

FM LIMA 110200Z MAY 82  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 167 OF 11 MAY



185

ARMS SUPPLIES TO ARGENTINA  
MY TEL NO 160

1. THE PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED ME TO SEE HIM AT 1700 TODAY TO GIVE ME THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT'S REPLY TO THE REQUESTS CONVEYED TO HIM IN MY TUR.
2. DR ARIAS SAID THAT IT WAS NOT REPEAT NOT POSSIBLE UNDER THE TERMS OF THE PERUVIAN CONSTITUTION TO GIVE ASSURANCES OF THE SORT REQUESTED ( C.F. PARA 2 OF MY TEL 116). HE SAID THAT ANY SUCH ASSURANCES WOULD BE AN INFRINGEMENT OF PERUVIAN SOVEREIGNTY AND FREEDOM OF ACTION. THEY WOULD ALSO RUN COUNTER TO PERU'S OBLIGATIONS TO HONOUR HER INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS IF INVOKED BY ARGENTINA UNDER THE TERMS OF THE RIO TREATY IN THE EVENT OF E.G. AN ATTACK AGAINST SOUTH AMERICA'S CONTINENTAL MAINLAND.
3. IN REPLY TO MY QUESTION DR ARIAS SAID THAT IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES PERU MIGHT BE OBLIGED TO SEND TROOPS, AIRCRAFT OR WHATEVER. HE SAID THAT HE PREFERRED NOT TO CONTEMPLATE THIS PROSPECT WHICH WOULD BE THE RUINATION OF PERU AS WELL AS OF ARGENTINA. BUT HE ASSURED ME AND AUTHORIZED ME EXPLICITLY TO INFORM YOU THAT PERU WOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A POSITION OF RESTRAINT WITH A VIEW TO CONTRIBUTING TO AN EARLY AND PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE DISPUTE. DR ARIAS SAID THAT WHILE IT WAS TRUE THAT PERU SUPPORTED THE ARGENTINE POSTURE, PERU ALSO ATTACHED VALUE TO HER FRIENDSHIP WITH THE UK. PERU WAS THEREFORE READY AND ANXIOUS AT ALL TIMES TO DO ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT BRING ABOUT A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT EVEN THOUGH THE GOVERNMENT HAD TO CONTEND WITH VARIOUS INTERNAL PRESSURES FOR A MORE EXTREME POSITION.
4. DR ARIAS CONCLUDED OUR CONVERSATION WITH THE COMMENT THAT THE LATEST REPORTS OFFERED SOME HOPES OF AN EARLY CEASE FIRE, THAT PERU WOULD CONTINUE TO PUT SUCH PRESSURE AS SHE WAS ABLE ON ARGENTINA FOR SOME MEASURE OF FLEXIBILITY AND THAT HE HOPED EVENTS WOULD SHORTLY RENDER OUR CONVERSATION OF ONLY ACADEMIC INTEREST.
5. AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR CONVERSATION I MADE THE POINTS IN YOUR GUIDANCE NO 38 WHICH I ALSO GAVE HIM TO READ.

WALLACE