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FM ROME 031230Z APR 82

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NO. 144 OF 03 APR 82

INFO PRIORITY ALL EC POSTS, UKDEL NATO, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, UKREP BRUSSELS

ALQ 050/4 (3)

YOUR TELEGRAM NO. 046 TO BRASILIA: FALKLAND ISLANDS

1. BEFORE DEPARTING ON AN OFFICIAL TOUR OF THE SOUTH I WARNED COLOMBO'S CABINET, IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT OF TUR, THAT WE WOULD BE SEEKING EARLY ITALIAN ACTION WITH THE ARGENTINES. WE FOLLOWED THIS UP EARLY ON 02 APRIL, AND THE MFA PROMISED TO INTERVENE. THIS WAS HOWEVER OVERTAKEN BY AGENCY REPORTS THAT THE INVASION OF THE FALKLANDS HAD ALREADY HAPPENED. FOLLOWING TELECON PRIVATE SECRETARY/HEAD OF CHANCERY, MINISTER SPOKE AGAIN TO COLOMBO'S CABINET (CAVALCHINI) AND HEAD OF CHANCERY TO BARBARANI (HEAD OF THE MFA'S LATIN AMERICA DEPARTMENT).
2. THE ITALIANS MOVED RAPIDLY AND HAVE JUST TOLD US THAT COLOMBO SUMMONED THE ARGENTINE CHARGE EARLY THIS MORNING. THE CHARGE DEFENDED ARGENTINE ACTIONS ON THE USUAL LINES. COLOMBO SAID THAT THE INVASION WAS A MOST SERIOUS NEW DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD COMPROMISE EXISTING RELATIONS. THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WAS GRAVELY CONCERNED AT THE INVASION AND ITS POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES. HE REMINDED THE CHARGE THAT IN ITS CONSTITUTION ITALY HAD RENOUNCED WAR AS A MEANS OF SETTling DISPUTES, AND URGED THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO WITHDRAW ITS FORCES, TO RESTORE THE STATUS QUO ANTE AND TO RESUME DIPLOMATIC METHODS OF SETTling THE DISPUTE.
3. HEAD OF CHANCERY ASKED WHETHER ITALY INTENDED ISSUING A PUBLIC STATEMENT. BARBARANI NOTED THAT THE TEN HAD MADE A JOINT DECLARATION (WHICH WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN), ADDING THAT THE ITALIANS HAD CONSIDERED, BUT RULED OUT, MAKING A STATEMENT OF THEIR OWN AT THIS JUNCTURE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE LARGE ITALIAN POPULATION IN ARGENTINA. THEY WOULD HOWEVER KEEP THIS POSSIBILITY UNDER REVIEW. HEAD OF CHANCERY NOTED THAT THE SITUATION WAS DETERIORATING FAST.
4. WE HAVE GIVEN THE ITALIANS A COMPLETE SET OF THE RELEVANT TEXTS.

ARCULUS

REC D
SAMO
CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL D
FALKLAND ISLANDS

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No. 10 DOWNING STREET

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