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GRS 260

SECRET

FM SANTIAGO 282110Z APR 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 182 OF 28 APR

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK, PRIORITY LA PAZ, LIMA, MONTEVIDEO, WASHINGTON

FALKLANDS/CHILE/OAS

MY TELEGRAM NO.160 (NOT TO ALL)

1. RELIABLE MEDIUM LEVEL MFA CONTACT HAS REPORTED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE (PLEASE PROTECT) MFA HAD PREPARED A COMPLEX DOSSIER OF VARYING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THEIR DELEGATION TO THE OAS DEPENDING ON THE MODERATION OR INTEMPERANCE OF ANY EVENTUAL ARGENTINE RESOLUTION. HOWEVER AT A MEETING OF THE JUNTA ON 22/23 APRIL, PRESIDENT PINOCHET APPARENTLY OVERRULED THESE DIPLOMATIC NICETIES AND HIS FOREIGN MINISTER ROJAS, AND INSTRUCTED THAT CHILE WOULD IN ANY EVENT ABSTAIN.
2. MFA SAY THAT THIS DECISION STEMMED FROM A CONVICTION THAT GALTIERI'S DAYS ARE NOW NUMBERED. IN THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT'S VIEW, GALTIERI IS COMING UNDER SEVERE PRESSURE FROM THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND SOLITS ARE ALREADY DISCERNIBLE WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES

AND SPLITS ARE ALREADY DISCERNIBLE WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES. CHILEANS ALSO APPEAR CONVINCED THAT HMG IS NOW SO FIRMLY COMMITTED TO RECOVERY OF THE FALKLANDS COME WHAT MAY, THAT GALTIERI WILL FALL AS A RESULT. WITH ARGENTINA THEN PLUNGED INTO A MAJOR POLITICAL CRISIS (WITH A TOTTERING ECONOMY) CHILEANS NOW CONSIDER IT UNLIKELY THAT ANY NEW REGIME WHICH EMERGES OF WHATEVER COMPLEXION WOULD CONTEMPLATE ATTACKING CHILE, ESPECIALLY AS THE CONSEQUENCES OF GALTIERI'S MILITARY FOOLHARDINESS WOULD BE STILL SO FRESH IN ARGENTINE MINDS.

3. MFA CONTACT ALSO CONFIRMED THAT ARGENTINA HAD INDEED APPROACHED CHILE WITH AN OFFER OVER THE BEAGLE CHANNEL (MY TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE) BUT HAD BEEN REBUFFED, PARTLY BECAUSE CHILIEAN GOVERNMENT MISTRUSTED ARGENTINE PROMISES AND PARTLY BECAUSE THEY NO LONGER SAW GALTIERI AS A LEADER WITH A POLITICAL FUTURE.

4. MFA ARE RESIGNED TO ARGENTINA REGARDING THE CHILEAN ABSTENTION AT THE OAS ON 27 APRIL AS AN QUOTE UNFRIENDLY UNQUOTE ACT AND EXPECT REPRISALS OF SOME SORT THOUGH THEY ARE NOT YET PREPARED TO BE SPECIFIC.

HEATH