

FALKLAND ISLANDS: FCO SITREP (DETAILED VERSION): 0730 HOURS,

8 MAY

UN

(a) Discussions with the Secretary-General

A  
(UKMIS NY  
telno 672)

1. On 7 May Sir A Parsons outlined to the Secretary-General the difficulties inherent in negotiations with the Argentines. He suggested that if the Secretary-General were to achieve progress he must concentrate at the outset on securing an agreement signed by President Galtieri on the transitional arrangements and the framework for the diplomatic negotiations; it was essential to establish clearly that the Argentine pre-condition of sovereignty was not going to scupper the Secretary-General's efforts as it had scuppered the previous ones. The Secretary-General said that he fully understood the position and was well aware that the Argentines might seek to use him for their own ends. Sir A Parsons also told the Secretary-General that we were negotiating with a sense of urgency and in total good faith; the Secretary-General accepted this.

B  
(UKMIS NY  
telno 674)

2. Later the Secretary-General told Sir A Parsons that in his meeting with the Argentine Deputy Foreign Minister (Ros) on 7 May he had been given "amplifications" of the Argentine reply and that he was studying these. The Secretary-General has arranged to see Ros and Sir A Parsons on 8 May.

(b) Reactions to MOD Statement of 7 May

C  
(UKMIS NY  
telno 675)

3. The statement has caused a stir in the UN. Sir A Parsons has reassured the Secretary-General that the statement should not be seen as a dramatic escalation of the conflict but rather as a clarification of earlier announcements. The Argentines have written to the President of the Security Council alleging that this constitutes a further act of aggression. Sir A Parsons will counter these allegations by writing to the President of the Security Council on 8 May. The Argentines have not asked for a Security Council meeting and both the Secretary-General and Sir A Parsons will attempt to head off the possibility of others suggesting such a meeting.

(c) Personal Views of the Secretary-General

(UKMIS  
NY telno  
674  
at B)

4. Speaking in confidence Mr Urquhart reported that the Secretary-General is despondent and worried largely because of what he sees as Mr Haig's attempts to block his initiative. On 8 May the Secretary-General was told by Mrs Kirkpatrick that other efforts (unspecified) were under way and that it would be a pity if the Secretary-General were to cut across them. Nevertheless the Secretary-General is determined to persevere. Mr Urquhart also confirmed that the Secretary-General had taken on board the points made to him by Sir A Parsons earlier in the day (see (a) above).

/US

US

(a) President Reagan's Message to Latin American Heads of State,  
2 May

5. We have now obtained the full text of this message. Our Embassy has let the State Department know, and Sir N Henderson will protest to Mr Haig personally, about the unsatisfactory tone and content of this message.

(b) Repatriation of Prisoners

6. Sir N Henderson reports that the Americans are reluctant to accede to our request for a US civilian aircraft. Sir N Henderson judges that if we applied significant pressure the Americans would give way; but he counsels that we should avoid using up our credit with the Americans unless we have to and that it seems best to revert to this request only if other options are not feasible.

ICRC

7. On 7 May the ICRC received a letter from Argentina alleging British neglect of its international obligations. Specifically the Argentines charge that the UK has provided inadequate information on those captured in South Georgia and that repatriated military personnel have been incorporated in the Task Force. The Argentines also complain about the sinking of the "General Belgrano" and allege that British forces have attacked Argentine vessels engaged in rescue operations. Our mission has responded to these charges and the ICRC have given us no indication that they expect us to comment further.

Mexico

8. The suggestion of a meeting between President Galtieri and the Prime Minister is known to Governor Rossell de la Lama and our Ambassador has learnt that in Rossell de la Lama's view President Lopez Portillo wishes to put his full weight behind this proposed meeting.

Brazil

9. The Brazilian Foreign Minister told our Ambassador on 7 May that he had personally urged on Sr Costa Mendez the necessity of adopting a flexible approach to a negotiated solution under UN auspices. He understood from Costa Mendez that the Argentines did not favour a further formal session of the Security Council (because of a possible UK veto) and that the Argentines would be willing to pursue discussions with the Secretary-General. There was no sign as yet that the Argentines would abandon their prerequisite of claiming sovereignty.

Comment

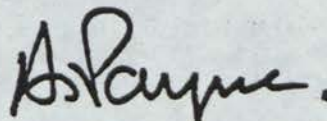
10. Sir A Parsons' further interview with the Secretary-General has usefully established that Perez de Cuellar is well aware of the dangers of Argentine manipulation. At his meeting at 1530 today, 8 May, with the Secretary-General, Sir A Parsons will presumably be given further details of the Argentine 'amplifications' presented by Ros on 7 May. It is for consideration whether additional guidance on last night's MOD statement might help Sir A Parsons to allay the Secretary-General's evident fears that this move has made his task more difficult.

11. It is to be expected that the Argentines would seek to make the most of the MOD statement, and clearly right that the allegations made in writing by Roca to the Secretary-General should be countered today by Sir A Parsons' proposed letter. The Secretary of State will have an opportunity today at Villers-le-Temple to gauge EC reactions to this move and it might be helpful for Sir A Parsons to have an early report on EC reactions.

12. Now that we are fully committed to the UN route, it seems gratuitously unhelpful for Mrs Kirkpatrick to continue earlier US efforts to keep the Secretary-General out of the action. We have as yet seen no comment from Washington. Mr Haig is known to be distrustful of Perez de Cuellar, but even so, there seems a good chance that Mrs Kirkpatrick was acting on her own initiative.

13. The Reagan message is extraordinary. Sir N. Henderson's protest is the least we can do, but it is probably unwise to take the matter further at this point, when we are seeking practical help from the US. It will undoubtedly give comfort to the Argentine and make Perez de Cuellar's task more difficult. Sir N Henderson's recommendation not to press for US transport for POWs seems right provided that other options are available. We must explore these urgently. The Argentines are trying to wrong foot us on this issue.

14. A short interim reply went last night to Mexico City on Lopez Portillo's initiative. The involvement of Rossell de la Lama and Rowland seems to have nothing to offer, but Lopez Portillo might be in a position to offer some help at a later stage. We must first await the outcome of Perez de Cuellar's efforts. If the Brazilian reports are correct, it is a bonus that Costa Mendez is not seeking a formal meeting of the Security Council.



A J Payne  
Emergency Unit

8 May 1982