



1. Pl cc with
attachm'ts to
AUS (AIR) (PE)
Hand-~~sup~~
2. + back to us.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

20 May 1982

J M Stewart Esq
AUS/Defence Staff
Ministry of Defence

R 26/5

DSU

PEC discuss with
DSG & let me have
a draft reply. ^{mm} 21/5

My dear Murray,

SOUTH AFRICA/ARGENTINA

1. We have seen, as a result of reflections of them elsewhere, copies of communications between the MOD and the Defence Attachés in Pretoria about possible supplies of arms to Argentina through South Africa, and related matters, eg Pretoria Attachés' telegrams Nos 1085 and 1087 to MODUK (Air). We also noted from Cape Town telegram No 326 to FCO (copied to MOD but attached for ease of reference), that the South Africans told HM Ambassador on 11 May that they had already responded favourably to a request put to them 'through Service channels' (whether British or South African was not stated) for 'certain equipment'. The South Africans naturally assumed that HM Ambassador was aware of this exchange and he has told us subsequently that he felt at a serious disadvantage through being in complete ignorance.

2. I am rather concerned that no-one in the FCO was consulted or even informed about all this, despite the evident political undertones of the whole subject. As you will see from FCO telegram No 175 of 7 May (copied to MOD), we instructed HM Ambassador in Cape Town to raise with the South Africans certain reports of arms supplies to Argentina, and took parallel action in London. It would have been useful for both the Ambassador and us to have known that enquiries were being made through the Attachés in Pretoria about similar reports. And in view of the Government's policy of not collaborating with South Africa in the military field and the possible repercussions for support on the Falklands from elsewhere, both political and practical (eg facilities in Dakar, Freetown and Banjul), it would also have been useful to have been consulted before (if it proves to be true) any request was put to the South Africans on service channels for what was presumably military equipment. Even now, at this rather late stage, we should be grateful for a full account from MOD of the background to all this.

3. I appreciate the current pressures on the MOD, and that the political angle may not always be clear to those initiating action. However, there are potentially strong political implications both bilaterally and internationally in South African reactions to the Falklands crisis and - even leaving aside the

/Falklands

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(4 Recd 25/82)



Falklands - in any kind of military contacts between the UK and South Africa. I should be grateful if you could remind all concerned at your end of this. We on our side shall do our best to practise what we preach by keeping you similarly informed.

Yours ever
D H Gillmore

D H Gillmore

cc E A J Ferguson Esq, CAPE TOWN
T A Evans Esq, PRETORIA
Mr Weston, Defence Dept

P.S. Please see also see Cape Town telno 349

attached.

DH

SECRET

SECRET

DESKBY 120800Z MAY 82
FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY 111720Z MAY 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 326 OF 11 MAY
INFO PRETORIA, MODUK

MY TELEGRAM NO 301; FALKLAND ISLANDS - ARMS SALES

1. I WAS SUMMONED AT SHORT NOTICE TO SEE THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DFAI AT 1700 HOURS LOCAL TIME TODAY (11 MAY). VAN DALSEN REFERRED
TO A REQUEST APPARENTLY MADE YESTERDAY BY ALLINSON TO THE SOUTH
AFRICAN EMBASSY IN LONDON REGARDING APPROCHES ALLEGEDLY MADE
TO SOUTH AFRICAN FIRMS (NIMRO AND ALBRECHT ?) FOR THE SUPPLY
OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ARGENTINA. ALLINSON HAD ALSO REFERRED
TO REPORTS ABOUT A URAGUAYAN PLANE LOADING MILITARY EQUIPMENT
AT A SOUTH AFRICAN AIRPORT, PRESUMABLY JOHANNESBURG. (SEE
ALSO MY TELEGRAM NO 323). THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAD TODAY
CONSIDERED THIS APPROACH AND HE THEN HANDED ME THE " SPEAKING
NOTES " IN MIFT. (HE CONFIRMED IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION THAT
THIS WAS ALSO THE SOUTH AFRICAN ANSWER TO REID' S ACTION
REPORTED IN MY TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE).

2. VAN DALSEN ADDED THAT HE WAS INSTRUCTED TO TELL ME, AS
I WAS NO DOUBT AWARE, THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD ALREADY
RESPONDED FAVOURABLY TO A REQUEST FOR CERTAIN EQUIPMENT PUT TO
THEM " THROUGH SERVICE CHANNELS ". VAN DALSEN WENT ON TO SAY,
IN ANSWER TO A FURTHER QUESTION PUT TO THE EMBASSY IN LONDON BY
ALLINSON, THAT WHATEVER THE TERMS OF THE SPEAKING NOTES HE COULD
GIVE US A CONFIDENTIAL ASSURANCE THAT EXOCET HAD NOT BEEN SUPPLIED
TO ARGENTINA (AND BY IMPLICATION WOULD NOT BE). VAN DALSEN
SAID THAT A REPLY ON THESE LINES WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE FCO THROUGH
THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY.

3. I TOLD VAN DALSEN THAT I FEARED THAT THE REACTION TO THE COMM-
UNICATION CONTAINED IN HIS SPEAKING NOTE WOULD BE TO REINFORCE
IMPRESSIONS IN LONDON THAT, WHATEVER THEIR PUBLIC POSITION
OVER THE FALKLAND ISLANDS DISPUTE, THE SOUTH AFRICANS WERE INDEED
SUPPLYING MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ARGENTINA. VAN DALSEN COMMENTED
THAT OUR APPROACH HAD TOUCHED THE SOUTH AFRICANS ON A RAW NERVE.

SECRET

/ SPEAKING

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see 51

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SPEAKING FRANKLY THE FALKLANDS DISPUTE, IMPORTANT AS IT WAS TO
HMS, DID NOT TOUCH THE FUNDAMENTAL SECURITY OF THE UK. THE UN
ARMS EMBARGO IN WHICH THE UK FULLY PARTICIPATED THREATENED SOUTH
AFRICA'S EXISTENCE. THE TERMS OF OUR REQUEST HAD PROVOKED A WARM
REACTION. (IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT EH EMBASSY'S REPORT WOULD HAVE
REACHED CAPE TOWN IN TIME FOR DISCUSSION AT THIS MORNING'S
REGULAR CABINET MEETING AND THAT THE TERMS OF THE SPEAKING NOTES
REFLECTED THAT DISCUSSION). THE MAJOR PRINCIPLE FOR SOUTH AFRICA
WAS THAT THEY WERE AGAINST BOYCOTTS OF ANY KIND, EITHER INWARD OR
OUTWARD, AND THAT WAS THE SENSE IN WHICH THEIR RESPONSE SHOULD BE
INTERPRETED. I REPEATED THE DISAPPOINTMENT WHICH I KNEW YOU WOULD
FEEL. YOU WILL NO DOUBT CONSIDER WHETHER YOU WISH TO REPLY TO
THE QUESTION IN THE LAST SENTENCE OF THE SPEAKING NOTES.

FERGUSSON

FALKLAND ISLANDS GENERAL

FCO

S AM D

CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

FALKLAND ISLANDS

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