

**321. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in
Brazil¹**

Washington, June 3, 1982, 2341Z

152723. Exdis ZFF Brasilia & Secretary only. Subject: UK Vulcan Bomber in Brazil. Ref: (A) Streator/Smith Telcon on June 3, (B) Motley/Kilday Telcon.²

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D850288-0106. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to Buenos Aires, London, the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Secretary of State Haig as Tosec 80053. Drafted by K. Smith; cleared by Morns (EUR/NE), Blackwill, Kilday, Kantor, Service, and in S/S-O; and approved by Eagleburger. Haig was then in Paris with Reagan for bilateral talks with French officials and the forthcoming June 5-6 Versailles Economic Summit.

² No memorandum of conversation of either of these telephone calls has been found.

1. Secret–Entire text.
2. UK Defense Minister John Nott passed to Embassy London “as courtesy” the following information regarding emergency landing of British Vulcan bomber at Rio de Janeiro June 3:
 - The Vulcan had to make emergency landing in Brazil due to failure of in-flight refueling;
 - The plane carried a Shrike missile (AGM-45) which the pilot could not jettison before landing;
 - The Brazilians are being helpful in getting the plane on its way back to UK territory;
 - The Brazilians, however, will not allow the plane to take off with weapons aboard (including Shrike);
 - Pilot has been instructed by UK MOD to comply with Brazilian request.
3. Nott said that it was in interest of US and UK to recover the Shrike before it could be taken apart by Brazilians.
4. UK Embassy later informed Department that the missile is in a lethal state since firing mechanism had been activated. MOD was sending radio instructions to crew on how to disarm the Shrike, and the UK had asked the Brazilians for permission to send a transport aircraft to recover the Shrike and other ordnance that may have been on the aircraft.
5. The British are hopeful that they can recover the plane and its weapons quickly and with little public notice. We want to avoid, if possible, any public mention of the Shrike, particularly since it is of US manufacture and was supplied to the UK after start of Falklands dispute. Embassy Brasilia should maintain as low profile as possible during the Vulcan Shrike recovery and treat issue as bilateral UK-GOB matter to greatest extent possible.
6. We understand that Embassy Brasilia has been in contact with UK Embassy which confirms that FAB is cooperating with British in this matter, leading Embassy Brasilia to conclude that British will be able to arrange for Shrike recovery without US assistance. Nevertheless, the Shrike contains sensitive US technology and we must assure that the weapon is not inspected or taken apart for study. If US assistance appears essential to maintain security of technology, Embassy should approach GOB confidentially at high level and register our strong desire for the immediate release of the Shrike to UK authorities.

7. Buenos Aires minimize considered.³

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³ On June 14, the British Air Attaché in Brasilia informed the Embassy that the Shrike missile had been removed from the Vulcan by the Brazilians and detailed the security arrangements that were being provided. (Telegram 4931 from Brasilia, June 14; Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D850363-0040) In telegram 166547 to Brasilia, June 17, the Department advised the Embassy that “the technology contained in the missile in the hands of the BAF is not sufficiently sensitive or advanced for USG to risk a negative diplomatic impact by even addressing the Brazilians on this issue.” (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D850378-0800)