

UN

NOTE TO PRESS OFFICERS

APPEAL TO BRITAIN AND THE ARGENTINE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON 26 APRIL 1982

There was an exchange in the House of Commons today between Mr Michael Foot MP and the Prime Minister on this subject in which Michael Foot sought to establish what response had been given by HMG.

On the record

The Secretary-General's appeal had no formal status and no formal reply is called for. It was issued as a press release and not formally brought to our attention.

Unattributable

In our view the appeal was low key and the least that the Secretary-General could do given the pressure he was under. Sir Anthony Parsons called on him and said that we could not accept this. It was Argentina which was in breach of the Resolution and there was no question of HMG having in any way breached the terms of SCR 502. The Secretary-General took the point.

GMJ

27 April 1982

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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 262345Z APR 82  
TO IMMEDIATE F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 570 OF 26 APRIL 1982  
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON.

MY TELNO 559: FALKLAND ISLANDS IN THE UN.

1. I HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH A NUMBER OF SECURITY COUNCIL DELEGATES TODAY (26 APRIL) INCLUDING ALL THE DO-GOODERS. NO ONE HAS ATTEMPTED TO CRITICISE US FOR YESTERDAY'S ACTION IN SOUTH GEORGIA, ALTHOUGH THERE IS GENERAL RELIEF THAT THERE WERE NO FATAL CASUALTIES - THIS HAS I THINK MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE TO FIRST REACTIONS. OUR RECOVERY OF SOUTH GEORGIA HAS FURTHER HEIGHTENED THE DISPOSITION OF THE DO-GOODERS TO THINK ABOUT FRESH RECOURSE TO THE COUNCIL DESIGNED TO PREVENT MORE MILITARY ACTION AND TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS OF BRINGING ABOUT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. I HAVE LEFT THEM IN NO DOUBT OF MY VIEWS WHICH ARE WELL KNOWN TO YOU. SO FAR, THERE IS NO DISPOSITION TO CALL THE COUNCIL BEFORE THE OAS MEETING IN WASHINGTON IS OVER AND IT IS CLEAR WHETHER OR NOT HAIG IS STILL IN BUSINESS.

2. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TODAY PUBLISHED "APPEALS TO ARGENTINA AND THE UK TO COMPLY WITH THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION AND TO REFRAIN FROM BROADENING THE CONFLICT". THE TEXT OF HIS STATEMENT WAS AS FOLLOWS:

"IN VIEW OF THE FURTHER ARMED EXCHANGE BETWEEN ARGENTINE AND BRITISH FORCES WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE OVER SOUTH GEORGIA ISLAND, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE ESCALATION OF THE SITUATION BE HALTED.

IN THIS CRITICAL SITUATION, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL THEREFORE APPEALS TO BOTH PARTIES TO COMPLY IMMEDIATELY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502 (1982) AND TO REFRAIN FROM ANY ACTION THAT WOULD BROADEN YET FURTHER THE CONFLICT WHICH THREATENS TO HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR WORLD PEACE".

3. I CALLED ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL THIS EVENING. I TOLD HIM THAT HIS STATEMENT SUGGESTED THAT WE HAD FAILED TO COMPLY WITH SCR 502. I COULD NOT ACCEPT THIS. IT WAS ARGENTINA WHICH WAS IN BREACH OF THE RESOLUTION. I DREW HIS ATTENTION TO THE RELEVANT PASSAGES IN MY LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (MY TELNO 565). THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TOOK MY POINT AND WAS MOST APOLOGETIC. HE SAID, I BELIEVE GENUINELY, THAT HE AND HIS STAFF HAD WORKED VERY HARD TO PRODUCE A COMPLETELY NEUTRAL TEXT. HE NOW SAW THAT IT COULD BE REGARDED BY US AS EQUIVOCAL. HE WAS EXTREMELY SCRRY.

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/ 4. THE JAPANESE

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4. THE JAPANESE HAVE CIRCULATED THE STATEMENT IN TOKYO TELNO 197 AS A SECURITY COUNCIL DOCUMENT. I AM REPORTING SEPARATELY THE OUTCOME OVER THE NAM COMMUNIQUE.

5. PEREZ DE CUELLAR TOLD ME THAT THE PERUVIAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON HAD TOLD HIM THAT AN IDEA WAS GOING AROUND AT THE OAS MEETING THAT, IF HAIG FAILED, EACH OF THE TWO PARTIES SHOULD BE INVITED TO NOMINATE A NEGOTIATOR TO HOLD TALKS UNDER THE AEGIS OF A NEUTRAL REFEREE APPOINTED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UN. THIS PROPOSITION WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY CALLS ON BOTH SIDES TO CEASE HOSTILITIES, EXERCISE RESTRAINT ETC.

6. AS YOU WILL SEE FROM THE ABOVE, THE PRESSURE FOR SOME FORM OF UN PEACE MAKING INTERVENTION IS MOUNTING ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT YET IRRESISTIBLE. ONE THING THAT WORRIES ME IS THAT THE OAS MEETING IN WASHINGTON MAY END UP WITH AN ATTEMPT TO REACH CONSENSUS ON AN APPARENTLY MILD RESOLUTION CALLING FOR MILITARY RESTRAINT COMBINED WITH RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS OF SOME KIND, AND THAT THE AMERICANS, IF ONLY TO BRING THE MEETING TO A CLOSE WOULD BE INCLINED TO JOIN SUCH A CONSENSUS. IF THEY DID SO, AND THE ARGENTINES OR OTHERS WERE CLEVER ENOUGH TO TABLE IDENTICAL WORDING AS A SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION, WE MIGHT FIND OURSELVES IN THE EXTREMELY AWAKWARD POSITION OF HAVING TO VOTE AGAINST SOMETHING WHICH THE AMERICANS WOULD FEEL OBLIGED TO VOTE IN FAVOUR OF (AS WELL AS ALL OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL).

PARSONS

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