT THEY HAVE A LIVELY EXPECTATION OF ATTRACTING POSITIVE VOTES FROM ONE OR MORE OF OUR MAJOR WESTERN EUROPEAN PARTNERS. IF ONE OF THE LATTER BREAKS RANKS IT IS LIKELY THAT OTHERS WILL FOLLOW SUIT. A POSITIVE VOTE FROM A MAJOR WESTERN EUROPEAN PARTNER WOULD BE REGARDED AS A VICTORY FOR THE ARGENTINES AND AS A SIGNAL THAT THEY WOULD GET MORE NEXT YEAR. ALMOST OUR ONLY PROSPECT OF ACHIEVING ANYTHING THAT COULD BE CALLED A VICTORY WOULD BE TO SECURE A U.S. ABSTENTION. THIS WOULD BE A TREMENDOUS SET-BACK TO THE ARGENTINES. WITHOUT A U.S. ABSTENTION WE MUST EXPECT AN EROSION OF THE SUPPORT WE RECEIVED LAST YEAR WHETHER IN THE SHAPE OF POSITIVE VOTES OR ABSTENTIONS. WITH WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFECTIONS THAT EROSION WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY INCREASED.

3. ALLOCATION OF ITEM. LAST YEAR THE ARGENTINES AT ONE STAGE SWITHERED BETWEEN ALLOCATION TO PLENARY AND TO FOURTH COMMITTEE. IN THE END THEY CHOSE AND SECURED PLENARY. THEY HAVE DONE THE SAME THIS YEAR (SINCE WE HAD NO CHANCE OF DEFEATING THEIR CHOICE I ASSUMED YOU WOULD WANT ME TO ACQUIESCE IN IT WITHOUT ATTEMPTING OPPOSITION). WE, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE SUCCEEDED IN KEEPING THE DOOR OPEN FOR THE FALKLAND COUNCILLORS TO APPEAR BEFORE THE FOURTH COMMITTEE AS THEY DID SO EFFECTIVELY LAST YEAR AND AS I HOPE THEY WILL THIS.

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/4.

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4. TIMING. NEITHER THE SECRETARIAT NOR THE PRESS NOR WELL-CONNECTED DELEGATIONS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GIVE US ANY CLUE ABOUT THE ARGENTINE PREFERENCE. PERHAPS THEY ARE GENUINELY UNCERTAIN IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR DOMESTIC SITUATION. GIVEN THE PARTIALITY OF THE PRESIDENCY (PARA 1 ABOVE) WE SHALL PROBABLY NOT BE ABLE TO INFLUENCE THE TIMING. HOWEVER, IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO DO SO MY PRESENT INCLINATION (ALL OTHER THINGS REMAINING EQUAL), WOULD BE FOR AS LATE A DATE AS POSSIBLE PERHAPS EVEN MID-DECEMBER. IT MAY BE THAT BY THEN PLENARY WILL BE IN SUCH A RUSH THAT THERE WILL BE LITTLE TIME OR INCLINATION TO STAGE A MAJOR EVENT AND THE DEBATE MIGHT BECOME SOMETHING OF A PRO-FORMA OCCASION. IN MAKING THIS JUDGEMENT FROM THE UN POINT OF VIEW, I AM ASSUMING THAT THERE IS NO STRONG COUNTER-INDICATION LIKELY TO RESULT FROM INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN ARGENTINA BUT SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR CONFIRMATION OF THIS.

5. NAM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING. TWO POTENTIALLY INFLUENTIAL INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS ARE LIKELY TO TAKE PLACE IN NEW YORK IN THE RELATIVELY NEAR FUTURE. THE NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS ARE MEETING HERE IN THE FIRST WEEK OF OCTOBER. IT WOULD BE SURPRISING IF THE ARGENTINES DID NOT SEEK AGAIN THE ENDORSEMENT OF THIS MEETING. NON-ALIGNED MEETINGS ARE PRONE TO BE STAMPEDED INTO GOING ALONG WITH A CONSENSUS EVEN THOUGH MANY MODERATES FREQUENTLY HAVE PRIVATE RESERVATIONS. BUT OF COURSE, ONCE THEY HAVE GONE ALONG WITH THE CONSENSUS IT IS HARD FOR THEM TO VOTE IN A CONTRARY SENSE IN THE PLENARY. I SUSPECT THAT A GOOD MANY OF OUR 51 ABSTENTIONS LAST YEAR OF WHICH 27 WERE NON-ALIGNED COULD, IF THEY ARE NOT CAREFUL, FIND THEMSELVES BOUND THIS YEAR BY A NEW NON-ALIGNED CONSENSUS. YOU WILL RECALL THAT LAST YEAR WE WERE REMARKABLY SUCCESSFUL IN MOBILISING SUPPORT AT THE EQUIVALENT NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING TO THE EXTENT THAT IT BECAME THE MAJOR SUBJECT FOR DEBATE AND THE MEETING WAS PROLONGED FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS. DO YOU WISH US TO TRY TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING SIMILAR THIS YEAR? YOU WILL, OF COURSE, BE IDEALLY PLACED TO DO A GOOD DEAL OF LOBBYING YOURSELF WHEN YOU ARE HERE NEXT WEEK. BUT I AM FAIRLY SURE THAT IF WE AIM FOR THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULT WE SHOULD NEED TO DO FAIRLY EXTENSIVE LOBBYING IN CAPITALS AS WELL.

6. THE COMMONWEALTH MEETING. ALTHOUGH NO DATE HAS YET BEEN ANNOUNCED FOR A VISIT TO THE UN BY RAMPHAL IT IS TO BE ASSUMED THAT HE WILL COME HERE IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THE NORMAL FORM IS FOR HIM TO CALL A MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES. AT THE EQUIVALENT MEETING LAST YEAR I MADE A MAJOR SPEECH WHICH SEEMED TO HAVE A USEFUL EFFECT. CONCLUSIONS WOULD BE DRAWN IF I DID NOT ACT IN A SIMILAR WAY THIS YEAR. YOU WILL RECALL THAT ALL BUT ONE OF THE COUNTRIES WHICH VOTED AGAINST THE LATIN DRAFT LAST YEAR WERE COMMONWEALTH AND THAT 16 OF THE ABSTENTIONS CAME FROM COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES. ACCORDINGLY ACTION AT THE COMMONWEALTH MEETING ASSUMING IT PRECEDES THE NAM MEETING COULD HAVE A USEFUL EFFECT ON THE LATTER.

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17.

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7. LOBBYING. YOU HAVE ALREADY LAUNCHED A MAJOR EXERCISE (YOUR TELNOS 257 TO ATHENS AND 244 TO CANBERRA). THERE WILL, OF COURSE, BE A GOOD DEAL MORE TO BE DONE ONCE WE KNOW THE DATE OF THE DEBATE AND ARE MORE CERTAIN OF THE TEXT OF THE LATIN DRAFT RESOLUTION. APART FROM THE TWO MEETINGS MENTIONED ABOVE I JUDGE THAT WHAT WILL IN THE MEANTIME HAVE THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON THE ATTITUDE OF NON-ALIGNED DELEGATIONS WILL BE WHETHER OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS STAND FIRM AND WHETHER THE U.S. CONTINUES TO SUPPORT AND EVEN LOBBY FOR THE LATIN DRAFT. IF THE U.S. CAN BE PERSUADED TO ABSTAIN ON THE LATIN DRAFT EG BECAUSE IT IS PREJUDICIAL AND MOREOVER DOES NOT LIVE UP TO THE CRITERIA WHICH THE AMERICANS ESTABLISHED LAST YEAR THAT COULD HAVE A VERY SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE DEBATE HERE. I ASSUME THAT THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH WE MIGHT MOVE THE U.S. TO SUCH A POSITION IS THROUGH THE PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION IN WASHINGTON WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN.

THOMSON

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