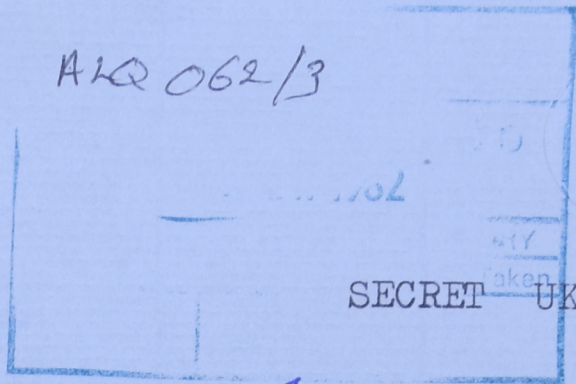


AHQ 062/3



SECRET UK EYES B

Mr. Weston  
Defence Dept.

Pr  
Chiefs  
of Staff  
Myrza/4

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#### THREAT FROM ARGENTINE CARRIER

At this morning's meeting of the Chiefs of Staff, there was some discussion of the attached note on the threat posed to the Task Force by the Argentine aircraft carrier, 25 de Mayo.

2. In discussion, the point was made that the Chiefs regarded any delimitation of the area in which action could be taken against the Argentine carrier as very much a fall back position. In military terms, they would clearly like to have authority to attack the carrier at the earliest opportunity, and wherever it is.
3. There was also some argument about the logic of the line produced in the attachment to the note, with several of those present pointing out that the line appeared to allow for the carrier to approach to within 200 miles of the Falkland Islands. There was also some argument about whether the promulgation of a line would have the effect of giving the carrier a sanctuary behind which it could operate.
4. The Chief of General Staff argued very strongly that it would be quite wrong to envisage an attack upon the Argentine carrier on the High Seas without any prior warning, and said that he would not be prepared to associate himself with any such recommendation. When the atmosphere had calmed down, I said that I was bound to point out that on both political and legal grounds (making it clear that my reference to the latter was based only on preliminary consultation with our Legal Advisers) a prior warning would seem to be an absolute necessity. This could possibly be linked with the announcement of a Total Exclusion Zone, if that were agreed by Ministers, but would have to make clear that any operations by the carrier across certain lines would be deemed to be a threat to the Task Force and would be dealt with accordingly.
5. The Chief of Defence Staff concluded that ACDS(Ops) should produce a revised paper for Ministers, describing the nature of the threat and its range, as well as timing considerations connected with the arrival of the Task Force and the Amphibious Group. Sir F. Cooper pointed out that the paper would need to deal not only with the question of warning but also with arrangements for picking up survivors.
6. The revised paper will be taken by the Chiefs of Staff tomorrow. Since the Chiefs of Staff meeting I have seen

/Sir

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(21)

Sir Ian Sinclair's minute of 27 April, the contents of which will need to be fed in to the MOD for the preparation of their paper.

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

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

SECRET UK EYES B