

FALKLAND ISLANDS GENERAL (ADVANCES)

39

PS
PS/MR HURD
PS/MR ONSLOW
PS/MR RIFKIND
PS/PUS
SIR J BULLARD
SIR I SINCLAIR
MR GIFFARD
MR WRIGHT
MR ADAMS
LORD N G LENNOX
MR EVANS
MR URE
MR GILLMORE

HD/PUSD (2)
HD/SAMD
HD/FID
HD/DEFENCE DEPT
HD/NEWS DEPT
HD/ERD
HD/ECD(E)
HD/UND
HD/PLANNING STAFF



IMMEDIATE

PS/NO 10 DOWNING ST (3)
PS/S OF S FOR DEFENCE
MR J STEWART AUSD STAFF MOD
PS/CHANCELLOR)
MISS M E CUND) TREASURY
MR LITTLER)
SIR R ARMSTRONG)
MR A D S GOODALL) CABINET OFFICE
DIO)
MR M A PATTISON, FID, ODA
MR A TITCHENER)
MR C U ROBERTS, IAT) DOT
MR A FORTNAM)

RESIDENT CLERK

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FM CIVIL COMMISSIONER
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TELEGRAM NUMBER 218 OF 29 MARCH

MIPT -17: ARGENTINE NOK: COUNCILLOR REACTION

1 COUNCILLOR REACTION WAS PREDICTABLY NEGATIVE, ALTHOUGH IN THE END THEY PROBABLY FOR THE MOST PART ACCEPTED THE NECESSITY FOR THE AGREEMENT QUOTE IN PRINCIPLE UNQUOTE AND THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT - INITIAL REACTION INCLUDED ACCUSATIONS THAT HMG WAS BACK-TRACKING FROM ITS COMMITMENT (WHICH I QUESTIONED) THAT NO ARGENTINES WOULD VISIT BEFORE THEIR GOVERNMENT FORMALLY ANNOUNCED THE END OF HOSTILITIES AND THAT FIG WAS BEING OVERRULED ON THE FIRST MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUE SINCE THE INVASION AFTER THE PRIME MINISTERS STATEMENT THAT ISLANDERS SHOULD HAVE MORE SAY IN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS. WHILE COUNCILLORS WERE SYMPATHETIC ON THE PROBLEMS WHICH MIGHT FACE URUGUAY ON THE UK NOK VISIT, URUGUAY WAS NOT (REPEAT NOT) A FRIEND AND WAS MAKING CAPITAL OUT OF THE AFFAIR. ~~THE VISIT WOULD~~

SNOWBALL: IT COULD END UP AS ANOTHER QUOTE SCRAP MERCHANT DEALER UNQUOTE. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE NOKS WOULD NOT LEAVE QUES
3 I REHERSED AGAIN THAT THIS WAS AN INDIVIDUAL PROJECT BY DESTAFANIS AND THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT INVOLVED: THAT THEY COULD NOT CHARGE HMG WITH ACTING BEHIND THE FIGS BACK OR OF NOT CONSULTING COUNCILLORS, THAT URUGUAY HAD, FOR ITS OWN UNDERSTANDABLE REASONS TO BE SEEN AS BEING EVEN HANDED AND THAT THE SHIP AND VISITORS WOULD BE ESCORTED BY THE MILITARY THROUGHOUT
4 ONE COUNCILLOR (PECK) SAID HIS CONSTITUENTS WERE VERY OPPOSED TO THE ARGENTINE VISIT AND HAD SUGGESTED A PUBLIC MEETING. IF COUNCILLORS MADE DECISIONS ON BEHALF OF COMMUNITY AND THEY WERE COMPLETELY OPPOSED, HE WOULD HAVE TO RESIGN. THERE WAS RELUCTANT AGREEMENT THAT THINGS WERE TOO FAR ADVANCED TO CHANGE NOW. (I EMPHASISED THAT IS WAS NOT HMGS FAULT, BUT DESTEFANIS AND THE URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES THAT EVENTS HAD NOW TO MOVE SO QUICKLY.)
I SAID THAT I WOULD HOPE THAT AT ANY PUBLIC MEETING COUNCILLORS WOULD SAY THAT THEY HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT THE VISIT COULD TAKE PLACE: IT WAS FOR THEM TO LEAD THEIR COMMUNITY.
5 THERE WAS SOME PERCEPTION OF THE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES IN NOT QUOTE YIELDING TO ARGENTINE PRESSURE UNQUOTE WHEN ASKED IF ICRC

HAD TOLD THE ARGENTINE PEOPLE ABOUT THE OFFER TO SEND BODIES BACK
I SAID THAT THE ICRC WERE NEUTRAL AND WOULD ONLY TELL THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. (YOU SHOULD BE VERY AWARE OF THE DEEP SUSPICION WITH WHICH ISLANDERS VIEW ICRC AS A RESULT OF THE INCIDENT DURING THE OCCUPATION WHEN AN ICRC REPRESENTATIVE LANDED ON BOARD A SUPPOSED ARGENTINE HOSPITAL SHIP WHICH ALLEGEDLY UNLOADED EXOCET MISSILES WITHOUT REPORTING THAT FACT. WHILE WORLD OPINION WOULD DOBTLESS ACCEPT THE NEUTRALITY OF ICRC THE SAME DOES NOT HOLD WITH ISLANDERS)
6 WHEN CHEEK SAID HE WAS ANNOYED THAT HMG HAD MADE THE ANNOUNCEMENT BEFORE COMING BACK TO COUNCILLORS I TOLD HIM THAT HMG HAD HAD NO OPTION AS THE STORY WAS ABOUT TO BREAK IN UK AS A RESULT OF THE PRESS
S
HERE KNOWING WHAT WAS SAID IN COUNCIL LAST WEEK. IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT DISCUSSIONS IN COUNCIL REMAINED STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
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ARGENTINE NEXT OF KIN

1. JOHN IZARD OF THE GUARDIAN CALLED AND ASKED FOR ADVICE ON THE FILING OF A PIECE ON THE ARGENTINE NEXT OF KIN WHICH CONTAINED A SUBSTANTIALLY CORRECT VERSION OF MY DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLORS YESTERDAY, HE WOULD NOT REVEAL HIS SOURCE BUT IT CLEARLY CAME FROM ONE OR MORE OF THE COUNCILLORS PRESENT
 2. I PERSUADED HIM THAT IT WOULD BE AGAINST OUR BEST INTERESTS FOR HIM TO FILE HIS STORY TODAY AND HE HAS AGREED TO HOLD IT UNLESS SOME OTHER PAPER BREAKS THE NEWS IN A FIRST EDITION TOMORROW. HUNT
- BT

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