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PM WASHINGTON 17175Z APR 82  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 1334 OF 17 APRIL 82  
INFO IMMEDIATE MOSCOW HAVANA UKDEL MATO

MOSCOW TELNOS 202 AND 203 : FALKLANDS : SOVIET ATTITUDE

1. I AGREE WITH MR BROOKE TURNER'S COMMENTS IN THE SECOND TUR.
2. SEMENOV'S ASSERTION THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS NOT PROVIDING INTELLIGENCE TO THE ARGENTINES IS, OF COURSE, UNTRUE. CLARK TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT THERE IS IN HIS VIEW NO DOUBT THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE PROVIDING THE ARGENTINIANS WITH INTELLIGENCE ABOUT OUR FLEET. THE WASHINGTON POST TODAY CARRIES A PHOTOGRAPH RELEASED BY THE ARGENTINE NEWS SERVICE AND WHICH SHOWS A SOVIET 'OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH' VESSEL IN THE BAY AT USHUAIA IN SOUTHERN ARGENTINA.
3. THE AMERICANS AS YOU KNOW ARE MUCH EXERCISED AT THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE ARGENTINIANS WILL TURN INCREASINGLY TO THE SOVIET UNION - AS THEY ARE ALREADY DOING - AND THAT THIS WILL OFFER THE RUSSIANS A HITHERTO UNHOPED FOR OPPORTUNITY OF EXTENDING THEIR INFLUENCE IN AN AREA OF GREAT STRATEGIC INTEREST TO THEM. THE SHARPER AND MORE PROLONGED THE CRISIS THE GREATER THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCH AN EXTENSION OF SOVIET INFLUENCE.
4. THE RUSSIANS CAN BE EXPECTED TO STEP UP ASSISTANCE OF VARIOUS KINDS INCLUDING, PROBABLY OFFERS OF FRESH ARMS SUPPLIES (THEY HAVE ALREADY SOLD HEAVY LIFT HELICOPTERS). AS I POINTED OUT TO CLARK, IT WOULD BE QUITE OUT OF CHARACTER WITH PREVIOUS SOVIET CONDUCT, HOWEVER, FOR THE RUSSIANS TO TAKE THE RISK OF DIRECT MILITARY INVOLVEMENT, THOUGH THIS DIMENSION OF THE CRISIS COULD TAKE ON A MUCH SHARPER ASPECT IN THE EVENT OF A THREAT TO SOVIET GRAIN SHIPMENTS.

HENDERSON

LIMITED  
HD/S AM D  
HD/EESD  
HD/DEF D  
HD/PUSD  
HD/NAD  
PS

PS/MR ONSLOW  
PS/PUS  
MR GIFFARD  
MR BULLARD  
MR URE  
MR GOODISON

*[ Passed to E.R. / M08 / CWP / Fied ]*

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