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Mr Wright

P.W.

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cc PS/PUS  
 Mr Bullard  
 Mr Giffard  
 Mr Mallaby  
 Mr Weston  
 Mr Fearn  
 Mr Hulse, EU  
 Mr Bayne, ERD

CHIEFS OF STAFF MEETING: 20 MAY

1. The following were the main points at a brief meeting of the Chiefs of Staff this morning. CAS was in the Chair; Mr Blaker attended.

(a) Intelligence

The only point not covered in today's INTSUM was the fact that 3 Argentine merchant ships in the Atlantic were now known to be reporting in cypher on the position of British shipping on our sea-lines of communication with the South Atlantic.

- (b) Mr Stewart asked about the availability of a ship if it were decided to transport Astiz to the UK. It was reported that the Esk would be reaching Ascension Island on about 25 May. The ship's ETA in the UK was 6 or 7 June.

(c) Own Forces

It was clear from the report by ACDS(Ops) that 'cross-decking' (ie the transport of troops to landing craft and assault ships) was now complete. On this see my separate minute (not to all).

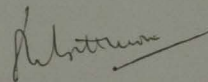
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(d) Military Options

There was no detailed discussion of the MOD's regular Thursday up-date of the Military Options paper. ACDS (Pol) was, however, asked to speed up work on an appreciation of possible options after a successful recapture of the Falkland Islands. It was suggested, and I readily agreed, that there should be an FCO input to this work. As I understand it, in the first instance this would involve the analysis of a number of possible scenarios. A significant factor in these will of course be political (and perhaps financial/economic). I gave ACDS (Pol) two /broad

scenarios which I said I thought the paper should cover:-

- (i) How to sustain and protect the garrison if, after expulsion from the Islands, the Argentines maintained a sporadic but unpredictable air attacks against the garrison;
- (ii) How to support the garrison if, following expulsion from the Islands, the Argentines sought to attack our sea-lines of communication (particularly with SSKs).



20 May 1982

D H Gillmore