

ALA 014/3

2

Mr Giffard

PS/PUS

cc: Mr Ure
Mr Chase, SAmD

MR WILLIAMS' VALEDICTORY DESPATCH

1. I attach a copy of Mr Williams' Valedictory Despatch finished just before his departure on leave. I have discussed it with Mr Ure and agreed that it should not be submitted or sent for printing at this stage.
2. The main theme of the Despatch is unexceptional and correct for an Ambassador in Buenos Aires. It is to remind us that despite the emotions created by the Falklands crisis, Argentina remains important to us and that we should not lose sight of the need to work for an eventual normalisation of relations. There are however some phrases and passages in the Despatch which would not be well received at this particular moment, if it were given wide circulation on printing.
3. More worrying are the suggestions in paragraph 9, and particularly in paragraph 10, that our policy on the Falklands, in the period up to the invasion, disregarded the advice and guidance which Mr Williams had given. There is of course truth in this to the extent that the general advice given by officials was not able to overcome the domestic/political constraints. But the way it is put in the Despatch is misleading and could cause misunderstanding.
4. You may wish to consider how the Despatch should be handled but delay a decision on this until you have been able to have a word with Mr Williams on his return from leave.
5. None of what I have said above does of course detract in any way from the very successful efforts which Mr Williams made during his term in Buenos Aires to build up our relations with Argentina. It is quite natural that he should feel personally disappointed at the way things have gone.


P R Fearn
Emergency Unit

5 June 1982

1. The PUS may wish to see the despatch. Although it contains much with which we can agree, and indeed the message that Argentina matters is both

tone and important, I am inclined to agree that it should not be given distribution in the print.

2. This poses a bit of a dilemma. If it were printed, some conclusions would be drawn which would be unhelpful; if it is not printed, we shall be said to have suppressed it. Some of the controversy which it would provoke if given wide distribution would be sterile - e.g. controversy about the characterisation of Mr Costa Mendez in paragraph 9. Other points would ^{arouse discussion which might} be thought liable to prejudice the official enquiry.
3. The right answer may be to ensure that it is made available for the enquiry, and to consider further distribution thereafter. Alternatively, the PUS might wish to see a draft minute under which it could be given some ^{further} distribution within the FCO meanwhile.

Arcliff
14/6

Mr Fearn, Emergency Unit

I have had a word with the PUS who is not very impressed by this despatch. We suggest that it may be given a limited printing, ie in the departmental series and not as a diplomatic report, but together with a short reply dealing with Mr Williams' points, so that the FCO view is on the record. Perhaps you could let me have a draft.

R A Burns

R A Burns
PS/PUS

16 June 1982