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DESKBY 28/1734Z

FM BUENOS AIRES 28/1500Z MAR 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 116 OF 28 MARCH 1982

INFO IMMEDIATE PORT STANLEY (PERSONAL FOR GOVERNOR), MODUK NAVY AND  
CINCFLEET

MIPT : SOUTH GEORGIA: FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MESSAGE:

QUOTE

EXCELLENCY :

THE EVENTS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE ON ST PETER'S ISLAND IN THE SOUTH GEORGIAS ARE BEING FOLLOWED BY MY GOVERNMENT WITH CLOSE ATTENTION. I AM CONVINCED THAT BOTH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND YOUR EXCELLENCY SHARE OUR CONCERN AND THIS IS WHY I AM SENDING THIS MESSAGE WITH THE OBJECT OF DESPELLING ANY MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT MY GOVERNMENT'S MOTIVES.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP OF WORKERS DISEMBARKED AT LEITH ARE OF A PRIVATE AND PEACEFUL CHARACTER BASED ON THE UNDISPUTED FACT THAT THEY WERE KNOWN IN ADVANCE BY HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT AND IN ANY CASE ON THE FACT THAT THEY ARE BEING CARRIED OUT ON TERRITORY SUBJECT TO THE SPECIAL REGIME AGREED IN 1971 BETWEEN THE ARGENTINE AND GREAT BRITAIN. IT IS MOREOVER WITHIN YOUR EXCELLENCY'S KNOWLEDGE THAT THESE TERRITORIES ARE CONSIDERED BY THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC AS HER OWN AND THAT THE SOVEREIGNTY DISPUTE ABOUT THEM HAS BEEN RECOGNISED BY THE UNITED NATIONS IN ITS RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS. YOUR EXCELLENCY'S GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED THE EXISTENCE OF THE SOVEREIGNTY DISPUTE.

HOWEVER THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS REACTED IN TERMS WHICH CONSTITUTE A VIRTUAL ULTIMATUM BACKED BY THE THREAT OF MILITARY ACTION IN THE FORM OF THE DESPATCH OF THE NAVAL WARSHIP ENDURANCE AND A REQUIREMENT FOR THE PEREMPTORILY IMMEDIATE EVACUATION OF THE ARGENTINE WORKERS FROM THE ISLAND. THESE ACTIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN WITHOUT A REGARD TO THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS MENTIONED ABOVE. THE REACTION TO WHICH I REFER THUS CONSTITUTES A DISPROPORTIONATE AND PROVOCATIVE RESPONSE AGGRAVATED FOR HAVING RECEIVED WIDE DIFFUSION IN THE PRESS WHICH HAS HAD A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON DEVELOPMENTS AND WHICH IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT IN THIS CONNECTION I CANNOT BUT REFER TO THE COMMENTS PUBLISHED IN THE BRITISH PRESS MANY OF WHICH HAVE HAD AN AGGRAVATING EFFECT AND IN ANY CASE DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF THE DESIRABLE CLIMATE FOR THE CONDUCT OF NEGOTIATIONS.

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IN THE LIGHT OF THIS ATTITUDE MY GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY ADOPT THOSE MEASURES WHICH PRUDENCE AND ITS RIGHTS DEMAND. IN THIS CONTEXT THE ARGENTINE WORKERS IN SOUTH GEORGIA MUST REMAIN THERE SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION TO DO SO.

I FEEL I MUST POINT OUT TO YOUR EXCELLENCY THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS THE DIRECT RESULT OF THE PERSISTENT LACK OF RECOGNITION BY THE UNITED KINGDOM OF THE TITLES TO SOVEREIGNTY WHICH MY COUNTRY HAS OVER THE MALVINAS, SOUTH GEORGIA AND SOUTH SANDWICH ISLANDS. THIS IS CONFIRMED BY THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF YOUR EXCELLENCY'S GOVERNMENT THROUGHOUT MANY YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS IN WHICH ARGENTINA HAS GIVEN ADEQUATE EVIDENCE OF ITS WISH TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE BY PEACEFUL MEANS WITH IMAGINATION AND PATIENCE WHICH TODAY HAVE LASTED FOR OVER FIFTEEN YEARS.

TO RESOLVE THE PRESENT SITUATION I CONSIDER IT NECESSARY THAT YOUR EXCELLENCY'S GOVERNMENT SHOULD DISPLAY, AS DOES THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT, THE POLITICAL WILL TO NEGOTIATE NOT ONLY THE CURRENT PROBLEM WHICH CONCERN US BUT ALSO THE SOVEREIGNTY DISPUTE BEARING IN MIND THAT SO LONG AS THIS CONTINUES OUR RELATIONS WILL BE OPEN TO SIMILAR DISTURBANCES AND CRISES.

YOUR EXCELLENCY CAN BE SURE OF COUNTING UPON THE COOPERATION AND GOODWILL OF MY GOVERNMENT TO ACHIEVE A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION . COURTESY ENDING.

UNQUOTE.

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FM BUENOS AIRES 28/1446Z MAR 82

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 115 OF 28 MARCH 1982

INFO FLASH PORT STANLEY (PERSONAL FOR GOVERNOR), MODUK NAVY AND  
CINCFLEET

MY TELNO 113 : SOUTH GEORGIA

1. COSTA MENDEZ TELEPHONED ME YESTERDAY EVENING TO SAY THAT HIS MESSAGE TO YOU WOULD BE READY AT 0930 (1230Z) TODAY AND I HAVE JUST COLLECTED IT. OUR TRANSLATION OF FULL TEXT IS IN MY IFT. IN ESSENCE IT SAYS THAT WE ARE MAKING TOO MUCH FUSS OVER A MATTER IN ADMITTEDLY DISPUTED TERRITORY SEMI COLON THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT CANNOT BUT TAKE THE PRECAUTIONS REQUIRED BY PRUDENCE AND ITS RIGHTS AND THAT THE WORKMEN SHOULD CONTINUE ON SOUTH GEORGIA SINCE THEY HAVE THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION.

2. IN CONVERSATION COSTA MENDEZ AND ROS EXPLAINED THAT THE LAST PHRASE MEANT THAT, IN THEIR VIEW (AND ROS WAS ONE OF THE NEGOTIATORS) SOUTH GEORGIA IS (REPEAT IS) INCLUDED IN THE WHITE CARD REGIME BY THE 1971 AGREEMENT. IN THE SAME CONVERSATION COSTA MENDEZ TRIED RATHER LAMELY TO RECONCILE HIS CONFLICTING STATEMENTS ABOUT THE BAHIA PARAISO BUT STILL PROFESSED IGNORANCE ABOUT THE PRESENCE ON BOARD OF ARGENTINE MARINES AND CAPITAN TROMBETTA. SINCE TODAY'S PRESS IS FULL OF STATEMENTS THAT A BRITISH WARSHIP, JOHN BISCOE, IS ON ITS WAY TO THE AREA I TOLD COSTA MENDEZ IN CONFIDENCE WHAT BISCOE IS AND THAT THE MARINES ON BOARD HER ARE NOT REINFORCEMENTS BY ROULEMENT IN CIVVIES AND UNARMED. I JUDGED THIS BETTER THAN ALLOWING HIM TO GET A GARBLED ACCOUNT ELSEWHERE.

3. I TOLD COSTA MENDEZ THAT I WOULD, OF COURSE, TRANSMIT HIS MESSAGE AND WOULD NOT ANTICIPATE YOUR REACTION. I COULD NOT, HOWEVER, FAIL TO NOTE THAT IT DID NOT SUGGEST ANY CONSTRUCTIVE WAY OF PROCEEDING AND, IF FACT, WITHDREW THE PROPOSAL HE HAD PUT TO ME ON WEDNESDAY. HE INTERJECTED THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN A PROPOSAL BUT ONE OF SEVERAL IDEAS. I RECALLED THAT YOUR RESPONSE TO IT, PROPOSAL OR IDEA, HAD BEEN TO OFFER CONSIDERABLE CONCESSION TO BUILD A GOLDEN BRIDGE. HE SEEMED NOW TO HAVE KNOCKED AWAY HIS END OF THIS AND I URGED HIM TO LOSE NO TIME IN DEVISING ANOTHER. IT WAS, I SAID, NOW AGAIN HIS TURN.

4. I HAVE MADE NO STATEMENT TO THE PRESS BEYOND ADVISING THEM TO CHECK PUBLISHED DATA ON THE NATURE OF THE BISCOE.

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FROM PORT STANLEY 281855Z MARCH 82  
TO FLASH FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 58 OF 28 MARCH  
INFO IMMEDIATE BUENOS AIRES, MODUK NAVY, CINCFLEET

BUENOS AIRES TELNO 116 TO YOU: SOUTH GEORGIA

1. I AM SURE THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF THE BASIC INACCURACIES IN COSTA MENDEZ'S MESSAGE:

(A) THE 1971 COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT DOES NOT APPLY TO THE DEPENDENCIES SEMI COLON

(B) EVEN IF IT DID, THE WHITE CARD DOES NOT ABSOLVE THE HOLDER OF THE REQUIREMENT TO PRESENT HIMSELF TO AN IMMIGRATION OFFICER AT A RECOGNISED PORT OF ENTRY AND

(C) THE MFA AND DAVIDOFF KNEW THAT THE RECOGNISED PORT OF ENTRY FOR SOUTH GEORGIA WAS GRITVIKEN.

2. I AM APPALLED AT THE ARROGANCE OF THE MESSAGE WHICH CONFIRMS MY PREVIOUS FEARS THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ARE USING DAVIDOFF AS A FRONT TO ASSERT WITH A PHYSICAL PRESENCE THEIR SOVEREIGNTY CLAIM OVER SOUTH GEORGIA.

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