

[PLEASE RETURN COPY TO
TYPISTS]

FALKLANDS SELECTIVE ADVANCES

(98) 46

PS (6)
PS/MR HURD
PS/MR ONSLOW
PS/PUS *Ps/Ld Belstead 1*
MR BULLARD
SIR I SINCLAIR
MR GIFFARD
MR WRIGHT
MR GILLMORE
MR URE
MR BARRETT
HS/S AM D
HD/DEF D
HD/PLANNING STAFF
HD/UND
HD/NEWS D
HD/ERD
HD/EOD(E)
HD/PUSD (2)
EMERGENCY ROOM
RESIDENT CLERK
Hd of NAD

IMMEDIATE

PS/NO 10 DOWNING STREET (2 copies)

PS/S OF S DEFENCE

PS/HOME SECRETARY

PS/HOME SECRETARY (c/o NO 10 DSt)

PS/ATTORNEY GENERAL

PS/CHANCELLOR DUCHY OF LANCASTER

PS/SIR R ARMSTRONG)

PS/SIR M PALLISER)

PS/SIR A DUFF)

CABINET

MR WADE-GERY)

MR FULLER)

OFFICE

MR O'NEILL, HD ASSESS-

MENTS STAFF)

Mr Cowin
DIO

MR J M STEWART AUSD STAFF MOD

ADMIRAL SIR ROY HALLIDAY DGI MOD

DIRECTOR G.C.H.Q. (via Room 8)

GR 550
CONFIDENTIAL
FM WASHINGTON 220046Z MAY 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1856 OF 22 MAY 1982
INFO UKMIS NEW YORK

FALKLANDS: CONGRESS

1. I MADE SEPARATE CALLS ON SENATORS PERCY AND TOWER TODAY. BOTH CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR POSITION THOUGH THEY HOPE THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE OUR MILITARY PURPOSE QUICKLY AND WARNED THAT THERE IS A FEAR AMONG SOME SENATORS THAT OUR MILITARY ACTION COULD SPREAD TO THE MAINLAND OR THAT WE MIGHT, IF WE GOT BOGGED DOWN, ASK THE US GOVERNMENT FOR ASSISTANCE GOING BEYOND MATERIEL SUPPORT. THE STRONG IMPLICATION WAS THAT WE WOULD LOSE SENATE AND INDEED PUBLIC BACKING IN EITHER EVENTUALITY.

2. I HAD A LONG TALK THIS EVENING WITH SENATOR BIDEN, A LEADING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WHO WAS THE AUTHOR OF THE RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR US ADOPTED BY THE SENATE ON 29 APRIL. BIDEN SAID THAT EVEN BACK IN APRIL THERE HAD BEEN SOME RELUCTANCE, ESPECIALLY AMONG REPUBLICANS, TO SUPPORT ANY RESOLUTION ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD CUT ACROSS HAIG'S EFFORTS AND INVOLVE THE US ILL ADVISEDLY IN A DISPUTE WHICH COULD DAMAGE US RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA. WHEN HAIG HAD GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD TO THE RESOLUTION, SUPPORT HAD RALLIED BUT ONLY AFTER CHANGES TO THE DRAFT HAD BEEN MADE, INCLUDING REMOVAL OF ANY REFERENCE TO THE RIGHT OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDERS TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

THE RIGHT OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDERS TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

3. BIDEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT SENATE SUPPORT FOR OUR POSITION REFLECTS THE CLOSENESS OF ANGLO/US RELATIONS RATHER THAN A FEELING THAT IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES WERE AT STAKE. HAD THE FALKLANDS BELONGED TO BRAZIL, FOR EXAMPLE, NO AMERICAN WOULD HAVE CARED A BIT ABOUT ARGENTINE AGGRESSION, LET ALONE BEEN PREPARED TO SUPPORT ATTEMPTS TO RETAKE THE ISLANDS. WE SHOULD NOT THEREFORE ASSUME THAT THE SENATE WOULD SUPPORT GREATER US INVOLVEMENT - OR EVEN MAINTAIN ITS PRESENT LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR US INDEFINITELY. THE LONGER THE DISPUTE LASTED THE MORE AMERICANS WOULD BECOME CONCERNED ABOUT BEING SUCKED IN MILITAIRLY OR ABOUT THE DETERIORATION IN US RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA. HE HAD HAD SOME CRITISISM FROM CONSTITUENTS ON THIS SCORE ALREADY.

4. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, BIDEN SAID WE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED THAT SO MANY SENATORS HAD TAKEN THE VIEW THAT THE US COULD NOT AFFORD TO IMPAIR ITS INTERESTS FOR THE RIGHTS OF SELF DETERMINATION OF 1800 SHEEP FARMERS. IF, IN ANY RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS, SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE ISLANDERS WERE TO BECOME THE ONE ISSUE ON OUR SIDE STANDING IN THE WAY OF A SETTLEMENT US SUPPORT FOR US WOULD EVAPORATE.

5. I SAID THAT I WAS ASTONISHED THAT SELF DETERMINATION COULD COUNT FOR SO LITTLE IN THE COUNTRY THAT HAD INVENTED IT. THE LOGIC OF WHAT BIDEN HAD SAID WAS THAT THE ISLANDERS SHOULD BE TOLD THAT THEY MUST EITHER LEAVE OR AGREE TO LIVE UNDER A DICTATORSHIP. BIDEN SAID HE AGREED WITH ME AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE OUR STRONGEST SUPPORTER BUT WE SHOULD NOT DELUDE OURSELVES THAT CONGRESSIONAL OPINION WAS ALTOGETHER SOLID. HE THOUGHT THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN'S RATHER TEPID EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FOR US REFLECTED, NOT JUST REAGAN'S STYLE, BUT A POLITICAL SENSE OF THE MOOD WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY.

6. COMMENT: BIDEN WAS NOT SAYING THAT WE HAD LOST SENATE SUPPORT BUT THAT IF WE GOT INTO DIFFICULTIES MILITAIRLY OR IF WE APPEARED TO BE UNREASONABLE IN NEGOTIATIONS, THEN FEAR OF THE US GETTING INVOLVED OR OF DAMAGE TO US INTERESTS WOULD START TO OUTWEIGH OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

HENDERSON

NNNN