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FM BONN 041120Z APRIL 82

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 295 OF 4 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE BRASILIA

ROUTINE WASHINGTON SANTIAGO UKMIS NEW YORK

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BONN TELNO 293 AND TELECON ELDON/BRIGHT : FALKLAND ISLANDS

1. THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR TOOK THE ACTION FORESHADOWED IN TUR WITH THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. HE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY SUMMONED TO SEE PRESIDENT GALTIERI AT 2000 BUENOS AIRES TIME. (THE GERMANS UNDERSTAND THAT OTHER EUROPEAN AMBASSADORS WILL ALSO BE CALLED IN BY THE PRESIDENT). THE AUSWAERTIGES AMT HAVE GIVEN US IN STRICT CONFIDENCE A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE LATTER CONVERSATION (ABOUT WHICH WE UNDERSTAND GENSCHER MAY TELEPHONE YOU FROM HIS AIRCRAFT - SEE PARA 6 BELOW). OUR CONTACT ASKED THAT OUR KNOWLEDGE OF IT SHOULD NOT BE REVEALED OUTSIDE THE FCO AND IN PARTICULAR THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH THE FRG EMBASSY IN LONDON.

2. GALTIERI, WHO LOOKED NERVOUS, BEGAN BY SAYING THAT HE WISHED TO EXPLAIN THE ARGENTINE POSITION TO FRIENDLY COUNTRIES WITH THE AIM OF BRINGING ABOUT A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION TO THE FALKLAND CRISIS. HE REHEARSED THE ARGENTINE POSITION ON FAMILIAR LINES AND ENDED BY SAYING THAT THE QUOTE OCCUPATION UNQUOTE OF THE ISLANDS HAD BEEN UNDERTAKEN BECAUSE OF DOUBTS ABOUT BRITAIN'S WILL TO NEGOTIATE IN EARNEST. ARGENTINA WAS PREPARED TO DEFEND THE ISLANDS WITH ALL THE MILITARY MEANS AT HER DISPOSAL: IF HER WESTERN FRIENDS CHOSE NOT TO SUPPORT HER SHE WOULD ACCEPT MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE.

3. AFTER REFERRING TO THE EC STATEMENT ON THE INCIDENT THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR ASKED WHETHER ARGENTINA WAS STILL PREPARED TO HOLD TALKS AIMED AT REACHING AN HONOURABLE SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS AND WHAT THE ELEMENTS OF SUCH A SOLUTION MIGHT BE. GALTIERI REPLIED THAT EVERYTHING WAS NEGOTIABLE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FINAL RECOGNITION OF

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/ ARGENTINE

ARGENTINE SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ISLANDS. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION HE SAID THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE ARGENTINE FORCE MIGHT BE POSSIBLE PROVIDED THAT IT DID NOT BRING INTO QUESTION THE RECOGNITION OF ARGENTINE SOVEREIGNTY. ARGENTINA WAS ALSO WILLING TO TALK ABOUT A TIMETABLE FOR THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY BUT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE FIRMLY AGREED WITH THE TRANSFER TAKING PLACE SOON AND IF POSSIBLE THIS YEAR: ANOTHER 17 YEARS OF NEGOTIATION WERE OUT OF THE QUESTION. ECONOMIC MATTERS AND QUESTIONS AFFECTING THE ISLANDERS COULD ALSO BE DISCUSSED.

4. GALTIERI SAID THAT DURING THE LANDINGS THE ARGENTINE FORCES HAD HAD STRICT ORDERS NOT TO OPEN FIRE AND IF POSSIBLE NOT TO ENGAGE IN ANY SHOOTING WITH THE ISLANDS' DEFENDERS. AS FAR AS HE KNEW FOUR ARGENTINES HAD BEEN KILLED BUT THERE HAD BEEN NO BRITISH CASUALTIES. BUT IF BRITAIN ATTEMPTED TO RETAKE THE ISLANDS THERE WOULD BE MUCH BLOODSHED.

5. GALTIERI ADDED THAT HE HAD NO SPECIAL CONFIDENCE IN US ATTEMPTS TO MEDIATE IN THE DISPUTE. HE PREFERRED TO LOOK TO EUROPE TO DO THIS AS HE FELT THAT THERE WAS MORE SYMPATHY THERE FOR THE ARGENTINE POSITION (SIC).

6. WE UNDERSTAND THAT GENSCHER HAS OFFERED OVER THE TELEPHONE TO FEED IN TO THE BRASILIANS ANY IDEAS ON THE DISPUTE THAT YOU FELT WOULD BE USEFUL (HE WILL ACCOMPANY FEDERAL PRESIDENT CARSTENS ON A STATE VISIT TO BRAZIL STARTING TOMORROW). THE PARTY LEFT BONN FOR RECIFE AT 1130Z AND WILL STOP OVER THERE TO ALLOW THEM TO ARRIVE IN BRASILIA AT A REASONABLE HOUR TOMORROW MORNING. IT MIGHT THEREFORE BE BEST IF ANY COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT COULD BE SENT BOTH HERE AND TO BRASILIA FOR ONWARD TRANSMISSION. THE AUSWAERTIGES AMT THINK THAT THE BRAZILIANS ARE BY NO MEANS SYMPATHETIC TO THE ARGENTINE MILITARY ACTION: AND OUR CONTACT POINTED OUT THAT THE BRAZILIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAD CAREFULLY AVOIDED TAKING A POSITION ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE MATTER WHEN HE SPOKE TO THE PRESS IN NEW YORK ON 2 APRIL ON HIS WAY BACK TO BRAZIL FROM A VISIT TO TOKYO.

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CABINET OFFICE

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ADDITIONAL DISTN  
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