

**CONFIDENTIAL**

SAPU(82) 4

SOUTH ATLANTIC PRESENTATION UNIT (SAPU)

The attached paper was issued at 1745 hours on 16 April 1982. Items 2 - 4 contain advance warning of news stories which may become public over the weekend along with suggested defensive lines to take. It is classified CONFIDENTIAL because we would not wish to draw attention to these issues unless or until they become public.

Cabinet Office

16 April 1982

**CONFIDENTIAL**

1. The Haig Mission

Mr Haig may come to London this weekend for further discussions. We shall not be commenting on any aspects of his negotiations until after he has seen the Prime Minister. Meanwhile our objective remains a diplomatic solution.

2. RAF Vulcan Bombers

The Sunday Express is likely to carry a story (by Winston Churchill MP) that the RAF is preparing Vulcan bombers to take part in the Falkland Island operations. These bombers, which have a nuclear capability, are to be replaced by the Tornado and were being withdrawn from service. However training exercises with conventional bombs were already planned for next week and it was not to be expected that these would have escaped public notice.

Defensive Line to Take

Can confirm that Vulcans are planned to take part in bombing exercises this week. I cannot comment on operational plans but in any event there is no suggestion that their nuclear capability has any relevance in the Argentine context.

3. HMS Illustrious

HMS Illustrious the second of the Navy's new anti submarine carriers which is being built by British Shipbuilders on Tyneside was planned to enter service in 1983. She has finished sea trials and is now completing her fitting out. British Shipbuilders have been asked to divert extra effort to Illustrious to speed up her acceptance into service and have agreed to co-operate.

Defensive Line to Take

We are making every effort to speed up HMS Illustrious's entry into service to enhance our military capability but cannot comment on specific plans.

CONFIDENTIAL

4. 2 Parachute Regiment --

2 Parachute Regiment is being brought to 72 hours notice to move as part of our continuing build up of military focus and this is likely to become public over the weekend. No firm order to move will however be issued until arrangements for suitable shipping have been finalised.

Line to take

Can confirm that this is part of our continuing build up but no move can take place until arrangements for transport have been completed.

CONFIDENTIAL