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South America Department

cc PS
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Mr Giffard
Mr Wright
Mr Gillmore
Mr Hannay
Mr Goodison
Mr Weston, Defence Department
Mr Gladstone, WED
Emergency Unit
ECD(E)
H M Ambassador, Paris

Hand
for entry
From 16/5

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETING
WITH M CHEYSSON, 14 MAY: FALKLAND ISLANDS

1. At his meeting with the French Foreign Minister at the FCO on 14 May, the Secretary of State brought M Cheysson up to date on the negotiations. There had been some Argentine movement on sovereignty, but there were contradictions in what was being said in New York and Buenos Aires. This dictates caution. Sovereignty could not be pre-judged. He speculated that the talks might reach a conclusive point next week. Meanwhile we were maintaining the TEZ. Every military option remained open. Economic measures remained a vital part of the long-term pressure. (Mr Hannay has recorded separately by telegram the discussion on EC measures.)

2. M Cheysson thanked the Secretary of State for the information received in New York. He showed particular interest in the sovereignty discussions. Although the UK could not accept anything which prejudged the issue, we could not prevent the Argentines stating their objective. The Secretary of State stressed importance the UK attached to the views of the Islanders both on sovereignty and over the interim administration. M Cheysson wondered whether the junta were capable of taking the crucial decision. Asked about withdrawal, the Secretary of State said he could agree to a stand-off by both sides, but the time-table would have to be fixed in advance. Asked about the place of the Dependencies in the negotiations, the Secretary of State said that this point had not been settled, but we had made clear our wish that the Dependencies should be excluded. M Cheysson thought Soviet support had been relatively minor. The Secretary of State agreed, and said there was no evidence available of Soviet military support. But they were likely to want to help, despite the risks involved for both sides.

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3. The Secretary of State assumed that Argentina was seeking military supplies through other Latin American countries. Mr Fall explained that we had taken steps to scrutinise all sales to the area, and certain administrative measures were open to us to stop or delay military goods which might find their way to Argentina. But there was no formal ban on sales to Latin America as a whole. M Cheysson strongly urged the Secretary of State to consider discussing informally with our European partners whether they might adopt a similar approach on arms sales to the area.

4. The Secretary of State concluded with warm thanks for France's consistent support. (His personal desire to be helpful was apparent throughout the discussion.)

5. I am recording separately a point about French arms supplies.

J R Young
Western European Department

15 May 1982

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BRIEF NO 1 (a)

BILATERAL MEETING WITH M CHEYSSON

14 MAY 1982

FALKLAND ISLANDS

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POINTS TO MAKE

WE ARE CONTINUING TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO REACH A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT

1. Since our meeting at Villers-le-Temple, intensive and urgent talks have continued in New York. Secretary-General's initiative now seems only available way forward. We are giving him full support and cooperation. Ready to show all possible flexibility consistent with our basic principles.

NEGOTIATIONS APPROACHING CRITICAL STAGE

2. Some progress made. But we cannot yet be sure of Argentine willingness to negotiate seriously. Argentina's objective may simply be to exploit international concern at hostilities in order to achieve unconditional ceasefire, leaving them in possession of Islands and free to resupply their garrison.

CEASEFIRE MUST BE LINKED TO WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES

3. This is a prerequisite for us. Argentina is aggressor and must end its unlawful occupation. We for our part ready to withdraw Task Force from area of Falkland Islands parallel with properly monitored withdrawal of Argentine forces.

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ARGENTINE FLEXIBILITY ON SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE ALSO ESSENTIAL
FOR AN AGREEMENT

4. Argentines have made a number of somewhat equivocal statements on this in recent days. We must insist on genuine negotiations without pre-determined outcome; we have open mind on future status of Islands. We must also insist that Islander wishes have to be taken fully into account. Self-determination principle must be maintained.

VITAL TO KEEP UP PRESSURES ON ARGENTINA

5. With negotiations at critical stage, essential to maintain strategy of diplomatic, economic and military pressures (see separate brief on EC sanctions). Any slackening of pressure will increase prospect of long and damaging confrontation.

APPRECIATE ANXIETIES ON DEVELOPMENT OF CONFLICT

6. Not of our seeking. Have throughout made clear need to protect Task Force. Using minimum force consistent with that. Have given Argentines clear warning of our determination to maintain TEZ. No intention to escalate conflict. But military pressures essential element in creating conditions for negotiated settlement. If Argentines remain intransigent, we have to keep further military options open.

GRATEFUL FOR FRENCH SUPPORT THROUGHOUT CRISIS

7. Realize problems for you. But continued solidarity very important if wrong signals are not to be given to Argentina and prospects for peaceful solution diminished.

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ESSENTIAL FACTS

FRENCH ATTITUDE TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDS CRISIS

1. The French have been to the fore in supporting us over the crisis. On 9 May M Cheysson publicly reaffirmed France's complete solidarity with Britain. The latest French opinion polls show overwhelming support for us, and even suggest that nearly 40% of Frenchmen would wish to continue this support even if this meant France would run the risk of direct involvement in the conflict.
2. French support stems from belief in the need to support a close friend and ally, from the principles involved and, partly, from the possession of overseas territories.
3. French Ministers have made some play with the apparent illogicality of Britain's insistence on Community solidarity over the Falklands while making trouble for the Community, as they see it, over agricultural price fixing.