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Mr Wright

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11/4 pa

FALKLAND ISLANDS: COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE SSN

1. Mr Pym called a meeting this afternoon to report on his discussions with the Prime Minister at Chequers over lunch. The main issue under discussion had been the arrangements for communications with the SSN submarine which will be in the zone of exclusion by 0400 hours on 12 April. The CDS also gave a de-briefing at the same time. The following is a combination of points from both meetings.
2. The CDS had told the Prime Minister that if Mr Haig came up with nothing from Buenos Aires, there should be no question of changing the instructions to the submarine as from 0400 hours on 12 April. Consideration however had been given to ensuring that the greatest flexibility possible should be arranged so that final contact with the submarine before 0400 should be as late as possible.
3. It had been agreed therefore that a message should be sent to the submarine before midnight tonight rescinding the present rules of engagement and instituting rule 2 (patrol, fire only in self-defence). Unless Ministers decided otherwise, however, a signal would be sent to the submarine at 1600 hours on 11 April instructing the Captain of the boat to revert to the previous rules of engagement (Numbers 4, 10 and 13).
4. The CDS had made the point that it would be up to the FCO to bring the issue before Ministers again in sufficient time if this procedure was to be changed.
5. The Prime Minister, in agreeing to this revised arrangement, had expressed deep concern about the risk that, if we delayed the instructions to the submarine to attack Argentine naval and auxiliary vessels, the Argentines would take advantage of this opportunity to continue to reinforce the Falkland Islands. On no account should this happen. Nor should they be allowed by this means to bring in the supplies necessary for the work now believed to be going on, to extend the runway at Port Stanley in order to allow it to take combat aircraft.
6. It was agreed at Mr Pym's meeting that we would have to act quickly on receipt of a message from Mr Haig. The Secretary of State should be informed as soon as the message had been received.

10 April 1982

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D H Gillmore

cc: Mr Weston
~~Mr Bunares~~

TOP SECRET

*PS. This minute was
drafted at 2000 hrs*