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TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
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INFO IMMEDIATE BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN THE HAGUE ROME DUBLIN PARIS  
BONN LUXEMBOURG ATHENS UKMIS NEW YORK WASHINGTON  
INFO PRIORITY STRASBOURG MADRID UKDEL NATO

EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION, POLITICAL COMMITTEE,  
BRUSSELS 4 MAY; FALKLANDS

SUMMARY

1. IRISH POLITICAL DIRECTOR'S HAND WAS FORCED BY HIS GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT OF 4 MAY (DUBLIN TELNO 124). OTHERS, WHILE CONTINUING TO EXPRESS SOLIDARITY WITH UK AND APPRECIATION OF FULL AND FREQUENT BRIEFINGS, SHOWED UNMISTAKEABLE SIGNS OF PERTURBATION AT LOSS OF LIFE IN SINKING OF ARGENTINIAN CRUISER, THE EFFECT OF THIS ON THEIR OWN PUBLIC OPINION AND RISK OF UK SEEMING TO PREFER A MILITARY TO A POLITICAL SOLUTION. GERMAN AND IRISH POLITICAL DIRECTORS SAID THAT THEIR INSTRUCTIONS WERE TOUGHER THAN THEIR INTERVENTIONS. IT WAS RECOGNISED THAT FOREIGN MINISTERS WERE LIKELY TO HAVE A FURTHER DISCUSSION ON 8/9 MAY.

2. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE PRESS SHOULD BE TOLD ONLY THAT THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE HAD MET AND HAD DISCUSSED THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS.

DETAIL

3. BULLARD SPOKE FROM NOTES IN MIFT.

4. FOLLOWING POINTS WERE MADE IN DISCUSSION:

(i) ALL WERE WORRIED AT WHAT WAS WIDELY SEEN AS ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT INVOLVED IN TORPEDOING OF THE ARGENTINIAN CRUISER, THOUGH DUPONT (FRANCE) SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN FORESEEABLE IN VIEW OF ARGENTINIAN INTRANSIGENCE. SEVERAL STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING GOING BEYOND THE POINT OF NO RETURN. PFEFFER (FRG) ASKED WHAT WERE THE LIMITS OF THE MILITARY OPTIONS; WAS A PAUSE NOW ENVISAGED OR WERE FURTHER AND MORE DRASTIC STEPS FORESEEN?

(ii) ALL WERE EQUALLY EXERCISED ABOUT THE EFFECT OF THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON THEIR PUBLIC OPINION. IF PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE TEN'S LINE HITHERTO WAS TO BE MAINTAINED THERE MUST BE CONSTANT RESTATEMENT OF THE UK'S (AND THE TEN'S) WISH FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT.

(iii) ALL SAW THE NEED FOR A SOLUTION TO BE BASED ON IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502 IN ALL ITS PARTS. SEVERAL STRESSED THE NEED FOR THE UK SECRETARY GENERAL

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TO BE INVOLVED. BUT THE IRISH CALL FOR IMMEDIATE SUMMONING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL RECEIVED NO SUPPORT, AND SEVERAL POLITICAL DIRECTORS POINTED TO THE RISKS OF CONVENING THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN THE PRESENT SITUATION.

(IV) PARTICULAR INTEREST WAS EXPRESSED IN HMG'S LIKELY REACTION TO THE PERUVIAN PROPOSALS. JACBOVITS (NL) ASKED WHETHER IT WAS THE CASE THAT HMG WOULD NEGOTIATE ONLY AFTER ARGENTINA WITHDRAWAL. PFEFFER (FRG) ASKED HOW THE NINE COULD HELP THE UK AVOID FURTHER ESCALATION AND REACH A POLITICAL SOLUTION.

(V) THERE WAS A GENERAL DESIRE TO MAINTAIN THE SOLIDARITY OF THE TEN (DK, ITALY, NL, BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG). THIS SHOULD BE MATCHED BY READINESS ON HMG'S PART TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF THE TEN (DK).

(VI) MACKERNAN (IRELAND) REFERRED TO HIS GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT (DUBLIN TELNO 124). THE TEN'S EMBARGO ON IMPORTS FROM ARGENTINA HAD BEEN AN ACT OF SOLIDARITY WITH A BRITISH POLICY WHICH HAD THREE ELEMENTS - ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PRESSURE AND MILITARY STRENGTH - WHICH WOULD REMAIN IN EQUILIBRIUM. THE IRISH GOVERNMENT NOW JUDGED THAT THE EMPHASIS HAD SHIFTED TO THE MILITARY OPTION. IT WOULD THEREFORE APPEAR THAT ECONOMIC SANCTIONS WERE BEING IMPOSED IN SUPPORT OF MILITARY ACTION. NO-ONE ELSE COMMENTED SPECIFICALLY ON THIS POINT AND IT WAS GENERALLY RECOGNISED THAT THIS WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY MINISTERS ON 8/9 MAY.

5. IN REPLY BULLARD AGREED THAT THE INCIDENT INVOLVING THE ARGENTINIAN CRUISER WAS FORESEEABLE. HE POINTED TO HMG'S FREQUENT STATEMENTS OF ITS PREFERENCE FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. YOU HAD TOLD THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL THAT THE UK WAS OPEN TO ANY IDEAS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE BASIS OF RESOLUTION 502. HMG WAS LIKELY TO WELCOME PERUVIAN INTEREST AND TO RESPOND SHORTLY. ON THE LINKAGE BETWEEN NEGOTIATIONS AND ARGENTINIAN WITHDRAWAL, THE UK ENVISAGED A PHASED SOLUTION BUT COULD NOT AGREE TO NEGOTIATE THE FUTURE OF THE FALKLANDS WHILE ARGENTINIAN TROOPS REMAINED IN PLACE. NOR COULD WE ACCEPT ANY PREDETERMINED OUTCOME. HE REMINDED THOSE WHO QUESTIONED THE USE OF FORCE THAT ARGENTINA HAD HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY WITHOUT ANY MILITARY PRESSURE BUT HAD NOT RESPONDED. IT WAS NOT FOR THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE TO DECIDE ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE IMPORT EMBARGO. BUT HE HOPED THAT ALL WOULD CONSIDER VERY CAREFULLY THE GRAVE EFFECT OF STATEMENTS SUCH AS THAT ISSUED BY THE IRISH GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY BE SEEN AS ONE PARTNER WITHDRAWING ITS SUPPORT FOR ANOTHER. THE MOST USEFUL CONTRIBUTION FROM OUR PARTNERS AT THIS STAGE WOULD BE TO BRING HOME TO ARGENTINA THAT ITS INSISTENCE ON AGREEMENT TO THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD NEVER BE ACCEPTED.

6. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE A FURTHER STATEMENT BY THE TEN. BULLARD SAID THAT WE WOULD

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WELCOME THIS PROVIDED IT BEGAN WITH A DECLARATION OF CONTINUING SOLIDARITY. IT SHOULD NOT BECOME KNOWN, HOWEVER, THAT THE TEN HAD DISCUSSED BUT FAILED TO AGREE ON A STATEMENT. BUT MACKERNAN (IRELAND) INTERVENED PROMPTLY TO SAY THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HE COULD NOT NOW AGREE TO ANY FORMAL STATEMENT BY THE TEN. IT WAS THEREFORE AGREED THAT THE PRESS WOULD BE TOLD ONLY THAT THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE HAD MET TO DISCUSS THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS.

7. THE PRESIDENCY'S SUMMING UP, AS CIRCULATED AT THE END OF THE MEETING, READS AS FOLLOWS:

'LES DIX SONT PREOCCUPES PAR LES DERNIERS DEVELOPMENTS MILITAIRES QUI SE DEROULENT ACTUELLEMENT.

ILS SONT UNANIMES A CONSIDERER QU'UNE SOLUTION NEGOCIEE BASEE SU LA RESOLUTION 502 DU CONSEIL DE SECURITE EST PLUS IMPORTANTE QUE JAMAIS. ILS PENSENT A CET EGARD QUE TOUTE INITIATIVE POUR ABOUTIR A UNE TELLE SOLUTION DOIT ETRE ENCOURAGEE.

LES DIX ESTIMENT QUE LES NATIONS UNIES CONSTITUENT UN FORUM OU CES INITIATIVES PEUVENT ETRE DEVELOPPEES.'

THESE CONCLUSIONS WERE BACKED BY A STRONG APPEAL FROM CAHEN (CHAIRMAN) FOR THE SOLIDARITY OF THE TEN TO BE MAINTAINED AND UNILATERAL STATEMENTS AT ODDS WITH THE TEN'S POSITIONS TO BE AVOIDED.

8. PLEASE SEE MIFT

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FCO - BULLARD, GIFFARD, URE, HANNAY, CROWE, EMERGENCY UNIT, COOPER  
CAB - WADE-GERY, COLVIN, FULLER, HATFIELD

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