

CONFIDENTIAL

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1941 OF 27 MAY

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FALKLANDS; RIO TREATY

SUMMARY

1. THE RIO TREATY MEETING TODAY 27 MAY WAS CHARACTERIZED BY A SERIES OF VENOMOUS ATTACKS ON AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR THE UK. LED BY ARGENTINA, A DISPARATE CLAQUE INCLUDING VENEZUELA, NICARAGUA, GUATAMALA AND PANAMA CONDEMNED THE US FOR TREACHERY TOWARDS ITS HEMISPHERIC PARTNERS AND FOR IGNORING THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE RIO TREATY. ATTACKS ON THE UK COMPRISED TIRED REITERATIONS OF EXISTING RHETORIC.
2. HAIG MADE A DETERMINED AND DETAILED SPEECH, GREETED IN SILENCE, WHICH CENTRED ON THE NEED NOT TO ALLOW THE VALUABLE INTER-AMERICAN MECHANISMS TO BE DESTROYED BY THE PRESENT CRISIS.
3. THREE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS WERE TABLED AND WILL BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION TOMORROW, 28 MAY, WHEN HARMLESS COLOMBIA AND COSTA RICAN PROPOSALS WILL BE PITTED AGAINST AN ARGENTINE DRAFT CALLING ON THE US TO CEASE ITS SUPPORT FOR THE UK AND URGING MEMBERS TO TAKE APPROPRIATE IF UNSPECIFIED STEPS WITHIN THE RIO TREATY FRAMEWORK TO HELP ARGENTINA RESIST BRITISH QUOTE AGGRESSION UNQUOTE.

DETAIL

4. COSTA MENDEZ SET THE TONE WITH AN INTEMPERATE ONSLAUGHT AGAINST THE US WHICH HAD FAILED IN ITS DUTY TO JOIN WITH ITS HEMISPHERIC NEIGHBOURS AGAINST AN EXTERNAL THREAT. HE URGED ARGENTINA'S TRUE FRIENDS TO UNITE IN SOLIDARITY AGAINST THE UK, WHICH HAD THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS ACTED WITH TOTAL INTRANSIGENCE. BRITISH ACTIONS WERE AN INSULT TO THE LATIN AMERICAN CONTINENT.
5. THE VENEZUELAN FOREIGN MINISTER ACCUSED THE BRITISH OF HAVING A PUNITIVE OBSESSION WHICH WAS SHARED BY THE EC, WITH THE HONOURABLE (SIC) EXCEPTIONS OF IRELAND AND ITALY. HE REPEATED THE USUAL CLICHES ABOUT BRITISH QUOTE COLONIALISM UNQUOTE, AND QUESTIONED BOTH UNSCR 502 AND 505. HE ASSERTED THAT THE LOCUS STANDI OF THE UN IN THIS DISPUTE WAS SUBORDINATE TO THAT OF THE OAS AND RIO TREATY. HE ACCUSED THE US OF INCOMPREHENSIBLY DESERTING ITS FRIENDS IN A WAY

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6. THE NICARAGUAN DEPTY FOREIGN MINISTER MAINTAINED THAT IN FUTURE THE RIO TREATY SIGNATORIES SHOULD MEET IN LATIN AMERICA AND NOT IN WASHINGTON, WHICH WAS QUOTE FOREIGN TERRITORY UNQUOTE AS THE RESULT OF US SUPPORT FOR THE CONTINENT'S ENEMIES. (MANY OTHER DELEGATES MADE THE SAME POINT). THE US WAS AN ACCOMPLICE IN BRITISH AGGRESSION, IN BREACH OF ITS SOLEMN UNDERTAKINGS UNDER THE RIO TREATY. HAIG'S NEGOTIATING EFFORTS HAD BEEN DESIGNED MERELY TO GAIN TIME FOR THE UK TO ATTACK ARGENTINA.

7. THE PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MAINTAINED THAT ARGENTINA HAD THROUGHOUT BEEN FLEXIBLE AND HAD ACCEPTED (SIC) BELAUNDE'S PEACE PLAN. THE UK, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS TOTALLY INFLEXIBLE AND HAD REJECTED IT. AGAIN, THE US WAS DISLOYAL TO THE HEMISPHERE AND SHOULD STOP AIDING THE UK WITH WEAPONS WHICH WERE USED AGAINST LATIN AMERICA.

8. HAIG MADE A LONG AND RELECTIVE SPEECH. HE FLIRTED WITH EVEN-HANDEDNESS BY STRESSING THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND BOTH ARGENTINA AND THE UK. HOWEVER THE FOCUS OF HIS REMARKS WAS ON THE FACT THAT SINCE IT WAS ARGENTINA WHICH HAD COMMITTED THE ORIGINAL ACT OF AGGRESSION, IT WAS WRONG TO INVOKE THE RIO TREATY NOW THAT THE UK WAS RESPONDING. HAIG EMPHASIZED THE HISTORIC VALUE OF INTER-AMERICAN MECHANISMS AND INSISTED THAT IT WAS VITAL THAT THEY BE PRESERVED. HE ALSO GAVE A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF HIS OWN NEGOTIATING EFFORTS, STATING THAT HMG HAD OFFERED SERIOUSLY TO CONSIDER HIS FINAL PROPOSALS (NOTWITHSTANDING THE DIFFICULTIES THESE GAVE US), WHEREAS ARGENTINA HAD SIMPLY REJECTED THEM, AS THEY HAD DONE THE US/PERUVIAN PLAN AND THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S IDEAS. (THIS PRODUCED AN EMBARRASSEDLY INCOHERENT ARGENTINE RESPONSE). HAIG CONCLUDED THAT THE RIO TREATY SHOULD BE USED TO DEFEND THE RULE OF LAW, WHICH ARGENTINA HAD VIOLATED; IT WAS WRONG TO USE IT TO ADJUDICATE A DISPUTE OVER SOVEREIGNTY (ABOUT WHICH THE US WAS NEUTRAL). THE IMPORTANT THING WAS TO ENCOURAGE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, SPECIFICALLY THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S EFFORTS.

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SPECIFICALLY THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S EFFORTS.

9. HAIG WAS GREETED IN SILENCE; THOSE WHO ATTACKED THE US WERE
GIVEN OVATIONS.

10. COLOMBIA INTRODUCED A MILD HAND-WRINGING RESOLUTION. TRINIDAD
AND TOBAGO REPEATED ITS SUPPORT FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND CONDEMNATION
OF ARGENTINA FOR USING FORCE TO RESOLVE A DISPUTE.

11. ILLUECA (PANAMA) MADE HIS USUAL LONG-WINDED AND ABUSIVE
SPEECH. THE ONLY NEW POINT WAS HIS QUOTE DEMAND UNQUOTE THAT THE
US GIVE AN UNDERTAKING THAT ITS FORCES OR FACILITIES IN PANAMA
SHOULD NOT BE USED IN SUPPORT OF THE UK.

12. COSTA RICA, URUGUAY, BOLIVIA AND GUATAMALA SPOKE WITHOUT
ADDING ANYTHING, ALTHOUGH THE LAST THREE JOINED THE MOB IN
CONDEMNING THE US.

13. COMMENT A BAD DAY FOR THE AMERICANS; A HYSTERIA IS BUILDING UP
AGAINST US SUPPORT FOR OURSELVES WHICH COULD ALLOW THE ADOPTION OF
A SHARPLY HOSTILE RESOLUTION TOMORROW. HOWEVER, BRAZIL AND MEXICO
HAVE KEPT THEIR POWDER DRY TODAY, AND THERE IS STILL A CHANCE THAT
THE ARGENTINE DRAFT, WHICH IS DIRECTED AS MUCH AGAINST THE US AS
THE UK, WILL RUN INTO STRONGER RESISTANCE IN THE CLOSED SESSION.

HENDERSON

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NKHZAULSWZAYA