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TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 568 OF 25 MARCH
ILLEGAL LANDING ON SOUTH GEORGIA

1. GIFFARD (DUS) BRIEFED THE US CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TODAY ON THE ARGENTINE PRESENCE IN SOUTH GEORGIA ON THE LINES OF MIFT, WHICH CONTAINS AN ACCOUNT OF THE LATEST SITUATION. GIFFARD MADE CLEAR TO STREATOR THAT WE WERE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE SITUATION WHICH HAD NOW BUILT UP. REPORTS FROM SECRET SOURCES INDICATED THAT ARGENTINE WARSHIPS WERE PREPARING TO RESIST ACTION BY US TO REMOVE THE ARGENTINES BY ONE OF OUR OWN SHIPS IN THE AREA. GIFFARD RAISED THE POSSIBILITY THAT I WOULD ASK HAIG TO INTERVENE WITH THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO PERSUADE THEM TO SEEK AN EARLY PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM BY REMOVING THE LANDING PARTY THEMSELVES. STREATOR SAID THAT HE WOULD REPORT OUR CONCERN IMMEDIATELY TO WASHINGTON AND SOUNDED OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF CONSTRUCTIVE INTERVENTION BY MR HAIG.

2. SINCE STREATOR WAS BRIEFED, THERE HAVE BEEN TWO FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. AN ARGENTINE SHIP HAS ARRIVED AT LEITH. IT IS AN UNARMED SCIENTIFIC SHIP, ALTHOUGH IT BELONGS TO THE ARGENTINE NAVY. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER ITS PURPOSE IS TO PICK UP THE LANDING PARTY OR TO PREVENT ACTION BY US. THE ARGENTINES HAVE SINCE TOLD US IN BOTH BUENOS AIRES AND LONDON THAT IT IS NOW VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM, WITHOUT UNACCEPTABLE LOSS OF FACE, TO TAKE OFF THE MEN THEMSELVES.

3. I STILL HAVE IT IN MIND TO SEND A MESSAGE TO HAIG ASKING FOR HIS HELP IN COOLING DOWN THE ARGENTINES BUT I AM AWAITING FURTHER WORD FROM THEM (THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER IS APPARENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF SENDING ME A MESSAGE) BEFORE DOING SO. IN THE MEANTIME WE ARE NOT ASKING THE AMERICANS FOR SPECIFIC HELP. YOU SHOULD DRAW ON THE ABOVE AND MIFT IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY THE AMERICANS.

CARRINGTON

DIST: ADDIT. DIST.
STANDARD FALKLAND ISLANDS
SAMD
CABINET OFFICE

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