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TO IMMEDIATE BRASILIA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 141 OF 28 MAY

INFO WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, BOGOTA, LIMA

ACTION

FALKLAND ISLANDS: CALL BY THE BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR

1. THE BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR CALLED ON ME AT SHORT NOTICE TODAY ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRESIDENT FIGUEIREDO.
2. CAMPOS REFERRED TO BRAZIL'S CONSTRUCTIVE POSITION THROUGHOUT THE CRISIS. IT DEPLORED THE ARGENTINE AGGRESSION AND VALUED ITS RELATIONS WITH THE UK. BUT IT WAS ALSO ARGENTINA'S NEIGHBOUR AND HAD A SPECIAL UNDERSTANDING OF ITS DIFFICULTIES. MATTERS WERE NOW AT A CRITICAL POINT. BRITISH INSISTENCE ON AN UNCONDITIONAL ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL WOULD HAVE A DESTABILIZING EFFECT BOTH ON ARGENTINA AND THE REGION. IF ARGENTINA WAS FACED WITH MILITARY HUMILIATION, IT MIGHT HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TURN TO THE SOVIET UNION. THIS WOULD LEAD TO A MAJOR REALIGNMENT BOTH IN ITS EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND ITS DOMESTIC POLITICS. THIS WOULD NOT ONLY FACE THE UK WITH CONTINUED AND COSTLY MILITARY CONFRONTATION BUT WOULD HAVE DAMAGING REGIONAL CONSEQUENCES.
3. FIGUEIREDO, AFTER DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT TURBAY (ALTHOUGH CAMPOS INDICATED THAT BRAZIL WAS NOT DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE LATEST COLOMBIAN PROPOSALS) WISHED TO KNOW WHETHER THE BRITISH POSITION ON ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL AND ON FULL RESTORATION OF BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY WAS IRREVERSIBLE. HE HOPED NOT: AND OUR SUPPORT FOR THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S RENEWED MISSION WAS ENCOURAGING. IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO WORK OUT SOME FRAMEWORK TO PROVIDE AN EXIT FOR ARGENTINA AND TO AVOID SOVIET INVOLVEMENT. HE HOPED THAT WE MIGHT INDICATE A CONTINUED WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION WHICH MIGHT INVOLVE A PHASED AND MUTUAL WITHDRAWAL AND INTERIM ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS (SUCH AS TRUSTEESHIP OR OTHER INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION).

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4. I SAID THAT WE HAD NO WISH TO HUMILIATE ARGENTINA. WE HAD ENGAGED IN LONG AND INTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS BUT HAD BEEN MET WITH STUBBORN ARGENTINE REFUSAL TO COMPLY WITH SCR 502. IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MIGHT NOW GET A DIFFERENT RESPONSE. BUT THE PRESENT MILITARY CONFRONTATION WAS THE FRUIT OF ARGENTINE OB DURACY AND HAD NOT BEEN OF OUR SEEKING. FOLLOWING OUR LANDING ON THE ISLANDS, THE CIRCUMSTANCES WERE INEVITABLY DIFFERENT. A CEASEFIRE HAD TO BE LINKED WITH A FIRM ARGENTINE COMMITMENT TO FULL WITHDRAWAL. WE APPRECIATED THAT THE ARGENTINIANS HAD GOT THEMSELVES INTO A MESS. BUT THIS WAS NOT OUR FAULT AND IT WAS HARD TO SEE WHAT WE COULD NEGOTIATE ABOUT AT THIS STAGE WITHOUT A MAJOR CHANGE IN THE ARGENTINE POSITION. WE INTENDED TO REPOSSESS THE ISLANDS AND TO RESTORE OUR ADMINISTRATION. THERE WOULD NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE A PERIOD FOR REHABILITATION. THERE COULD THEN BE A WIDE VARIETY OF POSSIBILITIES, IN WHICH THERE COULD BE AN INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION (WITH BRAZIL POSSIBLY PLAYING A PART).

5. CAMPOS, WHO WAS IN WASPISH MOOD, WENT ON TO MAKE SOME SHARP CRITICISM OF OUR POSITION ON SOVEREIGNTY AND ON THE "PRE-JUDGEMENT" IMPLICIT IN OUR ATTITUDE TO ISLANDERS' WISHES. HE ALSO MAINTAINED THAT OUR ATTITUDE TO UN INVOLVEMENT WAS SELECTIVE AND THAT BY TAKING MILITARY ACTION WE WERE SETTING OURSELVES UP AS ENFORCERS OF SCR 502. IT WAS NOT A PRODUCTIVE EXCHANGE. BUT I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE CLEAR THE IMPORTANCE WHICH WE ATTACHED TO BRAZIL'S POSITION AND OUR APPRECIATION OF THE DANGERS INHERENT IN THE PRESENT SITUATION.

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