

ADVANCE COPIES: FALKLAND ISLANDS

[TYPE] 436 + 7 CAB. OFFICE

PS (6)
PS/MR HURD
PS/MR ONSLOW
PS/PUS
MR GIFFARD
MR WRIGHT
MR ADAMS
MR URE
MR GILLMORE

ADVANCE COPY

IMMEDIATE

HD/S AM D (FCO DIST + A/D F/I)
HD/DEF D
HD/NEWS D
HD/UND
HD/PLANNING STAFF
MR ANTHONY WILLIAMS W60
RESIDENT CLERK

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PS/S OF S FOR DEFENCE
PS/CHANCELLOR)
SIR K COUZENS)
MR LITTLER)
MR HAWTIN)
MR PERETZ) TREASURY
MR ILETT)
MR McINTYRE)

MISS DICKSON (EIP DIV) D/EN
DIO CABINET OFFICE
MR WADE-GERY CABINET OFFICE
MR FULLER SAPU/DIO " "

SIR M PALLISER CABINET OFFICE
SIR R ARMSTRONG " "

(Copy passed to Emergency Staff)

CONFIDENTIAL

(FM BERNE 301755Z)

FM BRITISH INTERESTS SECTION SWISS EMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 60 OF 30 APRIL

AND TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON MONTEVIDEO SANTIAGO BRASILIA

APRES GALTIERI LE DELUGE?

1. GALTIERI'S FOUR MONTH PRESIDENCY HAS EXHIBITED MANY OF THE TRADITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUTH AMERICAN RIGHTWING MILITARY DICTATORSHIP: TOUGH LAW AND ORDER POLICIES, SUPPRESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PIOUS CATHOLIC STANCE, WITH EVEN A FEW RELUCTANT LIBERALISING TENDENCIES AND A FLURRY OF FLAMBOYANT POPULIST MOVES CULMINATING IN THE BOLD MALVINAS INVASION WHICH HAS BRIEFLY BROUGHT NATIONAL JUBILATION AND UNITY.

2. BUT WHAT IF THE ISLANDS ARE LOST AGAIN? THE NAVY COMMANDER, ANAYA, IS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE COMMANDERS

ANAYA, IS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE COMMANDERS: QUOTE WE TOOK THEM, NOW WE KEEP THEM UNQUOTE. FEW HERE BELIEVE GALTIERI WOULD SURVIVE SUCH A REVERSE. NO ONE CAN SAY WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, BUT THE POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

(1) A NEW ARMY COMMANDER AND PRESIDENT, PROBABLY TOUGHER AND EVEN LESS COMPROMISING THAN GALTIERI. (UNIDENTIFIED AS YET, BUT AS LIKELY AS NOT EAGER TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH).

(2) A NEW PRESIDENT, DRAWN, AGAINST TRADITION FROM THE NAVY, THOUGH WITH SOME POPULAR SUPPORT. (?ADMIRAL MASSERA, PAST JUNTA MEMBER AND NAVY COMMANDER, WHO HAS FLIRTED OPENLY WITH THE PERONIST RIGHT AND RECENTLY FORMED HIS OWN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY).

(3) AN INTERIM ARMY PRESIDENT, WITH CIVILIAN POLITICAL SUPPORT, APPOINTED TO PRESIDE OVER DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS WHICH THE PERONISTS WOULD EVENTUALLY WIN. THE QUOTE MULTIPARTIDARIA UNQUOTE 5-PARTY COALITION, IS NOT YET READY FOR THEM.

(4) AN INTERIM CIVILIAN PRESIDENT, RECALLED FROM RETIREMENT TO SUPERVISE ELECTIONS AS IN (3) (? ONGANIA).

(5) A PERIOD OF NEAR-ANARCHY, WITH VARIOUS ARMY COMMANDERS COMPETING FOR THE PRESIDENCY AGAINST NAVY AND CIVILIAN CLAIMANTS, THE POSSIBILITY OF A QUOTE CORDOBAZO UNQUOTE (JUNIOR ARMY COMMANDERS' COUP) AND AN INEXORABLE SLIDE TOWARDS CHAOS.

3. OTHER SCENARIOS COULD BE DRAWN, BUT NONE GIVE MUCH CONFIDENCE THAT ARGENTINA WILL BE ANY EASIER TO DEAL WITH AFTER GALTIERI THAN NOW. THE FALKLANDS WILL BE OURS, BUT FOR WHAT PURPOSE, AT WHAT NATIONAL COST, AND FOR HOW LONG? THE HEALING TIME FOR THE WOUNDS ON BOTH SIDES WILL DEPEND ON THE MAGNITUDE OF THE LOSSES INCURRED: IF THE BATTLE CAN BE WON AS CLEANLY AND SURGICALLY AS THAT IN SOUTH GEORGIA, TROOPS WITHDRAWN, AND THE ISLANDS THEREAFTER HANDED PROMPTLY OVER TO UN OR US OR JOINT ADMINISTRATION IN A MAGNANIMOUS GESTURE OF VICTORY, IT WILL HAVE BEEN WORTH MAKING OUR POINTS AGAINST THE USE OF FORCE AND FOR DEMOCRACY. BUT IF IT IS TO BE A QUOTE LONG AND BLOODY UNQUOTE AFFAIR (WOODWARD), WE RUN THE RISK OF STALEMATE, OR AT BEST, OF A PYRRHIC VICTORY, BRINGING CHAOS IN THIS COUNTRY AND IRREPARABLE LONG TERM DAMAGE TO OUR INTEREST ON THIS CONTINENT, IF NOT WIDER AFIELD.

JOY 32.4.

UNQUOTE

VOUS LAISSE LE SOIN DE JUGER. DE