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(30)

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ZZ F C O

GRS 320

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM UKMIS NEW YORK 271726Z APR 82

TO FLASH F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 575 DATED 27 APRIL 82

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

MY TELECONS WITH HOLMES: EXCHANGES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
ABOUT THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S 'APPEAL'

1. THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S SPOKESMAN YESTERDAY (MY TELNO 570, PARAGRAPH 2) HAS NOT BECOME A STORY HERE. IT WAS A ROUTINE, LOW-KEY COMMENT OF A KIND WHICH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OFTEN MAKES ABOUT DISPUTES AND TENSION BETWEEN MEMBER STATES. SUCH STATEMENTS ARE NOT FORMALLY COMMUNICATED TO THE DELEGATIONS CONCERNED AND DO NOT CALL FOR ANY FORMAL RESPONSE. HOWEVER, AS THE STATEMENT WAS ON THIS OCCASION OPEN TO MISINTERPRETATION, I THOUGHT IT RIGHT TO CALL ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND SPEAK AS IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF MY TELNO 570.

HERE. IT WAS A ROUTINE, LOW-KEY COMMENT OF A KIND WHICH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OFTEN MAKES ABOUT DISPUTES AND TENSION BETWEEN MEMBER STATES. SUCH STATEMENTS ARE NOT FORMALLY COMMUNICATED TO THE DELEGATIONS CONCERNED AND DO NOT CALL FOR ANY FORMAL RESPONSE. HOWEVER, AS THE STATEMENT WAS ON THIS OCCASION OPEN TO MISINTERPRETATION, I THOUGHT IT RIGHT TO CALL ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND SPEAK AS IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF MY TELNO 570.

2. AS I INDICATED TO HOLMES, I AM RELUCTANT TO ISSUE ANY KIND OF FORMAL STATEMENT FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION HERE. THIS WOULD BE ALMOST UNPRECEDENTED (AS FAR AS I CAN RECALL ONLY THE ISRAELIS AND SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE TAKEN SUCH ACTION IN RECENT YEARS). A FORMAL STATEMENT BY ME WOULD PROVOKE A REJOINDER BY ROCA (ARGENTINA) AND WOULD GENERATE LATIN PRESSURE ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO MAKE A FURTHER STATEMENT, WHICH WOULD PROBABLY NOT IMPROVE MATTERS.

3. I HAVE CONCLUDED THEREFORE THAT THE BEST WAY OF DEFUSING THIS EPISODE QUICKLY WOULD BE FOR ME TO GIVE THE STATEMENT IN MY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING TELEGRAM INFORMALLY TO THE BRITISH CORRESPONDENTS HERE BUT NOT ISSUE IT AS A FULL-BLOWN PRESS RELEASE WHICH WOULD BE CIRCULATED TO DELEGATIONS. I AM PROCEEDING ACCO^RDINGLY. I SHALL ALSO SPEAK ON SIMILAR LINES WHEN INTERVIEWED SHORTLY FOR THE BBC 2 NEWSNIGHT PROGRAMME AND PERHAPS ALSO FOR BBC RADIO.

4. MR DENIS HEALEY TELEPHONED FROM PHILADELPHIA THIS MORNING TO ASK WHETHER WE REGARDED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ''APPEAL'' AS COMPARABLE TO U THANT'S APPEAL TO THE US AND USSR DURING THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, I.E. THE IDEA URQUHART HAD DISCUSSED WITH HIM LAST WEEK (MY TELNO 544). WE SAID THAT WE DID NOT. THIS MAY EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THE ''APPEAL'' BY MR FOOT IN THE HOUSE TODAY.

PARSONS

NNNN