



SECRET

Mr Fearn *Thank you. This is, I suppose, a bit rough but  
was not not like it.*

*Peak*

ARGENTINA'S SUBMARINE SANTA FE

1. The attached telegram from Cinc Fleet requests permission to tow the damaged Argentine submarine Santa Fe clear of South Georgia and sink her in deep water. The reasons for this proposed action are set out in the telegram. The Ministry of Defence have sought our advice.

2. I spoke to Mr Darwin (Legal Advisors), who has advised as follows:

'This action is liable to be criticised as an unnecessary and gratuitous act of damage carried out against Argentina. Only if it is necessary for the continued safe use of the harbour could it be justified. It is not sufficient if it is merely convenient. Could the submarine not be beached elsewhere rather than sunk in deep water where it will be completely lost? Only if it is necessary and the only reasonable course could it be defended''.

3. In answer to my question, Mr Darwin said that we could leave ourselves open to a claim from the Argentine Government if we do not act in accordance with these principles. Our action over the Falkland Islands was based on the principle of self defence and any action taken in pursuance of this principle should be immediate and necessary.

4. I have passed this on to the DS5 representative in the DSC.

*H J S Pearce*

H J S Pearce  
Emergency Unit

cc. Mr. Winton (Defence Dept.)  
Mr. Hulst .. ..

ALQ 062/3		
RECEIVED IN REGISTRY		
Duty Officer		REPLY
INDEX	74	Action Taken

SECRET

0 0157 89 1927 12004497

FOI OUP

PRIORITY/PRIORITY 301614Z APR 82

FROM CINCFLEET  
TO MODUK  
INFO MODUK NAVY  
CTG 317.9  
CTG 317.8  
NP 1810

MR P...  
Feo...  
your agreement to this hazard  
being removed by sinking in  
deep water.  
DSS/ASAS  
at 7484/748

SECRET

SIC 19J/ESG/LGA/I2C

OPERATION PARAQUET

1. REQUEST PERMISSION TO SINK ARG S/M SANTA FE IN DEEP WATER (OVER 1000 FATHOMS) CLEAR OF SOUTH GEORGIA IF THIS CONSIDERED PRACTICABLE AFTER ASSESSMENT BY SMSRO EMBARKED TUG SALVAGEMAN.
2. SANTA FE IS DAMAGED AND GENERALLY UNSEAWORTHY. SHE HAS A FULL OUTFIT OF WEAPONS (INC 13 TORPEDOES) AND IS A POTENTIAL HAZARD TO PERSONNEL AND SHORE INSTALLATIONS. IF SHE SINKS IN SHALLOW WATER SHE WOULD ALSO BE A HAZARD TO SHIPPING (AREA USED BY TRAWLERS OF SEVERAL NATIONS) AND WOULD ALSO BE AN ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION THREAT.
3. DURING SINKING THERE IS A RISK THAT TORPEDOES COULD EXPLODE

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(BASED ON MK8 TORPEDO EXPERIENCE THIS COULD BE AS LITTLE AS 400 FEET)

4. SINKING IN DEEP WATER WOULD HAVE FOLLOWING ADVANTAGES:
    - A. EXPLOSIVE HAZARD WOULD BE REDUCED TO MINIMUM BY BEING CLEAR OF LAND/AREA USED BY FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS.
    - B. HULK NO LONGER HAZARD TO SHORE
    - C. HULK WOULD NOT BECOME DANGER TO SHIPPING
    - D. ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS TO SHORE/MARINE AND WILDLIFE/ECOLOGY WOULD BE MINIMISED.
  5. EXPLOSIVE CONTENTS WILL BE EXAMINED AND WHERE POSSIBLE RENDERED SAFE BY FCDT (EMBARKED STENA SEA SPREAD) BEFORE UNDERTAKING TOW. IF APPROVED WILL USE TYPHOON AND SALVAGEMAN.
  6. SINKING WOULD BE CARRIED OUT CLEAR OF SHIPPING
- BT

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