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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 February 1984

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*A.J.C. 2*

*Dear John,*

Falkland Islands: Fisheries Limits

As requested in your letter of 12 January, I enclose a draft reply, for your signature, to a letter from the Falkland Islands Government representative in London, Mr Adrian Monk, about the possibility of declaring a 200-mile exclusion fisheries limit (EFL) around the Falkland Islands. We have held back this draft to take account of discussion at OD on 31 January: we do not believe that the conclusions of that meeting affect our public line; at least for the time being. We must, if anything, err on the side of caution.

Mr Monk is a retired Falklands farm manager and former Councillor, who has represented the Falkland Islands Government here since the opening of its Office in January 1983. He is in regular contact with the FCO. His letter to the Prime Minister follows one published in The Times of 19 November on the same subject, and the motion adopted by the Falkland Islands Legislative Council on 22 November: he has enclosed copies of both of these with his letter. He wrote to Lady Young shortly before the Falklands debate in the House of Lords on 6 December, similarly drawing the Minister of State's attention to the Legislative Council motion.

Mr Monk was due to call on Lady Young on 26 January, together with representatives of the Falkland Islands Association at their request, but the Association asked for a postponement.

In his final paragraph, Mr Monk indicates that he may have in mind a joint meeting of Whitehall officials, himself, members of the Falkland Islands Committee and representatives of the British fishing industry. As the draft reply indicates, firms or individuals who might be interested are generally always encouraged to contact the Falkland Islands Government direct. Coalite did so with its proposals for a joint fisheries venture with the Japanese

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company Taiyo. Officials in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the ODA have been closely involved in this and have regularly discussed the prospects with Mr Monk.

*Yr ever,*

*Peter Ricketts*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

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- Top Secret
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A B Monk Esq  
Falkland Islands Government  
Office  
29 Tufton Street  
London SW1P 3QL

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 11 January about the possible declaration of a 200-mile <sup>exclusion</sup> fisheries limit <sup>(EFL)</sup> around the Falkland Islands.

CAVEAT.....

The Prime Minister and her colleagues well understand the arguments in favour of declaring a 200-mile EFL, to which they are continuing to give their closest attention. The very fact that it has been under consideration for so long demonstrates that it is far from being the simple issue - especially in its international aspects - that some people imagine. If we are to take due account of all the factors, and avoid risks of repercussions in the longer term that could outweigh short-term benefits, the question is formidably complex. I am sorry that I cannot for the moment give you a more positive reply.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

You will know from the press and from the transcripts sent to you by the FCO of Lady Young's speeches and press conference that there was a good deal of discussion of this subject during the Minister of State's visit to the Islands.

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She emphasised in her address to the Public Meeting in Port Stanley on 16 January that the Government are alive to the urgency of the matter. Lady Young said:

'The strong arguments in favour of declaring an EFL are well understood in London and I can assure you that this is something which is being given the closest attention at the highest level.'

In reply to a question later on the same occasion, Lady Young said:

'I do appreciate that you want a 200-mile fishing limit. I recognise your concern on conservation grounds that the fish stocks may run out in the not too distant future and I'm very conscious that you earn a lot of money from harbour dues on vessels that are currently fishing and of course would get a bigger income if there were some licensing arrangements. So we are very conscious in London of the arguments about the fisheries zone. And it is because we are conscious of those arguments that we have been considering them very seriously and I would like you to accept that this is a matter that we have very much before us. There are complications about it. It isn't quite as straightforward I think as some people might think and I'm sure all of us would hope, but I can assure you that it is something about which we are concerned.'

I really cannot go beyond this at present.

You ask whether there is some way in which interested parties could be brought together for a discussion. I understand that any British companies or individuals

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expressing interest in commercial fishing operations around the Falkland Islands are advised to contact the Falkland Islands Government in Port Stanley, and that some have indeed done so. At the London end, there have been preparatory meetings between officials of the ODA and the FCO and representatives of the companies most interested in Falklands fisheries, e.g. Coalite, Taiyo and Messrs Marr and Boyd. This dialogue will no doubt continue, and the FCO, the ODA and your own authorities in Port Stanley will I am sure remain in contact with you as the situation develops.

*AR*  $\frac{7.}{2}$

6 FEB 1964

