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FOR INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK WASHINGTON AND UKDEL NATO

FCO TELNO 50 TO ABIJAN: FALKLAND ISLANDS MARITIME EXCLUSION ZONE: SOVIET ATTITUDE.

- 1. ACTING ON THE INSTRUCTIONS IN TUR I CALLED THIS AFTERNOON ON SEMEONOV, THE DEPUTY HEAD OF THE SECOND EUROPEAN DEPT IN THE MFA. I READ AND HANDED HIM THE TEXT OF MR NOTT'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF A MARITIME EXCLUSION ZONE, GIVING SEMEONOV ON AN INFORMAL BASIS A COPY OF MY SPEAKING NOTE BASED ON PARA, 2 OF TUR.
- 2. SEMEONOV HAD A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS PREPARED. THE FIRST HALF WERE ON PRACTICAL MATTERS:
- A) FOREIGN VESSELS. SEMEONOV ASKED HOW THE MARITIME EXCLUSION ZONE WOULD AFFECT NON-ARGENTINE VESSELS. I TOLD HIM THAT WE EXPECTED THE SHIPS OF OTHER NATIONALITIES TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF HMG'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF A MARITIME EXCLUSION ZONE.
- B) EXTENT OF ZONE. WHY HAD THE FIGURE OF 200 NAUTICAL MILES
 BEEN CHOSEN? I TOLD SEMEONOV THAT I WAS NOT INSTRUCTED ON THE POINT
 BUT SUPPOSED THAT THIS WAS A MILITATILY CONVENIENT ZONE. I WOULD
 SEE IF I COULD GIVE HIM ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THIS QUESTION.
- C) US MEDIATION. HAD MR HAIG FLOWN TO LONDON? WAS THE US THEREFORE ACTING AS A MEDIATOR IN THE DISPUTE? I TOLD SEMEONOV THAT I HAD NOT HEARD THE WORD MEDIATOR USED IN THIS CONTEXT BUT HMG NO DOUBT WELCOMED ASSISTANCE FROM MANY QUARTERS. THE US WAS THE LARGEST POWER IN THE AMERICAN HEMISPHERE AND A FRIEND AND ASSOCIATE OF THE UK PRESIDENT REAGAN HAD SOUGHT TO DISSUADE THE ARGENTINE PRESIDENT FROM THE ILLEGAL INVASION. IT WAS NATUAL THAT THE US SHOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE OUTCOME OF THIS DISPUTE. SEMEONOV COMMENTED GRATUITOUSLY THAT THE UNITED STATES NEVER ACTED ALTRUISTICALLY IN THESE MATTERS.
- D) FEASIBILITY. SEMEONOV COMMENTED THAT THE BRITISH FLEET WAS NOT EXPECTED TO REACH THE FLAKLANDS FOR 2 WEEKS, YET THE ZONE WAS TO APPLY FROM 12 APRIL. HOW DID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT INTEND TO ENFORCE THE ZONE?
- I REPLIED THAT THE NATURE AND DEPLOYMENT OF UK FORCES, FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, COULD NOT BE COMMENTED UPON. BUT, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I RECALLED THAT EVEN BEFORE THE ARGENTINE AGGRESSION THERE HAD BEEN A CERTAIN BRITISH NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE AREA.

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- E) NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THERE HAD BEEN REPORTS (IN SVENSKA DAGBLADET)
 THAT THE BRITISH TASK FORCE WAS CARRYING TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.
 WAS THIS CORRECT? I REPLIED THAT I TOO HAD SEEN PRESS REPORTS AND
 UNDERSTOOD THERE HAD BEEN NO COMMENT ON THIS FROM HMG. THE REST OF
 SEMEONOV'S QUESTIONS DID MORE TO REVEAL THE SOVIET POSITION
 IN THE CRISIS:
- F) THE UN DECISION ON DECOLONISATION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. DID THE DECALARATION THAT BRITISH ADMINISTRATION WAS TO BE RESTORED ON THE ISLANDS MEAN THAT BRITAIN OPPOSED DECOLONISATION? I REPLIED THAT SEMEONOV HAD AN ERRONEOUS VIEW OF THE SITUATION. WE HAD BELIEVED THAT THE LAST ROUND OF TALKS IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR HAD GONE WELL. I DID NOT SUPPOSE THE SOVIET UNION SUPPORTED THE RESORT TO FORCE WHILE NEGOTIATONS WERE IN PROGRESS. SEMEONOV COMMENTED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES HAD HEARD A DIFFERENT VERSION FROM THE ARGENTINES, WHO CLAIMED THAT THE FEBRUARY TALKS HAD ENDED WITHOUT ANY PROSPECT OF PROGRESS. THIS DIFFERENCE WOULD NEED TO BE CLARIFIED.
- G) USE OF FORCE. DID THE REFERENCE TO MILITARY DEPLOYMENT IN MY SPEAKING NOTE MEAN THAT BRITAIN INTENDED TO USE FORCE? I MADE IT CLEAR THAT OUR AIM WAS TO SOLVE THE DISPUTE BY PEACEFUL MEANS. OUR IMMEDIATE RECOURSE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND ACTIVE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS SHOWED AS MUCH. NEVERTHELESS I WAS SURE THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD RECOGNISE THAT WHEN ONE SOVEREIGN TERRITORY WAS FORCIBLY SEIZED BY ANOTHER COUNTRY, ARTICLE 51 OF THE UN CHARTER GAVE RIGHTS TO SELF-DEFENCE BY ALL MEANS.
- THAT ARTICLE 51. SEMEONOV SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED
 THAT ARTICLE 51 SCARCELY APPLIED IN THIS CASE. SINCE THE ADOPTION
 BY THE UN IN 1963 OF THE RESOLUTION ON DECOLONISATION FOR THE
 FALKLANDS, THE ISLANDS WERE NO LONGER PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
 BUT A TERRITORY IN THE PROCESS OF DECOLONISATION. APPLICATION
 OF ARTICLE 51 TO THE PRESENT SITUATION REPRESENTED A STRAINED
 INTERPRETATION. I UNDERTOOK TO REPORT SEMEONOV'S VIEW BUT
 COMMENTED THAT I WAS SURE YOU WOULD REJECT IT AS I DID. UNTIL
 NEGOTIATIONS DETERMINED OTHERWISE THE FALKLAND ISLANDS WERE
 BRITISH TERRITORY. THE PARAMOUNT CONSIDERATION FOR HMG WAS THE
 WISHES OF THE INHABITANTS. THEY HAD MADE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT
 THEY WISHED TO REMAIN BRITISH CITIZENS. SEMEONOV COMMENTED THAT
 HE COULD RECALL THE CASE OF THE RESETTLEMENT OF THE INHABITANTS
 OF DIEGO GARCIA.

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- I) LAST RESORT. BRITAIN REFERRED TO THE USE OF FORCE AS A LAST RESORT. BUT ARGENTINA HAD NEGOTIATED PATIENTLY FOR 17 YEARS, WITHOUT PROGRESS. IT TOO WAS RESORTING TO FORCE AS A LAST RESORT. WHAT DID BRITAIN IMAGINE OTHER GOVERNMENTS WOULD THINK IF THEY RESORTED TO FORCE? SEMEONOV HOPED THAT BRITAINSS WISDOM AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE WOULD PREVAIL AND IT WOULD SEEK PEACEFUL MEANS TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE. HE QUOTED A SECTION FROM GROMYKO'S SPEECH IN BELGRADE ON 4 APRIL CALLING FOR A CONSIDERED APPROACH TO DISPUTES BETWEEN STATES AND A CALM, CAREFULLY WEIGHED CONDUCT IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. I REITERATED THAT WE WERE SEEKING A PEACEFUL OUTCOME ON THE BASIS OF THE UN RESOLUTION BUT WERE TAKING ALL MEASURES NECESSARY TO PROTECT OUR RIGHTS.
- 3. I ASKED SEMEONOV WHAT WAS THE STATUS OF THE MFA STATEMENT TELEPHONED TO WESTERN NEWS AGENCIES ON 7 APRIL. SEMEONOV EXPLAINED THAT JOURNALISTS HAD BEEN ENQUIRING ABOUT THE SOVIET POSITION. THE ONLY OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE SOVIET POSITION WAS CONTAINED IN TROYANOVSKY'S SPEECH AT THE UNITED NATIONS (SEMEONOV READ THIS IN FULL). THE MFA STATEMENT WAS AN AUTHORITATIVE REPETITION OF TROYANOVSKY. IT IS IN FACT A CONDENSATION OF TROYANOVSKY'S SPEECH WHICH ADDS NOTHING.
- 4. NEITHER I NOR SEMEONOV RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CRISIS FOR THE BRITISH ANTARCTIC TERRITORY (FCO TELNO 665 TO WASHINGTON).

BROOKE TURNER

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