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FOR CWG

IMMEDIATE 080032Z APR 82

FROM COMMCEN FCO LONDON  
TO MODUK  
CINCFLEET

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SIC A3A/A2N/19F

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FM WASHINGTON 080032Z APR 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1181 OF 7 APRIL

INFO UKMIS NEW YORK, BIS NEW YORK.

MY IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING TELEGRAM: FALKLANDS: PRESS COVERAGE:  
NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE BY APPEL

1. APPEL SAYS THAT THE BRITISH FLOTILLA STEAMING TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDS HAD BEEN GIVEN NO SPECIFIC ORDERS BECAUSE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS NOT DECIDED WHAT IT WANTS IT TO DO. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HOPES THAT ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE WILL PERSUADE THE ARGENTINES TO PULL THEIR TROOPS OUT OF THE FALKLANDS. BUT, APPEL ADDS, IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS HIGHLY DOUBTFUL THAT EITHER LONDON OR BUENOS AIRES COULD ACCEPT THE HONGKONG-TYPE SOLUTION BEING CONSIDERED IN WASHINGTON.

2. APPEL SAYS THAT, IF PEACEFUL PERSUASION FAILS, THE PRIME MINISTER WILL HAVE NO MORE ROOM FOR POLITICAL MANOEUVRE AND QUOTES A MEMBER OF THE CABINET AS SAYING THAT THE PRIME MINISTER CANNOT SURVIVE EITHER IF SHE SHRINKS FROM A MILITARY SHOWDOWN OR IF SHE GIVES THE ORDER TO FIGHT AND LOSES. HOWEVER, APPEL GOES ON TO NOTE SUGGESTIONS IN THE BRITISH PRESS THAT THE BRITISH FLEET SHOULD BE USED TO CALL THE ARGENTINE BLUFF BUT NOT FOR A FULL SCALE WAR, AND SPECULATES THAT IN COMING DAYS PUBLIC OPINION MAY THINK THE AFFAIR HAS BEEN BLOWN UP OUT OF PROPORTION. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FATE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDERS ARE BOUND TO BE ASKED E.G. HOW TO PREVENT THE ARGENTINES FROM TAKING HOSTAGES, OR WHETHER BRITAIN WOULD BE PREPARED TO SEE HOSTAGES KILLED. APPEL SAYS THE SECOND MAJOR QUESTION NOW BEING AIRED IN LONDON IS HOW BRITAIN COULD DEFEND THE FALKLANDS EVEN IF IT COULD GAIN CONTROL AND HE CONCLUDES THAT WE COULD ONLY DO SO BY DISTORTING OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING, CRIPPLING OUR ABILITY TO FULFIL NATO COMMITMENTS AND PERHAPS BY ABANDONING THE PURCHASE OF TRIDENT.

HENDERSON  
BT

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