



MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE
PROCUREMENT

D/MIN/TT/12/3/2

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Secretary of State

FALKLANDS: INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

It is more Foreign Office than you, and Francis Pym himself has been making powerful statements lately, but I must pass on to both of you that the most oft recurring theme in the House of Lords in the last two days has been that notwithstanding our efforts, we are failing to get over to the rest of the world as a whole our case, that we are leaning over backwards a bit to be fair, thus we do not start with the statement that we have a jolly good claim to sovereignty of the Falkland Islands and an impeccable one to the sovereignty of South Georgia. We are reiterating fairly effectively that the Argentine aggression started it all, but it is alleged that we are not stating often enough that all the Falkland Islanders are British and that the word 'colonialism' is utter nonsense.

2. More in our court, it is alleged that we have allowed international preoccupation with our declaration of exclusion zones to the detriment or ignorance of our oft repeated statements that any threat to our Task Force would meet an adequate response. In this latter case we have not stressed enough that the range and devastating power of modern weaponry means that he who does not fire first does not fire.

3. This is probably all platitudinous. If you think it worth it, ask your office to send a copy to Francis.

5th May 1982

Tom