

CONFIDENTIAL

FM F C O 051215Z JUNE 82

TO FLASH BRASILIA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 169 OF 5 JUNE

INFO FLASH UKDEL VERSAILLES (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY),

MODUK AIR (SIC 19F),

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

MY TELNO 166: VULCAN DIVERSION.

1. ACLAND SUMMONED THE BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR THIS MORNING AND ASKED THAT THE BRAZILIANS SHOULD STAND BY THEIR EARLIER DECISION TO LET THE VULCAN FLY OUT. WHATEVER THE LEGAL NICETIES, THIS WAS A POLITICAL ISSUE TO WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE ATTACHED VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE. WE WANTED TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL, WHICH WE RECOGNISED AS MUCH THE MOST IMPORTANT COUNTRY IN THE AREA. AT THE VERY LEAST, WE LOOKED FOR BRAZILIAN EVEN-HANDEDNESS. WE DID NOT UNDERSTAND HOW THEY COULD INSIST ON HOLDING ON TO THE VULCAN WHILE CONTINUING TO PERMIT SUPPLIES OF WAR MATERIAL FOR ARGENTINA TO BE FLOWN THROUGH RECIFE FROM LIBYA.

2. CAMPOS SAID HE HAD NO FIRM INSTRUCTIONS AND WOULD CONVEY THIS REQUEST TO HIS GOVERNMENT. HIS LATEST INFORMATION WAS THAT THE MINISTRY OF THE AIR HAD DECIDED ON THE BASIS OF ITS OWN LEGAL OPINION TO RELEASE THE PLANE UNARMED. THE ARGENTINES HAD PROTESTED THAT THIS WOULD BE AGAINST BOTH THE 1923 HAGUE RULES, WHICH REQUIRED THE INTERNMENT OF PLANES WHICH HAD STRAYED INTO NEUTRAL TERRITORY, AND AGAINST THE PASSAGE IN THE RECENT RIO TREATY RESOLUTION WHICH REQUIRED BRAZIL NOT TO TAKE ANY ACTION TO OBSTRUCT ASSISTANCE TO ARGENTINA. THE GOVERNMENT HAD SOUGHT A LEGAL OPINION ON THE ARGENTINE NOTES FROM BOTH THE MINISTRY OF THE AIR AND FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. NO FINAL DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN. BRAZIL WANTED TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE UK AND TO REMAIN AS EVEN-HANDED AS WAS POSSIBLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE UK AND A BROTHER LATIN AMERICAN NEIGHBOUR, WHOSE CLAIM ON THE FALKLAND ISLANDS BRAZIL SUPPORTED.

3. CAMPOS ASKED FOR OUR EVIDENCE FOR THE TRANSIT OF WAR SUPPLIES THROUGH RECIFE. HE WAS TOLD THAT WE HAD SEEN A NUMBER OF BRAZILIAN PRESS REPORTS WHICH COINCIDED WITH OUR OWN INFORMATION. WE WERE SURPRISED THAT BRAZIL KEPT SUCH CLOSE COMPANY WITH THE PRESENT LIBYAN REGIME. CAMPOS SAID THAT HE WAS NOT INFORMED OF THIS, BUT

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4. ACLAND CONCLUDED BY STRESSING THE VERY GREAT SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE REGARDED THIS EPISODE AND OUR VERY KEEN AND GENUINELY HELD DESIRE, REAFFIRMED IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEWS THIS WEEK, FOR CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL AND LATIN AMERICA AS A WHOLE.

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