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 ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-00 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-10 OIC-02 CIAE-00
 DODE-00 H-01 IO-15 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 HA-06
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 ICAS-00 SP-02 SPRS-02 /102 W

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O R 052142Z APR 82
 FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2914
 INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
 AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
 USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN//INTAFF//
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██████████ SANTIAGO 2047

E.O. 12065: RDS-1 4/6/02 (THEBERGE, JAMES D.) OR-M
 TAGS: PBOR, MOPS, AR, UK, CI
 SUBJECT: CHILEAN VIEWS OF FALKLAND CONFLICT

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ORIENTATION VISIT BY ARA/SC DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE SHAW SMITH PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS ON APRIL 5 WITH UNDER SECRETARY VIDELA AND OTHER FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICERS. THE CHILEANS ARE CLEARLY AWARE THAT ARGENTINE RESORT TO MILITARY FORCE IN THE FALKLANDS IS A MAJOR NEW DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE COURSE OF THE CHILEAN-ARGENTINE DISPUTE OVER JURISDICTION IN THE FAR SOUTH. THE OFFICIAL CHILEAN POSITION, AS EXPRESSED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON APRIL 2, IS CAUTIOUS AND

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OSTENSIBLY NEUTRAL, STATING GOC CONCERN OVER THE CONFLICT AND REITERATING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES IN ORDER TO VOID PROVOKING POSSIBLE

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ARGENTINE WRATH IN THE BEAGLE AREA. IN PRIVATE, HOWEVER, THE CHILEANS SEE THE ARGENTINE ACTION AS BLATANT AGGRESSION WHICH SHOULD BE COUNTERED BY A FIRM INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE. THEY BELIEVE THAT ARGENTINE LEADERS HAVE BEEN JOLTED BY THE LACK OF LATIN AMERICAN AND THIRD WORLD SUPPORT, THAT PRESIDENT GALTIERI WILL NOT BACK DOWN UNLESS THERE IS DETERMINED PRESSURE FROM THE UK, THE US, THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, AND OTHER INFLUENTIAL GOVERNMENTS. FOLLOWING ARE OTHER OBSERVATIONS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST.

3. UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION: THE CHILEANS BELIEVE THAT THE ARGENTINES HAD EXPECTED A MORE FAVORABLE OUTCOME IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, PERHAPS A SOVIET VETO, AND THAT COSTA MENDEZ WAS UNPLEASANTLY SURPRISED BY THE RESOLUTION POINTED AT THE GOA.

4. OAS CONSIDERATION: THE CHILEANS HAVE THEMSELVES BEEN APPROACHED BY THE ARGENTINES ASKING FOR HEMISPHERIC SOLIDARITY AGAINST THE UK AND BELIEVE OTHER LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS ARE BEING SIMILARLY PRESSED. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, THE CHILEANS ARE NOT AWARE OF WHAT SPECIFIC COURSE THE GOA MAY PURSUE IN THE OAS BEYOND MAKING A PRESENTATION TO JUSTIFY THE OCCUPATION OF THE ISLANDS.

5. POSSIBLE ARGENTINE MOVES TO HEAD OFF UK MILITARY RESPONSE: THE CHILEAN EMBASSY IN BONN REPORTED THAT GALTIERI WAS CALLING IN THE EUROPEAN AMBASSADORS IN BUENOS AIRES FOR DISCUSSIONS OF THE CRISIS. THE CHILEAN UNDERSTANDING IS THAT ONE IDEA BEING FLOATED IN THESE DISCUSSIONS IS SOME KIND OF MEDIATION BY THE EC TO FIND A DIPLOMATIC WAY OUT OF THE

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PROBLEM. (FYI-UK AMBASSADOR HEATH HAS CALLED FOR A MEETING OF ALL NATO AMBASSADORS IN SANTIAGO FOR APRIL 7 ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY.)

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BEAGLE DISPUTE: ON THE ONE HAND, THE CHILEANS BELIEVE THAT THE ARGENTINE ACTION CONFIRMS THE OPT-EXPRESSED GOC CONCERN ABOUT THE RISK OF ARMED CONFLICT IN THE FAR SOUTH, A RISK WHICH IN THE CHILEAN VIEW SHOULD LEAD THE US, THE VATICAN, AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR EFFORTS TO FACILITATE A SOLUTION. THE CHILEANS ALSO TAKE SOME SATISFACTION FROM THE FACT THAT THE ARGENTINE PROTESTATIONS ABOUT THEIR COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATED SOLUTIONS WILL NOW RING HOLLOW TO OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

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THE OTHER HAND, THEY ARE WORRIED THAT THE MILITARY MOVE AGAINST THE FALKLANDS IS A POWER PLAY BY PRESIDENT GALTIERI TO STRENGTHEN HIS POLITICAL BASE BY APPEALING TO ARGENTINE NATIONALISM, A TACTIC WHICH COULD LATER BE APPLIED TO THE ISLANDS AND WATERS CLAIMED BY ARGENTINA SOUTH OF THE BEAGLE CANAL. SUCCESS IN THE FALKLANDS, THE CHILEANS REASON, COULD EMBOLDEN THE GALTIERI GOVERNMENT TO UNDERESTIMATE CHILEAN DETERMINATION TO DEFEND THEIR POSITIONS AND SPARK A MAJOR CONFLICT. THE GOC ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IS THAT MUCH WILL DEPEND ON HOW FIRMLY THE UK REACTS AND ON THE GOC MANAGEMENT OF THE CRISIS; IT IS STILL AN OPEN QUESTION WHETHER THE FALKLAND CONFLICT WILL ULTIMATELY ADVANCE OR IMPEDE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION IN THE BEAGLE AREA, AND THE GOC IS THEREFORE AVOIDING ANY PROVOCATIVE MOVES, ALTHOUGH VIDELA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT UNSPECIFIED "PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES" HAD BEEN TAKEN IN THE FAR SOUTH. THEBERGE

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