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(Draft 2 pages)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

SW/82/804  
9/31/F

D J Wright Esq  
Cabinet Office  
Whitehall  
SW1

27 May 1982

Dear Friend

## ATTACKS WITHIN 12 NM OF ARGENTINE COAST

I attach the first outline of a draft paper for OD(SA) seeking authority for attacks on Argentine forces within 12 n. miles of their coast. We should be grateful if this could be discussed at the meeting under Sir Michael Palliser's chairmanship which you have kindly arranged for 5.30 this afternoon.

Copies go to him, to Andrew Burns and David Brook, and to Robert Wade-Gery.

✓ yours and

Fin.

S WEBB

Private Secretary

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DRAFT OD(SA) PAPER

ATTACHMENT TO  
SW/82/804  
OF 27 MAY 82

1. On 7 May, OD(SA) agreed that any Argentine warship or military aircraft found more than 12 nautical miles (NM) from the Argentine coast would be regarded as hostile and dealt with accordingly. A public announcement and a formal notification to the Argentine Government were made that day.
2. The restriction upon attacks within 12 NM from the Argentine coast was self-imposed. Since then, there has been a considerable change in both political and military circumstances. Negotiations are no longer taking place. The military conflict has escalated dramatically / And the Argentines have not imposed any parallel restrictions upon their own freedom of action. On the contrary, they continue to occupy much of the Falkland Islands, and are attacking British forces within the Falkland Islands (ie. British) territorial waters. Two of the warships were sunk there.
3. The Chiefs of Staff believe that the time has come to remove the sanctuary which we have allowed up to now for Argentine forces within 12 NM of their own coast. To do so may not only provide a number of important military targets, but also inhibit Argentine forces from leaving their mainland bases for fear of increasing the vulnerability of the Argentine navy to sea or air attack, thereby reducing the resources available for offensive operations against us in the Falklands area or elsewhere.
4. The attacks which the Argentines continue to mount on our own naval and merchant shipping justify full authority for the Task Force to carry out operations within 12 NM of the Argentine coast against any positively identified Argentine <sup>war</sup>ship, submarine <sup>naval auxiliary</sup> or aircraft identified as performing a military function.
5. It is necessary to continue to observe the limits upon the Task Force's action which have been notified to the Chilean Government, and to restrict the new area of operations to a latitude south of the River Plate so as to avoid exacerbating Uruguayan concerns. The current arrangements governing Rules of Engagement within 200 NM of  
with four of our warships having been sunk.

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the Brazilian, Chilean and Uruguayn coast should also remain in force. The precise geographical limits, and the terms of any further warning to the Argentines, need to be considered further in consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

RECOMMENDATION

6. OD(SA) is recommended to authorise operations by the Task Force against all positively identified Argentine <sup>war</sup> ships, submarines, <sup>naval</sup> auxiliaries, <sup>identified as</sup> or aircraft performing a military function within 12 NM of the Argentine coast, subject to precise geographical limits and the terms of any warning being agreed by the Ministry of Defence with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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