

A10 050/304/2 <sup>62</sup>

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OO WASHINGTON  
OO UKMIS NEW YORK  
GRS 506  
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FM FCO 282110Z MAY 82  
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1084 OF 28 MAY,  
INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK AND MODUK (DS11, DS8)  
YOUR TELEGRAM NO. 1838 : FALKLANDS : US ASSISTANCE

- A10 050/304/2 <sup>62</sup> <sub>63</sub>
1. THE FIRM US WISH (SET OUT IN TUR) TO AVOID OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF THE TYPE OF EQUIPMENT WE ARE SEEKING AND WHETHER THE US IS MEETING OUR REQUESTS IS WELL UNDERSTOOD. RECENT ARGENTINE CRITICISMS OF THE US ROLE IN SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE UK WILL DOUBTLESS INCREASE US SENSITIVITY ON THIS SCORE. NONETHELESS, WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE WELL-INFORMED ENQUIRIES ON THE SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE WITH WHICH THE US IS PROVIDING US. MANY OF THESE ENQUIRIES ARE, OF COURSE, FUELLED BY LEAKS FROM US OFFICIAL SOURCES WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN THE UK PRESS.
  2. YOUR TELEGRAMS NOS 1910 AND 1937 ON THE CONVERSION OF THE SS STENA INSPECTOR MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE US ARE THEMSELVES NOW FINDING DIFFICULTY IN RESPONDING TO MEDIA INTEREST, AND ARE THEREFORE PREPARED TO MAKE SOME RESPONSE, ALBEIT A RELATIVELY UNINFORMATIVE ONE. AT THE MOMENT, WE ARE BEING PRESSED FOR COMMENT ON THE SUPPLY OF SIDEWINDER, ON WHICH WE ARE STICKING TO THE AGREED LINE, BUT EXPECT FURTHER ENQUIRIES ON AM2 AIRFIELD MATTING. IN TERMS OF ITS VISIBILITY, THIS PRESENTS PARTICULAR DIFFICULTY BECAUSE OF THE AMOUNT OF MATTING INVOLVED, WHICH WILL REACH 8,000 TONS, THEREBY INVOLVING CONSIDERABLE TRANSPORTATION TO YORKTOWN ITS PORT OF EMBARKATION - LOADING WILL START EARLY NEXT WEEK. THE MATTING WILL THEN BE SHIPPED TO UK, WHERE IT WILL FORM PART OF A LARGE OPERATION TO DESPATCH SOME 900 PERSONNEL AND ALMOST 3,000 TONS OF OTHER MATERIAL TO THE FALKLANDS, WITH THE AIM OF ENSURING THE AVAILABILITY OF A FULLY OPERATIONAL AIRFIELD THERE FROM EARLY AUGUST. THE SCALE OF THIS OPERATION MAKES IT ALMOST INEVITABLE THAT THE ORIGIN OF THE MATTING WILL BECOME WIDELY KNOWN.
  3. WE DO NOT WISH TO PROMPT ANY OVER-REACTION ON THE PART OF

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THE STATE DEPARTMENT. BUT MOD WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD NONETHELESS DRAW THEIR ATTENTION TO THE NATURE OF THIS PARTICULAR PROBLEM AND DISCUSS THE PRESS LINE WHICH WE SHOULD TAKE. IF THEY INSIST ON RETAINING AN ENTIRELY NON-COMMITTAL LINE, WE WOULD RESPOND TO PRESS ENQUIRIES AS FOLLOWS:-

'WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE NATURE OR PROVISION OF MATERIEL SUPPORT FROM THE UNITED STATES. THERE IS, HOWEVER, BOTH A SHORT AND A LONG-TERM NEED TO INSTALL AIRCRAFT LANDING FACILITIES ON THE FALKLAND ISLANDS TO REPLACE DAMAGED OR INADEQUATE AIR-STRIPS. SOME MATERIEL TO FULFIL THIS FUNCTION IS ALREADY DEPLOYED WITH THE TASK FORCE, AND FURTHER EQUIPMENT IS BEING OBTAINED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO PROVIDE FURTHER DETAILS.'

5. YOU SHOULD ALSO BE AWARE THAT, TO AVOID RAISING THESE SORT OF ISSUES WITH THE AMERICANS EVERY TIME THEY ARISE, OUR GENERAL PRESS LINE ON US MATERIEL ASSISTANCE IS TO CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO COMMENT ON EQUIPMENT BEING OBTAINED FROM THE US BUT TO CONFIRM OUR OPERATIONAL NEED FOR EQUIPMENT, LEAVING ASIDE ITS SOURCE, TO FULFIL CERTAIN TASKS, PROVIDED SUCH CONFIRMATION IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR SECURITY REQUIREMENTS.

PYM

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FALKLANDS SELECTIVE  
LIMITED  
HD/EMERGENCY UNIT  
HD/S AM D  
HD/DEF D  
HD/PLANNING STAFF  
HD/UND  
HD/NEWS D  
HD/ERD  
HD/BCD (E)  
HD/PUSD  
DEP HD/PUSD  
HD/RES D  
PS  
PS/MR HURD  
PS/MR ONSLOW  
PS/LORD BELSTEAD  
PS/PUS  
MR BULLARD  
SIR I SINCLAIR  
MR GIFFARD  
MR WRIGHT  
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MR COLVIN  
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