



CABINET OFFICE

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From the Secretary of the Cabinet: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO

Ref. A08424

13 May 1982

*File 2*

Dear David, 5/21.

After this morning's meeting of OD(SA), the Chief of the Defence Staff gave the members of OD(SA) forewarning of a proposal for special action against an Argentine airbase. The action would be in two phases: an intelligence gathering phase, followed by an offensive action phase. The proposal was still under study; but, if further study confirmed that it was feasible, he could well need to seek Ministerial approval for the intelligence gathering phase while the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary was out of the country.

Ministers noted that they were not being asked at this stage to take any decision, though they were not disposed to see difficulties in the intelligence gathering phase of the plan. There would be an opportunity for further consideration at the meeting of OD(SA) on the morning of Friday 14 May. If a decision on the intelligence gathering phase was not reached at that meeting, it might be possible for Ministers to agree that it could be taken by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Defence over the weekend if necessary.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Coles and Brian Fall.

*Yours sincerely  
Robert Armstrong*

D B Omand Esq

*note for the record  
OD(SA) on 14 May agreed  
both phases of the operation,  
having to rest with the  
Prime Minister.*

*807 Ps/s 25.*



Secretary of State for Defence

1. ~~PS/CS~~

2. PS/PNS

3. Ans (DStatt) <sup>2587</sup> in hand.

To see, and return. <sup>17/11</sup>

Sys we want  
advance warning of  
New Phases I & II  
are planned to be  
conducted out; and  
we want to talk  
about the time to be  
taken in practice in  
due course. Can I  
leave this to Ans (DStatt)  
please?

John  
PS/CS