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FALKLANDS

1. HERR GENSCHER RECEIVED ME THIS MORNING. MY MAIN PURPOSE IN ARRANGING A MEETING HAD BEEN TO MAKE SURE THAT HE WAS ON BOARD, AND I CONCENTRATED ON EMPHASISING THE ENORMOUS EFFORT THAT YOU HAVE BEEN PUTTING IN, EVER SINCE YOU TOOK UP YOUR JOB AND AT AN EVER-INCREASING TEMPO, INTO THE PEACE EFFORT. I REFERRED TO MY DISAPPOINTMENT AT THE IMPLICATIONS IN RECENT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS THAT THE GERMANS FELT THAT WE WERE NOT DOING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ON THIS FRONT. HERR GENSCHER ASSURED ME THAT HE WAS FULLY AWARE OF YOUR EFFORTS AND THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS POSITION WAS ABSOLUTELY FIRM. HE REFERRED TO HIS QUOTE ROBUST UNQUOTE INTERVENTION AT VILLERS-LE-TEMPLE, WHERE HE HAD FOUND THE CRITICISMS OF SOME OTHER MINISTERS UNACCEPTABLE. HE SAID THAT THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC SUPPORTED US AS ALLIES AND FRIENDS AND PARTNERS, AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO.

2. ON THE QUESTION OF SANCTIONS, HERR GENSCHER SAID THAT THE MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AT CABINET BUT THAT NO FINAL DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN. THIS WAS BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT FELT THAT IT WOULD BE TACTICALLY BEST FOR THE DECISION TO BE STATED AT THE LAST MINUTE: OTHERWISE THERE WAS A DANGER THAT POLITICAL DISCUSSION ON THE SUBJECT WOULD ARISE BEFORE THE 17TH OF MAY WHEN THE DECISION HAD TO BE MADE. HE COULD ASSURE ME PERSONALLY AND CONFIDENTIALLY THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE THE SAME STANCE.

...WE COULD ASSURE HE PERSONALLY AND CONFIDENTIALLY THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE THE SAME STANCE. IE THAT SANCTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONTINUED IF NO PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS HAD BEEN AGREED BY 17 MAY. THE FINAL DECISION WOULD BE TAKEN BY HIMSELF AND SCHMIDT. BUT IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION HE CONFIRMED THAT WE COULD COUNT ON A POSITIVE DECISION.(WE DID NOT HOWEVER DISCUSS THE LENGTH OF THE RENEWAL, AND I HAVE SINCE HEARD INDICATIONS THAT THE GERMANS MAY TRY TO LIMIT IT TO 15 DAYS).

3. GENSCHER ADDED HOWEVER THAT HE WAS VERY CONCERNED OVER THE NEWS FROM ROME ABOUT ITALIAN ATTITUDES FOLLOWING YESTERDAY'S DEBATE IN THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT.

4. AT THE END OF MY TALK, AFTER DISCUSSING OTHER MATTERS WHICH I WILL REPORT SEPARATELY, I TOOK HERR GENSCHER THROUGH THE BELGRANO INCIDENT AND THE FACT THAT GERMAN REACTIONS HAD BEEN BASED ON INADEQUATE AND FALSE INFORMATION FROM ARGENTINA. HE CLAIMED TO UNDERSTAND THE POSITION FULLY AND DENIED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD FORMED FALSE CONCLUSIONS. I THINK HE NEVERTHELESS TOOK THE MESSAGE THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXERCISE SOME CAUTION IN REACTING TO NEWS THAT WAS NOT PROPERLY CONFIRMED.

5. I EMPHASISED AS STRONGLY AS I COULD THE IMPORTANCE OF SENDING THE RIGHT SIGNAL TO ARGENTINA AND OF AVOIDING ENCOURAGING THE ARGENTINIANS TO THINK THAT SUPPORT FOR US WAS CRUMBLING.

TAYLOR