

TYPISTS

Mujared 1400
1714

ADVANCE COPIES: FALKLAND ISLANDS

(29)

PS

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IMMEDIATE

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SIR K COUZENS
MR LITTLER
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MR ILETT
MR McINTYRE

H.M.TSY

HD/SAMD (FCO DIST + A/D F/I)
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Miss DICKSON (EIP DIV) D/EN

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM MOSCOW 171146Z APR 82

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 203 OF 17 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, HAVANA, UKDEL NATO,
PRIORITY PARIS, BONN

WASHINGTON TEL NO 1288 TO FCO : FALKLANDS : SOVIET ATTITUDE

1. SINCE SENDING MY TEL NO 201 (NOT TO ALL) I HAVE SEEN TUR REPORTING AMERICAN FEARS THAT THE RUSSIANS MAY BECOME MILITARILY INVOLVED IN THE CRISIS SHOULD ANGLO/ARGENTINE HOSTILITIES RESUME.
2. THE ODDS MUST BE STRONGLY AGAINST AMERICAN FEARS BEING REALISED IN ANY OVERT OR DIRECT WAY. IT IS MOST UNLIKELY THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD PROVIDE, FOR EXAMPLE, OPEN LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO ARGENTINA, STILL LESS ACTUALLY LINE UP ALONGSIDE THE ARGENTINE NAVY AGAINST OUR TASK FORCE. WERE THEY TO DO SO, IT WOULD BE THE MOST RADICAL DEPARTURE IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY SINCE THE CUBA CRISIS, DELIBERATELY PUTTING THE SOVIET UNION ON A MILITARY COLLISION

CONSIDERABLELY PUTTING THE SOVIET UNION ON A MILITARY COLLISION COURSE WITH A MAJOR EUROPEAN NATO POWER AND THE UNITED STATES. ALTHOUGH SOVIET INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOUR IN RECENT YEARS HAS DESERVED TO BE CALLED ADVENTURIST, THE SOVIET-BACKED INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA AND ETHIOPIA AND SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN WERE CARRIED OUT ON THE CORRECT CALCULATION THAT THESE WOULD NOT PROVOKE AN OPEN MILITARY CONFRONTATION WITH THE US. SEEN FROM HERE, NO SUCH CALCULATION COULD SAFELY BE ADVANCED TO JUSTIFY DIRECT MILITARY INTERVENTION ON ARGENTINA'S SIDE.

3. IF THE ARGENTINIANS COULD SWALLOW IT, IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE ALLIANCE COULD BECOME MORE UNHOLY THROUGH A MORE ACTIVE CUBAN ROLE ON THE ARGENTINE SIDE, INTENDED TO KEEP THE RUSSIANS AT ONE REMOVE FROM THE ACTION. BUT THIS WOULD BE AN EQUALLY HIGH-RISK POLICY, OPENING THE DOOR TO US/SOVIET CONFRONTATION ALMOST AS FAR AS DIRECT SOVIET INTERVENTION.

To
4. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT, AS SIR N HENDERSON HAS RIGHTLY POINTED OUT IN TUR, THE RUSSIANS WILL NOT TRY SOME FLESH-CREEPING TO TEST OUR NERVE AND THAT OF THE US. THE FIRST SIGNS OF THIS HAVE BEGUN TO APPEAR IN CHARACTERISTIC FASHION IN THE SOVIET PRESS. LAST NIGHT'S IZVESTIA CARRIED A REPORT OF A STATEMENT BY THE BRITISH COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT A RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES WOULD LEAD TO A "GREATER COMPLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND POSSIBLY TO NUCLEAR CONFLICT". PRAVDA THIS MORNING CARRIES A MORE ALARMIST VERSION OF THE STATEMENT: "THE CONFLICT CAN QUICKLY BEGIN TO SPREAD, DRAWING IN OTHER PARTICIPANTS AND LEADING TO A GENERAL CONFRONTATION IN WHICH THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS NOT EXCLUDED".

5. MIPT, REPORTING MY CALL THIS MORNING ON THE MFA TO CARRY OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS IN YOUR TEL NO 460 (NOT TO OTHERS), CONTAINS THE FORMAL DENIAL BY SEMEONOV, DEPUTY HEAD OF SECOND EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT, THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE HELPING THE ARGENTINES WITH THE PROVISION OF INTELLIGENCE ON THE BRITISH FLEET. EVEN IF TRUE, IT MAY NOT BE SO IN THE FUTURE, AND AS THE LAST SENTENCE OF PARA 4 OF MY TEL NO 201 SUGGESTS, PUBLIC OPINION HERE, SUCH AS IT IS, HAS BEEN TO SOME EXTENT PREPARED FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO PROVIDE SOMETHING MORE THAN PROPAGANDA SUPPORT TO THE ARGENTINIANS TO BALANCE ALLEGED ANGLO/AMERICAN COLLUSION. THIS POSSIBILITY CANNOT THEREFORE BE EXCLUDED, THOUGH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY AT THIS STAGE WHAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD DECIDE. THE HIGH POLITICAL RISKS APART, THE SCOPE FOR COVERT OR INDIRECT MILITARY SUPPLIES LOOKS LIMITED BECAUSE OF THE APPARENT INCOMPATIBILITY OF THE SOVIET AND ARGENTINE INVENTORIES. THERE COULD BE SOME KIND OF SOVIET ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO HELP DEFRAY THE COSTS OF...

ARGENTINE INVENTORIES. THERE COULD BE SOME KIND OF SOVIET ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO HELP DEFRAY THE COSTS OF ANY WAR AND OF THE EC'S EMBARGO, ALTHOUGH WHAT WE KNOW OF THE SOVIET FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION AT THE PRESENT TIME WOULD MAKE ANYTHING MORE THAN PROVISION OF A TOKEN AMOUNT OF AID AN UNATTRACTIVE OPTION FOR THEM.

6. TO SUM UP: THE RUSSIANS HAVE A STRONG MATERIAL INTEREST IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA. (THIS HAS BEEN UNDERLINED BY THE GRATUITOUS APPEARANCE ON TASS YESTERDAY, SOME DAYS AFTER HIS RETURN, OF AN INTERVIEW WITH MANZHULO, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE, ON THE RECENT SOVIET/ARGENTINE MIXED COMMISSION IN BUENOS AIRES: THIS STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC LINKS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.) FURTHERMORE THE FALKLANDS CRISIS HAS THROWN UP, IN THE SHAPE OF A POSSIBLE OPENING INTO ARGENTINA, AND INTO LATIN AMERICA GENERALLY, A TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY WHICH THE RUSSIANS HAVE FOUND TOO TEMPTING TO LET PASS. BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THEY CONSIDER THE PRIZE SO GLITTERING, OR THE THREAT TO THEIR GRAIN SUPPLIES SO GREAT, AS TO JUSTIFY THE RISK OF OPEN MILITARY CONFRONTATION WITH U.S. WHICH, SUBJECT TO SIR N HENDERSON'S VIEWS, WOULD SEEM THE ALMOST INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE OF SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTION ON THE ARGENTINE SIDE. THIS SAID, IF HOSTILITIES WITH ARGENTINA APPEAR IMMINENT, WE SHOULD FASTEN OUR SEAT BELTS TO FACE AN ESCALATION IN THE SOVIET POLITICAL AND PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN, WHICH IS VERY LIKELY TO CONTAIN A STRONG NOTE OF MENACE.

BROOKE TURNER

CCN PARA 4 LINE 1 "THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT"

CCN PARA 6 LINE 3 " THE GRATUITOUS....."

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