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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 594 OF 10 NOV 83

AND TO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON

YOUR TELEGRAM NUMBER 417: FALKLANDS AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE AMBASSADOR ON TOUR KATO, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE EUROPEAN AFFAIRS BUREAU IN THE MFA, SUMMONED WHITEHEAD THIS AFTERNOON. HIS MAIN MESSAGE WAS THAT THE ARGENTINE RESOLUTION THIS YEAR WAS IN SUBSTANCE IDENTICAL TO THE ONE ADOPTED LAST YEAR AND WAS COMPATIBLE WITH THE BASIC POSITION OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT OVER THE FALKLANDS THAT

- A) ANY INTERNATIONAL DISPUTE MUST BE SOLVED PEACEFULLY THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS,
- B) THE PRINCIPLE OF THE NON-USE OF FORCE MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO AND
- C) THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WAS IN NO WAY ABLE TO TAKE A POSITION ON THE SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE.

AFTER CONSIDERATION AT THE HIGHEST (PRIME MINISTERIAL) LEVEL THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAD THEREFORE DECIDED TO VOTE IN FAVOUR OF THE RESOLUTION THIS YEAR.

2. KATO SOUGHT TO SOFTEN THE BLOW BY EMPHASISING THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAD URGED ARGENTINA TO REACH A VERY EARLY AGREEMENT WITH HMG OVER CIVIL AVIATION MATTERS AND "TO MAKE THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC CLEARER AND MORE DEFINITE "AS WELL AS" MAKING CLEAR THE INTENTION OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO START NEGOTIATIONS WITH HMG WITHOUT PRE-CONDITIONS". KATO SAID THAT THE JAPANESE REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UN WOULD GIVE A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE JAPANESE VOTE GENERALLY ALONG THE FOREGOING LINES. THE JAPANESE EMBASSY IN LONDON WERE ALSO BEING INSTRUCTED TO SPEAK AS KATO HAD DONE HERE.

3. WHITEHEAD SAID THAT THE JAPANESE DECISION WAS BOUND TO BE RECEIVED WITH CONSIDERABLE REGRET. DESPITE JAPANESE EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT A MORE REALISTIC STANCE THE PLAIN FACT WAS THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW WOULD BE VOTING ON AN ISSUE OF VERY CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO THE UK IN A WAY WHICH WOULD LINE THEM UP WITH THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT AND AGAINST HMG. THIS WOULD BE THE VIEW TAKEN BY BOTH THOSE GOVERNMENTS. MOREOVER THIS WAS BEING DONE AT A TIME WHEN NO SERIOUS MOVES HAD BEEN MADE BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT IN RECENT MONTHS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION, WHICH REMAINED ONE IN WHICH POINT-SCORING SEEMED TO BE MORE IMPORTANT THEN PRACTICAL MEASURES DESIGNED TO DEFUSE THE ISSUE. WHITEHEAD NOTED KATO'S HOPE THAT DIFFERENCES OVER THIS MATTER WOULD NOT LEAD TO A COOLING IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRITAIN AND JAPAN:

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BUT SPEAKING PERSONALLY HE REGRETTED A MOVE WHICH WAS BOUND TO BE SEEN AS INIMICABLE TO BRITISH INTERESTS AT A TIME WHEN THE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRITAIN AND JAPAN NEEDED ALL THE REINFORCEMENT THAT IT COULD GET. ALTHOUGH NO DIRECT PARALLEL COULD BE DRAWN WE HAD ALSO NOTED THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAD FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO ABSTAIN ON THE GRENADA PROBLEM. IN RESPONSE KATO DENIED THAT THERE WAS ANY ELEMENT OF POLITICAL CYNICISM IN THE JAPANESE VOTING PATTERN OVER THESE TWO ISSUES. HE UNDERTOOK TO REPORT OUR VIEWS TO HIS SUPERIOURS

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