

(24)

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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ZZ BUENOS AIRES

GRS 408

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 231200Z MARCH 82

TO FLASH BUENOS AIRES

TELEGRAM NUMBER 64 OF 23 MARCH

AND TO PORT STANLEY (PERSONAL FOR GOVERNOR).

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK NAVY, CINCFLEET.

Aw 040/325/12		
RECEIVED 24 MAR 1982		
DESK OFFICER		REGISTRY
INDEX	PA	Action Taken

YOUR TELNO 87 AND PORT STANLEY TELNO 45. ILLEGAL LANDING ON SOUTH GEORGIA

1. MINISTERS HAVE AGREED THAT HMS ENDURANCE SHOULD CONTINUE TO SOUTH GEORGIA IN ORDER TO REMOVE THE REMAINING ARGENTINES. ETA LEITH IS EXPECTED TO BE 240800Z. DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS TO HMS ENDURANCE WILL FOLLOW.

2. PLEASE NOW TELL ARGENTINE MEA THAT CONTINUED ARGENTINE PRESENCE AT LEITH, CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS ASSURANCE FROM BLANCO (YOUR TELNO 85) THAT SHIP AND PARTY WOULD DEPART, LEAVES US NO OPTION BUT TO TAKE THIS ACTION. THE ARGENTINE WORKFORCE ARE AT LEITH ILLEGALLY AND WE CANNOT ALLOW THEM TO REMAIN. ON PRESENT PLANS HMS ENDURANCE WILL ARRIVE AT LEITH ON 24 MARCH IN ORDER TO TAKE THE MEN ON BOARD AND RETURN THEM TO ARGENTINA VIA PORT STANLEY. OUR INTENTION IS TO CONDUCT THIS OPERATION CORRECTLY, PEACEFULLY AND IN AS LOW A KEY AS POSSIBLE. WE HOPE THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WILL, IF THEY ARE ABLE TO DO SO, ADVISE THE ARGENTINE WORKMEN AT LEITH TO COOPERATE. WE HAVE IN MIND THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT EQUIPMENT LANDED AT LEITH IS PROPERLY SAFEGUARDED.

3. YOU SHOULD GO ON TO SAY THAT WE DEEPLY REGRET THAT THIS ACTION IS BEING FORCED ON US. WE HAD HOPED THAT THE PREVIOUS ARGENTINE UNDERTAKING THAT THE SHIP AND PARTY WOULD LEAVE, WOULD HAVE ALLOWED THIS INCIDENT TO BE SURMOUNTED WITH THE LEAST

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POLITICAL DAMAGE. OUR HOPE IS THAT THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES, WITH CAREFUL HANDLING ON BOTH SIDES, CAN CONTINUE TO BE MINIMISED. BUT IT SHOULD BE QUITE CLEAR THAT THIS SITUATION HAS NOT BEEN OF OUR SEEKING. IT HAS BEEN DAVIDOFF'S IRRESOONSIBLE ACTION AND THE APPARENT INABILITY OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE THE NECESSARY REMEDIAL ACTION WHICH HAS BROUGHT IT ABOUT.

4. WE WILL SPEAK SIMILARLY TO ARGENTINE CHARGE.

5. IN VIEW OF THE CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC INTEREST HERE, MINISTERS WILL BE MAKING A STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT TODAY ON THE SITUATION AND ON THE ACTION WE ARE TAKING. WE DO NOT HOWEVER AT THIS STAGE INTEND REFERRING TO HMS ENDURANCE'S ROLE. TEXT OF PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGES WILL BE SENT TO YOU IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF GOVERNOR COULD AWAIT THIS BEFORE MAKING ANY SIMILAR STATEMENT IN PORT STANLEY.

6. WE FULLY TAKE POINT IN PARA 3 OF BUENOS AIRES TELNO 86. BUT ANY LESSER ACTION THAN WE ARE NOW TAKING WOULD NOT BE DEFENSIBLE TO PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY OPINION.

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