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CONFIDENTIAL

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TO IMMEDIATE HONG KONG,

TELEGRAM NUMBER 777 OF 25 SEPTEMBER.

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FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF RES CLERK FOR P.M.'S PARTY WAS RECEIVED FROM UKMIS NEW YORK TELEGRAM NUMBER 1463 OF 24 SEPTEMBER.

BEGINS:

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, PORT STANLEY

MY TELNO 1437: FALKLANDS AT UNGA 37

1. IT IS ESTABLISHED PRACTICE HERE THAT WHEN AN AGENDA ITEM IS ALLOCATED DIRECT TO PLENARY, INTERESTED BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS (WHO ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ADDRESS PLENARY) ARE PERMITTED TO MAKE STATEMENTS IN THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE AT THE SAME TIME AS THE DEBATE IN PLENARY. WE LEARNT DURING THE COURSE OF 23 SEPTEMBER THAT THE ARGENTINES WERE NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT THIS PRACTICE IN THE CASE OF THE NEW ITEM ON THE FALKLANDS AND THAT THEY WOULD ARGUE THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF A SPECIFIC DECISION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE COUNCILLORS COULD NOT BE HEARD. WE TRIED THROUGH THE SECRETARIAT TO GET THE PRESIDENT TO MAKE A RULING IN FAVOUR OF THE NORMAL PRACTICE BUT HOLLAI WAS NOT PREPARED TO DO SO. BY THIS MORNING (24 SEPTEMBER) IT WAS CLEAR THAT IF THE COUNCILLORS WERE TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK ON THE NEW FALKLANDS ITEM, WE WOULD HAVE TO OBTAIN A SPECIFIC DECISION FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

2. THE ASSEMBLY CONSIDERED THE GENERAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT THIS MORNING. WHEN WE REACHED THE SECTION ON ALLOCATION OF THE ITEMS, I PROPOSED AN AMENDMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE NEW ITEM WOULD BE ALLOCATED TO PLENARY "ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH AN INTEREST IN THE QUESTION WOULD BE HEARD IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CONSIDERATION OF THE ITEM IN PLENARY MEETING". I EXPLAINED THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREVIOUS PRACTICE, EG OVER NAMIBIA, APARTHEID AND CYPRUS. VENEZUELA AND EIGHT OTHER LATINS OPPOSED MY PROPOSAL ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WAS AN UNACCEPTABLE MODIFICATION OF THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE ON 22 SEPTEMBER. AUSTRALIA MADE A ROBUST AND COURAGEOUS STATEMENT IN MY SUPPORT. MY PROPOSAL WAS PUT TO THE VOTE AND ADOPTED BY 41 (WEOG LESS SPAIN AND MALTA, MODERATE NON-ALIGNED, ESPECIALLY AFRICANS) - 33 (LATIN AMERICANS, SOVIET BLOC, SOME RADICAL NON-ALIGNED, SPAIN) - 24. BY THE TIME THE VOTE WAS TAKEN WE WERE WELL INTO THE LUNCH HOUR AND THIS EXPLAINS THE LOW VOTING FIGURES.

3. THERE WERE RISKS IN SEEKING A FORMAL DECISION OF THE ASSEMBLY. THE ASSEMBLY NEVER LIKES CHANGING A DECISION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE: MY PROPOSAL GAVE THE LATINS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROCEDURAL OBFUSCATION: AND A DEFEAT WOULD HAVE DETRACTED FROM OUR SUCCESS IN THE GENERAL COMMITTEE ON 22 SEPTEMBER. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT SEEMED TO ME ESSENTIAL THAT WE SHOULD FIGHT TO GET A HEARING FOR THE COUNCILLORS: AND IF WE HAD LOST, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ARGUE THAT THIS WAS A FURTHER EXAMPLE OF LATIN ATTEMPTS TO PREJUDICE DISCUSSION AT THE UN AND MUZZLE THEIR OPPONENTS. IN THE EVENT, WE WERE ABLE TO WIN ANOTHER SMALL VICTORY. THE CUBAN CHAIRMAN MAY YET TRY TO FRUSTRATE US IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE BUT WE NOW HAVE A FIRM DECISION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE COUNCILLORS SHOULD BE HEARD THERE.

4. I REGRET THAT IT HAS STILL NOT BEEN POSSIBLE FOR US TO OBTAIN A FIRM ESTIMATE OF WHEN THE FALKLANDS ITEM WILL BE TAKEN, BUT MID-NOVEMBER SEEMS THE LIKELIEST DATE.

THOMSON
ENDS