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Mr. Weston  
Defence Dept.  
*JW 30/4*

CHIEFS OF STAFF MEETING ON 30 APRIL

The following points arose during this morning's meeting of the Chiefs of Staff.

(a) Intelligence assessment. DCDSI reported on some new intelligence about Argentine naval deployments and intentions, all of which have been incorporated in today's JIC assessment (which will be available to Ministers before this afternoon's meeting of OD(SA).) The JIC assessment will also include information about two further reconnaissance flights by Argentine 707s, one of which was intercepted (but not shot at) by a Sea Harrier early this morning, some 120 miles away from the Task Force. DCDSI also reported that the Argentine carrier could be in a position to launch an attack within 24 hours.

(b) South Georgia airstrip. The Chiefs of Staff took note of a paper on the possibility of building an airstrip on South Georgia which concludes that it would take about 6 months to complete a 4000 foot airstrip from the time of decision to proceed. The Chief of Naval Staff said that he was not happy with the paper, and would like the option reconsidered. The Chief of Defence Staff concluded however that, with the onset of winter, there was no possibility of proceeding quickly with such an option, and the CNS was asked to revert to the question in a week's time, if he still felt strongly about it.

(c) Defence of Ascension Island. ACDS(Ops) reported that two officers would be flying to Ascension tomorrow to report on the defence needs of the Base Commander. Small arms had already been despatched for about two-thirds of the personnel on the island and air portable radar had been "brought forward" to 48 hours notice. Air defence cover was thought to be adequate up to 5 May, and any further action should await the report of the two officers.

(d) Reinforcements for landing operations. There was a long drafting exercise on the paper circulated yesterday about the additional reinforcements required for landing operations. A redraft (which takes account of most of our points) will no doubt be circulated shortly; meanwhile, the only action for the FCO, which I think is already in hand, is to explore the feasibility of chartering EEC shipping, should it be required.

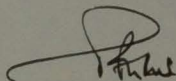
(e) ICRC. I did not have an opportunity to raise with the Chiefs of Staff the telegram from UKMIS Geneva about ICRC access to the

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Falkland Islands, nor our concern about the safety of small aircraft for medical emergencies. I have however left papers on both subjects with Mr. Moray Stewart for him to pursue.



(P.R.H. Wright)  
30 April, 1982.

cc Private Secretary  
PS/FUS  
Sir I. Sinclair  
Mr. Giffard  
Mr. Gillmore

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