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FILE(1)

(056)

~~NOFORN IMMEDIATE~~

(b)(3):10 USC 424

TRANSIT/041225Z/041421Z/001156TON

DE RUEBAA #0054 0351230

ZNY 88888 ZZK RUEKJCS

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)

BT

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(b)(3):10 USC 424

SUBJ: THIS IS IR

(b)(3):10 USC 424

1. COUNTRY: (AR)

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

PAGE 1

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(b)(3):10 USC 424

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3

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

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PAGE: 2

~~SECRET~~

80618

9. ASSESSMENT: (b)(3):10 USC 424
10. ORIGINATOR: (b)(3):10 USC 424
11. REQUEST EVALUATION: OMIT
12. PREPARING OFFICER: (b)(3):10 USC 424
13. APPROVING AUTHORITY: (b)(3):10 USC 424
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 HAS 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 (b)(3):10 USC 424 IN PUERTO BELGRANO

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

PAGE: 2

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00111000

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

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PAGE 3

~~SECRET~~

80618

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 THE

(b)(3);10 USC 424;(b)(1);Sec. 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,

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);Sec. 1.4(c)

(b)(3);10 USC 424

(C) TODAY'S BUENOS AIRES NEWSPAPERS CARRIED EXCERPTS

PAGE 3

~~SECRET~~

00111000

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

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PAGE 4

~~SECRET~~

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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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PAGE 4

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