



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 April 1982

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D B Omand Esq
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

copy
~~Chief of Staff
PUS
Ans DS 6
Hs 7 DS 6
Hs 7 DS 11
Stuart~~

Dear David,

At yesterday's Chiefs of Staff meeting, Mr Wright was asked to give the FCO view on the use of gurkhas on Operation Corporate. We have since told MOD officials that we share your Secretary of State's reservations on this point. Our doubts arise more from presentational than legal considerations. Although gurkhas do not fall within the current UN definition of the term 'mercenary', there would almost certainly be criticism of the UK by the third world for using them in what would be perceived as a 'colonial' problem. Furthermore, the Nepalese Government have a view of decolonisation which is unfavourable from our point of view. We do not want to put recruitment at risk.

2. Mr Hurd has seen and approved the contents of this letter.

Yours ever,
Stephen Lamport

S M J Lamport
Private Secretary to Mr Hurd