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INDEX	PA	ACTION FIRST	

FALKLANDS: U S DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY

1. ENDERS TELEPHONED ME THIS AFTERNOON TO SAY THAT HE HAD JUST HAD A LONG SESSION WITH THE ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, TAKACS, AND WAS DISTURBED BY HIS TOTAL LACK OF REALISM.

TAKACS, GENERAL MIRET ET AL SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT THE ARGENTINES COULD HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER ON EAST FALKLAND THAN THE U S ASSESSMENT OR OUR OWN SUGGESTED. THEY WERE THEREFORE MISLED INTO THINKING THAT THEY STILL HAD SOME LEEWAY ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE OF THE REASONS WHY THEY HAD REJECTED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S RECENT PROPOSALS WAS THE LACK OF BALANCE BETWEEN THE PROPOSALS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ARGENTINIAN AND BRITISH FORCES. THEY WERE NOW APPARENTLY ABOUT TO FLOAT A PEACE PLAN OF THEIR OWN WHICH WAS, EVEN IN ENDERS VIEW, COMPLETELY UNREALISTIC.

2. IN ORDER TO TRY TO BRING THEM DOWN TO EARTH, ENDERS TOLD ME THAT HE WAS NOW PROPOSING TO SHOW TAKACS THE TEXT OF HAIG'S TENTATIVE IDEA OF 29 MAY (WASHINGTON TELNO 1964), WHICH HAD BEEN MORE FORTH-COMING FROM THE ARGENTINIAN POINT OF VIEW, THAN THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SUBSEQUENT PROPOSALS. HE HOPED THAT THE FACT THAT THE TERMS WERE WORSENING FOR THE ARGENTINIANS ALL THE TIME WOULD HELP TO CONVINCHE THEM THAT THE SORT OF IDEAS THEY WERE NOW PLAYING WITH (WHICH HE DID NOT EXPLAIN) WERE MILES BEYOND REACH. HE SAID THAT HIS OBJECTIVE IN ALL THIS WAS TO TRY TO GET THEM TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR ONLY CHOICE NOW WAS BETWEEN EARLY WITHDRAWAL AND MILITARY DEFEAT.

3. I SAID THAT ANYTHING ENDERS COULD DO TO CONVINCHE THE ARGENTINIANS THAT THEY SHOULD ACCEPT OUR CONDITIONS FOR WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE WELCOME. BUT I STRONGLY DISCOURAGED HIM FROM GIVING THEM THE TEXT OF EARLIER PROPOSALS. I SAID THIS WOULD BE LIKELY TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD BY THEM AS REVIVING PROPOSALS WHICH WERE UNACCEPTABLE TO US. AFTER SOME FURTHER DISCUSSION, ENDERS AGREED NOT TO GIVE TAKACS A PIECE OF PAPER, BUT WOULD OUTLINE ORALLY THE SORT OF IDEAS WHICH HAIG HAD PUT FORWARD AND WOULD EXPLAIN THAT THESE HAD BEEN REJECTED BECAUSE:

(I) THE UK HAD LOST CONFIDENCE IN ANY NEGOTIATED DEAL WITH THE ARGENTINIANS, GIVEN THEIR RECORD THUS FAR:

(II) ANY PACKAGE DEAL NOW OF THE KIND WHICH HAD BEEN DISCUSSED EARLIER WAS RULED OUT BECAUSE OF THE CHANGED SITUATION:

(III) THIS INCLUDED BOTH IDEAS OF A SHARED OR INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND CONSTRAINTS ON DISCUSSION OF THE FUTURE STATUS OF THE ISLANDS.

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/ENDERS

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ENDERS WOULD TRY TO GET IT ACROSS TO TAKACS THAT THE ONLY OPTION NOW OPEN TO THEM, SHORT OF MILITARY DEFEAT, WAS A CEASEFIRE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN THE TWO COMMANDERS WITH A FIXED TIME-FRAME FOR WITHDRAWAL.

4. I TOLD ENDERS THAT I THOUGHT IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THIS KIND OF INITIATIVE WOULD GET ANYWHERE WITH THE ARGENTINIANS. MY OWN IMPRESSION (WITH WHICH ENDERS AGREED) WAS THAT THEY HAD DECIDED THAT THEY WOULD PREFER DEFEAT TO WITHDRAWAL. BUT PROVIDED HE SPOKE TO TAKACS ON THE LINES HE WAS NOW SUGGESTING, I COULD NOT SEE THAT IT WOULD DO HARM.

5 I AM NOT SURE WHAT ENDERS IS UP TO. FROM WHAT HE SAID, HE FULLY UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF ANYTHING BEYOND A CEASEFIRE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN COMMANDERS ON THE SPOT, FOLLOWED BY ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL. IF HE IS INTENT ON TRYING TO GET THE ARGENTINIANS TO FACE UP TO THIS REALITY IT COULD BE MARGINALLY HELPFUL. BUT I FIND IT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THAT ENDERS THINKS THAT ANYTHING REPORTED BY TAKACS TO BUENOS AIRES COULD PRODUCE THAT EFFECT.

THOMAS

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