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TO IMMEDIATE BERNE

TELEGRAM NUMBER 62 OF 6 APRIL

INFO PRIORITY BRASILIA, UKMIS NEW YORK, PORT STANLEY, WASHINGTON,
EC POSTS

MIPT: RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA
SOVEREIGNTY AND AGENDA

1. YOU SHOULD TELL THE SWISS THAT WE HAVE TAKEN NOTE OF WHAT M. AUBERT TOLD ME ON 2 APRIL ABOUT CAPUTO'S VIEW ON THE WAY IN WHICH THE SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE MIGHT BE HANDLED IN THE TALKS AND, IN PARTICULAR, WHAT HE SAID ABOUT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT'S NEED TO BE ABLE TO SAY THAT THEIR POSITION ON SOVEREIGNTY HAD BEEN MADE CLEAR TO THE BRITISH SIDE (ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED FURTHER). YOU SHOULD GO ON TO SAY THAT, SPEAKING FRANKLY, WE HAVE AN EQUAL AND OPPOSITE PROBLEM, NAMELY THAT WE MUST BE ABLE TO REASSURE PUBLIC OPINION IN THIS COUNTRY AND IN THE FALKLANDS THAT SOVEREIGNTY HAD NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN RAISED IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ARGENTINES.
2. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, YOU SHOULD SAY THAT WE BELIEVED THAT THIS PROBLEM COULD BE TAKLED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER. HAVING MADE CLEAR TO THE ARGENTINES OUR POSITION THAT SOVEREIGNTY WAS NOT FOR DISCUSSION, THE SWISS SHOULD ADD THAT IF ARGENTINA WISHED TO REPEAT ITS POSITION ON SOVEREIGNTY FOR THE RECORD, THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE ENTIRELY SEPARATELY FROM THE TALKS. THE SWISS SHOULD EXPLAIN TO THE ARGENTINES THAT THEY WOULD EXPECT US TO REBUT ANY SUCH STATEMENT, BUT SHOULD ALSO SAY THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THAT A SEPARATE EXCHANGE OF STATEMENTS ALONG THESE LINES WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT LEAD US TO CALL OFF THE TALKS BEFORE THEY BEGAN.
3. AS TO THE BEST WAY OF PROVIDING FOR A SELF-CONTAINED EXCHANGE OF STATEMENTS ON SOVEREIGNTY, YOU SHOULD TELL THE SWISS THAT WE SEE TWO POSSIBILITIES:

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(A) A PUBLIC STATEMENT BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT, TO WHICH WE WOULD RESPOND PUBLICLY. SUCH AN EXCHANGE WOULD FOCUS MEDIA ATTENTION ON THE BASIC DISPUTE ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY AND RISK SOURING THE ATMOSPHERE FOR THE TALKS. IT WOULD THEREFORE HAVE TO BE SEPARATED IN TIME AS WIDELY AS POSSIBLE FROM THE OPENING OF THE TALKS AND MIGHT TAKE PLACE WHEN THE TALKS WERE ANNOUNCED OR VERY SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

(B) ALTERNATIVELY, THE ARGENTINES COULD COMMUNICATE TO THE SWISS, FOR TRANSMISSION TO US, A WRITTEN OR, PREFERABLY, ORAL STATEMENT OF THEIR POSITION, TO WHICH WE WOULD MAKE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE THROUGH THE SAME CHANNEL. THIS EXCHANGE WOULD TAKE PLACE SHORTLY BEFORE, BUT CLEARLY SEPARATELY FROM, THE OPENING OF TALKS. THE FACT OF THE EXCHANGE WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC, BUT NOT ITS CONTENTS.

4. ALTERNATIVE (B) STRIKES US AS THE MOST PROMISING WAY OF RESOLVING THE DILEMMA DESCRIBED IN PARA 1 ABOVE AND COMES AS CLOSE AS WE CAN TO THE SUGGESTION M. AUBERT PUT TO ME ON 2 APRIL. WE RECOGNISE THAT ITS SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION WOULD REQUIRE ADROIT DIPLOMACY BY THE SWISS (THOUGH WE HAVE NO DOUBTS ABOUT THEIR CAPACITY ON THAT SCORE). WE HOPE THAT THEY WILL BE PREPARED TO COMMEND IT TO THE ARGENTINES.

5. AS REGARDS THE AGENDA, WE WOULD PREFER THE TALKS TO BE HELD WITHOUT A FORMAL AGENDA, ALTHOUGH WE WOULD PROPOSE TO RAISE OUR SIX POINTS. KEUSCH SHOULD CONFIRM THIS TO THE ARGENTINES IF ASKED. THE HANDLING OF THE THREE ADDITIONAL ITEMS PROPOSED BY THE ARGENTINES WILL ALSO REQUIRE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS TO KEUSCH. THE SPEAKING NOTE IS DESIGNED TO DISSUADE THE ARGENTINES FROM PURSUING THESE ITEMS. WE HOPE THAT KEUSCH WILL EMPHASISE THE POINT IN IT THAT WE REGARD THE THREE ARGENTINE SUBJECTS AS FALLING PLAINLY WITHIN OUR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE FALKLANDS. HE SHOULD ALSO WARN THEM THAT IF THEY NEVERTHELESS WERE TO PERSIST IN RAISING THEIR THREE POINTS, WE SHOULD RESPOND APPROPRIATELY AND WOULD FEEL ENTITLED TO RAISE SIMILAR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE ARGENTINES' OWN MILITARY DISPOSITIONS IN THE REGION AND ARGENTINA'S NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES. KEUSCH SHOULD BE AWARE, BUT SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT REVEAL TO THE

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ARGENTINES THAT WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT ENVISAGE THAT WE WOULD BREAK OFF THE DISCUSSIONS IF THE ARGENTINES DID INSIST ON RAISING THE THREE SUBJECTS DURING THE TALKS.

6. ON MODALITIES, THE SPEAKING NOTE ADVOCATES AN EARLY MEETING, WITHOUT SPECIFYING PRECISE DATES OR THE VENUE. WE HAVE NOTED FROM YOUR TELNO 103 THAT THE ARGENTINES WOULD ACCEPT MEETINGS IN BERNE OR BRASILIA ALTERNATELY. THIS DEPARTURE FROM THEIR PREVIOUS INSISTENCE ON NEGOTIATIONS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS IS WELCOME. WE AGREE THAT THE SUGGESTION THAT THE TALKS OPEN IN BERNE BE PRESENTED TO THE ARGENTINES AS A SWISS INITIATIVE. THE SWISS COULD ADD, IF THEY THOUGHT IT DESIRABLE, THAT THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO US. IF THE ARGENTINE RESPONSE THROUGH THE BRAZILIANS LEAVES US WITH A FOUR-SIDED INITIAL MEETING, THIS ARRANGEMENT, ALTHOUGH CUMBERSOME, WOULD BE A PRICE WORTH PAYING FOR KEEPING THE TALKS OUT OF THE UNITED NATIONS. IF BRUNNER INDICATES THAT THE SWISS SEE THEMSELVES AS CONVOKING THE FIRST MEETING, WORKING CLOSELY WITH YOU AND YOUR ARGENTINE COLLEAGUE ON THE PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS, THIS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO US. WE ALSO ENVISAGE YOU AND HM AMBASSADOR AT BRASILIA ALTERNATELY FORMING PART OF OUR DELEGATION, WHICH WOULD BE HEADED BY A SENIOR OFFICIAL FROM LONDON.

7. SEE MIFT.

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