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YOUR TELEGRAM NO. 71 TO BRUSSELS: ECONOMIC MEASURES AGAINST ARGENTINA

*26*

1. VAN AGT HAS BEEN FULLY OCCUPIED THROUGHOUT THE DAY WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S INCREASINGLY URGENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ON WHICH THERE ARE STRONG DIFFERENCES IN CABINET. I SAW HIM THIS AFTERNOON. MEANWHILE I SPOKE TO VAN DER STOEL, DEN UYL, VAN DER STEE, DIK (DEPUTY TO TERLOUW) AND VAN MIERLO STRESSING THE NEED FOR URGENT DECISIONS WHICH WOULD HAVE MAXIMUM IMPACT ON THE ARGENTINES AND MAKE THEM COMPLY WITH THE SECURITY COUNCIL MANDATORY RESOLUTION. THESE ARE THE KEY MINISTERS IN THE CABINET WHICH WILL MEET TOMORROW MORNING. THE FALKLANDS WILL BE THE FIRST ITEM ON THE AGENDA. ALL THOSE I SPOKE TO APPRECIATED THE IMPORTANCE OF A RAPID AND POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S REQUESTS.
2. DIK SIGNED THE ORDER THIS MORNING FORBIDDING THE SALE OF ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ARGENTINA.
3. AFTER VAN AGT HAD READ THE MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER, WHICH I GAVE HIM THIS AFTERNOON, I SPELLED OUT THE REASONS WHY URGENT DECISIONS WERE SO VITAL. VAN AGT SAID THAT THE FALKLANDS SITUATION WAS FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES HE FACED. THE DUTCH HAD OFTEN CLAIMED TO BE BRITAIN'S BEST FRIEND IN EUROPE. NOW WAS THE TIME TO SHOW THAT THE CLAIM WAS WELL-FOUNDED. HE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO GET THE CABINET TO TAKE DECISIONS AT TOMORROW'S MEETING. I SAID THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL IF A STATEMENT COULD BE ISSUED AFTER THE MEETING. IT COULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ARGENTINES AND COULD ALSO INFLUENCE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.

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4. VAN AGT THOUGHT THAT IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH A HELPFUL DECISION ON(C) OF YOUR TELEGRAM NO 72 TO BRUSSELS. IMPORTS FROM ARGENTINA, AS DIK HAD EXPLAINED TO ME EARLIER WERE MORE DIFFICULT. A MAJORITY OF THESE IMPORTS THROUGH ROTTERDAM WERE FOR THE FRG. VAN AGT SAID THERE WOULD BE THOSE WHO WOULD ARGUE THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO BAN ALL OF THESE. I POINTED OUT THAT WE HAD ALREADY TAKEN DRASTIC STEPS OURSELVES AND THAT THESE WOULD COST US DEAR. IF THE ARGENTINES WERE SEEN TO GET AWAY WITH THEIR AGGRESSION, OTHERS IN LATIN AMERICA WOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO BEHAVE LIKEWISE. THERE WAS BELIZE AND THERE WAS ARUBA. VAN AGT AGREED.

5. THE FIRST REACTIONS TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S REQUESTS HAVE THEREFORE BEEN POSITIVE. TOMORROW'S CABINET MEETING WILL BE CRUCIAL. VAN AGT SAID IT MIGHT BE FOLLOWED BY A FUTHER CABINET ON GOOD FRIDAY.

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