

SECRET

ALQ 050/3	
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Secretary of State
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AS/Ans
Emergency Unit

Private Secretary

cc: Mr Bullard
Mr Giffard
Sir I Sinclair
Mr Wright
Mr Ure
Mr Gillmore
Mr Mallaby, Planning Staff
Mr Fearn
Mr Williams
Mr Weston, Defence Dept

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1. Following the despatch of FCO tel no 396 to UKMIS New York the PUS spoke to Sir A Parsons on the secure telephone. The PUS explained the background to these instructions.

2. Sir A Parsons said that the UN Secretary General was in a very suspicious mood. Unlike his talkative predecessor he was quiet and perceptive and would quickly spot if we were flannelling. He thought that it would be most unlikely that with his present instructions he would be able to spin out the negotiations in New York beyond the weekend, though he hoped at least to get to Monday before the Secretary General took the issue back to the Security Council.

(a) As far as paragraph 1(a) of FCO tel no 396 is concerned (non pre-judgement) Sir A Parsons said that he had already made such great play in previous meetings of this point and the different statements coming out of Buenos Aires that the matter would not be treated as new. It would be very quickly dealt with. The PUS gave a few additional arguments about the impact these statements were having in London.

(b) As far as verification was concerned, Sir A Parsons doubted whether he could make much of the arguments on this point, given that in UN terms the involvement of the Americans in some form of guarantee would be a non-starter. He agreed with the PUS however that the need to ensure non-reintroduction of forces after the initial withdrawal and before the substantive negotiations concluded was something he could discuss, though it would be seen as less of a key issue than the question of South Georgia and the interim administration.

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(c) As regards the key issue of South Georgia the idea of referring the title to the ICJ would be seen as frivolous, given past attitudes.

(d) On the other key issue of the interim administration, Sir A Parsons did not think that to offer one Argentine to each of the two councils would in fact carry conviction. If that was all we could say the negotiations would terminate and he therefore proposed to say nothing about this idea at this point.

3. In short, in the absence of any substantial movement on our part over South Georgia or the interim administration (without which the Secretary General would conclude that the negotiations were going round in circles and should be concluded) Sir A Parsons thought that the only issue which could be isolated and treated seriously in his discussions with the Secretary General today was that of the risk of a vacuum after an interim period. He thought that this might just about enable him to take the discussions into the weekend without being accused of playing for time, providing that he could say that the key issues of South Georgia and the interim administration were still under discussion in London. He asked however how much time he was trying to buy. The PUS explained the pressures on Ministers in London and the competing commitments over the weekend. We very much hoped that the negotiations could be extended over the weekend at least and we hoped that Sir A Parsons would be able to use some of the points on verification, Costa Mendes' statements, etc, to achieve this end.

4. The PUS asked whether there would be any advantage in Sir A Parsons returning to this country. Sir A Parsons said that the assumption in the media would be that this was an effort on his part to change his instructions and that if he were seen to fail then the negotiations would be at an end. He was therefore rather doubtful about coming home in mid negotiation. If however he found that the Secretary General was on the point of going back to the Security Council then it might be possible to persuade Perez de Cuellar to stay his hand to allow him to return to London for final consultations. The PUS agreed that he must have discretion to make this suggestion to the Secretary General in extremis though we very much hoped that he would not need to do so without further consultation with us by telegram about the presentation of such a visit.

5. After a brief discussion of the way to handle a briefing of the 10 in New York this afternoon, it was left that Sir A Parsons would do his usual 'heroic' best with the Secretary General later today.

R A Burns
PS/PUS

13 May 1982