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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 January, 1983

*W.R.*  
*1 copy copy to me*  
*copy back page to Mr.*  
*Hyman.*

*A.F.C. 24*

*Dear John,*

German Warships and Submarines for the Argentine Navy

You asked on 27 January for details of all warships and submarines being built by the Germans for Argentina.

Four MEKO 360 Class destroyers (sometimes referred to as frigates) and two TR1700 Class diesel electric submarines are being built in the FRG. A further six MEKO 140 frigates and four TR1700 Class submarines are to be built in Argentina under licence. The contracts for all of these were signed before the Argentine invasion of the Falklands, from 1977 onwards. Details, including estimated delivery dates where known, are set out in the attached annex, which we have prepared with the help of the Defence Intelligence Staff. They are monitoring developments as a matter of priority.

The first MEKO 360 destroyer is being handed over to the Argentines in Hamburg on 2 February. It will sail for Argentina on or around 28 February, after three weeks of crew familiarisation trials. Ministers have discussed the prospect, which the DOI are doing their best to prevent, of a Rolls Royce engineer being on board for those trials.

All the MEKO 360s contain Rolls Royce power units. Those for the first two were handed over before the Argentine invasion. Those for the second two were released following OD discussion on 21 July and subsequent correspondence. They were to have had Westland Lynx helicopters as part of their equipment. After the invasion, Westlands cancelled the contracts for the helicopters for all four of the frigates and the Argentines are seeking substitutes (probably French or Italian).

Original contracts provided for some UK equipment for the MEKO 140 frigates, notably Vosper Thornycroft stabilising equipment worth £1.1 million (one set out of six was delivered before the conflict), diesel control gear worth £200,000 (one set delivered before the conflict) and Racal-Decca radars (all sets delivered before the conflict). Further deliveries are of course subject to our current ban on military supplies to Argentina. We know of no orders for any British equipment in any of the submarines.

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/ I enclose a suggested press line on the MEKO 140s agreed with the MOD.

I am copying this to the Private Secretaries of other members of OD(EM).

*Yours ever*  
*John Holmes*

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street

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ANNEX

GERMAN SUPPLIES OF WARSHIPS AND SUBMARINES FOR ARGENTINA  
MEKO 360 (Four destroyers, under construction in the FRG)

Displacement : 3600 tons

- MM40 surface to surface Exocets

Armaments

- One 127mm gun

Four Breda/Bofors guns

Two SCLAR multi-purpose rocket launchers

- Two triple torpedo tubes.

Aircraft

- two helicopters

Characteristics

The nearest equivalent UK ship in terms of size and weapon fit is the Batch 3 Type 22 frigate recently ordered by the Royal Navy.

Deliveries

1. "Almirante Brown" handover 2 February 1983
2. "La Argentina" handover expected mid May 1983
3. "Heroína" " handover expected end 1983/early 1984
4. "Sarandi" handover expected mid 1984

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MEKO 140's (under construction in Argentina)Displacement : 1470 tons

Weapons

- Four MM38 surface to surface Exocet launchers
- One 76mm gun
- Two 40m twin guns
- 2 triple torpedo tubes

Aircraft 1 Helicopter

Characteristics - A heavily armed light frigate for which there is no RN equivalent

Entry into service The first towards the end of this year, the rest planned at six-monthly intervals although this now appears optimistic given previous performance of Argentina's naval construction industry and inevitable delay resulting from the FRG's embargo during and after the conflict.

TR1700 SUBMARINES

Displacement ( 1760 tonnes (surface)  
( 2300 tonnes (submerged)

Characteristics a fast, modern, long range ocean going conventional submarine with a minelaying capacity.

Weapons                    22 Mark 48 torpedoes  
6 torpedo tubes

Propulsion                diesel electric

Construction            2 in the FRG  
4 in Argentina

deliveries/entry into service

The first of the two being built in the FRG is likely to be delivered around November this year. The precise status of the construction programme for the second to be built in the FRG is not clear. We believe construction of the first of the four being built in Argentina started early in 1982. But the programme has been severely delayed because of the FRG's embargo during and after the conflict and the need for considerable German technical assistance.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

31 January 1983

Copy: Dr. ~~byham~~  
Mr. Killett.

Dear John,

German Warships for Argentina

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With my letter of 28 January <sup>with ASL</sup> I enclosed a proposed press line for use when the handover to Argentina of the first MEKO 360 destroyer on 2 February becomes known.

Our Embassy in Bonn have since been in touch with the Germans about this. The Germans have expressed particular sensitivity about any implication that they are 'permitting' delivery, since they believe that they are not able to stop it in view of the legal and contractual position. Their concern could be met if the press line, instead of:

'.....the Government regrets that the German Government have permitted the delivery.....'

were to read:

'.....the Government regrets that the German Government have not felt able to prevent the delivery.....'

The difference may seem small to us, but the Germans attach much importance to it.

I am copying this to Richard Mottram (MOD).

Yours ever  
John Holmes

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq,  
10 Downing Street

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1981年1月1日

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GRS 270  
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FM BONN 201515Z JAN 83  
TO PRIORITY FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 51 OF 20 JANUARY  
INFO PRIORITY MODUK (FOR DS11, DS13 AND D173)

FALKLANDS: GERMAN FRIGATES FOR ARGENTINA

1. COUNSELLOR (DEFENCE SUPPLY) WAS ASKED TO CALL THIS MORNING ON HEAD OF MFA DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR ARMS EXPORTS. HENZE WISHED TO DISCUSS THE DEFENSIVE PRESS LINE TO BE USED IF NECESSARY AT THE TIME OF DELIVERY OF THE FIRST OF THE GERMAN SHIPS BEING BUILT FOR THE ARGENTINE NAVY. GERMAN COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT UK PRESS LINE AND THE LINE THEY PROPOSE TO USE THEMSELVES ARE BEING SENT BY TELELETTER TO DEW, FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPARTMENT.

2. HENZE INDICATED THAT THE PLANNED DATE OF HANDOVER OF THE FIRST FRIGATE HAD NOW BEEN PUT BACK TO 2 FEB. ASSUMING THERE WAS NO FURTHER DELAY, WE COULD EXPECT THE GERMANS TO NOTIFY US OFFICIALLY OF THIS DATE AT THE END OF NEXT WEEK. THE SHIP WOULD PROBABLY SAIL FOR THE SOUTH ATLANTIC THREE WEEKS AFTER 2 FEB.

3. PERRY REMINDED HENZE OF INDICATIONS WHICH I HAD DRAWN TO THE ATTENTION OF THE MFA (MY TEL 032) THAT ARGENTINA MIGHT BE CONTEMPLATING FURTHER HOSTILE ACTION. HE SAID THAT IN THIS CONTEXT WE WERE ANXIOUS TO CHECK ALL INDICATORS THAT MIGHT HAVE A BEARING ON ARGENTINE INTENTIONS HAD THE GERMANS ANY INDICATION THAT THE ARGENTINES MIGHT BE ANXIOUS TO ACCELERATE DELIVERY OF THE ALMIRANTE BROWN? WAS THERE ANY POSSIBILITY THAT THEY MIGHT CUT SHORT THE TRIALS AND SAIL THE SHIP SOUTHWARDS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS? THE MFA TOLD US AN HOUR LATER THAT AFTER CHECKING WITH BOTH BLOHM AND VOSS AND THE FEDERAL MOD THEY REMAINED SATISFIED THAT THERE WAS NO REASON TO SUSPECT THAT THE ARGENTINES WERE PLANNING TO ACCELERATE DELIVERY OF THIS SHIP. THE SHIP WAS NOW AT SEA CONTINUING BUILDERS TRIALS AND UNDER COMMAND OF A BLOHM AND VOSS CAPTAIN. ANY TRICKERY WOULD INCUR THE DISPLEASURE OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND CAUSE CONTRACTUAL COMPLICATIONS WITH BLOHM AND VOSS: AND HENCE PUT AT RISK DELIVERY OF THE REMAINING SHIPS.

TAYLOR

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THIS TELEGRAM

WAS NOT

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