

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL



Mr MacPherson 18/6

18/6

BRITISH EMBASSY,
LIMA.

81

5088

14 June 1982

Regy

To me on Falklands

Peru file please,
with reference to
telegram flagged.

(including 1052
to Washington
on reply)

Robin Fearn Esq
South America Department
FCO

18/6
AF 000/2
RECEIVED
14 JUN 1982
DESK OFFICE
INDEX

Dear Robin,

FALKLANDS - PERU

1. While I understand perfectly the reasons for your refusal to send a message to Belaúnde about the prospects in the longer term, your telegram No 126 also raised one or two doubts in my mind as to whether my reporting had been everything it should have been. The reference to numerous high level contacts with Belaúnde puzzled me a little, unless my own contacts with him are to be included in this category. In any case I have only once been instructed to convey a message to him from the Secretary of State (your telegram No 122). The other times I have been in touch with Belaúnde as a result of his either having summoned me or telephoned me.
2. Your reference to his influence on the Argentines is also slightly at odds with my telegram No 189 in which I reported that he thought the Argentine attitude unreasonable and that he was willing to use his influence (and that of other Latin American Presidents) in order to persuade Argentina to adopt a more reasonable posture. As you know, there is some evidence that he subsequently did this (my telegram No 192).
3. While on the subject of evidence, I have of course seen an increasing number of reports about Peruvian military assistance to Argentina. We now know there are the regular Peruvian Air Force flights referred to in my telegram No 225 and there must also be Armed Forces private enterprise on an increasing scale. But your TUR says that it is hard to believe that President Belaúnde knows nothing about these supplies. What I said was that these supplies might be taking place without his formal consent (my telegram No 208) and that much had been made in recent parliamentary debates of the fact that any military aid would have to

/be

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL



Robin Fearn Esq

14 June 1982

be approved by the Peruvian Congress. You already know about the military pressures; and also that these supplies might have been the price Belaúnde has had to pay for retaining a democratic regime in Peru.

4. I know you appreciate that President Belaúnde is in difficulties (there have been widespread rumours about military coups and ultimatums) and that he has had to curb the military as well as playing to the gallery of Peruvian public opinion which has overwhelmingly sided with Argentina for emotional and historical reasons. So far, President Belaúnde's public pronouncements on the subject have been at press conferences in reply to leading questions about outright military assistance to Argentina. His replies have been consistent on Peru's obligations under the Rio Treaty if Argentina invoked Article 3, eg, in response to an attack on Argentine continental bases. But he has also turned on reporters to question their constant preoccupation with military support while reaffirming that Peru could best help Argentina by continuing to seek a peaceful settlement.

5. There is absolutely no doubt as to where Peruvian popular sympathies lie. Both the President's and the Foreign Minister's public statements obviously take this into account. But I am certain that President Belaúnde does not condone the initial Argentine decision to use force (as recorded in the first formal communique issued by the Peruvian Government, which he drafted himself). By the same token, he does not condone our own use of force in resolving the conflict. It is clear that the Argentines have asked the Peruvian military for increased logistical and other support and that Belaúnde has had to acquiesce in something he may have been powerless to prevent. But I hope you will agree that President Belaúnde is potentially a valuable influence for good in a wider context and that it is in our interest to keep him in play, particularly once the military operations have been concluded and we are in a position to talk about the longer term future of the islands.

6. Finally, I have never seen a reply to your telegram No 1052 of 26 May to Washington. May I know the nature of the US response to this suggestion?

Tom ever,
C W WALLACE

Cherley

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL