

GRS 510
CONFIDENTIAL
DESKBY 051915Z
FM PARIS 051742Z MAY 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO

CONFIDENTIAL

TOP COPY

52
See 54
See 55

TELEGRAM NUMBER 427 OF 5 MAY 1982
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON UKDEL NATO AND UKMIS NEW YORK
INFO PRIORITY TO ATHENS BRUSSELS UKREP BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN
THE HAGUE LUXEMBOURG ROME DUBLIN AND BONN

MIPT: FRENCH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' STATEMENT ON FALKLANDS CONFLICT.

51

1. I CALLED ON THE SECRETARY GENERAL AT THE QUAI D'ORSAY THIS AFTERNOON TO ASK FOR HIS COMMENTS ON THIS STATEMENT AND IN PARTICULAR THE REFERENCES TO AN IMMEDIATE ENDING OF HOSTILITIES AND THE SEPARATION OF MILITARY FORCES. GUTMANN'S REPLY STARTED BY SAYING THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN THE FRENCH POSITION OF SUPPORT FOR BRITAIN ON THE MAIN ISSUES AND NO CRITICISM INTENDED OF THE UK ACTIONS THAT PRECEDED THE STATEMENT.

2. GUTMANN STRESSED HEAVILY THE PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION. WITH THE ESCALATION IN FIGHTING, PUBLIC OPINION WAS CHANGING: CYNICALLY ONE MIGHT SAY PEOPLE WERE BEGINNING TO REALISE THAT WAR WAS A SERIOUS MATTER. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT REALISED THAT BRITAIN WAS CAUGHT IN A LOGICAL DILEMA. THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT REFUSED TO NEGOTIATE EXCEPT ON THE UNACCEPTABLE BASIS OF PRE-JUDGING THE ISSUE OF SOVEREIGNTY. THE UK WAS UNDER CONSTRAINTS OF TIME, WEATHER ETC. AND, IN THE ABSENCE OF AN ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT SOON, HAD ONLY THE ALTERNATIVES OF WITHDRAWING THE TASK FORCE OR USING IT TO INVADE THE FALKLANDS. BUT IF SUCH AN INVASION TOOK PLACE BEFORE THE UK HAD CONVINCED PUBLIC OPINION OF ITS CLEAR DESIRE TO SEEK A PEACEFUL SOLUTION BY NEGOTIATION THE IMPRESSION WOULD GAIN GROUND THAT IT ATTACHED GREATER IMPORTANCE TO REVENGE AND PUNISHMENT AND THERE WOULD BE A DRAMATIC DOWNTURN IN WORLD SUPPORT. IN THE FRENCH VIEW THEREFORE A SPECTACULAR PEACE INITIATIVE WAS NEEDED. GUTMANN WAS NOT AUTHORISED TO MAKE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS, BUT FELT SURE THAT POSSIBILITIES WOULD OCCUR TO US.

3. RETURNING TO THE COMMUNIQUE IN MIPT, GUTMANN SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN DRAFTED BY CHEYSSON AND HIMSELF IN ADVANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THERE WAS NO INTENTION IN THE MIND OF HIMSELF, HIS MINISTER OR PRESIDENT MITTERRAND TO CRITICISE THE UK. IT WAS MORE A QUESTION OF SETTING A FIRE-BREAK TO CONTAIN PUBLIC OPINION. HE HOPED WE WOULD NOTE THE CAREFUL WORDING OF THE REFERENCE TO THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL, WHICH MADE CLEAR THAT THE SOLUTION WOULD NOT NECESSARILY LIE WITH THE UN, ONLY THE OPENING UP OF WAYS TO A SOLUTION. THE SEPARATION OF MILITARY FORCES WAS A REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT THE BRITISH TASK FORCE WAS NOW UNDER ATTACK BY THE ARGENTINE BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE TEZ. THE WORDING OF THE COMMUNIQUE SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS A LIMITATION ON THE BRITISH RIGHT TO SELF-DEFENCE OR A CALL FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATUS QUO.

ALQ 050/312/1
RECEIVED IN REGISTRY
DESK OFFICER
INDEX

CONFIDENTIAL

/COMMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

COMMENT

4. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT CLEARLY INTEND TO MAINTAIN IN DISCUSSION WITH US THAT THEY ARE NOT SEEKING TO MODIFY THEIR SUPPORT NOR TO BRING ABOUT A CEASEFIRE WHICH LEFT THE UK AT A DISADVANTAGE. WHETHER THEY WILL MAKE THIS CLEAR IN PRESS BRIEFING AND PUBLIC COMMENT, SO THAT THEIR STATEMENT IS NOT NEGATIVELY INTERPRETED, REMAINS TO BE SEEN. THERE IS IN ANY CASE SOME CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THEIR APPARENT READINESS TO CONTEMPLATE A BRITISH LANDING ON THE FALKLANDS AND THEIR CALL FOR CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES AND SEPARATION OF FORCES. BUT THEIR MAIN CONCERN IS NO DOUBT WITH PUBLIC OPINION, BOTH IN FRANCE AND IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, FROM WHICH CRITICISM WOULD BE PLAYED BACK TO FRANCE.

FRETWELL

FCO

S AM D
WED
CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

FALKLAND ISLANDS

COPIES TO

PS/CHANCELLOR)
SIR K COUZENS)
MR LITTLER)
MR HAWTIN) TREASURY
MR PERETZ)
MR ILETT)

SIR M PALLISER CABINET OFFICE

MISS DICKSON (EIP DIVN) D/ENERGY

MR A WILLIAMS DSW 60

2
CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 2000
UNCLASSIFIED
DESKBY 051900Z
FM PARIS 051720Z MAY 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO

ALQ 050/312/11

RECEIVED IN REGISTRY

DESK OFFICER		REGISTRATION
INDEX	PA	
		ADDITIONAL

51
See 52
See 55

TOP COPY

TELEGRAM NUMBER 426 OF 5 MAY 1982
INFO IMMEDIATE TO WASHINGTON UKDEL NATO AND UKMIS NEW YORK
INFO PRIORITY TO ATHENS BRUSSELS UKREP BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN
THE HAGUE LUXEMBOURG ROME DUBLIN AND BONN

FALKLANDS: FRENCH STATEMENT

1. THE FOLLOING STATEMENT WAS ISSUED AFTER THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON 5 MAY:

"THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WAS INFORMED OF THE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH HAVE LED FROM THE INVASION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS BY ARGENTINA TO A REAL WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA. IT DEPLORES THE DEATH OF HUNDREDS OF SERVICEMEN AND CONSIDERS THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE TO REVERT TO THE STRICT APPLICATION OF RESOLUTION 502 OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL BY MEANS OF THE IMMEDIATE ENDING OF HOSTILITIES AND OF THE SEPARATION OF THE MILITARY FORCES INVOLVED. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HOPES THAT THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL WILL BE ABLE QUICKLY TO INDICATE WAYS WHICH WILL PERMIT THE RESUMPTION OF A PEACEFUL NEGOTIATION FOLLOWING THE CESSATION OF FIGHTING. IT REMAINS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH ITS PARTNERS IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY".

2. BEREGOVY, THE ELYSEE SECRETARY GENERAL, IS QUOTED AS SAYING AFTER THE MEETING THAT THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAD RECALLED ITS ATTACHMENT TO THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND TO RESPECT FOR UN DECISIONS. HE ADDED THAT THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS "HOPES, IN THIS CONTEXT, THAT THE CESSATION OF FIGHTING WILL SERVE AS A FIRST STEP IN THE SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION".

3. SEE M I F T.

FRETWELL

FCO
S AM D
CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
FALKLAND ISLANDS

COPIES TO

- PS/CHANCELLOR)
- SIR K COUZENS)
- MR LITTLER)
- MR HAWTIN) TREASURY
- MR PERETZ)
- MR ILETT)

SIR M PALLISER CABINET OFFICE
MISS DICKSON (EIP DIVN) D/ENERGY
MR A WILLIAMS DSW 60