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PS/MR RIDLEY

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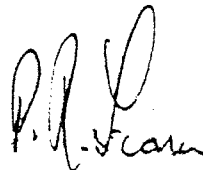
FALKLANDS: ANGLO/ARGENTINE TALKS

1. You will, I understand, have heard before leaving New York of the last minute Argentine difficulties on the communique and of their request for its issue to be withheld.

LAG A (14) 2. We were alerted to this by Buenos Aires Tel No 76 and by a call on News Department this afternoon by the Argentine Chargé d'Affaires, Sr Iglesias. By then, however, the text of the communique, as in UKMIS New York Tel No 169, had already been distributed. I understand that News Department have been able to reach most of the agencies etc; but we cannot be certain, until we see tomorrow's press, that the communique will not be published in its original form.

LAG B (12) 3. I have spoken to our Embassy in Buenos Aires, to the Argentine Chargé d'Affaires, and to UKMIS, New York. None can shed any light on the nature of the Argentine difficulties or on whether major problems or minor semantic amendments are involved. Mr Chick in Buenos Aires had only been told by the MFA that it was a matter of "smoothing over some rough passages". I have urged our Embassy and Sr Iglesias to obtain chapter and verse from the Argentine MFA urgently. I have also made clear to Sr Iglesias that, even if publication of the communique is prevented, the circumstances of its withdrawal will inevitably lead to a good deal of unhelpful speculation and that the sooner the matter is cleared up the better.

4. As agreed, News Department will be taking the line attributably that the communique is being withheld at Argentine request: and unattributably, that the Argentines appear to have presentational difficulties on the text which need sorting out. This seems the best that can be done without more background knowledge. I have told the Argentine Embassy that we shall be taking this line.



P R Fearn
South America Department

25 February 1981

cc:

PS
PS/LPS
PS/PUS
Mr Day
Mr Ure
News Department

CEB
27/2

My Sui pri

[Handwritten initials]