

GRS 450

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

FM DELHI 290700Z APR 82

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 431 OF 29 APRIL

MY TELEGRAM NUMBER 420: FALKLAND ISLANDS

1. I PUT OUR CASE TO MRS GANDHI YESTERDAY EVENING. I SAID WE WERE NOT ASKING HER FOR ANY SPECIFIC ACTION INTERNATIONALLY BUT I FELT I SHOULD MAKE CLEAR THE STRENGTH OF BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLES AT STAKE.
2. MRS GANDHI WAS MOST AFFABLE BUT SAID SHE DID NOT APPROVE EITHER OF WHAT THE ARGENTINES HAD DONE OR OF WHAT WE WERE DOING. SOMEWHAT VAGUELY SHE INDICATED THAT SHE HAD TO FOLLOW THE LINE TAKEN BY THE NON-ALIGNED. I SAID THAT VIRTUALLY EVERY GOVERNMENT WOULD AGREE THAT IN INTERNATIONAL LAW THE DECISIONS OF THE UN, IN THIS CASE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502, TOOK PRECEDENCE OVER THE COMMUNIQUE OF ANY GROUP OF COUNTRIES. MRS GANDHI SMILED AND DID NOT REPLY. I CONTINUED THAT I HOPED THAT SHE ACTUALLY DISAPPROVED OF WHAT THE ARGENTINES HAD DONE. SHE ASSURED ME THAT SHE DID. I EXPLAINED THAT WE WERE ACTING SCRUPULOUSLY UNDER ARTICLE 51 OF THE CHARTER AND WERE USING FORCE ONLY TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY AND PROPORTIONATE.
3. MRS GANDHI SAID THE ARGENTINES WERE CLAIMING THAT THE REASON WHY THE POPULATION OF THE FALKLANDS WAS NOW OVERWHELMINGLY BRITISH WAS THAT WE HAD FORCEABLY REMOVED THE FORMER ARGENTINIAN INHABITANTS. MY EXPLANATION OF THE REMOVAL OF THE PENAL COLONY IN 1833 MADE HER SMILE AGAIN. I SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT A COLONIAL DISPUTE.
4. I MADE SOME REMARKS ABOUT THE NATURE OF MILITARY DICTATORSHIPS AND ABOUT THE DEPLORABLE EXAMPLE WHICH THE JUNTA IN ARGENTINA WAS SETTING FOR OTHER DISPUTES ELSEWHERE, WHETHER ISLANDS OR FRONTIERS. MRS GANDHI PLAINLY GOT THE POINT. I SAID IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT DECENT CONVENTIONS SHOULD BE UPHELD IN INTERNATIONAL LIFE AND THAT I HOPED THAT WHEN THE ANSWER TO A FORTHCOMING PQ WAS FRAMED THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WOULD MAKE IT PLAIN THAT THEY THOUGHT SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502 SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN ALL ITS PARTS. MRS GANDHI SAID SHE WAS UNAWARE OF THE PQ AND INSTRUCTED HER NOTETAKER TO LOOK INTO IT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

5. THIS CONVERSATION WAS UNSATISFACTORY IN THAT IT DID NOT PRODUCE ANY EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR OUR POSITION, BUT IT WAS INTERESTING THAT MRS GANDHI DID NOT ASK THAT WE SHOULD COMPLY WITH THE VIEWS OF THE NON-ALIGNED OR MAKE ANY SUGGESTION AS TO WHAT OUR POLICY SHOULD BE. I AM REASONABLY SATISFIED THAT SHE UNDERSTANDS THE MAIN POINTS IN OUR CASE AND SEES THEIR STRENGTH. NEVERTHELESS I THINK THAT IN PUBLIC THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WILL PROBABLY TRY TO MAINTAIN SOME SORT OF BALANCE.

THOMSON

FCO

S AM D

CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

FALKLAND ISLANDS

COPIES TO

PS/CHANCELLOR }
SIR E COUZENS }
MR LITTLER } TREASURY
MR HAWTIN }
MR PERETZ }
MR ILETT }

SIR M PALLISER CABINET OFFICE

MISS DICKSON (EIP DIVN) D/ENERGY

MR A WILLIAMS DSW 60

2

CONFIDENTIAL