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NYFC 33/27

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27 MAY 1982

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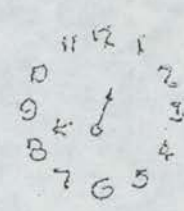
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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 272215Z MAY 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 874 OF 27 MAY

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON



YOUR TELEGRAM NO 475: FALKLANDS: SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MANDATE

1. I SAW THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AT 2000Z TODAY, 27 MAY. I ASKED TO SEE HIM ALONE BEFORE WE MOVED TO THE PLENARY SESSION.
2. PEREZ DE CUELLAR TOLD ME THAT HAIG HAD TELEPHONED HIM ABOUT HALF AN HOUR PREVIOUSLY. HAIG HAD SAID THAT COSTA MENDEZ HAD DELIVERED A VERY TOUGH STATEMENT AT THE OAS MEETING. HAIG HOPED THAT THE SECRETARY-GENERAL WOULD NOT THROW IN HIS HAND. HE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT I WOULD HAVE ENCOURAGING NEWS FOR HIM FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. PEREZ DE CUELLAR HAD REPLIED THAT HE WAS GLAD TO HEAR IT: HE WOULD NOT RUSH PREMATURELY TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL.
3. I SAID THAT I WOULD SHORTLY BE GIVING HIM A MESSAGE FROM YOU IN WRITING. I THOUGHT THAT HE WOULD FIND A GLIMMER OF LIGHT IN IT THAT HAD NOT BEEN APPARENT IN MY STATEMENT IN THE COUNCIL ON 26 MAY IN EXPLANATION OF VOTE. I SAID THAT HE MUST BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAID THAT WE WERE NOT USING HIM TO BUY TIME WITH OUR MILITARY DISPOSITIONS IN MIND. IF THE SECURITY COUNCIL WAS RECALLED TOMORROW OR THE NEXT DAY AND AN UNACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION WAS TABLED, I WOULD DO WHAT I HAD TO DO: I WOULD DO THE SAME IF THE COUNCIL MEETING WAS FOLLOWED BY A GENERAL ASSEMBLY. NONE OF THIS WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO WHAT WAS HAPPENING ON THE GROUND. HENCE, WHETHER THE SECURITY COUNCIL MET IN A COUPLE OF DAYS' TIME OR IN A WEEKS'

DIFFERENCES IN MIND. IF THE SECURITY COUNCIL WAS RECALLED TOMORROW OR THE NEXT DAY AND AN UNACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION WAS TABLED, I WOULD DO WHAT I HAD TO DO: I WOULD DO THE SAME IF THE COUNCIL MEETING WAS FOLLOWED BY A GENERAL ASSEMBLY. NONE OF THIS WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO WHAT WAS HAPPENING ON THE GROUND. HENCE, WHETHER THE SECURITY COUNCIL MET IN A COUPLE OF DAYS' TIME OR IN A WEEKS TIME WOULD NOT AFFECT THE MILITARY SITUATION. OUR POSITION WAS THAT WE WANTED TO DO EVERYTHING WE COULD TO ENABLE HIS MISSION TO SUCCEED AND TO GIVE HIM ALL THE TIME AVAILABLE TO HIM TO PROVE TO HIS OWN SATISFACTION WHETHER OR NOT SUCCESS WAS POSSIBLE. WHATEVER THE ARGENTINE REPLY WAS TONIGHT, MY GOVERNMENT WOULD WANT TO STUDY IT CAREFULLY.

4. PEREZ DE CUELLAR ACCEPTED ALL THIS WELL. I THEN GAVE HIM YOUR MESSAGE (MINUS THE PENULTIMATE PARAGRAPH WHICH I DECIDED TO TRANSMIT ORALLY FOR IMPORTANT TACTICAL REASONS). PEREZ DE CUELLAR READ THE MESSAGE CAREFULLY AND FOCUSED POSITIVELY ON THE LAST PARAGRAPH.

5. I THEN MADE THE POINT ABOUT HIS POSSIBLY VISITING BUENOS AIRES AND LONDON OR SENDING AN EMISSARY. HE SAID THAT, IF HE DECIDED TO PURSUE THIS, HE WOULD DEFINITELY GO HIMSELF: "I CANNOT RELY ON THE IMPARTIALITY OF ANY OF MY FALKLANDS TEAM". BUT HE WAS A LOW-KEY MAN AND HATED AROUSING EXAGGERATED EXPECTATIONS. HE WOULD SEE HOW THINGS WENT IN THE NEXT DAY OR SO.

6. HE THEN SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE NEXT STEP WAS FOR HIM TO SPEAK PERSONALLY TO COSTA MENDEZ TOMORROW (FRIDAY) EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR IN NEW YORK. WHEN LISTRE CALLED ON HIM THIS EVENING HE WOULD FOR HIM OFF BY SAYING THAT HE WOULD BE IN PERSONAL CONTACT WITH HIS FOREIGN MINISTER: HE DOUBTED WHETHER LISTRE WOULD HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY.

7. PEREZ DE CUELLAR WENT ON TO SAY IN STRICT CONFIDENCE (PLEASE PROTECT EVEN FROM HAIG) THAT HE HAD BEGUN TO FORM THE OPINION THAT, ALTHOUGH THE ARGENTINE MILITARY WERE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH; COSTA MENDEZ AND HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY TEAM WERE ACTUALLY MORE HARD LINE, INSPITE OF THEIR CIVILISED AND APPARENTLY FLEXIBLE MANNER. (HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE REASONABLENESS OF OUR FINAL POSITION OF 17 MAY AND SHOCKED BY THE ARGENTINE RESPONSE FOR WHICH HE BELIEVED COSTA MENDEZ RESPONSIBLE. HE HAD TOLD COSTA MENDEZ THIS WHEN HE HAD ARRIVED IN NEW YORK). HE WOULD BEAR THIS THOUGHT IN MIND IN SPEAKING TO COSTA MENDEZ. HE WOULD NOT OF COURSE LET HIM SEE YOUR MESSAGE, BUT WOULD TOUCH ON ALL THE POINTS IN IT AND SEE HOW COSTA MENDEZ REACTED.

8. PEREZ DE CUELLAR SAID THAT HE WOULD LET ME KNOW THIS EVENING OR TOMORROW (FRIDAY) MORNING IF LISTRE HAD SAID ANYTHING OF IMPORTANCE, AND IF, AND WHEN AND WHERE HE WOULD BE SEEING COSTA MENDEZ. HE ADDED THAT THE LAST THING HE WOULD REQUEST OR ALLOW TO BE ELICITED WOULD BE THE IDEA OF COSTA MENDEZ AND HIS MINISTRY.

THIS WHEN HE HAD ARRIVED IN NEW YORK). HE WOULD BEAR THIS THOUGHT IN MIND IN SPEAKING TO COSTA MENDEZ. HE WOULD NOT OF COURSE LET HIM SEE YOUR MESSAGE, BUT WOULD TOUCH ON ALL THE POINTS IN IT AND SEE HOW COSTA MENDEZ REACTED.

8. PEREZ DE CUELLAR SAID THAT HE WOULD LET ME KNOW THIS EVENING OR TOMORROW (FRIDAY) MORNING IF LISTRE HAD SAID ANYTHING OF IMPORTANCE, AND IF AND WHEN AND WHERE HE WOULD BE SEEING COSTA MENDEZ.

HE ASSURED ME THAT THE LAST THING HE WOULD SUGGEST OR ALLOW TO BE FLOATED WOULD BE THE IDEA OF COSTA MENDEZ AND YOURSELF BEING IN NEW YORK TOGETHER, SHUTTLING BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS BETWEEN HIM. THIS WOULD BE ABSOLUTELY WRONG.

9. BEFORE WE MOVED TO THE PLENARY. PEREZ DE CUELLAR SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH HE TRUSTED HIS STAFF TO KEEP YOUR WRITTEN MESSAGE CONFIDENTIAL, HE COULD NOT RELY ON THEIR REACTIONS ON OTHER MATTERS. HE WOULD NOT THEREFORE MENTION TO THEM THAT HE WAS PLANNING TO SEE COSTA MENDEZ PERSONALLY, OR THAT I HAD RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS GOING TO BUENOS AIRES AND LONDON.

10. THE SUBSEQUENT PLENARY MEETING WAS A FORMALITY AT WHICH I DREW THE ATTENTION OF HIS STAFF TO THE VARIOUS POINTS IN YOUR MESSAGE. WE CONCLUDED BY AGREEING THAT I WOULD SAY TO THE PRESS ON DEPARTURE THAT I HAD TRANSMITTED TO HIM A NUMBER OF VIEWS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THAT WE WERE STILL IN BUSINESS.

11. SO FAR, SO GOOD.

PARSONS

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