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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 November 1980

A J Williams Esq CMG
BUENOS AIRES

ALW 040/325/10		
RECEIVED IN REGISTRY NO. 18		
9 DEC 1980		
DESK OFFICER		REGISTRY
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Dear Sir,
FALKLAND ISLANDS

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- (77)
1. Many thanks for your manuscript letter of 6 November. We fully understand your difficulties with DEYOU telegrams, to which you seem to have found a sensible - if momentarily perplexing - solution.
 2. On your second point, I do not think it fair to describe those in the know in London as a cohort. Knowledge of our clandestine activity has in fact been kept to the lowest number feasible in a direct chain leading between the Secretary of State and the desk officer, plus the Lord Privy Seal and the PUS. No other Under-Secretaries or Departments in the FCO are aware of it, nor is any other Ministry. Even other Ministers involved have been informed orally, not in writing.
 3. I naturally have no objection to your informing John Chick and Andrew Murray, provided that they fully understand that no word of what has already taken place must ever leak out, no matter what Mr Ridley manages to achieve in the Islands. We may now be going public on the leaseback concept; but the run-up must remain secret.
 4. As for the Argentines, I do not think it is for us to suggest to Cavandoli whom he should inform and whom not. Our concern is solely that the Geneva meeting should remain for ever secret. That is vital. If knowledge were ever to leak, it would cause very considerable political difficulties here and would almost certainly lead to an abrupt break in the negotiations.
 5. Please destroy this after you have read it.

G W Harding
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