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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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MO 5/21

1st September 1982

Prime Minister

Dear John,

Content?

Yes

At top

*oh
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*No Hansard
cutting*

In a written reply to Mr Tam Dalyell MP on 22nd July, the Prime Minister announced the lifting of the Total Exclusion Zone and the 12 nautical mile restriction on Argentine naval forces. The announcement also included a statement that Port Stanley Harbour and the 3 nautical mile territorial sea around the Falklands would remain closed to commercial shipping until further notice for reasons of safety. The Task Force has now cleared the minefields in the area and marked hazards to navigation such as ships sunk in San Carlos Water. There is no military necessity to keep the territorial sea closed to commercial shipping and both the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Civil Commissioner, Falkland Islands believe that the removal of the restrictions would represent a highly desirable move towards normality.

My Secretary of State therefore proposes to authorise the issue of a Notice to Mariners announcing that restrictions on commercial shipping (other than Argentine vessels) entering the Falkland Islands territorial sea have been lifted now that minefields in the area have been cleared; and giving instructions to those wishing to enter port to contact the Queen's Harbour Master at Port Stanley. Mr Nott would be grateful to know that the Prime Minister is content.

I am copying this to John Holmes (FCO) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Jane Ridley
(J E RIDLEY) (MISS)

A J Coles Esq

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