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FM FCO 191400Z APR 82

TO IMMEDIATE CERTAIN MISSIONS AND DEPENDENT TERRITORIES  
GUIDANCE TELEGRAM NUMBER 63 OF 19 APRIL 1982

FALKLANDS: CREDIBILITY OF OUR POLICY

1. THERE IS A TENDENCY IN SOME GOVERNMENT AND PRESS CIRCLES OVERSEAS ESPECIALLY IN WESTERN EUROPE, WHILE DEPLORING THE ARGENTINE INVASION, TO CONSIDER THAT OUR RESPONSE IS EXCESSIVE AND PUTS AT RISK WIDER WESTERN INTERESTS OVER AN INTRINSICALLY MINOR ISSUE. YOU SHOULD REBUT THIS, POINTING OUT THAT ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE ARE INVOLVED WHICH MUST BE UPHELD.
2. YOU SHOULD MAKE USE OF THE ARGUMENTS IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT ON 14 APRIL (VS 42/82). YOU MAY ALSO DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:
  - (A) THE ARGENTINE INVASION IS AN ACT OF UNPROVOKED AGGRESSION: TO IGNORE THIS WOULD UNDERMINE BRITISH AND WESTERN CREDIBILITY. WE ARE OF COURSE STRIVING FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IF POSSIBLE: IT WAS NOT WE WHO BROKE THE PEACE.
  - (B) TO CONDONE SUCH CYNICAL DEFIANCE OF THE RULE OF LAW AND OF INTERNATIONAL OPINION WOULD ENCOURAGE FURTHER SIMILAR ACTS, WHETHER BY THE ARGENTINES OR BY OTHERS. HISTORY AFFORDS MANY EXAMPLES WHERE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S FAILURE TO TAKE ACTION OVER COMPARATIVELY MINOR ACTS BY AGGRESSIVE POWERS LED TO MUCH GRAVER CRISES LATER.
  - (C) MANY OTHER STATES ARE SUBJECT TO CLAIMS BY NEIGHBOURS, WHICH ARE BEING PURSUED PEACEABLY (EG GUYANA-VENEZUELA, CHINA-INDIA, MALAYSIA-PHILIPPINES, BELIZE-GUATEMALA). IF THE ARGENTINES GET AWAY WITH THEIR USE OF FORCE, OTHERS WILL COPY THEM.
  - (D) THE CREDIBILITY OF THE UN IS AT STAKE IF A MANDATORY RESOLUTION OF THE SC IS DEFIED.
  - (E) THE COMMUNITY ON THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, THOUGH SMALL, IS FREE AND DEMOCRATIC. WESTERN DEMOCRACIES CANNOT BE INDIFFERENT TO ITS BEING SUBJECTED, AGAINST ITS WILL, TO AN ALIEN MILITARY

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(F) SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES HAS BEEN A CORNERSTONE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER AT LEAST SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT POINT OF PRINCIPLE WHICH MUST BE UPHELD.

(G) COLONIALISM IS NOT THE ISSUE. INDEED, IT IS ARGENTINA WHICH IS SEEKING TO SUBJECT AN ESTABLISHED POPULATION TO AN ALIEN RULE, AGAINST ITS CLEARLY EXPRESSED WISHES. DESPITE THE FACT THAT ARGENTINA FORMERLY HAD COLONIAL STATUS ITSELF, ITS INVASION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS IS TANTAMOUNT TO COLONIALISM.

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