

ADVANCE COPIES: FALKLAND ISLANDS GENERAL 43

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 PS/MR HURD
 PS/MR ONSLOW
 P PUS
 MR BULLARD
 SIR I SINCLAIR
 MR GIFFARD
 MR WRIGHT
 MR ADAMS
 LORD N G LENNOX
 LORD BRIDGES
 MR URE
 MR GILMORE
 HD/PUSD 2
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 HD/NEWS DEPT
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 HD/PLANNING STAFF
 MR ANTHONY WILLIAMS W60
 EMERGENCY ROOM
 RESIDENT CLERK
 H. J. ~~SED~~ SED

PS/NO 10 DOWNING ST (2) ✓
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 MR J STEWART AUSD STAFF MOD
 PS/CHANCELLOR)
 MR ILETT) TREASURY
 MR LITTLER)
 SIR R ARMSTRONG)
 SIR M PALLISER) CABINET
 MR WADE-GERY) OFFICE
 MR FULLER SAPU/DIO)
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GRS 350
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 FM MADRID 141321Z MAY 82
 TO PRIORITY FCO
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 273 OF 14 MAY

MY TELNO 272: SPANISH MEDIA COVERAGE OF FALKLANDS

I PAID A "COURTESY CALL" THIS MORNING ON ROBLES PIQUER, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SPANISH RADIO AND TV. HE IS A PERSONAL FRIEND, HAVING BEEN SECRETARY OF STATE IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. WHILE EXPRESSING UNDERSTANDING FOR THE DIFFICULTY OF TRYING TO COVER IMPARTIALLY A FAST MOVING SITUATION, I SAID EXPLICITLY THAT WE WERE UNHAPPY ABOUT THE PRESENTATION OF THE FALKLANDS CRISIS ON TELEVISION HERE. I GAVE HIM SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES. I MADE IT CLEAR THAT WE OBJECTED BOTH TO THE LACK OF BALANCE IN THE COMMENTARIES AND TO THE MARKED PREFERENCE FOR PRESENTING ARGENTINE, BUT NOT BRITISH, MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS. THIS COULD NOT (NOT) BE EXPLAINED ONLY BY TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES ABOUT VOICE-DUBBING.

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2. ROBLESPIQUER TOOK ALL THIS IN GOOD PART, POSSIBLY PERHAPS BECAUSE I WAS AT PAINS TO AVOID THE IMPRESSION THAT I WAS MAKING AN OFFICIAL PROTEST AND ALSO BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE TO OFFER PERSONAL CRITICISM OF THE SPANISH TV CORRESPONDENT IN LONDON (VEYRAT). HE MADE A SPECIAL NOTE WHEN I POINTED OUT THAT UNCRITICAL TRANSMISSION TO THE SPANISH NATION OF ARGENTINE LIES, DESIGNED TO GIVE THE BRITISH FORCES AN APPEARANCE OF INHUMANITY, COULD HAVE A DANGEROUS IMPACT ON PUBLIC ORDER WITHIN SPAIN AND ON THE VALUABLE BRITISH TOURIST TRADE.

3. WE THEN WENT ON TO DISCUSS PRACTICAL METHODS OF COOPERATION ALONG THE LINES OF MY TELNO UNDER REFERENCE. ROBLES PIQUER UNDERTOOK TO EXPLORE URGENTLY WITH VEYRAT SOME WAYS OF IMPROVING VISUAL COVERAGE OF THE BRITISH POSITION. HE CLAIMED TO BE BY NO MEANS AVERSE TO SHOWING EXTRACTS FROM BRITISH MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS DUBBED INTO SPANISH. THESE WERE AVAILABLE FROM VISNEWS. HE ALSO LIKED THE IDEA OF SPANISH SPEAKING INTERVIEWS WITH PRO-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT SUCH AS GAREL-JONES.

4. ALTHOUGH A HARDLINER ON GIBRALTAR, ROBLES PIQUER HAS ENOUGH SENSE TO SEE THE DANGERS OF STIMULATING ANTI-BRITISH FEELING HERE. BUT IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW SUCCESSFUL HE WILL BE IN SWINGING HIS HUGE AND TEMPERAMENTAL TEAM IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. I RECOMMEND THAT THIS CONVERSATION SHOULD BE ACTIVELY FOLLOWED UP WITH VEYRAT IN LONDON IN A CONSTRUCTIVE SPIRIT. IT WILL OBVIOUSLY BE IMPORTANT TO AVOID GIVING HIM THE INCORRECT IMPRESSION THAT I HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT HIM TO ROBLES PIQUER. THIS WOULD DO US NO GOOD WITHIN SPANISH TV.

PARSONS

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SENT/RECD AT 14/1358Z PJ/JJJJKZ