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TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1214 OF 9 APRIL
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1. HAIG'S TALKS IN LONDON ARE THE LEAD STORY IN THE WASHINGTON POST AND NEW YORK TIMES, BOTH OF WHICH EMPHASISE OUR DETERMINATION TO SECURE AN ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ARGENTINA CAN BEGIN.

2. AN ARTICLE IN THE WASHINGTON POST BY JOHN GOSHKO, WHO HAS BEEN REGULARLY REPORTING US GOVERNMENT VIEWS OF THE CRISIS, SUGGESTS THAT, DESPITE PRESS CRITICISM OF ITS EVEN-HANDED APPROACH, THE ADMINISTRATION BELIEVES THAT ITS ONLY HOPE OF PURSUING AN HONEST BROKER ROLE IS THROUGH BEING QUIET AND EFFECTIVE RATHER THAN MORALISTIC AND INEFFECTIVE. GOSHKO SAYS THAT US OFFICIALS BELIEVE BOTH BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA HAVE TACITLY ENDORSED REAGAN'S EFFORTS TO AVOID TILTING OVERTLY TOWARD ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER, DESPITE BRITISH ANNOYANCE AT QUESTIONABLE ACTIONS SUCH AS THE ATTENDANCE BY KIRKPATRICK AND STOESSEL AT THE ARGENTINE DINNER ON THE DAY OF THE INVASION. GOSHKO QUOTES MY COMMENT: "IF I HAD BEEN ASKED BY THE IRANIAN EMBASSY TO GO TO A BANQUET THE NIGHT YOUR HOSTAGES WERE TAKEN, I WOULD NOT HAVE DONE SO". ACCORDING TO GOSHKO, ADMINISTRATION SOURCES SAY THAT IF A CONFRONTATION CANNOT BE AVOIDED THE OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE OF BRITAIN TO US POLICY, AND US CONCERN THAT THE CRISIS COULD CAUSE THE FALL OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY FORCE WASHINGTON TO COME DOWN ON

CONCERN THAT THE CRISIS COULD CAUSE THE FALL OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY FORCE WASHINGTON TO COME DOWN ON BRITAIN'S SIDE.

3. THE POST CARRIES YET ANOTHER STORY QUOTING UNNAMED US EXPERTS TO THE EFFECT THAT WHILE WE HAVE THE CAPACITY TO SET UP A BLOCKADE AROUND THE FALKLANDS, SUSTAINING IT WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT. THE ARTICLE SUGGESTS THAT WHILE BRITISH SHIPS COULD SINK ARGENTINE SHIPS WITHOUT SURFACING, SUCH ACTION MIGHT PROVOKE WORLD-WIDE PROTEST AGAINST THE BRITISH SINCE THE USUAL BLOCKADE PRACTICE IS TO WARN BEFORE RESORTING TO SINKING THE VIOLATOR. (WE ARE TAKING THE POST TO TASK ON THIS ARTICLE WHICH DOES NOT REFLECT OFFICIAL US THINKING AND WHICH IGNORES THE FACT THAT A DECLARATION OF A MARITIME EXCLUSION ZONE IS A PUBLIC WARNING TO SHIPPING).

4. BOTH THE POST AND NEW YORK TIMES CARRY COMMENTARIES. AN ARTICLE IN THE POST BY AN ARGENTINE JOURNALIST, MARIO DEL CARRIL, SAYS THAT HAD THE ARGENTINE MILITARY REGIME DONE ALL THAT IT HAS DONE IN THE LAST SIX YEARS IE THREATENED ITS NEIGHBOURS, REPPRESSED ITS PEOPLE, RUINED THE NATION'S ECONOMY, SUBVERTED A DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN BOLIVIA, TOLERATED ANTI-SEMITIC OVERTONES IN ITS SECURITY WITCH-HUNTS, AND OCCUPIED A FREE ISLAND PEOPLE WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT, WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME RAISING THE FLAG OF ANTI-COMMUNISM, REAGAN WOULD HAVE KEPT IT AT ARMS LENGTH. BUT BECAUSE OF ITS ANTI-COMMUNISM, ARGENTINA HAS BECOME A FRIEND AND ASSET OF AMERICA AND THUS GIVEN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION IN THIS CRISIS A CHANCE OF BECOMING WHAT THEY PROMISED THEY WOULD NEVER BE: APPEASERS.

5. NEW YORK TIMES CARRIES AN ARTICLE ABOUT ARGENTINE CLAIMS TO BRITISH ANTARCTIC TERRITORY, WHICH ARGUES THAT ARGENTINA HAS LONG SOUGHT TO CIRCUMVENT THE TREATY AND THAT EVEN A POLITICAL VICTORY FOR THE ARGENTINE REGIME OVER THE FALKLANDS WOULD PROBABLY ENCOURAGE IT TO BE MORE BRAZEN WITH ITS ANTARCTIC CLAIMS, OR TO BREAK WITH THE TREATY ALTOGETHER IN ORDER TO WORK ITS WILL FREELY IN THE ANTARCTIC.

6. A SECONDPICE IN THE NEW YORK TIMES, FROM STEVEN RATINER IN LONDON, DESCRIBES THE GLOOMY PROSPECT FOR THE ARGENTINE ECONOMY FOLLOWING BRITAIN'S FREEZE OF ARGENTINE ASSETS. DRAWING AN ANALOGY BETWEEN OUR ACTION AND AMERICAN ACTION AGAINST IRAN IN THE HOSTAGE CRISIS, RATINER SAYS THAT THE BRITISH ACTION COULD MEAN SUBSTANTIAL PRESSURE ON ARGENTINE TRADE BEYOND THE SANCTIONS IMPOSED BY BRITAIN AND OTHER NATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE SOVIET UNION, A MAJOR PURCHASER OF WHEAT, HAS BEGUN DEMANDING SHORT-TERM CREDIT TO PAY FOR THE GRAIN. NOW ARGENTINA MIGHT HAVE TROUBLE ARRANGING SUCH CREDIT

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7. LARGE SCALE RADIO AND TELEVISION COVERAGE CONTINUES. APPEARING ON ABC'S NIGHTLINE PROGRAMME LAST NIGHT, WARREN CHRISTOPHER, THE FORMER DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE WHO HANDLED NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN UNDER CARTER, WAS ROBUSTLY ON OUR SIDE AND DEPLORED THE ADMINISTRATION'S EVEN-HANDEDNESS, PARTICULARLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE OUTSTANDING SUPPORT WHICH AMERICA HAD HAD FROM BRITAIN OVER THE IRAN CRISIS

HENDERSON

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