

ADVANCE COPIES: FALKLAND ISLANDS GENERAL 42

IMMEDIATE

PS
PS/MURD
PS/MR ONSLOW
PS/MR RIFKIND
PS/PUS
SIR J BULLARD
~~SIR J SINCLAIR~~ MR RIFKIND
MR GIFFARD
MR WRIGHT
MR ADAMS
LORD N G LENNOX
LORD BRIDGES
MR URE
MR GILLMORE

~~PS/NO 10 DOWNING ST~~ (2)
PS/S OF S FOR DEFENCE
MR J STEWART AUSD STAFF MOD
PS/CHANCELLOR)
MR ILETT) TREASURY
MR LITTLER)
MISS DICKSON D/ENERGY
SIR R ARMSTRONG)
SIR M PALLISER)
MR A D S GOODALL)
MR FULLER SAPU/DIO) CABINET OFFICE
DIO)

HD/PUSD (2)
HD/S AM D
HD/FALKLANDS UNIT (2)
HD/DEFENCE DEPT
HD/NEWS DEPT
HD/ERD
HD/ECD(E)
HD/UND
HD/PLANNING STAFF

ROOM 8 FOR MODUK C IN C FLEET

IMMEDIATE

~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

CONFIDENTIAL
FROM UKMIS GENEVA 010950Z JUL 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 377 OF 1 JULY
AND TO IMMEDIATE MODUK
INFO BERNE, BRASILIA, UKMIS NEW YORK

FALKLANDS: ARGENTINE POWS

1. PALEXANDRE HAY, PRESIDENT OF THE ICRC, ASKED ME TO CALL LATE ON 30 JUNE. HIS MAIN POINT WAS THAT THE ICRC WERE UNDER GREAT PRESSURE FOR FULL DETAILS OF THE POWS WE ARE RETAINING FOR THE PRESENT (YOUR TELNO 260). THE ICRC OFFICE IN BUENOS AIRES WAS BESIEGED BY ANXIOUS FAMILIES. THIS COULD HAVE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES. HE ALSO TOUCHED ON THE PROBLEM OF IDENTIFYING THOSE KILLED; AND ON THE ARTUSO AND GOOSE GREEN INCIDENTS.

ARGENTINE POWS IN UK HANDS

2. WHILE FAMILIES WERE CLAMOURING FOR FULL DETAILS OF INDIVIDUALS, THERE WAS STILL CONFUSION EVEN OVER THE PRECISE NUMBER OF THE PRISONERS RETAINED. MOD HAD MENTIONED TO ICRC A TOTAL NUMBER OF 568(569). BUT THE ICRC REPRESENTATIVE IN THE FALKLANDS, NOW [NAME] HAD COMPILED HIS OWN "UNOFFICIAL" LIST

568(568). BUT THE ICRC REPRESENTATIVE IN THE FALKLANDS, NOW ON THE MV SIR EDMUND, HAD COMPILED HIS OWN "UNOFFICIAL" LIST OF 610 TO WHICH SHOULD BE ADDED THE TEN FROM SOUTH THULE. THE "OFFICIAL" BRITISH LIST OF THOSE RETAINED HAD ALREADY BEEN FORWARDED BY AIR TO ASCENSION ISLAND, BUT IT WAS NOT KNOWN WHEN IT WOULD REACH LONDON AND GENEVA. MEANWHILE, THERE WERE DIFFICULTIES ABOUT TELEXING THE UNOFFICIAL ICRC LIST VIA NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS.

3. HAY ASKED AS A MATTER OF HUMANITARIAN CONCERN IF WE COULD URGENTLY SOLVE THE COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM. BY SO DOING WE WOULD ALSO DEFUSE POSSIBLE POLITICAL CRITICISM OF OUR ATTITUDE.

4. WE SPOKE TO FEARN, SAND ON THE TELEPHONE AND WITHIN AN HOUR RECEIVED A MESSAGE THAT THE LIST WOULD BE TELEXED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE DIRECT TO ICRC AND THIS MISSION. I AM MOST GRATEFUL.

MISSING ARGENTINE SERVICEMEN

5. HAY WENT ON TO MENTION THE PROBLEM OF "DISAPPEARED" ARGENTINE TROOPS, MISSING IN ACTION. MANY HAD BEEN HASTILY BURIED BEFORE THE CEASEFIRE WITHOUT PROPER RECORD BEING KEPT. THE BODIES OF OTHERS WERE INACCESSIBLE IN MINEFIELDS. OTHER CORPSES LACKED IDENTIFICATION DISCS. THIS WAS A PROBLEM ON WHICH ICRC WOULD BE LOOKING TO US FOR MAXIMUM HELP IN DUE COURSE, THOUGH THEY RECOGNISED THE DIFFICULTIES. THIS IS A FURTHER PROBLEM AREA IN WHICH THE ARGENTINES COULD, HOWEVER UNJUSTIFIABLY, MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL OUT OF OUR DIFFICULTIES. I HOPE THIS POINT WILL BE CAREFULLY BORNE IN MIND.

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ARTUSO AND GOOSE GREEN INCIDENTS

6. FINALLY, HAY MENTIONED THAT THE ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES WERE PRESSING FOR THE REPORTS ON THE ARTUSO AND GOOSE GREEN INCIDENTS. THE ICRC INTEREST HERE WAS NOT SO MUCH A HUMANITARIAN ONE AS OF SEEING THAT THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS WERE OBSERVED. I SAID THAT WE WERE DOING WHAT WE COULD, BUT THAT JUDICIAL PROCESS TOOK TIME. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO KNOW SOON THE LATEST POSITION, IF NECESSARY FOR MY OWN INFORMATION ONLY, ON THESE TWO CASES.

MARSHALL