

54

Covering SECRET AND PERSONAL UK COMMS



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB  
Telephone 01-218 2111/3 (Direct Dialling)  
01-218 9000 (Switchboard)

MO 5/21

14th May 1982

Dear Francis,

Defence Dept for  
action  
(received here 142100hr)

As we discussed over the 'phone I am  
sending over to you the letter my Secretary  
of State has sent to M. Hernu. The text was  
signalled to Paris in advance and I am also  
enclosing the signal reply we have since  
received from HMA which indicates that the  
message has to some extent achieved its  
purpose.

While the letter is marked Secret and  
Personal I do not think that there would be  
any objection to showing it to the French  
Ambassador on an "In Confidence" basis.  
Perhaps you would then forward it to Paris  
in the normal way.

Yours  
Gene Ridley  
(J RIDLEY) (MISS)

F N Richards Esq

Covering SECRET AND PERSONAL UK COMMS

SECRET

WPA 14517Z MAY 82

SEC

SPE

IR

141101Z MAY 82

FROM COMCOMB FCO LONDON

TO MOUK

SECRET EXCLUSIVE UK COMMS ONLY

SIG A2P

DDIP

SECRET EXCLUSIVE UK COMMS ONLY

COMMS ONLY

SECRET

FM PARIS

TO IMMEDIATE MOUK

DTG 140530Z MAY 82

PERSONAL FOR APS/SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE FROM AMBASSADOR  
YOUR SIGA2P OF 121730Z MAY 82

1. THE TEXT OF MR NOTT'S LETTER WAS PASSED TO M. HERNU YESTERDAY  
MORNING UNDER COVER OF A LETTER FROM ME TO THE MINISTER. M. HERNU  
SENT ME A REPLY YESTERDAY EVENING CONFIRMING RECEIPT OF MR NOTT'S  
LETTER. HE ASKED ME TO PASS HIS WARMEST THANKS TO MR NOTT AND STRESSE  
D  
HOW TOUCHED HE HAD BEEN BY HIS MESSAGE. HE SAID THAT, WHILE RECOGNIS-  
ING THAT THE LETTER HAD BEEN ADDRESSED PERSONALLY TO HIM, HE HAD  
TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF TRANSMITTING THE TEXT TO M. MITTERRAND

FRETWELL..

BT

APS/S OF S ACTION

SECRET



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

TELEPHONE 01-218 9000  
DIRECT DIALLING 01-218 2111/3

MO 5/21

13th May 1982

*Dear Minister*

I sincerely regret that certain reports in London newspapers have recently criticised France for providing the weapons which were responsible for the sinking of HMS SHEFFIELD. These allegations are a considerable embarrassment to me and my colleagues and we are treating them with the contempt they deserve.

In my letter of 22nd April, I made clear how much we appreciated your agreement to provide us with information on French manufactured equipment in service with the Argentine armed forces. I can now say that this information has been of the greatest possible value. I am also most grateful for your Government's recent help in the field of export controls.

I will, of course, continue to ensure that the extent of your assistance, and the information provided, is treated with the utmost discretion. However, at an early opportunity I intend to make clear publicly that I believe that the recent press criticisms of France to be disgraceful and entirely without foundation.

Your generous help in this whole matter has marked France out as a true ally, with a mutual understanding of the need for all nations to stand firm against military aggression.

*Kind est regards*  
*John Nott*

John Nott

Monsieur Charles Hernu  
Le Ministre de la Defense