

PS
MR HURD
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MR GIFFARD
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MR ADAMS
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PS/S OF S FOR DEFENCE
PS/CHANCELLOR)
SIR K COUZENS)
MR LITTLER)
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HD/UND
HD/PLANNING STAFF
MR ANTHONY WILLIAMS W60
RESIDENT CLERK

MISS DICKSON (EIP DIV) D/EN
DIO CABINET OFFICE
MR WADE-GERY CABINET OFFICE
MR FULLER SAPU/DIO " "

SIR M PALLISER CABINET OFFICE
SIR R ARMSTRONG " "

(Copy passed to Emergency Staff)

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 300820Z

FM MEXICO CITY 292230Z APRIL 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 337 OF 29 APRIL

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, ROUTINE UKMIS NEW YORK

YOUR TELNO. 342: MEETING WITH MEXICAN PRESIDENT

1. I CALLED ON PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO THIS MORNING. WE WERE ALONE.
2. I SAID THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE MESSAGE CONVEYED BTO HER BY ROSSELL DE LA LAMA ON 26 APRIL. LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID THAT HE WAS ANXIOUS TO HELP IN ANY WAY BUT DID NOT WANT TO CUT ACROSS THE EFFORTS OF OTHERS. HE WOULD BE GLAD TO OFFER A PLACE FOR NEGOTIATIONS IF AND WHEN NEED AROSE. IN SUCH NEGOTIATIONS HE WOULD NOT SEEK TO BE A MEDIATOR BUT RATHER A COMMUNICATOR WHO WOULD ENABLE THE PARTIES CONCERNED TO MEET FACE TO FACE. WE HAD ONLY TO LET HIM KNOW AND HE WOULD SET THINGS IN TRAIN IMMEDIATELY. SO FAR HE HAD NOT SENT ANY EMISSARY, OFFICIAL OR OTHERWISE, TO BUENOS AIRES TO SPEAK TO GENERAL GALTIERI. HE HAD NOT THOUGHT IT WORTHWHILE IN THE PRESENT MOOD OF THE ARGENTINES.
3. LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW HOW US SECRETARY OF STATE HAIG WAS GETTING ON BUT IT WAS HARD TO BE OPTIMISTIC. HE REALIZED THAT WE COULD NOT LEAVE THE FLEET BOUNCING UP AND DOWN IN THE TERRIBLE WEATHER OUTSIDE THE FALKLANDS MUCH LONGER. HE ALSO KNEW HOW DIFFICULT IT WAS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE ARGENTINE JUNTA WHICH CONSISTED OF AMBITIOUS INDIVIDUALS. IT WAS OBVIOUS THEY LAUNCHED THEIR INVASION TO DISTRACT ATTENTION FROM

THAT THEY HAD LAUNCHED THEIR INVASION TO DISTRACT ATTENTION FROM THEIR FAILURES AT HOME, AND TO UNIFY THE ARGENTINES. YET THE PRINCIPAL RESULT SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN TO UNIFY THE BRITISH IN DEFENCE OF THE FALKLANDS.

4. I SAID THAT WE HAD BEEN CRITICISED IN MEXICO FOR THE LENGTH OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE BEFORE THE ARGENTINE INVASION OF 2 APRIL. THESE CRITICISMS WERE UNFAIR. SUCCESSIVE BRITISH GOVERNMENTS HAD TRIED TO ESTABLISH A NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, AND HAD SINCE BEEN MUCH CRITICISED FOR DOING SO. BUT THE DIFFICULTIES HAD BEEN AND WERE VERY GREAT. WE COULD NOT ABANDON THE ISLANDERS; THEIR VIEWS AND INTERESTS HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO FULL ACCOUNT. THEY WERE A DEMOCRATIC AND STRONG-MINDED PEOPLE WITH DEEP SUSPICIONS OF ARGENTINA. THEIR FEELINGS ON THE SUBJECT HAD BEEN EXPRESSED IN THE ELECTIONS TO THEIR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL LAST AUTUMN. THESE SUSPICIONS HAD BEEN ONLY TOO JUSTIFIED BY SUBSEQUENT EVENTS. LIKE MEXICO, BRITAIN ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION.

5. I REFERRED BRIEFLY TO THE OAS DEBATE ON 27/28 APRIL. WE DID NOT OF COURSE AGREE WITH MEXICO ON THE LEGAL BASIS OF THE ARGENTINE CLAIM, BUT WE HAD APPRECIATED THE MODERATE ATTITUDE OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT AND ROLE IN WORKING OUT THE FINAL RESOLUTION. LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID THAT MEXICO HAD FOUGHT HARD TO GET A BALANCED RESULT. HE FELT THAT THE RESOLUTION WAS THE BEST THAT COULD BE ACHIEVED. MEXICO WAS PART OF LATIN AMERICA, AND TOOK A CORRESPONDING ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ARGENTINE CLAIM. BUT NO ONE DEPLORED MORE THAN MEXICO THE METHODS THE ARGENTINES HAD USED TO PURSUE IT. IF OTHER COUNTRIES BEHAVED LIKEWISE WITH THEIR ASSORTED CLAIMS, THEN THE WORLD WOULD GO BACK TO THE JUNGLE.

6. BEFORE LEAVING I SAID THAT MUCH AS WE WANTED A PEACEFUL OUTCOME, THE FIRST REQUIREMENT WAS FOR THE ARGENTINES TO WITHDRAW THEIR FORCES IN CONFORMITY WITH THE MANDATORY RESOLUTION OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL. MOREOVER ANY NEW STATUS FOR THE ISLANDS WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE VIEWS AND INTERESTS OF THE INHABITANTS. BUT WE WERE OTHERWISE OPEN FOR DISCUSSION. WHEN HE ASKED ABOUT SOVEREIGNTY, I SAID THAT IT WOULD BE BEST TO LEAVE QUESTIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY ASIDE AS OBVIOUSLY NEITHER COULD AGREE. THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE OF OTHER MATTER FOR NEGOTIATION. IT WOULD TAKE A LONG TIME. PEOPLE'S MINDS COULD NOT CHANGE OVERNIGHT.

7. LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID THIS WAS A REASONABLE APPROACH. HE WOULD REFLECT ON OUR MEETING AND CONSIDER WHETHER TO SEND A PERSONAL EMISSARY TO TALK TO THE ARGENTINES IN BUENOS AIRES. IF HE DID SO HE WOULD LET ME KNOW. IN ANY EVENT WE SHOULD REMAIN IN TOUCH.

8. PLEASE SEE MIFT.