

GRS 420
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FM BRASILIA 11:1830Z MARCH 82
TO PRIORITY FCO
REPEATED TO BUENOS AIRES AND PORT STANLEY
TELEGRAM NUMBER 042 OF 11 MARCH

FOR FEARN SAMD FROM FLYNN

FALKLANDS

1. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE AMBASSADOR ON TOUR I CALLED ON THE HEAD OF THE AMERICAS DEPARTMENT ON 10 MARCH TO DISCUSS THE VISIT LAST WEEK OF THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER. RICUPERO SAID THAT THE ARGENTINES HAD NOT INCLUDED THE FALKLANDS IN THE FORMAL AGENDA BUT THAT IT HAD COME UP IN PRIVATE DISCUSSION BETWEEN COSTA MENDES AND GUERREIRO.
2. RICUPERO STATED THAT COSTA MENDES HAD NOT GONE INTO DETAIL BUT HAD GIVEN THE IMPRESSION THAT ARGENTINE POLICY WAS TO INCREASE DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON THE UK AT THE UNITED NATIONS AND ELSEWHERE. COSTA MENDES HAD GIVEN NO INDICATION THAT THE ARGENTINES WERE CONTEMPLATING AT THIS STAGE ANYTHING BEYOND THIS ALTHOUGH RICUPERO COMMENTED THAT THE ARGENTINES WOULD NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TOLD THEM SO IF THEY WERE.
3. COSTA MENDES HAD TOLD GUERREIRO THAT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE THE ARGENTINES PROPOSED TO OFFER INDUCEMENTS TO THE ISLANDERS IN THE FORM OF EQUIVALENT PLOTS OF LAND ON THE MAINLAND OR, FAILING THAT, FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO WISHED TO DO SO TO EMIGRATE TO, EG, NEW ZEALAND.
4. RICUPERO CITED THE RECENT SURPRISE LANDING OF AN ARGENTINE AIR FORCE HERCULES AT STANLEY AND SURMISED THAT DESPITE WHAT COSTA MENDES HAD TOLD HIS OWN MINISTER THIS MIGHT INDICATE THE SORT OF ADDITIONAL PRESSURE WHICH THE ARGENTINES MIGHT FEEL TEMPTED TO USE.
5. I THANKED RICUPERO FOR THIS HELPFUL BRIEFING AND SAID THAT WE HAD BEEN DISHEARTENED BY THE ARGENTINES GOING BACK ON THE NEW YORK UNDERSTANDING. WE HAD THOUGHT THE NEW YORK TALKS HAD BROKEN NEW GROUND AND HAD BEEN DISTRESSED BY THE SUBSEQUENT ARGENTINE CHANGE OF ATTITUDE BUT BRITISH MINISTERS WOULD NOT NEGOTIATE UNDER DURESS. RICUPERO REFERRED TO THE HANSARD EXTRACT ON THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE OF 3 MARCH AND COMMENTED THAT MR LUCE HAD HANDLED THE DEBATE VERY WELL. I SAID THAT IN THIS NEW AND DELICATE SITUATION WE WOULD FIND IT USEFUL TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE ITAMARATY ON THE SUBJECT. RICUPERO AGREED.

COMMENT

6. FROM THE TONE OF RICUPERO'S CONVERSATION, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE BRAZILIAN FOREIGN MINISTER DID NOT GO MUCH BEYOND LISTENING TO HIS ARGENTINE COLLEAGUE'S EXPOSITION. THE BRAZILIANS ARE WELL AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF ARGENTINE ADVENTURISM IN THIS REGARD RICUPERO MENTIONED THE BEAGLE CHANNEL AND ARGENTINE DIFFICULTIES WITH PARAGUAY OVER THE YACYRETA DAM. HE WAS EMPHATIC, HOWEVER, IN

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STATING THAT THE BRAZILIANS FORESAW NO POINT OF FRICTION BETWEEN THEMSELVES WITH ARGENTINA. RICUPERO HIMSELF SHOWED SOME SYMPATHY FOR OUR PREDICAMENT. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, THE BRAZILIANS WILL CONTINUE THEIR LONG-ESTABLISHED POLICY OF PASSIVE SUPPORT FOR THE ARGENTINE CLAIM WHILE HOPING THAT THE ARGENTINES WILL BE SENSIBLE.

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ADDITIONAL DISTN:
FALKLAND ISLANDS

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