



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 April 1984

Dear John,

Belgrano

AR 1/4
- with AJC?

Thank you for the copy of your letter of 6 April to Richard Mottram, in which you enclosed a copy of a letter of 5 April from Mr Tam Dalyell to the Prime Minister asking eleven further questions about the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano.

The Foreign Secretary agrees with the line you propose the Prime Minister should take in answer to Mr Dalyell. As you know, Sir Geoffrey Howe will, subject to the views of the Defence Secretary, shortly be sending Mr Dalyell replies to the eleven questions which he posed during the Foreign Affairs Debate in the House of Commons on 22 March. This reinforces the point in your third paragraph.

I understand that the Ministry of Defence are providing you with the answers for possible use in Parliament to ten of the eleven questions which Mr Dalyell has now put to the Prime Minister. We suggest that the answer to the outstanding question - No 10 - should be:

"Our Embassies in Washington and Lima reported, fully and promptly, all the relevant information that was available to them. Agency reports of President Belaúnde's press conference in Lima on 2 May reached London slightly earlier than the telegram from our Embassy because the then Ambassador was personally briefed by the Foreign Minister immediately after the press conference. All the reports of the Peruvian ideas were sent after the Belgrano had been sunk. President Belaúnde's press conference was itself held four hours after the sinking."

This is consistent with the answers which Sir Geoffrey proposes to give to Questions Nos 5 and 9 put by Mr Dalyell on 22 March.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram.

Yours ever,
Peter Ricketts

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Private Secretary

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