## ACTION COPPNISOR

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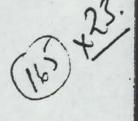
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TELEGRAM NUMBER 327 OF 17





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INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, BERNE, BRASILIA, MONTEVIDEO, UKMIS GENEVA,

UKMIS NEW YORK, MODUK(DS5, DS11, S.C. AND L), CINCFLEET.

YOUR TELEC 194 TO BERNE: REPATRIATION OF AGGENTINE POWS.

- 1. I SAW ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER GENERAL COVARRUBIAS AT 19307, SPOKE AS INSTRUCTED AND HANDED HIM AN AIDE MEMOIPE FULLY REHEARSING OUR ARGUMENTS. HE CONFIRMED AGAIN THAT CHILE WAS WILLING TO OFFER FUNTA ARENAS AS A STAGING POINT FOR THE RETURN OF ARGENTINE POWS, IF ARGENTINA WAS AGREEABLE AND SO INFORMED THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HE THOUGHT IT UNLIKELY ARGENTINA WOULD AGREE, AS THEY WOULD NOT WANT CHILEANS OR OTHERS TO SEE THE STATE THE ARGENTINE PRISONERS ARE IN.
- 2. COVARRUBIAS SUGGESTED THAT WE BRING MAXIMUM PRESSURE TO BEAR THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS NOT ONLY TO PERSUADE ARGENTINA OF SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION, BUT ALSO TO PUBLICISE THIS AS WIDELY AS POSSIBLE AND ENLIST HELP OF CTHERS, EG UN SECRETARY-GENERAL, PERU AND VENEZUELA, WHO SHOULD CARRY SOME WEIGHT IN BUENOS AIRES. 3. I ALSO MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF CHILE SUPPLYING SHIPS TO EVACUATE ARGENTINE POWS (YOUR TELNG 266, NCT TO ALL). COVARRUBIAS SEEMED WELL-DISPOSED TO THIS IDEA, ALWAYS PROVIDED THE ARGENTINES GAVE THEIR AGREEMENT. HE STRESSED THAT THE CHILEAN NAVY'S ANTARCTIC RESEARCH SHIP QUOTE PILOTO PARDO UNQUOTE HAD VERY LIMITED CAPACITY, BUT SAID HE WOULD LOCK INTO THIS. MY DA HAS MENTIONED THIS IDEA INDEPENDENTLY TO ADMIRAL POISSON (CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF) WHO REACTED SIMILARLY, AND SAID THAT QUOTE PILOTO PARDO UNQUOTE WAS ONLY SUITABLE SHIP FOR THIS PURPOSE. GRATEFUL TO KNOW WHETHER THIS REQUIREMENT STILL EXISTS IN VIEW OF RECENT REASSESSMENT OF NUMBERS OF ARGENTINE PRISONERS ON THE FALKLANDS.

HICKMAN