

ANNEX

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Rules of

Engagement

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OO BRUSSELS (PERSONAL FOR PS TO S OF S)

GRS 410

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FM FCO 081530Z MAY 82

TO IMMEDIATE BRUSSELS

TELEGRAM NUMBER 106 OF 8 MAY.

COPY NO.

12 MAY 1982

FALKLANDS: FOLLOWING PERSONAL FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY TO S OF S.

1. THE S OF S WILL WISH TO BE AWARE THAT CINC FLEET IS CONCERNED AT THE DIFFICULTY HE FACES IN ENFORCING THE TEZ AND PREVENTING RESUPPLY OF THE ARGENTINE GARRISON ON THE FALKLANDS IF HE IS OBLIGED TO ADHERE TO THE PRESENT RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WHICH REQUIRE HIM TO WARN OF MERCHANT SHIPS BEFORE ANY ACTION IS TAKEN AGAINST THEM. THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS AVAILABLE TO THE FORCE COMMANDER FOR DEALING WITH RESUPPLY BY FISHING BOATS, WITH THE LEAST RISK TO HIS OWN SURFACE SHIPS, IS TO USE THE LYNX HELICOPTER ARMED WITH A SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE. THE CHIEFS OF STAFF ACCEPT HIS ADVICE THAT IT IS NEITHER REASONABLE NOR PRACTICABLE TO INSIST ON WARNINGS BEING GIVEN IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH SUCH VESSELS ARE LIKELY TO BE DETECTED.
2. THE DEFENCE SECRETARY WAS CONSULTED THIS MORNING AND HAS AUTHORISED THE FORCE COMMANDER TO DEAL WITHOUT WARNING WITH FISHING OR MERCHANT VESSELS WITHIN 150 NAUTICAL MILES OF THE CENTRE OF THE TEZ, IF THEY APPEAR TO BE ENGAGED IN RESUPPLY OF THE ISLANDS.
3. THE CHIEFS OF STAFF BELIEVE THAT THE CHANCES OF FINDING INNOCENT NEUTRAL VESSELS HEADING FOR THE FALKLANDS WITHIN THIS INNER CIRCLE OF 150 NAUTICAL MILES IS EXTREMELY SLIGHT. WE HAVE, NEVERTHELESS, AT THEIR SUGGESTION INSTRUCTED OUR EMBASSIES IN MOSCOW AND WARSAW TO GIVE A FURTHER REMINDER TO THE RUSSIANS AND POLES ABOUT THE DANGERS TO THEIR FISHING OR OTHER VESSELS WITHIN THE TEZ.
4. THE DEFENCE SECRETARY HAS SUGGESTED THAT WHEN THE CURRENT RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR OUR FORCES IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC ARE REVIEWED (IN THE FIRST INSTANCE BY OFFICIALS ON MONDAY 10 MAY) PARTICULAR ATTENTION SHOULD BE PAID TO WHAT HE HAD DESCRIBED AS CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON HM FORCES OPERATING THE BLOCKADE WITHIN THE TEZ.
5. THE GIST OF THE FOREGOING HAS BEEN CONVEYED BY PRIVATE SECRETARY

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LETTER TO NO. 10 TODAY.

6. THE VIEW OF THE FCO OFFICIALS WHO HAVE BEEN CONSULTED ABOUT THIS SO FAR IS THAT THERE IS LITTLE TO BE DONE THIS WEEKEND ABOUT THE AUTHORITY THAT MR NOTT HAS ALREADY ISSUED TO THE FORCE COMMANDER. WHEN THE RATIONALISATION OF THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT COMES TO BE CONSIDERED NEXT WEEK, HOWEVER, WE MAY WISH TO RECOMMEND TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE THAT THE ARGUMENTS WHY FISHING VESSELS, ENGAGED IN RESUPPLY, CANNOT FIRST BE WARNED OFF BEFORE ATTACK BE SCRUTINISED PARTICULARLY CAREFULLY, BEFORE ANY FORMAL ALTERATION OF THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT IS CONFIRMED.

PYM

LIMITED

HD/DEFENCE D
PS
PS/PUS
MR WRIGHT
MR GILLMORE

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