

TYPISTS

ADVANCE COPIES: FALKLAND ISLANDS

(29) 33

PS

~~PS~~ No.10 DOWNING ST.

~~PS/LPS~~

PS/MR ONSLOW

~~PS/MR RICHMOND~~

PS/PUS

MR GIFFARD

MR WRIGHT

MR ADAMS

MR URE

MR GILLMORE

PS/CHANCELLOR

SIR K COUZENS

MR LITTLER

MR HAWTIN

MR PERETZ

MR ILETT

MR McINTYRE

H.M.TSY

HD/SAMD (FCO DIST + A/D F/I)

HD/DEF D

HD/NEWS D

HD/UND

HD/PLANNING STAFF

HD/HKGD

Miss DICKSON (EIP DIV) D/EN

DIO CABINET OFFICE

MR WADE-GERY CABINET OFFICE

MR FULLER ~~SAPU~~ CABINET OFFICE

RESIDENT CLERK

DIO
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(Copies passed to Emergency Staff, MOD Sitcen and CinC Fleet)

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 161600Z

FROM UKMIS GENEVA 161415Z APR 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 170 OF 16 APRIL

AND TO IMMEDIATE MODUK SITCEN

INFO SAVING WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK

YOUR TELNO 708 TO WASHINGTON: FALKLAND ISLANDS AND ICRC (RED CROSS)

1. CONVERS, DEPUTY HEAD OF OPERATIONS, ASKED ME TO CALL THIS AFTERNOON. HE HAD NO (NO) NEWS OF POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN BUENOS AIRES, BUT WANTED TO EXPLAIN PRECISELY HOW MATTERS NOW STOOD.

2. CONVERS SAID THAT HE HAD JUST BEFOREHAND HAD A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE ICRC MAN IN BUENOS AIRES, CORTESI, WHO HAD AGAIN GONE OVER THE GROUND WITH THE ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES. THE ARGENTINIANS CONTINUED TO SHOW EXTREME SENSITIVITY AND A LEVEL OF NATIONALISM RARE IN ICRC EXPERIENCE. THEY CLEARLY FELT UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM THE UK AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, AND ALSO FROM THE WORLD PRESS WHICH THEY SAW AS DEEPLY UNSYMPATHETIC. ALL THIS TENDED TO CONFIRM THE TOUGHER ELEMENTS IN THEIR OB DURACY.

THEY SAW THE ICRC AS A EUROPEAN INSTITUTION AND HENCE THE TOOL OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE UK. THE ICRC WAS ALREADY SUSPECT IN ARGENTINIAN EYES BECAUSE OF ITS EFFORTS TO RELIEVE THE EFFECTS OF REPRESSION IN ARGENTINA. THEY SAW THE ICRC'S ACTION AS DICTATED BY EUROPEAN AND UK INTERESTS AND CONSIDERED THAT A CONCESSION TO THE ICRC WOULD BE A CONCESSION TO THE BRITISH. THEY ARGUED FALSELY THAT DURING RECENT TENSION BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND CHILE THE ICRC HAD SHOWN NO INTEREST IN THE LIKELY CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, AND WONDERED WHY THE ICRC WERE PUSHING SO HARD NOW.

3. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, CONVERS RECOGNISED THAT BRITISH MINISTERS MIGHT WELL FIND IT DESIRABLE (AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FACTS) TO MENTION ICRC'S ACTIONS IN PUBLIC AND EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THEM. WE WERE ENTIRELY FREE TO TAKE OUR OWN DECISIONS ON HOW TO EXPLAIN THE FACTS AND OUR REACTIONS TO THEM. BUT IN SO FAR AS WE MENTIONED ICRC ACTIVITIES WITH APPROVAL, AND CRITICISED THE LACK OF AN ARGENTINE RESPONSE, THE CONSEQUENCES WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL TO THE ICRC IN ATTAINING ITS IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE TO ESTABLISH A PRESENCE ON THE ISLANDS. THE ICRC WERE PRESSING AS HARD AS THEY COULD FOR THIS OBJECTIVE AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO. TO STAND ANY CHANCE OF SUCCESS THEY MUST HOWEVER BE SEEN TO BE THE INITIATOR OF THEIR OWN POLICIES, AND NOT THE TOOL OF ANYONE ELSE. CONVERS SAID THAT THE ICRC RECOGNISED THAT WE WANTED TO SEE AN ICRC PRESENCE TO HELP PROTECT "OUR PEOPLE" ON THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. BUT HE HOPED THAT MINISTERS WOULD SO FAR AS POSSIBLE AVOID SAYING SO PUBLICLY, IN ORDER THAT OUR INTEREST, AND THE ICRC INTEREST, WHICH FULLY COINCIDED,,

SHOULD BE REALISED.

4. I WELCOMED ICRC'S DETERMINATION TO PERSERVERE IN THEIR EFFORTS, AND NOTED THAT IT WAS ALSO IN THE INTERESTS OF THE ARGENTINIANS TO ALLOW THE ICRC IN, TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY WERE PREPARED TO BEHAVE IN A RESPONSIBLE AND HUMANITARIAN WAY. CONVERS AGREED, BUT SAID THAT THE LONGER THE ARGENTINIANS DELAYED, THE MORE ANY DECISION TO ADMIT THE ICRC WOULD BE SEEN AS POLITICAL RATHER THAN HUMANITARIAN.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO WASHINGTON AND UKMIS NEW YORK

LONG