

PARIS FCO

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13 MAY 1982

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM PARIS 131636Z MAY 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 483 OF 13 MAY 1982

FALKLANDS: FRENCH ATTITUDE

1. ANSWERING QUESTIONS YESTERDAY (12 MAY) IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CHEYSSON MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT THE FALKLANDS:

(1) FRANCE'S SOLIDARITY WITH BRITAIN STEMMED FROM CONDEMNATION OF THE INVASION OF A TERRITORY BY FORCE. THE INVASION HAD BEEN FOLLOWED BY THE ADOPTION OF SCR 502 WHICH WAS MANDATORY AND WHICH CALLED FOR IMMEDIATE ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL. AS LONG AS RESOLUTION 502 WAS NOT APPLIED FRANCE WOULD CONTINUE TO CONDEMN THE ARGENTINE INVASION.



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(II) FRANCE'S SOLIDARITY WITH BRITAIN DID NOT MEAN FRENCH RECOGNITION OF ANYONE'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE FALKLANDS. IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY SHOULD NOT BE PREJUDGED.

(III) NEW CLASHES WERE LIKELY TO ARISE DESPITE THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S SOLEMN APPEAL FOR A CEASEFIRE ON 5 MAY.

(IV) BOTH SIDES (SIC) WERE IN FACT PREJUDGING THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OVER SOVEREIGNTY. ARGENTINA HAD MADE CONCESSIONS, BUT BRITAIN WAS INSISTING THAT THE WISHES OF THE FALKLANDS INHABITANTS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT; THIS WAS TANTAMOUNT TO PREJUDGING WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN SOVEREIGNTY CAME TO BE DISCUSSED. AS THE ARGENTINES WERE REFUSING TO ACCEPT THIS BRITISH DEMAND, THE NEGOTIATIONS HAD NOT REACHED A CONCLUSION.

(V) TOGETHER WITH ITS EC PARTNERS FRANCE STOOD BY RESOLUTION 502 BUT FRANCE WOULD CONSIDER RESOLUTION 502 TO HAVE BEEN APPLIED ONCE THE ARGENTINES STARTED WITHDRAWING THEIR FORCES. AFTER THAT, FRANCE WOULD INSIST MORE ON OTHER ASPECTS: CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES, ORGANISATION OF A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES, AND THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS.

(VI) RENEWAL OF THE EC BAN POSED A SERIOUS PROBLEM GIVEN THAT SOME PEOPLE TENDED TO LINK THIS TOPIC WITH OTHERS OVER WHICH EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY WAS SINGULARLY LACKING. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE DANGEROUS TO FORECAST WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.

2. MINISTER ASKED THE DIRECTOR FOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS IN THE QUAI THIS AFTERNOON FOR SOME CLARIFICATION OF CHEYSSON'S REMARKS, WHICH INTER ALIA DID NOT CORRECTLY DESCRIBE THE BRITISH POSITION AND WHICH APPEARED, ODDLY, TO ENVISAGE A PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL OF ARGENTINE FORCES BEFORE A CEASEFIRE. DORIN ADMITTED THAT THE REMARKS SUMMARISED IN PARA 1 (IV) AND (V) ABOVE WERE HARD TO INTERPRET



AND SUGGESTED THAT TOO MUCH SHOULD NOT BE READ INTO THEM. THEY WERE NOT PART OF CHEYSSON'S PREPARED WRITTEN STATEMENT. HE MAINTAINED THAT CHEYSSON FIRMLY SUPPORTED BRITAIN AND SAID THAT OVERALL CHEYSSON'S REMARKS HAD BEEN INTERPRETED AS DISAGREEABLE FOR ARGENTINA. (IN FACT, THEY APPEAR TO BE A TYPICAL EFFORT BY CHEYSSON TO APPEAL TO DIFFERENT AUDIENCES AT THE SAME TIME.)

3. MIFT CONTAINS FULL TEXT IN FRENCH OF THE REMARKS SUMMARISED IN PARA 1 (IV), (V) AND (VI) ABOVE.

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