

FALKLAND ISLANDS: FCO SITREP 0700 HOURS,
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Secretary of State's Visit to Washington

1. The only report so far received on the Secretary of State's visit to Washington is of his meeting with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Although the Committee were concerned that armed confrontation should be avoided if possible, there was overwhelming support for the British position.

OAS

2. The balance of reporting seems to suggest that the Argentine Resolution may attract the necessary two-thirds majority, despite some earlier indications to the contrary. There have been robust statements, for example from Mexico about opposing application of the Rio Treaty and refusing to impose sanctions on Britain even if there were a two-thirds vote in favour. But Santiago reports a distinct weakening of Chilean resolve and the desire to avoid giving unnecessary offence to powerful neighbours. Hardening of attitudes are reported from Panama and Caracas with the Venezuelans 'working to principles of regional solidarity against what they see as an extra continental aggression'. Much could however depend on the tone and nature of the Argentine Resolution and any military developments.

Non-Aligned Movement

3. UKM's New York have sent the latest draft of the communique to be issued by the NAM coordinating bureau.

While this is a considerable improvement on the earlier draft, it still leaves a lot to be desired and further instructions have been sent, as suggested, to posts in Commonwealth countries members of the drafting group.

Cuba

4. HM Ambassador has reported Cuban views expressed in interviews with the Vice President and Deputy Foreign Minister that it was a fact of life that the majority of the NAM membership took their cue from the regional group concerned. A strong anti-British reaction by the Latin American group would inevitably be reflected by the NAM. If that happened, we should not blame the Cuban Presidency!

China

5. The Chinese Vice Foreign Minister has avoided giving any assurance that the Peoples Daily commentary, (condoning Argentine military action and failing to call for implementation of SCR 502),

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did not represent the Chinese Government's position, but has expressed his Government's hope that the crisis could be settled by a peaceful negotiation. HM Ambassador concludes that 'the best we can hope is that China remains neutral'.

The Commonwealth

6. Sir A Parsons gave a resumé of our policy to a meeting of the Commonwealth Group at the UN called, with his encouragement, by the Australian representative. This elicited a realistic and not unfavourable response, with none of those present arguing against the principle that we might need to use force.

Other Third Countries

7. A report from Bridgetown suggests that Argentina is making veiled threats to third countries who are supporting us. The Barbados Government, at least, did not apparently take kindly to suggestions that they only acted on a matter of principle because they were under pressure.

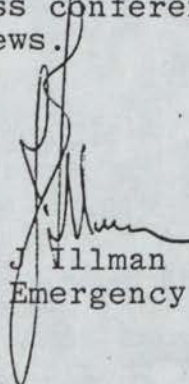
US Press

8. The New York Times has suggested that Argentina has invoked the wrong Treaty at the wrong time, choosing the semblance of diplomacy over the real thing. 'One good way to give diplomacy a further chance will be for the US to rebutt this Argentine challenge with a more pronounced tilt towards Britain'. In another report headed 'In Buenos Aires the euphoria is over', the New York Times refers to the terrible state of the Argentine Stock Exchange, deep divisions in the regime and ideas for a Government of national unity. Reports from other sources also refer to a marked deterioration in the situation in Buenos Aires.

Counsellor Cheek

9. Mr and Mrs Cheek seem to have gone down well in New York with well attended press conferences and impressive meetings and interviews.

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Emergency Unit