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10 June 1982

Dear N.H.

cc Capt Tod
Cabinet Office (!)

per RAJ 16/6

HAIG AND MRS KIRKPATRICK

1. Following the imbrogio over the US vote in the Security Council on the Falklands, there has been a spate of press and political comment here, as in Britain. The serious newspapers and political commentators have been unanimous in pointing out that even by the standards of this (and for that matter the preceding) US Administration, the last minute change in voting instructions to Mrs Kirkpatrick and the way she carried them out have brought the Administration's conduct of its foreign policy into disrepute. Matters have not been helped by Haig's remark, when asked why he did not himself telephone Mrs Kirkpatrick, that army commanders are not in the habit of giving their orders direct to "company commanders"; it was for the corps and divisional commanders in the State Department to do so. Mrs Kirkpatrick, showing by her standards unusual restraint, made clear that she did not see the relationship quite that way, but then proceeded to score a further spectacular own goal for the Administration by her comments at the Heritage Foundation about the ineptitude of US foreign policy (contrasted with the manner in which we conduct our diplomacy at the UN). A senior official here (almost certainly Eagleburger) was quoted on CBS News as saying that there was, unfortunately, very little likelihood of Mrs Kirkpatrick resigning "so long as she could be of service to her two favourite countries - Argentina and Israel".

2. Although this city is accustomed to a good deal of blood-letting, these exchanges have been unusually venomous even by the standards prevailing here. Reston in the New York Times and Harsch in the Christian Science Monitor argue that Mrs Kirkpatrick will have to go. She has every right, they point out, to fight for her views within the Administration but hardly to make so public a display of her disagreement with many of its policies - ranging from the failure to push Poland into default to siding with us over the Falklands. There are, of course, institutional as well as personal reasons for the conflicts which have arisen. The case for the US Representative at the United Nations being a member of the Cabinet is increasingly questioned. This, it is pointed out, renders it virtually impossible for officials in the State Department to exercise any control over the US delegation, particularly when, as has been the case with Mrs Kirkpatrick, the US Representative is surrounded by political appointees with their own ideological axes to grind and not answerable to the rest of the bureaucracy.

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3. It is ironic that this fresh spate of criticism of Mrs Kirkpatrick should have been triggered by a mess which was on this occasion largely of Haig's making: he changed his mind under pressure from her and Enders. A number of senior officials in the Administration here believe that things really cannot go on as they are and that the President will in the end have to dispense with Mrs Kirkpatrick's services. We are not ourselves yet convinced that this will come to pass. Mrs Kirkpatrick's neo-conservative credentials are still important to the President, as in present circumstances is her self-appointed role within the Administration as the champion of Latin America (and of Israel). The sort of confusion witnessed over the vote at the UN has become a more or less permanent feature of the scene here. Beyond the personal rivalries lie major unresolved differences on questions of policy. While the expectation is that Mrs Kirkpatrick, eventually, will have to go, such expectations have been disappointed before. In the meantime it is a / extraordinary state of affairs to have a US Representative at the United Nations to whom Haig (please protect) invariably refers in private as "Madama Defarge" - who, you will recall, spent her time knitting beneath the guillotine.

/pretty

Tom, was,

Robin

R W Renwick

cc

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