



Copy No 1 of 4 copies
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

E7

London SW1A 2AH

Sir Frank Cooper GCB CMG
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

5 May 1982

Dear Frank^N

FALKLAND ISLANDS: NUCLEAR WEAPONS

I was very glad to have your confirmation this afternoon that HMS Sheffield was not carrying an inert round when she was hit. I am sorry that I had to raise this, but I felt that I must ask. Although questions of pollution would not have arisen in this case, we might have had to face acute embarrassment in the non-proliferation field if the Argentinians had got hold of this piece of our technology, not to mention the effect on public opinion if ever rumours of the kind pedalled by some American journalists earlier this week were repeated.

I presume that, since the inert round on HMS Sheffield was transferred to one of the two carriers, all the other weapons, both active and inert, were transferred to the carriers from other ships in the task force at the same time. Could you possibly please confirm this for my own private information only?

Yours ever
Antony

Antony Acland

TOP SECRET
ASOMCC



Permanent Under Secretary of State

DS 17 (Mr Brennan)

FANGLANDS : NUCLEAR
WEAPONS

Please could you let me have a draft reply to the attached. Following a word between CBS (who has now seen your earlier minute) and CRT, I gather that action to remove the surveillance word from COVERTLY is likely.

C May.

FWA
PS