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FM BUENOS AIRES 052311Z MAR 68
TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 60 OF 25 MARCH 1968

INFO IMMEDIATE PORT STANLEY (PERSONAL FOR GOVERNOR)

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON

INFO SAVING UKMIS NEW YORK

W/SO 94

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RECEIVED

13 MY TELNO 03: FALKLANDS DISPUTE

1. IN MY INTERVIEW WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER (THIS EVENING 1, AT HIS INVITATION, REHEARSED AGAIN THE REASONS WHY THE RECENT PRESS OUTBURSTS WERE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND COULD LEAD TO DELAY IN OUR RESPONSE. COSTA MENDEZ FELT IT NECESSARY TO REPEAT FORMALLY AND AT SOME LENGTH THE EXPLANATIONS OF ARGENTINE

DISSATISFACTION WITH PROGRESS THAT WE HAD HEARD FROM ROS IN NEW YORK (TO WHICH I REPLIED FIRMLY ON SIMILARLY WELL WORN LINES) BUT ENDED BY DENYING THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WISHED IN ANY WAY TO THREATEN AND BY ADMITTING WITH REGRET THAT THEY COULD NOT ALWAYS PREVENT UNHELPFUL PRESS TREATMENT.

2. HE THEN ASKED WHAT COULD BE DONE NOW AND I SUGGESTED ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS SPECIFICALLY DISTANCING THEMSELVES FROM PRESS REPORTS THAT THREATS WERE BEING HELD IN RESERVE. IN REPLY HE DREW ATTENTION TO STATEMENTS HE HAD MADE EARLIER TODAY IN BRAZIL, MAKING CLEAR THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT IMPOSING DEADLINES BUT SETTING OUT A PROPOSED PROGRAMME WHICH INCLUDED ONLY RECOURSES CONTEMPLATED IN THE UN CHARTER.

3. WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT SOMETHING MORE SPECIFIC WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE HE ENTERED INTO A LONG DISCOURSE ON THE NEED FOR MORE SERIOUS AND CONTINUOUS DISCUSSIONS FOR WHICH, AS LATINS, THE ARGENTINES SAW THE DISCIPLINE OF A MONTHLY CALENDAR AS NECESSARY. I EXPLAINED THAT OUR ANGLO-SAXON RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT UNREALISTIC RHYTHMS WAS PRACTICAL AND CONCEALED NO DESIRE TO PROCRASTINATE. I COULD ONLY SAY THAT WE STILL HOPED TO GIVE HIM AN ANSWER AND TO PROCEED THEREAFTER AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE. I ASKED HIM TO CONFIRM THAT WHAT HE STILL WANTED WAS APPROVAL OF THE NEW YORK DRAFT WORKING PAPER AND THIS HE DID. WE LEFT IT THAT I WOULD SEE HIM AS SOON AS I HAD ANYTHING TO COMMUNICATE.

4. THOUGH WE ARE PERSONAL FRIENDS AND COSTA MENDEZ SPEAKS EXCELLENT ENGLISH THE INTERVIEW WAS FORMAL AND MAINLY IN SPANISH. BOTH ROS AND FIGUEROA (THE MINISTER'S CHEF DE CABINET) WERE PRESENT BUT LARGELY SILENT. WE BOTH TALKED QUITE TOUGHLY, BUT ENDED IN FRIENDLY PERSONAL CHAT.

FCO PSE PASS SAVING TO UKMIS NEW YORK

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