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24 FEB 1982		
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FM FCO 241530Z FEBRUARY 82

IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 243 OF 24 FEB

FROM PS/MR LUCE

MR LUCE'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON: 1 MARCH

- MR LUCE DISCUSSED HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT AND PARTICULARLY THE PROPOSED CALL ON ENDERS WITH STREATOR (US EMBASSY) TODAY.
- MR LUCE SAID HE HOPED TO HAVE A SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WITH ENDERS: HE WISHED TO RAISE THREE PARTICULAR TOPICS AND WOULD WELCOME A GENERAL DISCUSSION ON SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.
- MR LUCE SAID WE KNEW THE AMERICANS WERE GETTING ALONGSIDE THE ARGENTINES AND THAT ENDERS INTENDED TO VISIT ARGENTINA SOON. HE HOPED TO FLOAT WITH ENDERS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE US MIGHT HELP HMG BY GETTING THE ARGENTINES TO 'COOL IT' OVER THE FALKLANDS: WE THOUGHT THE NEW ARGENTINE PRESIDENT WAS MORE HAWKISH THAN HIS PREDECESSOR, AND THAT THE ARGENTINES FELT FRUSTRATED BY WHAT THEY SAW AS LACK OF PROGRESS OVER THE FALKLANDS: THEY MIGHT THEREFORE BE TEMPTED TO FLEX THEIR MUSCLES.
- ON BELIZE, MR LUCE SAID THAT HE WANTED TO SET THE BEST POSSIBLE CLIMATE FOR THE FORTHCOMING WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH TROOPS. HE HOPED TO DISCUSS WITH ENDERS THE QUESTION OF INCREASED DIPLOMATIC AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR BELIZE. STREATOR SUGGESTED THAT A POSSIBLE UK ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION TO BELIZE TO OFFSET THE FORTHCOMING TROOP WITHDRAWAL MIGHT BE DRESSED UP AS A UK CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARIBBEAN BASIC INITIATIVE (HE STRESSED THAT THIS WAS HIS OWN IDEA AND THAT HE HAD NOT (NOT) BEEN AUTHORISED TO SUGGEST THIS).
- MR LUCE SAID HE HOPED TO DISCUSS EL SALVADOR WITH ENDERS.

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STREATOR SAID THE USG WAS ENORMOUSLY GRATEFUL TO THE UK FOR ITS DECISION TO SEND OBSERVERS TO THE ELECTIONS AND WAS FULLY AWARE THAT WE FACED HEAVY CRITICISM FOR THIS: IT WAS A COURAGEOUS DECISION MUCH APPRECIATED IN WASHINGTON. MR LUCE WARNED THERE WAS A SERIOUS POSSIBILITY THAT THE BRITISH OBSERVERS, WHO WOULD BE FREE TO REPORT ON THE ELECTIONS AS THEY SAW THEM, MIGHT HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ON SOME PARTS OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, THOUGHT HE COULD NOT OF COURSE ANTICIPATE WHAT THEY WOULD SAY. STREATOR ACKNOWLEDGED THIS WAS A RISK BUT SAID THE AMERICANS WERE FULLY PREPARED FOR IT. HE DID NOT THINK THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE RECENT MEXICAN SUGGESTION THAT THERE SHOULD BE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN EL SALVADOR: THIS WOULD UNDERMINE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS. IT WAS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT ELECTIONS TOOK PLACE. AFTER ELECTIONS THE SITUATION MIGHT BE MORE CONDUCTIVE TO A SOLUTION OF EL SALVADOR'S PROBLEMS. (HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL IF EL SALVADOR COULD BE RAISED WITH THE TEN UNDER THE GYMNIKH FORMULA).

6. STREATOR SAID ENDERS WOULD PROBABLY RAISE THE QUESTION OF ECGD COVER FOR CUBA WITH MR LUCE.

7. STREATOR CONSIDERED THE PROSPECT OF THE MEETING BETWEEN MR LUCE AND ENDERS VERY TIMELY. HE WOULD REPORT THIS CONVERSATION TO WASHINGTON. IN ADDITION TO ENDERS, STREATOR SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR MR LUCE TO MAKE A COURTESY CALL ON EAGLEBURGER. WE WILL PURSUE THIS POSSIBILITY WITH YOU DIRECT BY TELEPHONE.

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PS/MR LUCE
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