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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 01-218 (Direct Dialling)

01-218 9000 (Switchboard)

CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF

Saturday 5 Feb '83.

Dear Prime Minister

I do feel so guilty that I have not written before to thank you for all your warm hospitality at Chequers last week end, including such a delicious lunch. You always look after us all marvellously well. Which is an added reason why it is such a pleasure to come there. Thank you both so very much.

I thought that that particular discussion has immensely helped in clearing the air on what could constitute a sound and safe negotiating position. I hope you thought so too; and I am so grateful to you for allowing me at the

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, and on other occasions, to represent
the Chief of Staff and the military
as strategic aspects of these vital issues.

Quite apart from any contribution
I may or may not make, I find
it invaluable to listen to and about
the wider discussions on these defence &
strategic issues and particularly to
be made fully conversant with your ^{own} views.

~~This~~ This helps me so much to make
military planning relevant & responsive.

And I do believe the reorganised
Chief of Staff of organisation is now
well geared to a quick response.

Indeed in the context of the
Falklands, I hope I can reassure
you Prime Minister that we are
busy on real plans as a matter
of great urgency & down to the

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greatest detail — pre-reconnaissance
 methods of attack, exact weapon loads
 etc. This will enable us to give
 you a precise and well thought through
 response to cover any eventuality; and
 I am very conscious of the significance
 of the 48 hours (a fortnight) time frame.
 I have just completed a series
 of meetings on this very issue; so please
 don't think we are letting the grass grow
 under our feet.

I must also thank you for
 including Aviad as me in your party
 very friendly party for President
 Mubarak of Egypt. It was an excellent
 evening with 'super' speakers, and we were
 privileged to be there.

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The Egyptians are nice folk
but the Israelis do not fear them
(nor really respect them) so they are in
a weak position as far as getting
the Israelis out of Lebanon is concerned;
but as you said we must all
'soldier on' and keep trying. I am
sure the Arab ^{would} be grateful to us
for showing our concern by coming
a contingent to the Mult. Natl. Force,
as they ^(the queens & you friends) are a good Regt and
will acquit themselves well. But what
they will achieve in that chaotic
set up is a different matter; and
they could be in for quite a dangerous time!
However never let us forget that previous
dangerous times for the British Army in Ireland
as elsewhere helped enormously to sharpen
their performance in the Falklands.
Again many thanks for all your hospitality
Yours ever
Desir