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YOUR VISIT TO NEW YORK: COMMUNITY BRIEFING

1. AT THE PRESIDENCY'S REQUEST, I BRIEFED MY COLLEAGUES OF THE TEN ABOUT YOUR VISIT THIS AFTERNOON AND GAVE THEM THE TRANSCRIPT OF YOUR PRESS CONFERENCE HERE (MY TELNO 634). I SAID THAT YOU EXPECTED TO BE IN TOUCH WITH THEIR FOREIGN MINISTERS SHORTLY AFTER YOUR RETURN TO LONDON (YOUR TELNO 895 TO WASHINGTON NOT TO ALL).
2. I SAID THAT I UNDERSTOOD THAT YOUR TALKS IN WASHINGTON HAD CONFIRMED THAT HAIG WAS STILL IN THE ACT. IN NEW YORK YOU HAD SEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. PEREZ DE CUELLAR HAD CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD NOT TAKE AN INITIATIVE WITHOUT THE AGREEMENT OF THE PARTIES. BUT HE WAS THINKING OF USING HIS GOOD OFFICES ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY. IE WITHOUT SEEKING A MANDATE FROM THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HE FELT THAT MEETINGS OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL WOULD BE LIKELY TO BE POLEMICAL AND THIS COULD DAMAGE THE COUNCIL'S ABILITY TO HELP IN THE FUTURE. YOU HAD HAD A LONG EXPLORATORY DISCUSSION WITH PEREZ DE CUELLAR ABOUT THE STEPS HE MIGHT TAKE TO HELP RESOLVE THE IMMEDIATE CRISIS OR TO ASSIST DURING AN INTERIM PERIOD. YOU HAD MADE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT AS FAR AS WE WERE CONCERNED OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH 2 OF SCR 502 CONSTITUTED AN UNCONDITIONAL DEMAND FOR AN IMMEDIATE ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL.

BUT THE ARGENTINES HAD REFUSED TO WITHDRAW AND HAD REINFORCED THEIR TROOPS ON THE ISLANDS. YOU VERY MUCH WANTED A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION BUT YOU WERE DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN DIPLOMATIC, ECONOMIC AND (UNDER ARTICLE 51) MILITARY PRESSURES ON THE ARGENTINES IN ORDER TO GET THEM TO CHANGE THEIR PRESENT INSISTENCE THAT THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION MUST BE PREJUDGED BEFORE THEY WOULD WITHDRAW. UNLESS THIS POSITION COULD BE CHANGED IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE EITHER HOW A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION COULD BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT FURTHER USE OF FORCE OR HOW THE UN COULD PLAY A USEFUL ROLE. YOU HAD LISTENED WITH INTEREST TO ALL THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S IDEAS. BUT YOU HAD INSISTED ON OUR DETERMINATION TO DISCHARGE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS TRUSTEES OF THE ISLANDERS. I THOUGHT THAT YOUR FIRM STATEMENT OF HM GOVERNMENT'S POSITION WOULD HAVE REMOVED ANY DOUBTS IN THE MINDS OF PEREZ DE CUELLAR AND LING QING.

3. AS REGARDS THE SECURITY COUNCIL, OUR IMPRESSION WAS THAT ARGENTINA WAS NOT DISPOSED TO RETURN TO THE COUNCIL FOR THE PRESENT. NOR DID ANY OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS SEEM TO WANT TO DO SO. WE WERE NOT AFRAID OF A FURTHER PUBLIC DEBATE BUT WE WERE WORRIED THAT IF IT WAS ACRIMONIOUS AND IF THE COUNCIL FAILED TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION (IE IF THERE WAS A VETO), THAT WOULD NOT BRING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION NEARER.

4. IN THE DISCUSSION THAT FOLLOWED, THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THE CONSULTATIONS THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ARE HOLDING TODAY WITH COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL HAVE REDUCED THE RISK OF ANYONE CALLING THE COUNCIL IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, THOUGH WITH A SLIGHT QUESTION MARK OVER SPAIN, WHOSE FOREIGN MINISTER IS TO SEE THE SECRETARY GENERAL TOMORROW (4 MAY) EN ROUTE TO COSTA RICA. IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT, WHILE PEREZ DE CUELLAR FELT HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS SECRETARY GENERAL, HE WAS PROCEEDING CAUTIOUSLY AND RECOGNISED THE EXTREME DELICACY OF THE PROBLEM. I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO CORRECT SOME MIS-APPREHENSIONS AMONGST MY COLLEAGUES ABOUT LAST NIGHT'S PERUVIAN PROPOSAL.

PARSONS

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