

PS
 PS/MR HVED
 PS/MR ONSLOW
 PS/MR ~~REKIND~~
 PS/PUS
 MR GIFFARD
 MR WRIGHT
 MR ADAMS
 MR URE
 MR GILLMORE

IMMEDIATE

HD/SAMD (FCO DIST + A/D F/I)
 HD/DEF D
 HD/NEWS D
 HD/UND
 HD/PLANNING STAFF
 HD/~~WISD~~

RESIDENT CLERK

PS No.10 DOWNING ST.

PS/CHANCELLOR
 SIR K COUZENS
 MR LITTLER
 MR HAWTIN
 MR PERETZ
 MR ILETT
 MR McINTYRE

H.M.TSY

Miss DICKSON (EIP DIV) D/EN

DIO CABINET OFFICE
 MR WADE-GERY CABINET OFFICE
 MR FULLER SAPU/ CABINET OFFICE

SIR M PALLISER, CABINET OFFICE

SIR R ARMSTRONG, DIO. CAB. OFFICE

ADVANCE COPY

(Copies passed to Emergency Staff, MOD Sitcen and CinC Fleet).

UNCLASSIFIED

FM WASHINGTON 221616Z APR 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1401 OF 22 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK MEXICO CITY SANTIAGO SAN JOSE
 PORT OF SPAIN TEGUCIGALPA BOGOTA SANTO DOMINGO LA PAZ MONTEVIDEO
 KINGSTON ASUNCION QUITO LIMA CARACAS PANAMA CITY BRIDGETOWN
 CASTRIES GEORGETOWN NASSAU BRASILIA PRIORITY BELMOPAN

FALKLANDS: OAS

1. THE FOLLOWING EDITORIAL ENTITLED QUOTE THE RIO PACT INDEED
 UNQUOTE WAS PUBLISHED TODAY IN THE NEW YORK TIMES:

ARGENTINA HAS INVOKED THE WRONG TREATY AT THE WRONG TIME
 TO PROMOTE THE ILLUSION THAT ALL LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS SUPPORT
 ITS SEIZURE OF THE FALKLANDS. THEY DON'T, AND SOME THAT DO SERVE
 ONLY THEIR OWN TERRITORIAL AMBITIONS. BY APPEALING TO THE RIO PACT
 AGAINST INTRUSION INTO THE HEMISPHERE, THE ARGENTINE GENERALS
 CHOOSE THE SEMBLANCE OF DIPLOMACY OVER THE REAL THING.

THEIR TURN TO THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES CAN ONLY
 PRODUCE A USELESS CONFRONTATION OF FOREIGN MINISTERS NEXT WEEK. THE
 UNITED STATES POINTEDLY ABSTAINED FROM APPROVING THE MEETING; THE
 JUNTA WOULD BE FOOLISH TO IGNORE THAT SIGNAL. ARGENTINA'S
 RESISTANCE TO COMPROMISE CAN ONLY INCREASE THE PRESSURES FOR
 THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TO SIDE MORE OPENLY WITH BRITAIN.

THAT PARTISANSHIP WOULD NOT JUST BE AN EXPRESSION OF CULTURAL

THAT PARTISANSHIP WOULD NOT JUST BE AN EXPRESSION OF CULTURAL AFFINITY. AMERICANS NEITHER KNOW NOR CARE VERY MUCH ABOUT WHO HAS THE BETTER CLAIM TO THOSE LONG-DISPUTED ISLANDS. BUT THEY ARE WELL AWARE THAT 1,800 FALKLANDERS SHOULD NOT BE ABSORBED INTO A MILITARY DICTATORSHIP THROUGH A COUP DE MAIN THAT AFFRONTS ALL INTERNATIONAL NORMS.

IN FACT, THOSE NORMS ARE SPELLED OUT IN THE VERY FIRST ARTICLE OF THE TREATY ARGENTINA WOULD INVOKE AGAINST BRITAIN. THE RECIPROCAL ASSISTANCE (RIO) PACT OF 1947 OPENS WITH THE DECLARATION THAT 19 HEMISPHERE NATIONS QUOTE CONDEMN WAR AND UNDERTAKE IN THEIR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS NOT TO RESORT TO THE THREAT OR USE OF FORCE IN ANY MANNER INCONSISTENT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS OR OF THIS TREATY. UNQUOTE

HAVING VIOLATED THAT COMMITMENT, ARGENTINA CHEEKILY ACCUSES BRITAIN OF AN EXTRACONTINENTAL ATTACK ON AN AMERICAN REPUBLIC, IN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 6. THE IMPUDENCE IS COMPOUNDED BY CRUDE HINTS THAT BUENOS AIRES WILL RELY ON SOVIET AID TO SUSTAIN ITS AGGRESSION: FOR THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE RIO PACT WAS TO SHIELD THE HEMISPHERE AGAINST SOVIET INTRUSION.

A VAGUE SENSE OF HEMISPHERE SOLIDARITY PREDICTABLY PRODUCED 18 VOTES FOR CONVENING A MINISTERS' CONFERENCE. ONLY COLOMBIA AND TRINIDAD JOINED THE UNITED STATES IN ABSTAINING. BUT SUPPORT FOR ARGENTINA IS TEPID, EXCEPT FOR SUCH NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS AS VENEZUELA AND GUATEMALA - WHICH HAVE STANDING TERRITORIAL CLAIMS IN GUYANA AND BELIZE CONCERNING FRONTIERS FIXED BY BRITAIN.

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION IS RIGHT TO TRY TO SIDETRACK THIS PLOY AND TO KEEP THE BRITISH NAVY TREADING WATER WHILE NEW BRITISH PROPOSALS ARE CONSIDERED. THIS WAR IS BETTER THREATENED THAN FOUGHT, AND IF IT MUST BE FOUGHT, BETTER LATER THAN SOONER. IF THE THREAT OF IT HAS STILL NOT REGISTERED IN BUENOS AIRES, HOWEVER, ONE GOOD WAY TO GIVE DIPLOMACY A FURTHER CHANCE WILL BE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO REBUT THIS ARGENTINE CHALLENGE WITH A MORE PRONOUNCED TILT TOWARDS BRITAIN.

THIS DISPUTE DOES NOT REPRESENT A NEW COLONIAL THRUST BY A EUROPEAN POWER INTO THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. NOR IS IT A SOVIET CHALLENGE EXCEPT AS ARGENTINA'S MANEUVERS FACILITATE MOSCOW'S MEDDLING. THE RIO NATIONS SHOULD STAND BY THEIR FIRST PRINCIPLE AND JOIN THE UNITED NATIONS IN CONDEMNING ARGENTINA'S RESORT TO FORCE.

HENDERSON