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TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1794 OF 2 NOVEMBER
INFO PRIORITY PORT STANLEY, WASHINGTON

MY TELNO 1790: FALKLANDS AT UNGA 37: HEARINGS IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE

1. BEFORE CHEEK AND BLAKE WERE HEARD CHILE MADE A BRIEF PROCEDURAL STATEMENT REGRETTING THAT THERE WAS TO BE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE. AS MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF 24 (WHICH HAD REPORTED DIRECTLY TO PLENARY) THEY SAW NO NEED FOR PETITIONERS TO BE HEARD AGAIN FOLLOWING THE APPEARANCE OF PETITIONERS BEFORE THAT COMMITTEE IN AUGUST. PANAMA, CLAIMING TO SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE 20 CO-SPONSORS OF THE LATIN DRAFT RESOLUTION (MANY OF WHICH HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED) COMPLAINED THAT THE PRESENT FALKLAND ISLANDERS HAD NO 'LEGITIMATE RELATION' WITH THE TERRITORY. THE ONLY TRUE INHABITANTS HAD BEEN THE ARGENTINE CITIZENS EVICTED IN 1833.

I STRESSED THAT THE UK HAD NO OBJECTION TO ANYBODY OR INDIVIDUAL ADDRESSING THE FOURTH COMMITTEE. WE DID NOT SEEK TO MUZZLE ANYONE IN CONTRAST TO THOSE WHO HAD SOUGHT TO OPPOSE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THE HEARING OF SUCH BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS. THE ARGENTINES MADE A CHURLISH REPLY THAT THE LATIN AMERICANS HAD NOT INTENDED TO OPPOSE THE RIGHT OF THE COUNCILLORS TO SPEAK, BUT DID CHALLENGE THEIR 'REPRESENTATIVES'.

2. AFTER THE COUNCILLORS HAD DELIVERED THEIR STATEMENTS LISTRE (ARGENTINA) PUT A SERIES OF QUESTIONS TO THEM WHICH WERE FOLLOWED AND OFTEN DUPLICATED, BY AN ORCHESTRATED BARRAGE OF QUESTIONS FROM COLOMBIA, VENEZUELA, BRAZIL, BOLIVIA, ECUADOR, MEXICO AND CUBA. THE QUESTIONS COVERED INTER ALIA MINEFIELDS (THE ARGENTINES HAD, CONTRARY TO CHEEK'S ASSERTIONS, RECORDED ALL OF THEIR MINEFIELDS), THE TREATMENT OF THE ISLANDERS DURING THE OCCUPATION (NO COMPLAINTS, NO FATALITIES, COMPENSATION PAID FOR DAMAGES ETC), THE FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY, BRITISH NATIONALITY LAWS, POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM ARGENTINA. CHEEK AND BLAKE UNFAILINGLY DELIVERED ROBUST BUT COURTEOUS REPLIES, AND ON MANY OCCASIONS TURNED THE QUESTIONS ROUND TO SCORE POINTS OFF THEIR QUESTIONERS. IT WAS A COOL AND IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE. FULLER DETAILS FOLLOW BY BAG.

3. EACH OF THE FOUR PRO-ARGENTINE INDIVIDUALS CALLED FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH ARGENTINA TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE. MRS COUTTS DE MACIELLO AND MRS MINTO DE PENNISI MADE SIMPLE, RATHER HOMESPUN STATEMENTS, EXPRESSING CONCERN FOR THEIR FAMILIES WHO REMAINED IN THE ISLANDS, DESCRIBING THE ISOLATED AND PRIMITIVE WAY OF LIFE THERE AND COMMENDING ARGENTINA FOR HER ATTEMPTS TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT. PEACE MUST BE RESTORED TO THE ISLANDS AND THE BRITISH MILITARY FORCES WITHDRAWN.

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4. REYNALDO REED SAID THE COUNCILLORS WERE NOT TRULY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLANDERS AND REAPED MATERIAL BENEFITS FROM THEIR POSITIONS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEM FROM OTHER ISLANDERS. MANY ISLANDERS WOULD BEFORE THE INVASION HAVE ACCEPTED ARGENTINE SOVEREIGNTY IF THEIR WAY OF LIFE HAD BEEN GUARANTEED. EVEN DURING HOSTILITIES REED AND HIS FAMILY IN PORT STANLEY HAD NEVER SEEN ARGENTINES BEHAVING OFFENSIVELY TOWARDS THE ISLANDERS. BY CONTRAST THE BRITISH CARED MORE ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY THAN ABOUT THE ISLANDERS: THEIR BOMBARDMENT OF STANLEY PROVED THIS. A PEACEFUL SOLUTION, RECOGNISING ARGENTINE SOVEREIGNTY AND THE ISLANDERS' RIGHT TO MAINTAIN THEIR WAY OF LIFE, MUST BE FOUND THROUGH NEGOTIATION.

5. ALEXANDER BETTS STRESSED THE INTRANSIGENCE OF THE ISLANDERS. THEIR WISH FOR CONTINUITY IN THEIR COLONIAL STATUS HAD BEEN ACCEPTED FOR 149 YEARS BUT NOW THEY MUST ACCEPT CHANGE AND ADAPT. THE ISLANDERS' PREVIOUS LIFESTYLE WOULD NEVER RETURN FOLLOWING THE INVASION. THE PRESENCE OF THE MILITARY GARRISON NECESSITATED RATIONING OF WATER AND ELECTRICITY AND LIMITED COMMUNICATIONS. HOW LONG WOULD THE UK BEAR THE COST? MILLIONS OF POUNDS WERE NEEDED TO REVIVE THE ECONOMY: THE ORIGINAL SHACKLETON REPORT HAD ADVISED THAT COOPERATION WITH ARGENTINA WAS NECESSARY. NEGOTIATIONS MUST BE RESUMED, BUT NOT IN SECRECY AS BEFORE. THE ISLANDERS MUST BE GIVEN THE FACTS, AND TIME TO CONSIDER THEM. IN THE MEANTIME THERE SHOULD BE A DEMILITARISED ZONE AROUND THE FALKLANDS. THE UN MUST MAINTAIN ITS CREDIBILITY BY ASKING FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

THOMSON

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