

ENCL N 3
Falkland 2:30
60

LOOSE MINUTE

Emm

DS5a - Mrs McLoughlin

Copy to:
Head of DS5 ✓
DS5b

Tricky, this one. But 'larger than'
(taken into account) (ie. could)
mean highly disrupted port-paging etc)

FALKLANDS: HMS ENDURANCE

Ministers
are

1. The Cabinet Office (Richard Hatfield) telephoned me this morning to ask for a line to take on HMS Endurance if buttonholed on the subject in the corridors of the House of Commons this afternoon.
2. Hatfield wanted the line to take to cover Endurance's current role and her longer term future. The line I gave him, after consultation with Jonathan Iremonger (who had I think already discussed the matter with you previously) was as follows: HMS Endurance is currently operating in support of the Royal Navy's operations in the South Atlantic where her local knowledge and intelligence should prove of particular value. As events of the past few weeks have shown, HMS Endurance has only a small military capability and her deterrent value is therefore limited. Her longer term future will be a matter for consideration once the present crisis has been resolved.
3. Hatfield noted the change of position which the final sentence of the line to take records to which I responded (as you had informed me) that this reflected Lord Trenchard's views recently expressed in a Defence Debate.

Trenchard

14th Apr 82

J P PLOWMAN
DS5b
MB 8391 7157 MB

D. S. 5
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15 APR 1982
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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