

Mr. Fearn To see.
Then back to me for action
24/2/82
RSC.
213
(30)

Peter: I have taken a
-pr of this with me to
the US. If Dept. need an answer before the
Minister's return, pl. ask me.

PS/Mr Luce

Jueing
24/2

ARGENTINA: ARMS SALES

1. Please refer to your minute of 22 February to Mr Fearn recording Mr Luce's views on the sale of Infra-red Linescan to Argentina.
2. As you know, we do not sell defence equipment to Argentina if it is likely to be used for internal repression or if it could be used for aggression against the Falklands. We have generally interpreted the latter guideline to mean that while we would not sell equipment which could be used directly in an attack, there is no objection to the supply of equipment which might have a useful supporting role. Thus, while we have refused air-to-surface missiles, machine guns for aircraft and even ammunition for naval cannon on the grounds that they could be used directly against the Falklands, we have, with Ministerial approval, sold the Argentines Canberra aircraft, Lynx helicopters and a variety of ground-to-air and ship-to-air missiles. The Argentines also have two British type 42 destroyers under a contract signed with the previous British Government.
3. Infra-red Linescan is not in itself a weapon system and while it might play a supporting role in an attack on the Islands, it is a much more harmless item of equipment than those I have mentioned above. It might be difficult to explain to the Ministry of Defence why we were prepared to sell the Argentines such major military items as fighter/bombers and warships, but not surveillance equipment. In these circumstances I should prefer to raise no objection to the sale of Infra-red Linescan to Argentina.

X

Mr Chase

Mr Luce has now seen a copy of your minute. He agrees with you at 'x' about.

Re 25/2

ALA 087/1		
RECEIVED [unclear] NO. 73		
- 2 MAR 1982		
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R J Chase

R J Chase
South America Department

24 February 1982

cc: PS/Mr Hurd
Mr Ure
Mr Gillmore
Defence Dept

Application approved

CRB
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