

Secretary of State

Ch 2
10/11



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P.H. Wright

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SECRET UK EYES B

Private Secretary

FALKLAND ISLANDS: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR OPERATION SUTTON

Following agreement in OD(SA) this morning that Rules of Engagement for the first phase of Operation Paraquet (i.e. on the open seas) should be issued forthwith, I received a telephone call at 1645 today from the Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff about Rules of Engagement for Operation Sutton (i.e. the main Task Force operation against the Falkland Islands themselves).

2. Brigadier Eyre said that the part of the Task Force which would provide the first leg for Operation Sutton was steaming at a faster rate than expected (about 500 miles a day) and was now only some two or three days away from a point at which they might be expected to encounter Argentine vessels. The Ministry of Defence therefore thought that similar Rules of Engagement for the open seas should now be issued to that part of the Task Force engaged in Operation Sutton, and Brigadier Eyre asked for my advice whether this matter would need to be cleared in committee.

3. I said that the question of dealing with something which had so far gone to Ministers in OD(SA) was primarily for the Cabinet Office to advise, and I suggested that he should consult Mr. Wade-Gery in the first instance. Emphasising that I was speaking personally, I said that I understood that Phase A in the Rules of Engagement for Operation Paraquet had not raised any particular difficulty, and I thought that Ministers would probably be happy to agree identical Rules of Engagement for Operation Sutton out of Committee. I thought that Mr. Nott might therefore wish to circulate a minute to his colleagues in OD(SA), setting out his forecast of when the Task Force was expected to arrive at which point, and proposing that Phase A of the Rules of Engagement for Operation Sutton should be issued forthwith, unless he received any request for further discussion in committee.

4. Subject to any minuting that may result from this conversation, I shall try to obtain from the Chiefs of Staff tomorrow a more detailed forecast of which parts of the Task Force are expected to arrive where, and when.

ALQ 050/6

P.H. Wright

(P.R.H. Wright)
16 April, 1982.

cc PS/PUS
Sir I. Sinclair
Mr. Gillmore
Mr. Weston

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