



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 April 1982

Prime Minister

*Some useful developments,
especially overleaf.*

A. J. C. 27.4

Dear John,

Falkland Islanders

Following discussion at Chequers yesterday, officials have once again reviewed the position of the Falkland Islanders and the related questions of what might be done to sustain their morale and to provide assistance for those of them who wish to leave the Islands temporarily.

Numbers of Falkland Islanders wishing to leave

Accurate figures are impossible to obtain. We have made the best estimate we can, after consulting the Governor, his Chief Secretary and Councillors as well as some of the Islanders who left most recently. We have also consulted the Chairman of the Falkland Islands Company who is in touch daily with his representative in Port Stanley.

Our best estimate, albeit very rough, is that about 300 Falkland Islanders may still remain in Port Stanley. Everyone else has gone to 'the Camp', with which communications are very difficult. The main feeling of those we have consulted is that the great majority of those in 'the Camp' voted with their feet in going and would wish to stick it out. There is also the practical problem that movement back from 'the Camp' to Port Stanley is difficult and would take time.

Of those in Port Stanley, between one and two hundred wish to leave temporarily.

For the time being those who wish to leave temporarily will continue to use the Argentine aircraft. We have no indication that the Argentines are forbidding anyone from leaving.

Help for those who wish to leave temporarily

The BBC have carried a message over the weekend saying that the Government will offer sympathetic help to those who wish to leave temporarily but who are prevented by lack of means from doing so. This message has also been passed by Mr Needham, Chairman of the Falkland Islands Company, to his Company representative in Port Stanley. The Prime Minister made it clear today in the House that the Government would not be found to lack generosity to those wishing to leave temporarily. The BBC

/are



are relaying the Prime Minister's statement today in their special programme for the Falkland Islands.

We have also considered the possibility of special arrangements for the departure of those Falkland Islanders who at present want to leave. Our view is that their numbers do not at present warrant any special arrangements by a third party to evacuate them by air or sea. But we shall need to keep the situation under constant review and reconsider when the Task Force is in position, when the present Argentine flights to the mainland may cease.

Islanders' Morale

We have arranged with the BBC's External Services that their special programme for the Falkland Islands - now transmitted thrice weekly - should be broadcast daily. We have also arranged with the Governor that he and his colleagues will appear on these programmes on a regular basis, in order to give a better personal touch to them and to relay as appropriate any Government statement which particularly concerns the Islanders.

I am copying this to the Private Secretaries of the other members of ODSA, Sir Robert Armstrong and Sir Michael Palliser.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

John Holmes

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing St

27 APR 1964

