

Mr Wright

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PS/PUS

Mr Gillmore

Mr Giffard

Mr Ure

Mr Fearn

Mr Fenn

Mr Hulse

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE : 15 JUNE

You asked me to record the following points which arose at today's discussion.

2. Further UK Military Options

DCDSI listed possible Argentine threats in the event of continuing hostilities, namely re-invasion, low-level military action, passive resistance (exercises and deployments), terrorist-type action against British targets. He said the UK had the following options by way of riposte: air attacks, offensive mining, naval action within the 12 mile limit, special forces. DCDSI said that in his view none of these options, and no combination of several of them, would be entirely successful in emasculating the Argentine capacity for continuing hostilities. Indeed he judged that any attack against mainland Argentina would carry political penalties, would provoke immediate tangible support from countries like Brazil and Peru and could affect arms supply in favour of Argentina from such countries as Libya, Israel, as well as indirectly from Germany, France and Italy. His conclusion was that the UK might well end up in a worse position overall than if it had not undertaken action against the mainland. This provoked some dissent, notably from CDS and CAS who thought such a conclusion premature. CGS agreed that a pre-emptive British strike against the mainland would be disadvantageous, but thought that selective action in the case of hostilities continued at Argentine initiative might be a different matter. CNS and Sir Frank Cooper were cautious and tended to the conclusion that it would depend very much on circumstances and what opportunities presented themselves.

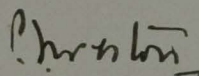
3. British Policy on Arms Supplies to South America

Sir Frank Cooper said he attached importance to FCO and MOD officials having an early look at what policy we should advocate with our NATO and EC partners about arms supplies to Argentina. You added that this applied also to other countries in South America. In discussion after the meeting, we agreed that I would, as a first step, call a small meeting at which South America Department and Defence Department could consider this further with DS11 and Defence Sales.

4. An Air Bridge Between the Falklands and South America

CAS said he hoped that in seeking Chilean and Uruguayan permission for journalists to travel by air to the Falklands

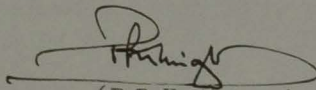
via those countries, the FCO would press for similar air-staging facilities for humanitarian purposes over the coming weeks. He would hope that this could be extended gradually in the direction of building up normal air communications between the Falklands and such countries as Chile, Brazil and Uruguay. We discussed this afterwards and you said it would be sensible first to await the response from Chile and Uruguay to our request for help in flying in journalists; but that it might make sense in the meantime to consult the posts concerned about the prospects of moving things in the direction indicated by CAS. I am asking Mr Hulse to put this in hand.



P J Weston
Defence Department

15 June, 1982

Thank you for this record. It may be worth adding, in connection with paragraph 2, that the Chief of Defence Staff drew attention to recent JIC assessments that economic sanctions had not made anything like the same impression on the Argentine economy as the high insurance rates resulting from hostilities. He argued from this that military action against the mainland might have a disproportionate effect also on the Argentine economy. In describing DCDSI's judgement as "premature", the CDS commented that he was certain that this would also be the Prime Minister's view.



(P.R.H. Wright)
16 June, 1982.

cc PS/FUS
Mr. Gillmore
Mr. Hulse