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FM FCO 111030Z MARCH 83

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 407 OF 11 MARCH

INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO ROUTINE SANTIAGO

YOUR TELNO 564 AND UKMIS TELNO 127: ARMS SUPPLIES TO
ARGENTINA AND CHILE

1. I AGREE THAT WE SHOULD RESERVE ANY HIGH-LEVEL MESSAGE FOR WHEN THE AMERICANS COME TO US FOR THE PROMISED CONSULTATIONS. BUT THERE MUST BE NO LOSS OF MOMENTUM IN OUR WORK TO KEEP THE AMERICANS AWARE OF THE STRENGTH OF OUR FEELINGS.
2. AT THIS END, MR ONSLOW SAW STREATOR ON 8 MARCH AND LEFT HIM IN NO DOUBT OF OUR CONCERN. STREATOR SUGGESTED THAT A FORMAL ARGENTINE DECLARATION THAT HOSTILITIES WERE AT AN END MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE TO US AS A QUID PRO QUO FOR THE RESUMPTION OF AMERICAN ARMS SALES. MR ONSLOW EXPRESSED SCEPTICISM OF THE VALUE OF ANY SUCH AGREEMENT EXTRACTED UNDER DURESS. WHEN MIDDENDORF CALLS ON 11 MARCH HE WILL BE TOLD THAT, WHILE WE WOULD OBVIOUSLY WELCOME AN ARGENTINE DECLARATION THAT HOSTILITIES WERE AT AN END, WE HAVE GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT REGARDING ANY SUCH DECLARATION BY THE PRESENT ARGENTINE REGIME AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESUMPTION OF ARMS SUPPLIES.
3. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU AND YOUR STAFF WOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE IT VERY PLAIN AT ALL LEVELS OF THE ADMINISTRATION, INVOKING MY PERSONAL CONCERN AS APPROPRIATE, THAT THE AMERICAN DECISION, IF IT TAKES THE SHAPE NOW INDICATED, WILL BE VERY BADLY RECEIVED HERE BOTH PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY. THE EXTENT OF PRESS COVERAGE AND POLITICAL INTEREST HERE EVEN AT THIS PRELIMINARY SPECULATIVE STAGE IS AN INDICATION OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THE SUBJECT AND THE ROW THAT IS LIKELY. PLEASE ALSO CONTINUE TO DEPLOY THE OTHER STANDARD ARGUMENTS AT ALL SUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES.
4. YOUR PARA 2. YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO INTIMATE TO THE AMERICANS

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THAT IF THE DECISION IS TO BE TAKEN WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS,
TIME FOR THE PROMISED PRIOR CONSULTATION IS RUNNING VERY SHORT.
WE SHOULD TAKE A DIM VIEW OF CONSULTATION WHICH WAS CLEARLY ONLY
FOR FORMS SAKE.

PYM

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ASSESSMENT STAFF, CABINET OFFICE.

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PS/MR RIFKIND

PS/MR ONSLOW

PS/PUS

MR ADAMS

MR GIFFARD

MR URE

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FM WASHINGTON 092324Z MAR 83
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 564 OF 9 MARCH
INFO UKMIS NEW YORK SANTIAGO

UKMIS NEW YORK TELNO 127: ARMS SUPPLIES TO ARGENTINA AND CHILE

1. RUMOURS HAVE CIRCULATED IN THE AMERICAN MEDIA RECENTLY THAT A DECISION TO CERTIFY ARGENTINA (BUT NOT CHILE) WAS IMMINENT. WE HAVE BRIEFED JOURNALISTS FULLY ABOUT OUR OBJECTIONS TO CERTIFICATION AND US ARMS SALES TO ARGENTINA.

2. STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE INSISTED BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY THAT NO (NO) DECISIONS HAVE YET BEEN TAKEN. EAGLEBURGER TOLD ME TODAY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S PREOCCUPATION WITH EL SALVADOR MEANT THAT A DECISION REMAINED SOME WAY OFF, AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR FOR THE SOUTHERN CONE (SHAW SMITH) HAS TOLD US THAT IN HIS VIEW A DECISION WILL NOT (NOT) BE TAKEN FOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS. HE SAID THAT A NUMBER OF DIFFERENCES STILL NEEDED TO BE RESOLVED WITHIN THE STATE DEPARTMENT ABOUT:
 - A) THE ADVERSE EFFECT SUCH A DECISION WOULD HAVE ON UK/US RELATIONS:
 - B) WHETHER OR NOT AN ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE TO CERTIFY CHILE AND ARGENTINA SIMULTANEOUSLY (IT IS LIKELY THAT THE TWO WILL BE TREATED SEPARATELY):
 - C) WHETHER IT WOULD BE BETTER TO DELAY CERTIFICATION UNTIL AFTER A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN ELECTED IN ARGENTINA. (A SOURCE IN THE NSC HAS SUGGESTED THAT THIS IS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY.)

3. INsofar AS MRS KIRKPATRICK'S ADVICE IS SOUND, WE ARE ALREADY WEIGHING IN. WE HAVE CONTINUED TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE AMERICANS AT ALL LEVELS OUR STRONG OBJECTIONS TO THE POSSIBLE CERTIFICATION OF ARGENTINA AND HAVE FULLY BRIEFED THE MEDIA, EMPHASISING IN PARTICULAR OUR HOSTILITY TO THE SUPPLY OF US WEAPONS TO A MILITARY REGIME WHICH IS STILL FORMALLY IN A STATE OF HOSTILITIES WITH US. OUR COMPLAINTS, WHICH HAVE RECEIVED WIDE PUBLICITY, HAVE STIMULATED THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS TO SUMMON US OFFICIALS BEFORE HIS COMMITTEE NEXT WEEK TO TESTIFY ON CURRENT ADMINISTRATION POLICY. WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT STATE DEPARTMENT TESTIMONY WILL EMPHASISE THAT NO (NO) DECISIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN: WE HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT SEVERAL WITNESSES ARE LIKELY TO OPPOSE US CERTIFICATION BEFORE ARGENTINA DEMOCRACY IS RESTORED.

4. I DO NOT (NOT) THINK THAT AT THE MOMENT WE NEED DO MORE IN MAKING OUR FEELINGS KNOWN: THE AMERICANS HAVE REPEATEDLY INSISTED THAT THEY WILL CONSULT US (AND NOT MERELY GIVE US PRIOR NOTIFICATION) BEFORE ANY FINAL DECISIONS ARE TAKEN: IT IS AT THAT TIME THAT I MAY WISH TO RECOMMEND A HIGH LEVEL MESSAGE.

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