

Mr Weston
Defence Department

cc: Mr Wright
Mr Gillmore

USE OF AMERICAN TANKER AIRCRAFT

1 Mr Harding (DS8) telephoned me this evening to enquire whether we had any objection to a message going from the CAS to his American opposite number seeking the use of a KC135 tanker to refuel Phantoms and Lightnings. The latter would be performing NATO tasks over the North Sea and had no connection with Operation Corporate. The Joint Chiefs had ~~undertaken~~ *indicated* that they would agree to such a request if a formal approach were made. Mr Harding argued that the Victor force was currently over-stretched because of the deployment of aircraft to the South Atlantic; American help would give much needed flexibility. I asked whether this flexibility would allow the MOD to add significantly to the categories of operations which it can at present carry out around the Falkland Islands. He replied that there were at present no plans to do anything new.

2 After consulting you, ~~you~~ agreed that the Americans could be approached.

C Hulse

ALQ 50/304/2
13 MAY 1982
25
SEARCHED
INDEXED
SERIALIZED
FILED

10 May 1982

C Hulse
Emergency Unit

Mr Gillmore

I told Mr Harding to probe further on this before requisitioning, having a suspicion mind later days!

CH
1/5

Quite right - we all have the same disease! It looks fishy but I suppose may be genuine. It also has a familiar ring to it: making good in NATO for absence further afield.

JH 1/5