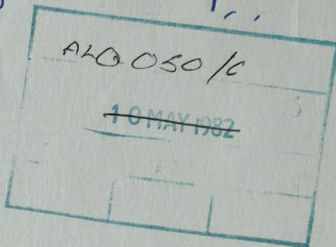




Chm
2 p/w

See 55

Mr Weston
Defence Department



cc:- PS
PS/PUS
Sir I Sinclair
Mr Gillmore

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT OUTSIDE THE TOTAL EXCLUSION ZONE

1. I have already recorded, in my minute on the Chiefs of Staff meeting today, that the Chief of Defence Staff had it in mind to recommend to the Prime Minister at Chequers a relaxation of the Rules of Engagement, to enable the Task Force to engage Argentine warships and naval auxiliaries outside the TEZ.
2. I should now record that the Permanent Under-Secretary telephoned me at about 1330 to say that this matter had now been discussed at Chequers, and that those Ministers present (including the Attorney General) were unanimous in concluding that our intelligence about Argentine intentions made it essential that the Rules of Engagement should be relaxed. They were not however extended to include anything other than Argentine warships. The PUS commented that Ministers had also taken into account the fact that, in the present military situation, it was unlikely that any warships would need to be engaged very far from the TEZ.
3. I later spoke to Mr Carrick in Washington, and asked him to ensure that the Secretary of State was informed. Mr Carrick said that the matter had already been discussed briefly (in the light of my earlier telephone conversation with the Embassy) and that the Secretary of State had been fairly relaxed about extending the ROEs to cover both warships and naval auxiliaries. He thought that the Secretary of State would therefore readily accept the decision which Ministers had reached at Chequers.
4. The Cabinet Office will no doubt be recording the precise terms of the amendment to the ROEs.

PRH

2 May 1982

P R H Wright