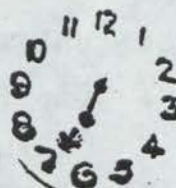


CONFIDENTIAL

UKM NEW YORK 172218Z MAY 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 766 OF 17 MAY
AND TO IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY UNIT
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON.

17 MAY 1982

157



FOR NEW DEPARTMENT.

FALKLANDS: PRESS LINE.

1. ROS LEFT THE UN AT APPROXIMATELY 2100Z AND TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THE LATEST BRITISH POSITION: WOULD CONSULT HIS GOVERNMENT: AND WOULD BRING BACK THEIR ANSWER.

2. THIS PROVOKED A FRESH WAVE OF ENQUIRIES TO THIS MISSION. IN PARTICULAR, MICHAEL COLE (BBC TV NEWS) ASKED WHETHER WE HAD NOW SET OUT OUR FINAL POSITION, AND HAD ATTACHED A DEADLINE FOR THE ARGENTINE REPLY (EG OF 48 HOURS). OTHERS HAVE PUT ESSENTIALLY THE SAME QUESTION TO US, THOUGH LESS PRECISELY WORDED. WE HAVE SPOKEN ON THE FOLLOWING LINES:

(A) AT ALMOST EVERY MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, ROS HAS BEEN INFORMED IN BROAD TERMS OF THE LATEST BRITISH POSITION AND ASKED TO BRING BACK HIS GOVERNMENT'S REACTIONS TO IT. AS IN THE LAST WEEK'S MEETINGS, I DISCUSSED THE MAJOR PROBLEMS NOW ON THE TABLE WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL THIS MORNING, AND REACTED TO POINTS HE HAD RAISED WITH ME ABOUT THEM. IN THE NATURE OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS, HIS NEXT STEP WOULD BE TO PUT FURTHER POINTS TO MR ROS. WE IN TURN WOULD BE INTERESTED TO HEAR WHETHER, AFTER A WEEKEND OF REFLECTION, MR ROS HAD HAD ANYTHING NEW TO SAY ABOUT THE ARGENTINE POSITION.

(B) PRACTICALLY EVERY DAY FOR THE LAST THREE WEEKS WE HAD BEEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON SPECULATION ABOUT A BRITISH DEADLINE OR ULTIMATUM. AS WE HAVE REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DID NOT SET A TIME LIMIT FOR THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S TALKS, BUT THE URGENCY OF THE SEARCH FOR A SETTLEMENT HAS BEEN PLAIN FOR ALL TO SEE AND SELF-EVIDENTLY INCREASES WITH EVERY DAY THAT PASSES. AS I AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL HAVE SAID, WE DO NOT SEE THESE AS AN ENDLESS SERIES OF NEGOTIATIONS.

(C) IN RECENT REMARKS TO THE PRESS, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL HAS INDICATED THAT IN HIS VIEW THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE MOVING INTO THE CULMINATING PHASE. HE WILL PRESUMABLY MAKE A JUDGEMENT AT SOME POINT ON WHAT HE CONSIDERS TO BE THE FINAL POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES.

(D) THE BROAD PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE BRITISH POSITION - FOR EXAMPLE, THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING THE WAY OF LIFE AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION OF THE ISLANDERS, AND OUR REFUSAL TO ENTERTAIN PRECONDITIONS ON SOVEREIGNTY - HAVE BEEN MAINTAINED CONSISTENTLY THROUGHOUT THIS AND PREVIOUS NEGOTIATIONS. THOSE PRINCIPLES HAVE NOT BECOME HARDER OR SOFTER AS A RESULT OF THE WEEKEND'S TALKS IN LONDON. MINISTERS HAVE REVIEWED THE CURRENT STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS IN GREAT DETAIL, AND IN THE LIGHT OF THAT HAVE INSTRUCTED ME TO CONTINUE TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT URGENTLY TO ACHIEVE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, IF THAT IS ATTAINABLE.

3. WE SHALL CONTINUE TO HOLD THIS LINE AS BEST WE CAN, THOUGH THE PRECISION OF COLE'S QUESTION IMPLIED THAT HE MAY HAVE BEEN PROMPTED TO ASK IT BY HIS COLLEAGUES IN LONDON, WHO WE UNDERSTAND ARE SPECULATING ON SIMILAR LINES.

4. THE ABC CORRESPONDENT AT THE UN ASKED US THIS AFTERNOON TO CONFIRM A STORY WHICH REACHED HIM FROM WASHINGTON VIA BUENOS AIRES, TO THE EFFECT THAT THE AMERICANS HAD BEEN ASKED TO PROVIDE A GUARANTEE AGAINST THE REINTRODUCTION OF ARGENTINE FORCES. WE REPLIED THAT IT WAS CLEARLY OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO US THAT ANY NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT SHOULD HOLD, AND THAT WE SHOULD NOT FACE A REPETITION OF THE UNILATERAL ARGENTINE ACTION OF 2 APRIL; BUT THAT WE COULD NOT SAY WHETHER THIS POINT HAD YET BEEN COVERED IN DETAIL IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND, IF SO, IN WHAT WAY.

PARSONS

NNNN