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FM PARIS 271020Z OCT 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 963 OF 27 OCTOBER

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK

FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

GRENADA

1. SECRETARY OF STATE HAD A BRIEF BILATERAL WITH SHULTZ BEFORE THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS MEETING THIS MORNING. SHULTZ EXPRESSED HIS REGRET ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE SITUATION HAD CREATED FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE. HE WENT ON TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(I) THE CUBAN PRESENCE ON GRENADA HAD TURNED OUT TO BE LARGER AND MORE OMINOUS THAN THE US HAD ESTIMATED. THE INSTINCTS OF THE OECS HAD TURNED OUT TO BE BETTER THAN US INTELLIGENCE. THERE WAS A MAJOR CUBAN HEADQUARTERS (A FULL COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTRE) AT SALINAS WITH HUGE STOCKS OF ARMS. GRENADIANS HAD HAD NO ACCESS TO THIS BASE. THE LATEST INFORMATION WAS THAT THERE WERE 1100 CUBANS ON THE ISLAND AGAINST EARLIER ESTIMATES OF LESS THAN HALF THAT, AND, SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION, THE AIRPORT WORKERS APPEARED TO BE SOLDIERS. THE AMERICANS HAD 700 CUBAN PRISONERS.

(II) THERE WAS A POWERFUL LEGAL CASE TO BE MADE FOR THE INTERVENTION. FIRSTLY BECAUSE OF THE DANGER TO US CITIZENS (A POINT RECOGNISED IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE, ALTHOUGH WE HAD TAKEN A DIFFERENT VIEW ON THE DANGER). SECONDLY, BOTH THE OAS AND THE UN CHARTER RECOGNISED THE LEGITIMACY OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER REGIONAL AGREEMENTS. THE OECS TREATY COULD NOT THEREFORE BE DISMISSED AS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE. THE OECS VIEW WAS THAT THEY HAD ACTED UNANIMOUSLY BECAUSE THERE

NOT THEREFORE BE DISMISSED AS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE. THE OECS VIEW WAS THAT THEY HAD ACTED UNANIMOUSLY, BECAUSE THERE WAS NO GOVERNMENT IN GRENADA. AND THEY WERE CONVINCED THAT THERE WAS AN EXTERNAL THREAT (BISHOP HAD BEEN MURDERED BECAUSE HE WAS THINKING OF HAVING ELECTIONS).

(III) DOMESTICALLY, THERE HAD BEEN MUCH CRITICISM AMONG CONGRESSMEN WHEN SHULTZ HAD FIRST BRIEFED. BUT THE TUNE HAD CHANGED WHEN CONGRESSMEN HAD HEARD FROM THE FOLKS BACK HOME. PEOPLE WERE OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT THE US CITIZENS ON THE ISLAND WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN HOSTAGE, AS HAD HAPPENED IN IRAN.

(IV) IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE AMERICAN POSITION AROUND THE WORLD THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD ACTED DECISIVELY AND SUCCESSFULLY.

(V) THE US ADMINISTRATION HAD TURNED THEMSELVES INSIDE OUT TO HELP US OVER THE FALKLANDS, BUT IT WAS GOOD THAT WE HAD BEEN SEEN TO STAND UP FOR WESTERN VALUES. THE GRENADIAN ACTION MIGHT HAVE THE SAME EFFECT.

2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN RESPONSE.

(I) THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE US ACTION HAD CAUSED US WENT WIDER THAN SHULTZ HAD IMPLIED. THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE REFLECTED OUR DEEPER ANXIETIES. THE IMPACT ON THE DEBATE OF CRUISE MISSILES WAS A PARTICULAR CAUSE FOR CONCERN. HE HAD ADDRESSED THE MATTER IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS YESTERDAY, BUT IT WOULD NOT GO AWAY. THE GERMANS HAD ALSO EXPRESSED ANXIETY.

(II) ON THE LEGAL POINTS, WE RECOGNISED THE PRINCIPLE OF ACTION TO DEFEND CITIZENS. THE JUDGEMENT DEPENDED ON THE FACTS, AND THE COUNTRY MOST IMMEDIATELY CONCERNED MIGHT HAVE THE BEST EVIDENCE. WE RECOGNISED THAT THE US COMMUNITY WAS LARGER, MORE CONCENTRATED AND MORE EXPOSED, AND WE HAD MADE CLEAR THESE DIFFERENCES IN PUBLIC. ON THE OECS TREATY, IT WAS MORE DIFFICULT TO ARGUE THE EXTERNAL AGGRESSION POINT BECAUSE THE CUBANS, HOWEVER MUCH ONE DISLIKED THEM, WERE THERE AT THE INVITATION OF THE GRENADIAN GOVERNMENT.

(III) OUR ACTION IN THE FALKLANDS HAD BEEN TAKEN IN VERY DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

(IV) THERE REMAINED GROUNDS FOR WIDER POLITICAL CONCERN ABOUT THE CONCLUSIONS WHICH SMALL COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD WOULD DRAW ABOUT INTERVENTION BY SUPER POWERS.

3. SHULTZ, WHO HAD ASKED FOR THE QUESTION OF CONSULTATION TO BE LEFT TO ONE SIDE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CONVERSATION, THEN EMPHASISED THAT THERE WAS NO TRUTH IN THE ALLEGATION THAT THE US HAD BEEN PLANNING INTERVENTION FOR WEEKS. HE HIMSELF HAD WOKEN UP THE PRESIDENT IN AUGUSTA AND THE PRESIDENT HAD HAD TO REACH CONCLUSIONS RAPIDLY. HE HAD ALSO BEEN VERY CONCERNED TO ENSURE THE SECRECY OF THE OPERATION, AS A LEAK WOULD HAVE ENDANGERED LIVES. THE AMERICANS HAD PERHAPS BEEN OVERLY SENSITIVE ON THIS COUNT, BUT THE FACT REMAINED THAT THE OPERATION HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY KEPT OUT OF THE PRESS.

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4. IT WAS LEFT THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND SHULTZ WOULD TRY TO  
HAVE ANOTHER WORD ABOUT FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS. SHULTZ SAID THAT THE  
GOVERNOR-GENERAL WAS BACK ON THE ISLAND AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION  
OF THE ROLE HE WAS PLAYING.

FRETWELL

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JMR