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GENSCHER'S VISIT TO ARGENTINA, 16-18 APRIL

SUMMARY

1. GERMANS IMPRESSED BY ALFONSIN GOVERNMENT AND ITS PROSPECTS. IN FALKLANDS DISCUSSIONS, GENSCHEER STRESSED THE NEED FOR THE ARGENTINES TO START TALKING WITH HMG.

DETAIL

2. AT MY REQUEST RUHFUS, WHO HAD BEEN WITH GENSCHEER IN ARGENTINA, BRIEFED ME ON THE VISIT ON HIS RETURN TO BONN TODAY.

3. HE SAID THE GERMAN DELEGATION HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE ALFONSIN GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO RESTORE DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW, AND BY THEIR PLANS FOR PULLING THE ECONOMY OUT OF ITS PRESENT MESS IN THE FACE OF THE HAZARDS PRESENTED BY THE PERONISTS AND THE TRADES UNIONS. THE LOCAL GERMAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY, WHO HAD LONG EXPERIENCE AND MUCH AT STAKE, WERE OPTIMISTIC THAT A NEW BEGINNING FOR ARGENTINA WAS AT LAST ON THE WAY - THE ELECTORATE HAD SHOWN THEMSELVES FOR THE FIRST TIME FED UP WITH THE CONSTANT YO-YOING BETWEEN MILITARY AND PERONISTS, AND THE LATTER WERE THEMSELVES DIVIDED.

4. IN DISCUSSION OF THE FALKLANDS, CAPUTO HAD UNDERLINED ARGENTINE DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION. BUT BRITISH REFUSAL TO DISCUSS SOVEREIGNTY AT PRESENT CREATED AN IMPASSE. GENSCHEER HAD UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF STARTING DISCUSSIONS, AND HAD SUGGESTED THAT INFORMAL TALKS MIGHT BE THE WAY TO BEGIN. IN A SEPARATE MEETING ALFONSIN HAD ALSO EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT AT THE BRITISH POSITION. HE UNDERSTOOD THE REASONS FOR EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY WITH THE UK. BUT HE ALLEGED THERE WAS TALK IN THE UK OF A NATO INTEREST IN THE FALKLANDS: SUCH TALK COULD ONLY AGGRAVATE THE SITUATION. GENSCHEER HAD EMPHASISED THAT GERMAN SOLIDARITY WITH THE UK HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH NATO (THE SOUTH ATLANTIC WAS "OUT OF AREA") BUT WITH COMMON MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMUNITY AND OUR IMPORTANCE AS A CLOSE ALLY. HE REITERATED THE IMPORTANCE OF STARTING TALKS, ADDING THAT HE DID NOT WANT THE FALKLANDS SITUATION TO BE A LONG-TERM DRAG ON EC-ARGENTINA RELATIONS. THE GERMANS HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT ARGENTINA WAS SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN TALKS.

5. IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE (AS GERMAN PAPERS REPORT) HE HAD REBUTTED A SUGGESTION THAT THE FRG MIGHT BE ABLE TO MEDIATE IN THE CONFLICT.

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6. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION, RUHFUS CONFIRMED THAT NEITHER SIDE HAD MENTIONED A FORMAL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES.

7. FULLER REPORT FOLLOWS BY BAG.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVINGS TO ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

TAYLOR

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

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