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Secretary of StateCopy to: CDS  
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L. G. M.  
D. G.OPERATION PARAQUET - RECONNAISSANCE BY VICTOR TANKER

You will wish to know that the 9 Victor Tankers needed to mount Operation Paraquet reconnaissance are now at Ascension. They have been modified with F95 cameras and other equipment to give both low level Photographic Reconnaissance (PR) and a Maritime Radar Reconnaissance (MRR) capability.

2. At Ascension the Victors are under the operational command and control of the Air Commander, who is directly responsible to the Force Commander. It is for him to decide whether and in what way to make use of the Victors taking into account all the operational factors at the time. There has never been any question of flights being launched except at the Force Commander's specific request.

3. The point about alternative sources of intelligence made in the two recent minutes from your Private Secretary is a matter for the Force Commander rather than me but, knowing the amount of effort needed to mount this Victor operation, I cannot believe the Force Commander would request the reconnaissance if he could get the information from other sources. In fact he has now requested that MRR be flown tomorrow in the sea area to the west of South Georgia. Should a diversion of the Victor to Brazil be necessary I confirm that the crew can dispose of sensitive material before landing.

19th April 1982CAS