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RECEIVED IN REGISTRY NO. 13		
31 DEC 1981		
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INDEX	PA	Action Taken

31/12/81
 Minister (33)
 TUESDAY : 3.00 p.m.

PS/Mr Luce

FALKLAND ISLANDS: ANGLO-ARGENTINE TALKS

1. The Argentine Ambassador called on me on 30 December. His purpose was to emphasise again the difficulty for the Argentine Government if the next round of Falkland talks were to be delayed for too long. He had received a telegram from Buenos Aires reporting Mr Williams as saying that late February would be a suitable time: the Argentines would be most reluctant to wait this long. Sr Ortiz de Rozas had himself recommended the postponement of the talks planned for December, not because the Argentine position might change, but rather so that the Islanders in particular should have no doubts about the Argentines' credibility. But he had not expected the delay to be substantial.
2. I went over the ground with him again. Planning for the Minister's trip to the Caribbean was too advanced for it to be changed now and there was still uncertainty about the timing of the Second Reading of the Canadian Constitution Bill, which would almost certainly require Mr Luce's presence in London. At this stage, therefore, it might be difficult for Mr Luce to make himself available in early February. If the talks were to be held in Geneva rather than in New York (the Argentines' own choice) it would of course reduce the travelling time and might make it easier for Mr Luce to agree an earlier date. At all events, I promised to raise this matter with the Minister next week and to be in touch with Sr Ortiz de Rozas thereafter.
3. I would welcome the Minister's comments, or a chance to discuss this with him soon. NAD, to whom I am copying this minute, may be able to contribute an up-to-date estimate of the likely dates of the Second Reading of the Canada Bill.

Bure

J B Ure

30 December 1981

cc:

Mr Day
 Mr Fearn, SAMD
 Mr Berry, NAD