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FM BRASILIA 1:2300Z APRIL 82  
 TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 020900Z FCO  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 059 OF 1 APRIL  
 REPEATED TO IMMEDIATE BUENOS AIRES, WASHINGTON

FALKLAND ISLANDS/SOUTH GEORGIA  
 YOUR TELNO 46

1. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER IN JAPAN I CALLED THIS AFTERNOON ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ITAMARATY AND SPOKE AS INSTRUCTED.
2. AMBASSADOR BAENA SOARES LISTENED ATTENTIVELY, NODDING IN AGREEMENT AT THE MAIN POINTS. AT THE END, HE SAID HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR WHAT I HAD TOLD HIM AND FOR THE EARLIER INFORMATION WE HAD GIVEN RICUPERO. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE TO RESPOND TO OUR REQUEST FOR INTERVENTION WITH THE ARGENTINES. IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO DISCUSS WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES CONCERNED. HE WOULD GIVE US AN ANSWER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
3. BAENA THEN REFERRED TO BRAZILIAN AND OTHER (PROBABLY BRITISH) PRESS REPORTS REGARDING THE SENDING OF ROYAL NAVY REINFORCEMENTS, INCLUDING A QUOTE NUCLEAR SUBMARINE UNQUOTE TO THE AREA. THIS HAD CAUSED CONCERN TO THE BRAZILIAN AUTHORITIES WHO, DESPITE BRAZIL'S NON-RATIFICATION HITHERTO, SET STORE ON THE PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY OF TLATLELOLCO WHICH BANNED BOTH THE PRESENCE AND THE TRANSIT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE TREATY AREA. HE ASKED IF WE COULD CLARIFY URGENTLY THE PRESS REPORTS IN QUESTION. I SAID THAT I HAD NO DIRECT INFORMATION ON THIS POINT AND WOULD SEEK IT AT ONCE. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I SAID THAT THE REFERENCE TO NUCLEAR SUBMARINES MUST SURELY REFER TO THE TYPE OF PROPULSION, NOT THAT OF WEAPONS.
4. BAENA THEN TURNED TO RICUPERO WHO CONFIRMED THAT THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE ITAMARATY ACCORDED WITH WHAT I HAD SAID.
5. MAKING IT CLEAR THAT I WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I THEN SAID THAT THE THREATENING STATEMENTS MADE BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE NEW YORK TALKS HAD TAKEN US BY SURPRISE. WE HAD THOUGHT THAT THE TALKS HAD MADE REAL PROGRESS AND THAT WE WERE ON THE WAY TO AGREEMENT AS TO HOW TO HANDLE THE NEGOTIATIONS IN FUTURE. THE MENACING TONE SUBSEQUENTLY ADOPTED IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN BUENOS AIRES CAUSED US CONCERN AS REVEALING A DISQUIETING STATE OF MIND AMONG CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE ARGENTINE

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GOVERNMENT, WHO APPEARED , AS ON PAST OCCASIONS TO BE DIVIDED. I WENT ON TO SAY THAT, WHETHER OR NOT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT AND HIGH COMMAND HAD CONNIVED AT THE UNAUTHORISED EXPEDITION TO SOUTH GEORGIA, IT WAS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THE USE OF AN ARGENTINE NAVY TRANSPORT SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO SOME ELEMENTS IN THE NAVAL COMMAND. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE BEAGLE CHANNEL CRISIS OF DECEMBER 1978 SHOWED, MOREOVER, THAT WHEN THE ARGENTINE HIGH COMMAND SPOKE WITH DIFFERENT VOICES CONFUSION ENSUED AND THE RISK OF ESCALATION WAS ENHANCED. THAT WAS WHY THE CURRENT EVIDENCE OF ARGENTINE NAVAL MANOEUVRES CAUSED US GREAT DISQUIET. ALL WE WANTED WAS A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, USING WELL-TRIED DIPLOMATIC PROCEDURES. WE VERY MUCH HOPED THAT OUR BRAZILIAN FRIENDS WOULD FIND IT POSSIBLE TO SPEAK QUICKLY TO THE ARGENTINES AND URGE ON THEM THE IMPORTANCE OF A PEACEFUL SOLUTION.

6. IN CONCLUSION BAENA THANKED ME AGAIN AND SAID THAT HE LOOKED FORWARD TO RECEIVING CLARIFICATION ON THE QUESTION OF A NUCLEAR SUBMARINE. HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER LADE FLIGHTS BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND THE ISLANDS HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED.

7. WHEN I REFERRED TO THE SENSITIVITY OF BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY AND PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT THE BULLYING OF SMALL DEFENCELESS GROUPS BY BIG NATIONS RICUPERO REMARKED ON MR HEALEY'S CRITICAL REMARKS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ABOUT THE ROYAL NAVY'S PRESENCE OR LACK OF IT IN THE AREA AND COMMENTED THAT IT WAS SURPRISING THAT THE OPPOSITION SHOULD BE GETTING WORKED UP ABOUT THE SITUATION.

8. THE BRAZILIANS ARE OBVIOUSLY ANXIOUS THAT THE POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE SITUATION IN THE FALKLANDS SHOULD BE DAMPED DOWN. I THINK THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THEY WILL DECIDE TO SAY SOMETHING TO THE ARGENTINES, THOUGH THEY MAY FEEL OBLIGED TO APPEAL TO US TOO FOR RESTRAINT, IF ONLY FOR FORM'S SAKE. THE MORE WE CAN TAKE THEM INTO OUR CONFIDENCE THE MORE FORTHCOMING WE MAY EXPECT THEM TO BE.

HARDING

[PASSED TO EMERGENCY STAFF]

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FM FCO 020700Z APRIL 82  
 TO PRIORITY BRASILIA  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 50 OF 2 APRIL.  
 FALKLAND ISLANDS  
 YOUR TEL 059

1. MANY THANKS.
2. WE ARE NOT CONFIRMING PRESSREPORTS ON SUBMARINES BUT ASSUMPTION IN YOUR PARA 3 ON TYPE OF PROPULSION IS CORRECT.

CARRINGTON

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