

~~Mr Huckle~~  
You may wish to  
ask SAUD to consider  
whether we should  
acknowledge the L. R.

169

Brasilia message

BSB/FCO 012/27

FE 28/4

2 APR 1982

OO FCO DESKBY 272200Z

ACTION

OO WASHINGTON

~~SAUD~~

OO UKMIS NEW YORK

in London?

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GRS395

CONFIDENTIAL

FM BRASILIA 27:2045Z APRIL 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO DESKBY 272200Z

REPEATED TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK

FALKLANDS: RIO TREATY MEETING

1. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER SUMMONED ME AT 4.30 PM (271930Z) TO SAY THAT THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT HAD JUST LEARNED OF THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER'S WARNING TO THE RIO TREATY MEETING IN WASHINGTON THAT AN INVASION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS BY BRITISH FORCES WAS "IMMINENT". AMBASSADOR BAENA SOARES SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WISHED TO TRANSMIT TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THEIR PREOCCUPATION AT THIS PROSPECT AND THEIR HOPE THAT NO MOVE WOULD BE MADE WHICH MIGHT IMPEDE THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

2. I UNDERTOOK TO CONVEY THIS MESSAGE IMMEDIATELY TO LONDON. I SAID THAT, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I HAD NO REASON TO SUPPOSE THAT AN IMMINENT INVASION WAS LIKELY AND I THOUGHT IT AT LEAST POSSIBLE THAT THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS ATTEMPTING TO RAISE THE TEMPERATURE AT THE RIO TREATY MEETING BY TAKING THIS ALARMIST LINE. I WENT ON TO SAY THAT, NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON THE ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES BY THE THREAT OF MILITARY FORCE, SINCE THE ARGENTINES DID NOT APPEAR TO BE ACCESSIBLE TO ANY OTHER KIND OF PERSUASION. BAENA DID NOT DEMUR.



3. I THEN ASKED BAENA WHETHER HE THOUGHT THAT THE HAIG NEGOTIATION STILL HAD SOME STEAM LEFT IN IT, GIVEN THE ARGENTINES' REFUSAL TO RECEIVE HIM IN BUENOS AIRES. HE SEEMED TO THINK THAT IT HAD, THOUGH THIS MAY HAVE BEEN ONLY BRAZILIAN WISHFUL THINKING. I ASKED IF THE BRAZILIAN AUTHORITIES HAD ANY ALTERNATIVE IDEAS AS TO HOW THE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE PURSUED; HE SAID THAT THEY HAD NOT AT THE MOMENT.

COMMENT

4. BRAZILIAN CONCERN AT THE MENACING TURN OF EVENTS IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC IS NO DOUBT GENUINE. IT WAS EXPRESSED YESTERDAY BY PRESIDENT FIGUEIREDO TO THE AMERICAN DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AND TO ME BY THE PRESIDENT'S CHIEF OF CIVIL HOUSEHOLD. THERE ARE SIGNS THAT SOME SENIOR OFFICERS IN THE BRAZILIAN ARMED FORCES, PARTICULARLY IN THE NAVY AND AIR FORCE, ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT'S AMBIGUOUS POSITION AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE A FIRMER STAND IN SUPPORT OF SPECIFICALLY BRAZILIAN INTERESTS INSTEAD OF THE PRESENT UNSEEMLY PREOCCUPATION WITH PLACATING ARGENTINA. THIS LINE IS ECHOED IN ONE OR TWO POWERFUL EDITORIALS IN THE PRESS (SEE MYTEL NO 135); AND PRESIDENT FIGUEIREDO HIMSELF IMPLIED TO CARLUCCI THAT THE TIME MIGHT COME WHEN BRAZIL WOULD HAVE TO CONSIDER TAKING A HAND. BUT I DO NOT THINK THAT THIS MOMENT HAS YET ARRIVED; NOR IS IT EASY TO SEE WHAT ROLE IN ANY FUTURE NEGOTIATING PROCESS BRAZIL MIGHT BE FITTED TO PLAY.

HARDING

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SENT/RECD 27:2205Z K//HK