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TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 542 OF 12 OCTOBER 1984

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EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION MEETING: DUBLIN 11/12 OCTOBER *mt*

FALKLANDS AT THE UN

SUMMARY

A DISCOURAGING DISCUSSION, IN WHICH INCREASING SUPPORT WAS
DISCERNIBLE AMONG OUR EC PARTNERS FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF NEGOTIATIONS.

DETAIL

2. THOMAS (UK) TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY OF AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION
OVER DINNER WITH EUROPEAN POLITICAL DIRECTORS ON 11 OCTOBER TO
REMINDE THEM OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO MAINTAINING THEIR
ABSTENTIONS IN THE UN VOTE ON THE FALKLANDS. HE SAID WE HAD BEEN
DISAPPOINTED BY ALFONSIN'S REMARKS ON THIS QUESTION IN HIS SPEECH
TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. HE HAD MADE NO REFERENCE TO THE ARGENTINE
INVASION OF THE ISLANDS OR TO ITS CONSEQUENCES. NOR HAD HE
ACKNOWLEDGED THE EXISTENCE OF PEOPLE ON THE ISLANDS LET ALONE
THEIR WISHES OR THEIR RIGHT TO LIVE UNDER A GOVERNMENT OF THEIR
OWN CHOOSING. ON FUTURE RELATIONS, HE HAD INSISTED, THIS TIME
PUBLICLY, ON LINKAGE BETWEEN NORMALISATION AND DISCUSSION ON
SOVEREIGNTY. BY THIS HE MADE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT
NEGOTIATIONS ON SOVEREIGNTY TO ARGENTINA MEANT, IN ARGENTINE
MINDS, THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY TO ARGENTINA, WITHIN A SHORT TIME
TIME-FRAME. ONE ARGENTINE SPOKESMAN HAD SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED THAT
1989 SHOULD BE THE TARGET DATE FOR TRANSFERRING SOVEREIGNTY.

3. THOMAS WENT ON THAT THE FIRST ARGENTINE DRAFT RESOLUTION WHICH
HAD BEEN CIRCULATED HAD EVIDENTLY RUN INTO CONSIDERABLE RESISTANCE.
WE UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY WERE NOW WATERING IT DOWN. HE ASKED
WHETHER ANY EUROPEAN EMBASSIES IN BUENOS AIRES HAD BEEN GIVEN
A REVISED VERSION, AS HAD BEEN SUGGESTED IN THE ARGENTINE PRESS.
MOST POLITICAL DIRECTORS SAID THEIR EMBASSIES HAD NOT SEEN SUCH A
REVISED DRAFT. SOME REMAINED SILENT. BUT ALL HAD CLEARLY HEARD
THAT ONE WAS IN THE WIND, POSSIBLY AMOUNTING TO LITTLE MORE THAN
A SIMPLE CALL FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THEY CLEARLY REGARDED THIS AS
WELCOME.

4. THOMAS EMPHASISED AGAIN THAT WHATEVER A REVISED DRAFT RESOLUTION
MIGHT APPEAR TO SAY, ALFONSIN'S EXPOSITION OF ARGENTINE POLICY
HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT AVOTE FOR A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR
NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE ISLANDS, WITHOUT MENTIONING

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THE WISHES OF THE ISLANDERS AND THEIR RIGHT TO SELF- DETERMINATION , MEANT A VOTE IN SUPPORT OF THE ARGENTINE AIM TO SECURE A TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY WITHIN A FEW YEARS. IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT THAT OUR PARTNERS SHOULD NOT BE DELUDED ON THIS POINT.

5. THOMAS CONCLUDED THAT THE ARGENTINES WERE CLEARLY DETERMINED TO WIN AWAY SOME OF OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS. HE EMPHASISED THAT IT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE SPIRIT OF POLITICAL COOPERATION IF OUR PARTNERS WERE TO VOTE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE TO US ON SOMETHING WHICH SO DIRECTLY AFFECTED OUR INTERESTS AND WAS OF SUCH ACUTE POLITICAL SENSITIVITY AT HOME. OF COURSE WE RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING SUPPORT TO DEMOCRACY IN ARGENTINA. WE ALSO RECOGNISED THE PROBLEMS WITH WHICH ALFONSIN HAD TO GRAPPLE . BUT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR DEMOCRACY IN ARGENTINA IF PEOPLE THERE WERE ENCOURAGED TO MOVE TOWARDS NORMALISATION OF RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN RATHER THAN TO FOCUS ON THE UNREALISTIC OBJECTIVE THAT WAS AT PRESENT BEING SET FOR THEM.

6. A LENGTHY AND AT TIMES HEATED DISCUSSION FOLLOWED IN THE COURSE OF WHICH IT BECAME CLEAR THAT SEVERAL OF OUR PARTNERS HAD ALREADY BEEN LOBBIED IN CAPITALS AND WERE LOOKING FOR A WAY OF ENDORSING THE PRINCIPLE OF NEGOTIATIONS. PFEFFER (FRG) HAD BEEN

APPROACHED ON 10 OCTOBER BY THE ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR IN BONN. AFTER FILLING IN THE BACKGROUND IN ARGENTINA (SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF THE BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE AND RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY) THE AMBASSADOR HAD TOLD PFEFFER, THAT THIS YEAR'S RESOLUTION ON THE FALKLANDS WOULD BE Milder THAN IN EARLIER YEARS AND HE HAD CONFIRMED EXPLICITLY THAT ARGENTINA HOPED TO WIN OVER SOME AT LEAST OF OUR PARTNERS TO A POSITIVE VOTE. HE HAD NOT GIVEN PFEFFER A TEXT OF THE REVISED ARGENTINE RESOLUTION BUT PFEFFER'S IMPRESSION WAS THAT THE ARGENTINIANS EXPECTED TO BE DISCUSSING IT WITH US AT SOME STAGE PERHAPS EVEN WITH A VIEW (HE HOPED) TO ARRIVING AT A TEXT ON WHICH THE UK COULD ABSTAIN.

7. ANDREANI (FRANCE) ASKED WHY WE WERE SO INSISTENT THAT WHEN THE ARGENTINES TALKED ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY NEGOTIATIONS THEY MEANT NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY. THEY HAD GIVEN THE FRENCH A MORE FLEXIBLE IMPRESSION AND HAD MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WERE NOT EXPECTING A SOLUTION IN ANY CASE FOR A VERY LONG TIME. THOMAS POINTED AGAIN TO THE EVIDENCE OF ALFONSIN'S RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THIS QUESTION . IT WAS DIFFICULT TO FIND A MORE AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE.

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8. CAHEN (BELGIUM) ASKED WHETHER IF WE STARTED ON THE PROCESS OF NORMALISATION, WE WOULD THEN BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE STATUS OF THE ISLANDS. THOMAS REMINDED HIM THAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT A PEOPLE WHOSE ISLANDS HAD BEEN INVADED BY ARGENTINA NO MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO AND WHO HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO EXTREMELY HARSH TREATMENT BY THE MILITARY REGIME. IT WAS NOT CONCEIVABLE, WITHIN A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, TO EXPECT PEOPLE TO BE PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT FUTURE STATUS AGAINST THAT BACKGROUND, MORE PARTICULARLY WHEN THE ARGENTINIANS HAD MADE IT SO POINTEDLY CLEAR THAT THE ONLY OUTCOME FOR THEM MUST BE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY. TO PRESS US TO NEGOTIATE WITH ARGENTINA ON THE FUTURE STATUS OF THE ISLANDS WAS TO CONDEMN SUCH DISCUSSIONS TO FAILURE SINCE SOVEREIGNTY WAS THE VERY ISSUE THAT DIVIDED US. THIS WAS WHY THE ONLY CONSTRUCTIVE COURSE WAS TO CONCENTRATE ON NORMALISATION. WE HOPED OUR FRIENDS WOULD URGE THIS ON THE ARGENTINIANS.

9. STATHATOS (GREECE) TRIED TO DRAW A PARALLEL WITH CYPRUS, WHERE THE BRITISH HAD NOT INSISTED ON THE VIEWS OF THE MAJORITY BEING PARAMOUNT. THOMAS SAID THERE WAS NO POSSIBLE PARALLEL BETWEEN THESE TWO CASES. WAS GREECE PROPOSING TO ENDORSE THE PRINCIPLE OF PROPINQUITY ON TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AS A BASIS FOR SETTLING SUCH QUESTIONS?

10. MACKERNAN (SPEAKING FOR IRELAND) WAS FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT HE COULD DELIVER AN IRISH ABSTENTION THIS TIME BUT HE FEARED IT WOULD BE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO HOLD THE LINE. THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES AND THE PRINCIPLE OF NEGOTIATIONS WERE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL CONDUCT. SOONER OR LATER THE UK WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THE NEED TO NEGOTIATE OVER THE DISPUTE WITH ARGENTINA. THOMAS POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS AN EQUALLY IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE ENshrined IN THE UN CHARTER - SELF-DETERMINATION - WHICH EVERYONE SEEMED DETERMINED TO IGNORE.

11. THE ONLY POLITICAL DIRECTOR WHO SPOKE UP UNEQUIVOCALLY IN FAVOUR OF THE UK'S POSITION WAS MISCHO (LUXEMBOURG) WHOSE COUNTRY WOULD NOT EXIST IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF DETERMINATION.

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