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80618 *JOB*

DIA(15)
DISTR

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~~NOFORN IMMEDIATE~~

(b)(3):10 USC 424

(056)

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DE RUEBAA #0054 0351230
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D 041225Z FEB 78

(b)(3):10 USC 424

(b)(3):10 USC 424

TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASH DC
INFO RULPALJ/USCINCSO QUARRY HTS

(b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

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REC'D (b)(3):10 USC 424

7 FEB '78

BT

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~ (b)(3):10 USC 424

SUBJ: THIS IS IR (b)(3):10 USC 424

- 1. COUNTRY: (AR) (b)(3):10 USC 424
- 2. REPORT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 424

3. TITLE: (U) MILITARY INTENTIONS - BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE

- 4. PROJECT NUMBER: N/A
 - 5. DATE OF INFORMATION: 780203
 - 6. DATE OF REPORT: 780203
 - 7. DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 780203
 - 8. REFERENCE: (b)(3):10 USC 424 CONTINUES, SKY LINK FONECON
- 2 FEB, (b)(3):10 USC 424

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- 9. ASSESSMENT: (b)(3):10 USC 424
- 10. ORIGINATOR: [REDACTED]
- 11. REQUEST EVALUATION: OMIT
- 12. PREPARING OFFICER: (b)(3):10 USC 424
- 13. APPROVING AUTHORITY: [REDACTED]
- 14. SOURCE: VARIOUS
- 15. SPECIAL INSTRUCTION: DIRC - NO - NOFORN (b)(3):10 USC 424

16. SUMMARY: (U) THIS IR PROVIDES AN INTERIM RESPONSE TO DIA MSG 2853 DTG 030007Z FEB 78

22. DETAILS: (S/NOFORN) (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) HAS NO INFORMATION TO CONFIRM THE POSSIBILITY OF AN IMPENDING INVASION OF THE WOLLASTON ISLAND GROUP BY THE ARGENTINE MARINE CORPS, ON 780111, (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) TO THE (b)(1);1.4 (c) ABOUT THE BEAGLE

PROBLEMS, THE ESSENCE OF WHICH WAS (b)(3):10 USC 424 (b)(1);1.4 (c) (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THE NAVY WAS PREPARED TO OCCUPY SOME ISLANDS NEAR THE BEAGLE CHANNEL (NOT FURTHER IDENTIFIED) AND MARINE ELEMENTS IN SEVERAL STRATEGIC SOUTHERN LOCATIONS HAD BEEN REINFORCED. (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) THE LST "CABO SAN ANTONIO" ON 20 JAN 78 WHILE [REDACTED] IN PUERTO BELGRANO (b)(3):10 USC 424 CONFIRMING ITS LOCATION AT LEAST ON THAT DATE. (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c)

(b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) REPORTS THAT THIS VESSEL, ALONG WITH AN LSD AND OTHER SUPPORT CRAFT WERE IN USHUAIA HARBOR (b)(3):10 USC 424 AS OF 30 JAN 78. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THESE SHIPS COULD HAVE BEEN STEAMED SOUTH IN 10 DAYS. FINALLY, (b)(1);1.4 (c) REPORTS REINFORCED ARMY UNITS IN THE RIO GALLEGOS (TOYEERZ- (b)(3):10 USC 424 AREA AND 50 TANKS. THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE ARMY UNITS AND HELICOPTERS IS REASONABLE BUT IS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT AMX13 TANKS IN THOSE QUANTITIES HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED SOUTH. THE MAJORITY OF AMX13 TANKS ARE ASSIGNED TO THE 8TH CAVALRY REGT LOCATED AT MAGDALENA, BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE. (b)(3):10 USC 424 IT WOULD BE A VERY DIFFICULT, BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE LOGISTICS TASK TO MOVE THE TANKS TO RIO GALLEGOS.

2. (C/NOFORN) (b)(1);1.4 (c) WAS RECENTLY IN PUERTO BELGRANO STATE THAT AS OF 2 FEB THE ARGENTINE NAVY'S LSD AND THE NEW LST "CABO SAN ANTONIO" WERE NOT IN PORT. (b)(1);1.4 (c) ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT ALL BUT ONE DESTROYER (THE PY) WERE IN THE HARBOR AS WERE A TANKER, THE HERCULES AND THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER. (b)(1);1.4 (c) CONTINUED THAT MOST OF THE NAVY HELICOPTERS (SEA KNIGHTS, AND ALOUETTES) THAT ARE USUALLY STATION IN PUERTO BELGRANO HAVE NOT BEEN THERE SINCE BEFORE.

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CHRISTMAS AND HE HAS HEARD THAT THEY HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO RIO GRANDE AND USHUAIA, ANOTHER (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT SMALL DETACHMENTS OF MARINES OCCUPIED THE ISLAS ORCADAS (4845S4815W) LAST WEEK. FINALLY, ANOTHER (b)(3);10 USC 424

(b)(1);1.4 (c) STATED THAT LAST WEEK AN ARMY RPT FROM COMODORO RIVADAVIA

(b)(3);10 USC 424 (PRESUMABLY THE 8TH INF RGT) AND AN ARMORED CAV RECON SQD FROM PUERTO DESEADO (b)(3);10 USC 424

(PROBABLY THE 9TH RECON SQD) REDEPLOYED TO THE AREA OF RIO TURBIO (b)(3);10 USC 424 NEAR THE CHILEAN FRONTIER (A GOOD BLOCKING POSITION AGAINST THE CHILEAN 5TH AUSTRAL DIV.)

3. (C/NORM) THE (b)(3);10 USC 424; (b)(1);1.4 (c) THE (b)(3);10 USC 424; (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c) FOR USHUAIA ON 020900Z FEB 78. ITINERARY INCLUDES RON AT COMODORO RIVADAVIA, ON 2 FEB AND USHUAIA ON 3, 4 FEB 78. FURTHER, (b)(1);1.4 (c)

TAKE PLACE IN RIO GRANDE (b)(3);10 USC 424 OR RIO GALLEGOS DURING THE TRIP. (b)(3);10 USC 424 SHOULD HAVE AN

(b)(1);1.4 (c) IN THESE AREAS AND ARE EXPECTED TO RETURN TO BUENOS AIRES 052000 FEB 78. IN THE INTERIM IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE

TO (b)(1);1.4 (c) BECAUSE OF THE VERY (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c) . IN ADDITION, NO SECURE AVAILABLE. (b)(3);10 USC 424

COMMENT: (C) THERE IS A GENERAL CONSENSUS AMONG OBSERVERS HERE THAT THERE WILL NOT BE AN ARMED CONFRONTATION BETWEEN CHILE AND ARGENTINA. NEVERTHELESS, THE ARGENTINE ARMED FORCES HAVE IMPROVED THEIR MILITARY POSTURE IN THE SOUTH CONSIDERABLY. THEREFORE, ONE CAN NOT TOTALLY DISMISS THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME ACTION SUCH AS THE OCCUPATION OF THE HOLLASTON ISLAND GROUP. IF THE ARA LAD AND LST ARE IN USHUAIA, THE CAPABILITY EXISTS FOR SUCH AN ACTION. HOWEVER, THE ABSENCE OF COMBATANT AND SUPPORT SHIPS IN THE AREA WOULD INDICATE THAT NO ACTION IS ANTICIPATED IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. AS FOR THE (b)(1);1.4 (c) OF THE OCCUPATION OF THE ISLAS ORCADAS, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT IMPACT SUCH AN ACTION WOULD HAVE ON THE BEAGLE SITUATION. IT COULD REFLECT A NEW ARGENTINE POLICY OF OCCUPYING ALL ISLANDS THAT ARGENTINA CLAIMS TO PREVENT FURTHER ENCROACHMENT, (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(3);10 USC 424

(C) TODAY'S BUENOS AIRES NEWSPAPERS CARRIED EXCERPTS

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OF PRESIDENT VIDELA'S LATEST LETTER TO PRESIDENT PINOCHET, AMONG OTHER THINGS, VIDELA SAID THAT ARGENTINA HAD THE NONORABLE TRADITION OF INTERNATIONAL CONDUCT OF NEVER HAVING USED THREATS AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING ITS GOALS. TO EXECUTE A MILITARY OPERATION ON THE HEELS OF SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE VIDELA'S CREDIBILITY. THEREFORE, WHILE SUCH A POSSIBILITY CANNOT BE DISCARDED, IT IS UNLIKELY. THIS MSG CDDR W/AMEMBASSY. GDS DEC 84

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