



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

2 November, 1984

Prime Minister⁽²⁾

Dear Charles,

Foreign Affairs Committee: Belgrano Inquiry: Mr Charles Wallace

The Foreign Affairs Committee have requested the attendance before them of Charles Wallace, now the Ambassador at Montevideo, who was Ambassador in Lima in April-May 1982.

The Foreign Secretary has agreed that Mr Wallace should appear before the FAC. We have several times made it clear, in correspondence with Mr Tam Dalyell and in Parliament, that reports from Lima of the "Peruvian proposals" did not reach London until the early hours of 3 May - ie 6 hours after the attack on the Belgrano - and that Mr Wallace himself was not told of them until 1830 local time (2330 GMT) on 2 May, ie 4½ hours after the Belgrano had been sunk. But Mr Dalyell has not been put off by this. The journalist Arthur Gavshon has recorded an interview with Mr Alexander Haig, in which the former US Secretary of State maintains that the British Ambassador in Lima ".... was right in with the President" when Mr Haig spoke to President Belaunde by telephone over the weekend of 1-2 May. You may have noticed that The Times Diary of 26 October appears to take this "revelation" as accurate (I enclose a copy of the article).

The latest round of speculation makes it all the more desirable that Mr Wallace should set the record straight personally, emphasising that the stories about him being with President Belaunde are completely untrue, and that the first information he received about the Peruvian proposals was when the then Foreign Minister of Peru, Dr Arias Stella, asked him to call at 1830 (2330 GMT) on 2 May. Mr Wallace will be able to point out that, when he saw Dr Arias Stella on other Falklands business on 1 May, the Peruvian Foreign Minister gave no indication that any initiative was being contemplated. Mr Wallace's reporting on 2 May was prompt: he despatched his telegram only 90 minutes after the beginning of his conversation with the Peruvian Foreign Minister.

The most probable date for Charles Wallace's appearance is Wednesday 14 November; otherwise, he will

/appear

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London SW1A 2AR



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REC'D
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LONDON

Dear Sir,

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appear on some subsequent Wednesday.

I am copying this to Richard Mottram (MOD) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

L V Appleyard

(L V Appleyard)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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