

Falklands tension grows

By Our Foreign Staff

Five Argentine vessels were last night reported to be in the area of South Georgia, the Falkland Islands dependency where a group of Argentines has illegally landed.

In London, the Ministry of Defence confirmed the presence of an Argentine patrol ship and two missile-carrying corvettes, but could not confirm reports in the Argentine press that two destroyers had also headed into the south Atlantic.

In Buenos Aires, Señor Nicanor Costa Mendez, the Argentine Foreign Minister, delivered a note to the

British Ambassador and described the situation as tense.

The Foreign Office said that diplomatic exchanges were continuing in an effort to resolve the crisis. The Argentines, who had gone to South Georgia to gather scraps from a whaling station, raised the Argentine flag.

Argentina claims the Falkland Islands but most of the original party of fifty left after British protests. The group's presence was discovered 10 days ago. Señor Mendez told journalists during the weekend that the Bahía Paraiso was standing

by off South Georgia to protect the Argentines.

The British Ministry of Defence said that it had no exact confirmation of the vessel's position, but she was certainly not within sight of the Royal Navy patrol ship, HMS Endurance, which was within easy reach.

Meanwhile, the Argentine news agency DYN reported yesterday that vandals had set fire to an English-language school in Buenos Aires and quoted the school's principal as saying the attack was related to the present tension.

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