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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 192 OF 13TH APRIL

FOR INFO IMMEDIATE DESKBY WASHINGTON

FOR INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK AND UKDEL NATO.

WASHINGTON TELNO 1222 TO F C O: F C O TELNOS 690 AND 691 TO
WASHINGTON: SOVIET/ARGENTINE RELATIONS.

1. I REGRET THAT BECAUSE TURS WERE NOT MARKED "DESKBY" WE DID NOT RECEIVE THEM UNTIL AFTER THE HOLIDAY PERIOD, IE THIS MORNING. ALTHOUGH SIR N HENDERSON WILL ALREADY HAVE SPOKEN ON US TELEVISION, THERE IS PLENTY OF MATERIAL IN THE SOVIET POSITION ON THE FALKLAND CRISIS AND IN THE SOVIET/ARGENTINE RELATIONSHIP WHICH COULD BE USED TO EMBARRASS BOTH ARGENTINA AND THE SOVIET UNION AND WHICH COULD PROVIDE USEFUL AMMUNITION ON A SIMILAR OCCASION OR IN ANY GUIDANCE TO POSTS (THOUGH THE POINTS BELOW WOULD HAVE TO BE USED SELECTIVELY AND TAILORED TO SUIT THE AUDIENCE).

2. THERE ARE OBVIOUS PROPAGANDA POINTS TO BE SCORED OFF THE RUSSIANS:

I) NEITHER IN THE UN NOR THE PRESS HAS THE SOVIET UNION CRITICISED, STILL LESS CONDEMNED, ARGENTINA'S USE OF FORCE IN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 2(3) AND (4) OF THE UN CHARTER. THE DETAILED ARGUMENT HAS BEEN ADMIRABLY SET OUT IN SIR A PARSONS' RECENT STATEMENT IN THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE NO- USE OF FORCE (WHICH, WITH STATEMENTS BY UK MINISTERS, WE HAVE SENT TO THE MFA). TO COUNTER THE SOVIET ARGUMENT THAT, BECAUSE OF YEARS OF BRITISH FOOTDRAGGING, THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RESORT TO FORCE WE SHOULD MAKE FULL USE OF THE COMMUNIQUE AGREED AFTER THE 27 FEBRUARY ROUND OF ANGLO/ARGENTINIAN TALKS, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE SOVIET MFA HAS QUESTIONED OUR VIEW THAT THIS ROUND ENDED ON A POSITIVE NOTE (PARA 2(F) OF MY TELNO 181).

II) DESPITE THEIR IDEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR THE RIGHTS OF COLONIAL PEOPLES, THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLIC SOVIET ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE WISHES OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDERS THEMSELVES. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT, IMPERVIOUS TO THE WISHES OF OVER 2 MILLION AFGHAN REFUGEES AND 9 MILLION POLISH MEMBERS OF SOLIDARNOSC, FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO SEE WHY THE WISHES OF 1800 FALKLANDERS ARE A CENTRAL ISSUE IN THIS QUESTION.

III) THE SOVIET PRESS HAS FAILED TO MENTION THAT SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502 CALLS FOR ARGENTINA'S WITHDRAWAL NOR HAS IT REPORTED HOW THE SOVIET UNION VOTED ON THE RESOLUTION. THIS IS EXTRAORDINARY BEHAVIOUR FOR A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

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IV) THE RUSSIANS' SELF-APPOINTED ROLE AS THE SCOURGE OF NEO-FACIST REGIMES HAS NOT STOPPED DEVELOPMENT OF CLOSE TIES WITH THE ARGENTINE JUNTA. THIS AND THE ABSENCE OF SOVIET CRITICISM OF THE ARGENTINE REGIMES' LACK OF DEMOCRACY AND ABUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ARE IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THE FREQUENT ACCUSATIONS HERE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABBUSES BY, FOR INSTANCE, THE CHILEAN REGIME. (DRAWING ON WESTERN REPORTS, THE SOVIET MEDIA LAST WEEK SUGGESTED ANGLO/CHILEAN COLLABORATION DURING THE CRISIS BUT APPEARS NOW TO HAVE DROPPED A LINE WHICH COULD HAVE BACKFIRED).

V) TAKEN TOGETHER, THE ABOVE POINTS MAKE A MOCKERY OF THE SOVIET CLAIM TO A PRINCIPLED FOREIGN POLICY. THIS IS A SENSITIVE POINT FOR THE RUSSIANS AS IS INDICATED BY THEIR SWIFT RESPONSE TO COMMENTS REPORTED BY TASS TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY GENSCHER ON SUEDEDEUTSCHER RUNDFUNK: PARA 3 OF MY TELNO 191 REFERS.

3. ON THE SUBSTANCE OF SOVIET/ARGENTINE RELATIONS I WOULD ADD ONLY THE FOLLOWING TO PARA 1 OF WASHINGTON TELNO 1222. LAST YEAR THE SOVIET UNION TOOK 30% OF ARGENTINE EXPORTS. SOVIET

TRADE FIGURES FOR 1980 SHOW THAT IMPORTS FROM ARGENTINA WERE 2.6% OF TOTAL SOVIET IMPORTS. MORE THAN FROM ANY OTHER NON-COMMUNIST DEVELOPING COUNTRY INCLUDING INDIA. THE 1980 TRADE BALANCE WAS 2.5 BILLION DOLLARS IN ARGENTINA'S FAVOUR. AT ALMOST THE SAME TIME AS THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ANNOUNCED ITS EMBARGO ON ARGENTINE IMPORTS THE SOVIET PRESS DREW ATTENTION ON 10 APRIL TO THE SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET/ARGENTINE ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE 6TH SESSION OF THE SOVIET/ARGENTINE JOINT TRADE COMMISSION. THIS MET IN BUENOS AIRES AT THE LEVEL OF DEPUTY TRADE MINISTER FROM 31 MARCH TO 8 APRIL.

4. FINALLY, ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT BEST PLACED TO JUDGE, THE TWO-EDGED SWORD ARGUMENT MENTIONED IN YOUR TELNO 690 TO WASHINGTON DOES NOT CARRY CONVICTION. SO LONG AS THE SOVIET UNION NEEDS ARGENTINE GRAIN AND MEAT THE MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE WITH THE JUNTA WILL CONTINUE. HOWEVER THE CRISIS IS RESOLVED, THE SOVIET UNION IS LIKELY TO INCREASE ITS INFLUENCE IN ARGENTINA, EVEN THOUGH THIS INCREAS MAY BE ONLY TEMPORARY. BY COMPARISON, THE CHANCES THAT ARGENTINA, UNDER THE PRESENT REGIME, WILL BE SHIFTED FROM HER ESSENTIALLY ANTI-COMMUNIST ALIGNMENT BY OUR WON EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE WORLD OPINION ON THE FALKLANDS ISSUE AND A COUNTER SOVIET LINE SEEMS SLIGHT INDEED. FAR WORSE WOULD BE TO LOSE THE POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC BATTLE WITH ARGENTINA: THE REST OF LATIN AMERICAN AND THE THIRD WORLD WOULD DRAW THE APPROPRIATE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF HAVING THE SOVIET UNION AS AN ALLY.

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