

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 070215Z APR 82

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NO 1154 OF 6 APRIL

FOLLOWING FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY

YOUR TEL NO 658: FALKLANDS

1. SINCE RECEIVING YOUR TELEGRAM I HAVE HAD A CALL FROM HAIG WHO HAS SPOKEN TO THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER AND HAD A REPORT FROM THE US AMBASSADOR IN BUENOS AIRES. THE MINISTER HAD BEEN COMPLETELY INTRANSIGENT.

2. HAIG NOW BELIEVES THAT THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY IS EVEN NARROWER THAN HE HAD THOUGHT. IN HAIG'S WORDS THE US AMBASSADOR IN BUENOS AIRES THINKS THAT THERE ARE SIGNS OF QUOTE SOFTENING UP AND CONSIDERABLE BACKFIRE UNQUOTE: IN BUENOS AIRES BUT IT IS QUOTE PERISHABLE UNQUOTE AND COULD WELL SHIFT TO BEING QUOTE MACHO UNQUOTE AS THE THREAT OF MILITARY ACTION GROWS.

3. THE AMBASSADOR WAS REPORTING THAT THERE WAS TALK OF A COUP IN BUENOS AIRES OF YOUNG OFFICERS IN THE EVENT OF ANY MOVE BY GALTIERI TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM THE FALKLANDS.

4. HAIG REGARDED ALL THIS AS EMPHASISING THE NEED FOR THE JOURNEYS HE WANTED TO MAKE TO LONDON AND BUENOS AIRES.

5. I SAID THAT I HAD HEARD OF THIS PROPOSED VISIT FROM MR PYM. MY OWN IMMEDIATE THOUGHT WAS TO WONDER WHETHER IT MIGHT BE MORE SUITABLE FOR HAIG TO GO TO BUENOS AIRES FIRST. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD MADE THEIR POINT OF VIEW PERFECTLY CLEAR. THERE MUST BE WITHDRAWAL BEFORE NEGOTIATION. HAIG SAID THAT SUCH A JOURNEY WOULD POSE A GREAT RISK FOR HIM. ONCE HE HAD EMBARKED ON IT HE WOULD HAVE TO BRING HOME THE BACON BECAUSE THERE WOULD BE NO OTHER CHANCE. HE WAS NOT WEDDED TO GOING TO LONDON BEFORE BUENOS AIRES BUT HE FAVOURED DOING SO BECAUSE IF HE WENT TO BUENOS AIRES FIRST IT MIGHT BE SEEN IN THE UK AS COLLUSION BETWEEN THE ARGENTINIANS AND THE AMERICANS. HE THOUGHT THAT THE SENSIBLE THING WAS TO QUOTE GO TO YOUR ALLY FIRST UNQUOTE. HAIG SAID THAT ARGENTINA HAD BEEN CONDEMNED AS THE VILLIANS. HE SAW HIS PROPOSAL NOT AS TWO SEPARATE JOURNEYS BUT AS ONE ROUND TRIP. AND IF HE COULD COME TO LONDON FIRST HE WOULD HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE QUOTE ART OF THE POSSIBLE UNQUOTE.

6. I TOLD HIM THAT MR PYM WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE HIM AN ANSWER BEFORE TOMORROW. HE SAID THAT THAT WAS QUITE ALL RIGHT. HE WAS KEEPING TOMORROW OPEN TO DO WHATEVER WAS BEST. HE SAID HOW IMPRESSED HE HAD BEEN BY MR PYM'S LETTER AND HOW GRATEFUL HE WAS FOR IT. HE REALISED THAT GREAT THOUGHT HAD GONE INTO IT.

7. HAIG REPEATED HIS CONVICTION THAT IT WOULD BE A GREAT MISTAKE FOR MR PYM TO FLY TO WASHINGTON AT THIS STAGE.

8. MY OWN COMMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS. I DO NOT THINK IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO COME HERE AT THIS STAGE. THIS WOULD CERTAINLY BE TAKEN AS A SIGN OF ANXIETY ON OUR PART. I KNOW TOO THAT HAIG BELIEVES THAT THE ARGENTINIANS WOULD SEE IN IT JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHARGE OF COLLUSION WHICH WOULD NOT OCCUR IF HE, HAIG, SHOULD DO THE VISITING.

9. WHATEVER WE MAY THINK HAIG IS CONVINCED THAT HE HAS GOT TO DO SOMETHING: WE WILL NOT STOP HIM AND PERSONALLY I DO NOT THINK IT NEED NECESSARILY HARM US. I THINK ON BALANCE IT WOULD BE BEST IF HAIG WERE TO GO TO BUENOS AIRES FIRST. AFTER ALL HE KNOWS OUR STANCE. WHAT WE WANT HIM TO DO IS TO EXERT PRESSURE ON THE ARGENTINIANS.

10. BUT IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT ONE SET OF VISITS IS GOING TO SUFFICE. HAIG MAY WELL BE EMBARKING ON A SHUTTLE: SURELY WE WANT TO START BY HIM FINDING OUT WHAT GIVE, IF ANY, THERE IS IN HIS ARGENTINE POSITION.

ANDERSON

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