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~~D. T. PIPER~~

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17th April 1982

Dear Lord Buxton.

Thank you for your letter which was delivered to my office by hand yesterday afternoon. I understand, of course, your reasons for writing as you have and I wanted to reply as quickly as I could.

Let me say first of all that, as you asked him to do so, Ian Gow has shown me a copy of the letter you sent to Francis Pym about lifting off by helicopter the party presently in South Georgia, including your daughter, and transferring them to the Bransfield. Francis' people are in touch with mine and he will, I know, be replying to you shortly.

In your letter to me you asked about the possibility of your joining at Ascension Island the first ship going to South Georgia. You will not, I know, expect this reply even to touch on the military options open to us. But I am truly grateful for your offer to act as a guide, and I know how worried you and Lady Buxton must be at the moment. That makes it all the more difficult for me to turn down your offer but I must, I am afraid, do so. As you would expect, there are those in the task force with very detailed knowledge of the



geography of the islands, including, of course, South Georgia. While I accept that you also know the place well I can at least assure you that others will be equally as well acquainted with it.

I am grateful for your offer, which I know is well meant, but I ask you to understand why I cannot accept it.

Our thoughts are with you and your family at this difficult time.

Kind regards
John Nott

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