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TELEGRAM NO. 023 OF 12 MAY 82

INFO ROUTINE ROME

**FLASH**  
**ADVANCE COPY**

**THE POPE'S VISIT**

1. DURING CDL HUME'S BRIEF VISIT TO ROME HE GAVE ME AN HOUR YESTERDAY BETWEEN CALLS ON THE POPE. IN COURSE OF HIS FIRST TALK ON 10 MAY HUME HAD ARGUED STRONGLY WHAT A BAD EFFECT CANCELLATION OR POSTPONEMENT WOULD HAVE ON PUBLIC OPINION AND THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN. THE POPE PROPOSED A PAUSE FOR REFLECTION BEFORE A SECOND MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE YESTERDAY.

2. I GAVE MR GLADSTONE THE GIST OF THE AGREED STATEMENT WHICH EMERGED FROM THE CDL'S SECOND MEETING WITH THE POPE. THE KERNEL OF THIS WAS A SENTENCE TO THE EFFECT THAT IF THE POPE'S PRAYERS AND HOPES FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT WERE NOT ANSWERED (AN AMELIORMENTO

HOPES FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT WERE NOT ANSWERED (AN 'AMELIORMENTO NETTO') AND IF ARMED CONFLICT WERE TO CONTINUE THEN THE VISIT WOULD BE 'RECONSIDERED'.

3. IN MY VIEW THE POPE IS AND HAS LONG BEEN VERY KEEN TO COME. BUT HE IS UNDER STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE LATIN AMERICANS, WHO REPRESENT ABOUT HALF CATHOLIC CHRISTENDOM IN NUMBERS. FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CRISIS THE VATICAN HAS BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE DANGER OF ESCALATION AND THE POPE HAS MADE A NUMBER OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO THIS EFFECT. THEY ARE FULLY SIEZED OF OUR CASE THE JUSTICE AND LEGALITY OF WHICH THEY HAVE SHOWN NO DISPOSITION TO CONTEST. BUT LOSS OF LIFE, ON BOTH SIDES, AND THE DANGERS OF WIDER INVOLVEMENT ARE A SOURCE OF CONCERN.

4. CDL HUME TOLD ME THAT THE COST OF THE VISIT WAS SO GREAT THAT THE CHURCH COULD NOT AFFORD ANOTHER. THE BEST THEY COULD HOPE FOR MIGHT BE A ONE DAY VISIT IN, SAY, OCTOBER. THE POPE WILL REFER TO THE FALKLANDS WHEN HE IS AT FATIMA AND AGAIN AT NEXT SUNDAY'S ANGELUS. A DECISION ON WHETHER THE VISIT IS ON OR NOT WILL BE TAKEN BY 19 MAY (THESE THREE POINTS HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN TO THE PRESS).

5. THE CDL IS AWARE OF THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES FOR UK/VATICAN RELATIONS IF THE POPE DOES DECIDE TO POSTPONE THE VISIT, A POSSIBILITY HE HIMSELF CDL GRAY AND ARCHBISHOP WORLOCK HAVE BEEN RESISTING STRONGLY. I HAVE POINTED THIS ASPECT OUT TO VATICAN OFFICIALS ON A PERSONAL BASIS AND WOULD WELCOME INSTRUCTIONS TO DO SO FORMALLY. HITHERTO I HAVE BEEN CAREFUL TO UNDERLINE THE PASTORAL AND NON-OFFICIAL NATURE OF THE VISIT. THERE IS CLEARLY AN ELEMENT OF SQUEEZE IN THE POPE'S LINE BUT I SUSPECT THIS IS MAINLY TO ENABLE THE VATICAN TO ANSWER CRITICISM FROM THE CELAM BISHOPS SHOULD THE VISIT GO AHEAD WITHOUT SOME SOLUTION OF THE CRISIS IN SIGHT.

6. I THINK IT WOULD DO NO HARM TO TELL MGR HEIM THAT A DECISION TO POSTPONE OR CANCEL THE VISIT MIGHT BE TAKEN BY PUBLIC OPINION IN BRITAIN AS A POLITICAL COMMENT ON THE FALKLANDS ISSUE AND COULD FAN THAT VERY SUSPICION OF AND HOSTILITY TOWARDS CATHOLICISM THAT HAS TAKEN SO LONG TO SET AT REST.

HEATH

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