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cc Sir Anthony Parsons

MR. COLES

A.S.C. 4/3

Prime Minister

R. Tackling.

JIC BUSINESS

Thank you - this is most useful to me

I attended the JIC yesterday morning. One or two points may be worth noting about the assessments which will emerge later today.

a. Brunei

The danger would seem to be from the frustration and dissatisfaction of the younger, overseas-educated professionals, who will find their opportunities severely circumscribed by the autocratic and whimsical approach to government of the Sultan. There is little confidence that the Sultan is becoming, or will emerge after his father's death, a more responsible leader.

b. Belize/Guatemala

In response to Sir A Parsons' request last week, the JIC have produced a note on the cross border "cuttings" at Jalacte. This concludes that these are probably a local phenomenon, which could, nevertheless, create some embarrassment or difficulty for the British Garrison. The MoD told me at the end of last week that CBF Belize had been given clear instructions that action to deal with the problem should be left in the hands of the Belize Defence Force, and the garrison should confine itself to providing logistic and other back-up. Following yesterday's JIC meeting, CBF will be asked to reconnoitre the frontier between Belize and Guatemala to establish whether Guatemalan peasants are straying over the border with their cuttings anywhere else.

c. Sudan/Libya

The story of the coups that never was has been pieced together by the Assessment Staff, but it is still not clear (a) whether the Libyan's agent in Khartoum had the plans, the capability and the intention to launch a coup on 18 February, and (b) the extent to which the US Government was involved with the Egyptian and Sudanese Governments in attempting to lead the Libyans on to cause them international embarrassment.

/d. Argentina/Falkland Islands

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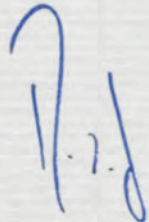
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d. Argentina/Falkland Islands

There are no surprises in the routine assessment. A major assessment is due in the next fortnight of the Argentine military capability for an attempt to recapture the Falkland Islands, and separately an assessment of their intentions for marking the anniversary of last year's invasion. It is intended to continue the weekly look at the situation in the South Atlantic, but the JIC are disposed not to produce a written assessment unless there is anything worth saying.

✓ The JIC considered yesterday an assessment of the Soviet attitude to arms control and disarmament, which has been remitted for further work. The intention now is to attempt a more comprehensive analysis of the Soviet Union's underlying attitudes to, and aims for, arms control negotiations, and then to relate these to the individual negotiations START, INF, etc in the attempt to explain and point up Soviet tactics, and anticipate how they may develop. This important assessment should be ready next week.

✓ I raised the question whether Secretary Shultz's public comments earlier this week about the Soviet SAM 5s in Syria were evidence that the US Administration was becoming more concerned about these missiles, and possible Israeli action to deal with them. The US authorities had previously shared our assessment that Israeli action was unlikely in the near future. The Assessment Staff agreed that the situation was now rather more worrying, and that both the US Administration, and the Kremlin, were tending to talk up the crisis. The Assessment Staff will produce an immediate assessment during the course of today.

  
R.T. JACKLING  
4 March 1983

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