

FC 999

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DS11/10/6

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 SEC/CNS
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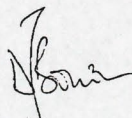
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EXOCET - AM59

1. It was suggested this afternoon that there were between 30 and 35 Exocet AM59 Missiles which were available on the world arms market. The Exocet AM59 is the air launched version of the Missile which can be (and has been) launched from Argentina's Super Etendard aircraft, and which Argentina is known to trying to acquire more of.
2. The DIS are in the progress of assembling a comprehensive list of the number of Missiles exported from France and their destination. So far their best information is that 186 Missiles have been ordered for export, of which 100 have been delivered. The number of Missiles held in each case by the Countries which have placed contracts is not yet finally established; the countries concerned are believed to be Argentina, Peru, South Africa, Qatar, Parkistan and Iraq.
3. A signal was sent this morning to Paris asking the Defence Attache to approach again his contact in the Defence Ministers Cabinet for details of the exact numbers of Missiles delivered to the countries concerned and the location of any other Missiles not included in official, governmental orders. Another signal is now being sent to the Defence Attachés of the six countries for there assessment of the number of Missiles held.
4. At this stage, therefore, it is not possible to say definitely that there are 30/35 Exocet AM59 Missiles available on the world arms market. The present assessment is that there may be more Missiles exported overall than there are Missiles held by the Governments of the six countries. But this has not been established, and it is not known where they are located or who has charge of them.

The fear that Argentina may be able to purchase them is not to be discounted. As soon as the DIS have made a full assessment of what the situation is, which will be after the Defence Attache Paris has reported, it will be necessary to address the question of how to prevent any of these Missiles falling into Argentina's hands.

7 May 82



D J BOWEN
DS11