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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

19 October 1984

The Prime Minister has received the attached yet further letter from George Foulkes, MP, about the Belgrano.

I should be grateful for your advice on whether the Prime Minister should continue to respond in detail to Mr. Foulkes' points or whether it might now be appropriate to refer him to the forthcoming appearance of the Secretary of State for Defence before the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. Could I have such advice and a draft reply as soon as possible please.

BF //

(TIM FLESHER)

Richard Mottram, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.

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From: George Foulkes. M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

*J19*

17 October 1984

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 8th October. *with TF*

May I start by expressing my deepest sympathy with those people and their families who suffered, and who continue to suffer, from last week's outrage in Brighton. It was an act of senseless terrorism for which there can be no excuse. However, as you and the Leader of the Opposition have rightly stated, it should be 'business as usual'.

You will be aware that, in addition to questions which you refused to answer in your letter of 8th October, you have simply ignored others. It would be futile of me to repeat them at this stage, but I would as a matter of urgency ask for answers to two of them.

1. Why did you claim on 21st February 1984 in answer to Mr Dalyell's question on the Belgrano (vol 54 col 695) that ... "The full facts were given in several replies in the House ... All the facts are there. They support the Government's case". Do you not agree that not all the facts were there? Did you not realise that the effect of your answer was to prevent further parliamentary questions on the subject and that your answer was the reason given by the MOD for their refusal to allow Admiral Woodward to be interviewed on the subject? (Hansard vol 55 col 476w).

2. Whether you agree with statements made by Lord Lewin in the Panorama programme of 16th April 1984 and subsequently repeated that, "the Belgrano was a threat as long as she existed". Is this what you meant by "a real and direct threat" to the Task Force in your letter of 19th September.

It is also incumbent upon you to explain why on 24th May 1983 to a large television audience you answered a question about the Belgrano by stating: "But it was not sailing away from the Falklands".

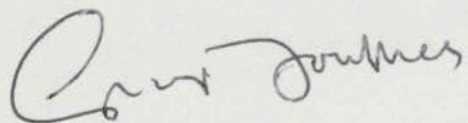
Cont ...

- 2 -

This was, by your own admission, some six months after you had learnt about the reversal in the course of the cruiser.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George Foulkes".

GEORGE FOULKES MP

Argentina: Res B 38



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