

Ref: B06497



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Prime Minister.

RW

H.V.P.L.

MR WHITMORE

c Sir Robert Armstrong o/r

Argentine Mainland

After this morning's briefing I asked Admiral Fieldhouse whether (leaving aside one rather different possibility of which you are aware) he now foresaw any circumstances in which he would want to seek authority to attack the Argentine mainland. His answer was No. His view on this had changed since he briefed members of OD(SA) at Northwood on 25th April. It had not done so for political reasons - though he was well aware of these - but for military ones. Air attacks on Argentine air bases were unlikely to do much permanent damage; and using Vulcans would, for air-tankering reasons, inhibit his all-important Nimrod reconnaissance flights.

R L WADE-GERY

14th May 1982