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FLASH

ZZ UKREP BRUSSELS

GRS 490

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BULLARD (4 COPIES)

FM FCO 291500Z MARCH 82
TO FLASH UKREP BRUSSELS
TELEGRAM NUMBER 260 OF 29 MARCH
INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK NAVY
FOR BULLARD

MY TELNO 256: SOUTH GEORGIA

1. FOLLOWING IS DRAFT TEXT OF PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT. BEGINS.
AS MY NOBLE FRIEND THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
(LORD TREFGARNE) INFORMED THE HOUSE ON 23 MARCH, A GROUP OF
ARGENTINES, EMPLOYED BY A COMMERCIAL CONTRACTOR, MR DAVIDOFF,
LANDED AT LEITH HARBOUR ON SOUTH GEORGIA ON 19 MARCH FROM AN
ARGENTINE NAVAL TRANSPORT VESSEL. MR DAVIDOFF HAD BEEN FULLY
INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF THE NEED TO SEEK THE NECESSARY PERMISSION
FROM THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES AT GRYTVIKEN TO LAND AND TO CARRYOUT
HIS WORK. MR DAVIDOFF'S COMMERCIAL CONTRACT IS A STRAIGHTFORWARD
ONE. BUT IT DOES NOT ABSOLVE HIM FROM COMPLYING WITH NORMAL
IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES. THIS HE FAILED TO DO; AND, WHEN THE
ARGENTINE PARTY AT LEITH WAS REQUESTED BY THE BASE COMMANDER TO
PROCEED TO GRYTVIKEN TO OBTAIN THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION, IT
AGAIN FAILED TO COMPLY.

WE THEN SOUGHT THE COOPERATION OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO
ARRANGE FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE PARTY, MAKING CLEAR THAT WE
REGARDED THIS AS A POTENTIALLY GRAVE INCIDENT AND THAT WE COULD
NOT ACCEPT AN ILLEGAL ARGENTINE PRESENCE ON BRITISH TERRITORY.
THIS REQUEST WAS REJECTED. HMS ENDURANCE WAS ORDERED TO
PROCEED TO THE AREA TO BE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST AS NECESSARY.
SHE HAS BEEN STANDING BY AT GRYTVIKEN SINCE 24 MARCH. ON
25 MARCH AN ARGENTINE VESSEL DELIVERED FURTHER EQUIPMENT TO THE
GROUP ASHORE AND THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS ASSERTED
THAT ARGENTINE PERSONNEL IN SOUTH GEORGIA WILL BE GIVEN THE FULL
PROTECTION OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. THE DESPATCH OF
ARGENTINE WARSHIPS TO THE AREA HAS BEEN REPORTED.

WE FACE A DANGEROUS SITUATION. IT HAS IN NO WAY BEEN OF OUR

SEEKING. WE TAKE THE GRAVEST VIEW OF THIS INFRINGEMENT OF
BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY AND OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE ARGENTINE
GOVERNMENT. H M G REMAIN OF THE VIEW THAT THIS UNAUTHORISED
PRESENCE ON BRITISH TERRITORY CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.
AT THE SAME TIME THE HOUSE WILL - I AM SURE - JOIN
WITH ME IN RECOGNISING THAT A NAVAL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN A
BRITISH WARSHIP AND ELEMENTS OF THE ARGENTINE FLEET IN THESE
DISTANT WATERS WOULD BE A PERILOUS UNDERTAKING ENDANGERING
LIVES AND THE STABILITY OF THIS WHOLE REGION. IT WOULD ALSO
DESTROY ANY PROSPECT OF REACHING A FAIR AND AMICABLE SOLUTION
OF THE LONG-STANDING DISPUTE BETWEEN OURSELVES AND ARGENTINA.
IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS OUR CLEAR DUTY TO PURSUE, WITH ALL
THE IMAGINATION AND ENERGY AT OUR DISPOSAL, A DIPLOMATIC
SOLUTION OF THIS SMALL BUT DANGEROUS PROBLEM. I MUST ASK THE
HOUSE TO BEAR WITH ME WHILE WE CONTINUE OUR DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES.
TO RELEASE THE DETAILS OF THESE AT THIS STAGE WOULD MAKE THEM
LESS RATHER THAN MORE LIKELY TO SUCCEED. MEANWHILE THE HOUSE
WILL WISH TO KNOW THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION OF SECURITY IN THE
FALKLANDS AREA IS UNDER CONSIDERATION, AND I CAN GIVE AN
ASSURANCE THAT HMS ENDURANCE WILL REMAIN ON STATION FOR THE
TIME BEING.

CARRINGTON

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