

ARGENTINA
FALKLAND ISLANDS GENERAL (ADVANCES)

39

IMMEDIATE

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

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 B ARMSTRONG)
MR A D S GOODALL) CABINET OFFICE
DIO)

MR M A PATTISON, FID, ODA

MR A TITCHENER)
~~MR C S ROBERTS, IAT~~) DOT
MR A FORTNAM)

RESIDENT CLERK

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 260800Z

FM UKMIS NEW YORK 252200Z APR 83

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 270 OF 25 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS GENEVA, BERNE

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, MONTEVIDEO, CIVIL COMMISSIONER PORT STANLEY

MY TELNO 265: FALKLANDS: ARGENTINE NEXT OF KIN.

1. DE SOTO RANG ME THIS AFTERNOON (25 APRIL) TO SAY THAT THE DESTEFANIS GROUP HAD RENEWED THEIR APPROACH TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL SEEKING HIS HELP IN ARRANGING A VISIT TO THE ARGENTINE WAR DEAD IN THE FALKLANDS. THEY HAD ORIGINALLY APPROACHED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AT THE SAME TIME AS APPROACHING THE RED CROSS. BECAUSE OF THIS HE HAD DONE NOTHING ABOUT IT AT THE TIME (MY TELNO 193). THEIR RENEWED APPROACH WAS BASED ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE RED CROSS FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS. THEY WERE ASKING THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO APPROACH HMG TO ARRANGE THE VISIT.

2. IN REPLY TO MY QUESTIONS DE SOTO SAID THAT THE SECRETARIAT HAD SPOKEN WITH THE RED CROSS WHO HAD CONFIRMED THAT THEY HAD WITHDRAWN FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS AND HAD SAID THAT THEY BELIEVED THE ARRANGEMENT WHICH DESTEFANIS WAS NOW PROPOSING, INCLUDING TRAVEL BY A SHIP FLYING THE ARGENTINE FLAG AND ACCOMPANIED BY JOURNALISTS OF BOTH BRITISH AND OTHER NATIONALITIES, WAS IDENTICAL WITH OR SIMILAR TO THE PROPOSALS DESTEFANIS HAD PUT TO THE RED CROSS. DE SOTO SAID THAT HE HAD INFORMED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN PARTS OF THIS APPROACH

~~BOTH BRITISH AND OTHER NATIONALITIES, WAS IDENTICAL WITH OR SIMILAR TO THE PROPOSALS BESTEFANIS HAD PUT TO THE RED CROSS. DE SOTO SAID THAT HE HAD INFORMED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN PARIS OF THIS APPROACH AND HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO EXPLORE WITH US WHAT THE POSITION WAS. HE ASKED WHAT OUR CONDITIONS WERE FOR THE VISIT.~~

3. I UNDERTOOK TO REPORT HIS ENQUIRY AND TO GET A REPLY. MEANWHILE I HAD TO TELL HIM THAT THIS LOOKED LIKE A POLITICAL TRY-ON. WE HAD REPEATEDLY PROPOSED THAT THE ARGENTINES SHOULD REMOVE THEIR WAR DEAD. THEY HAD REFUSED. WE HAD BEEN READY FOR A PURELY HUMANITARIAN VISIT BY RELATIVES. THE HUMANITARIAN CHARACTER MADE THE RED CROSS THE RIGHT ORGANISATION TO GIVE IT SUPPORT IF APPROPRIATE AND TO ARRANGE THE MODALITIES. IF THE RED CROSS WOULD NOT DO IT IT WAS PLAINLY NOT "HUMANITARIAN". IT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL SHOULD BE EXPECTED TO RESPOND TO THE PLEAS OF A GROUP OF PRIVATE PEOPLE (DE SOTO CONFIRMED THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT "HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT") AND WHY THE POLITICAL CHANNEL OF THE UNITED NATIONS SHOULD BE USED ONCE THE RED CROSS HAD DECLINED. DE SOTO SAID HE TOOK NOTE OF THIS BUT WOULD STILL LIKE A MORE FORMAL RESPONSE.

4. I AM INCLINED TO THINK THAT IT WILL BE BEST TO SCOTCH THIS IDEA BEFORE IT CAN GAIN MOMENTUM. AT THE SAME TIME I THINK IT WILL BE BEST TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION PERSONALLY TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL. HOWEVER HE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE IN NEW YORK UNTIL THE MORNING OF 27 APRIL. COMBINING THESE CONSIDERATIONS I SUGGEST THAT I MIGHT BE INSTRUCTED TO GIVE A FIRST REPLY TO DE SOTO TOMORROW (26 APRIL) AND TO SEEK AND INTERVIEW WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON WEDNESDAY.

THOMSON

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