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*Mr Hulse*

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Mr Weston

cc: Mr Fearn, SAmD  
Mr Hulse

SOUTH GEORGIA AND HMS ENDURANCE

1. I attended a meeting this afternoon in the MOD chaired by Mr Nicholls, Head of DS5. The DNOT, who was present, was tasked with putting on stream the passage to South Georgia of RFA Fort Austin although it was thought that the decision actually to send the Royal Fleet Auxiliary need not be taken until after the weekend. I emphasised that we wanted as low a profile response as necessary but which would accord with our commitment to Parliament to do something about the Argentinians on South Georgia.
2. Mr Nicholls touched on two other matters (a) HMS Endurance and (b) the MOD's military contingency paper for the Falkland Islands. On (a) he said that while the MOD were disposed to be helpful in the short run, they hoped that the longer term problem of HMS Endurance could be settled soon. The MOD did not have the funds to pay for HMS Endurance's continued existence. I stressed that feelings were running high on this issue in the FCO as in the House of Commons. We were getting a lot of political "flak" over £4.5 million. On (b) Mr Bowen (DS11) said that the MOD would be circulating their military contingency paper to OD colleagues.
3. Both points (a) and (b) will be covered in a minute tomorrow from Mr Blaker (Minister Armed Forces) to Lord Carrington. (Mr Nott is still away in the US).
4. (Unless something dramatic occurred during the night, Mr Nicholls did not foresee having a meeting in his office tomorrow at 10.00am).

*Peter Hood*

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