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PORT STANLEY

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M. Davies
19/1/81

Dear Mr. M.

REACTIONS TO MR RIDLEY'S VISIT

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1. Many thanks for your letter of 19 December reporting on your recent visits to farms in East and West Falkland. We greatly value such reports for the fascinating insights they give into the evolution of Islander opinion at the grass-roots.
2. Although your visit took place early on in the debate following Mr Ridley's visit and perhaps before Islanders had had time to clear their minds, your account brings out the degree of underlying support for the leaseback idea. There seems in general to be at least a welcome determination particularly in the Camp, to look at the problem realistically, providing of course no pressure is put on the Islanders. This is very much the impression we ourselves got from talking to Islanders in November. LEGCO's subsequent decision to go for a freeze presumably reflects their wish to play it safe at this stage, as well as the more negative opinions in Port Stanley.
3. The important thing now is that there should be continuing quiet debate and evolution of opinion. Any further indications you can provide of Islander views and the degree to which they are being truly reflected by Councillors would always be helpful to us.

Yours every
Robert

P R Fearn
South America Department