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SECRET UK EYES A

CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF

D/DS 11/10/6

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PS/Secretary of State

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FALKLAND ISLANDS: US ASSISTANCE

Against the likelihood that the US President will announce today a number of measures in support of the United Kingdom, including an undertaking to respond positively to requests for materiel support for British Forces, I have established a preliminary framework for our response in consultation with the Defence Policy Staff (but not in view of the timing with the Chiefs of Staff or the FCO).

2. We must assume, initially at least, that overt US military assistance will be constrained by the terms of the Presidential announcement. There is little prospect that the US would be willing to be perceived as engaging in the conflict by direct participation in operations. It similarly seems unlikely that they would contemplate making available for example, ships or aircraft on a lend/lease basis. But the draft Statement we have seen indicates the likelihood of them being ready to offer us materiel support. In addition, there are some measures of indirect operational support which we should feel able to request. The following list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3. In so far as weapons and equipment are concerned we can legitimately request: advanced delivery dates for weapons and equipment on order, including increased quantities where appropriate; priority in provision of spares for US equipment; and immediate loan or purchase of specialised weapons and equipment, notably guided weapons, electronic warfare systems and secure speech communications equipment. US materiel support would be particularly valuable in the repair and upgrading of Stanley airfield.

4. We will continue to rely heavily on the logistic support offered by the US facilities on Ascension Island. We might extend our requests for logistic support to include assistance with the transshipment of stores to Ascension Island.

5. Indirect measures of operational support could include: increased demands for intelligence under existing arrangements, particularly tactical intelligence of Argentine dispositions; greater surface and sub-surface surveillance of the South Atlantic;

including the possible deployment of US Maritime Reconnaissance aircraft to Ascension Island; air to air refuelling support for aircraft deployments; replenishment at sea for RN ships not engaged in Op CORPORATE; and medical support, in particular casualty evacuation.

6. All these requests would I believe be within the terms of what we expect the President to say. They should not give rise to US speculation that the UK's ability to undertake Op CORPORATE was lacking. If the Secretary of State agrees, CDS may wish to take the opportunity of developing these thoughts in his meeting next week with Secretary of the Navy Lehmann and with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the margins of MC/CS.

30th April 1982

C.B.J.
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for AUS(D Staff)