

Moore Br 398
Hof/Sand

814/5 (7)



TMA
PUS

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Secretary of State
This is indeed a life
despatch. He is entitled
to his views which of
course the office will
challenge.
It must be
come at
before Franks
PUS

Private Secretary

ARGENTINA: VALEDICTORY DESPATCH

1. You asked for my views on Mr Williams' Valedictory Despatch before submitting it to the Secretary of State.
2. This is not the despatch of a happy man. He is understandably grieved by the failure of his mission in Buenos Aires. With much less justification he is also convinced that he has been ill-used by the Office. Some of his complaints are personal and relate to what he sees as lack of recognition (I can explain orally). More generally he believes that his views and reporting from Buenos Aires were disregarded by the Office.
3. Nonetheless I think that the Secretary of State should read the despatch. I suspect that it reflects something of what Mr Williams will say if called to appear before the Franks Committee. In any case I should not want to give Mr Williams grounds for thinking now, any more than in the past, that his views have been suppressed.
4. On the substance, Mr Williams makes some useful points about Argentina, though it seems to me that his attempt to defend the reputation of Costa Mendes betrays a persistent reluctance to accept that he, like many others, was misled by the Argentines. On the whole, I should prefer to let the Franks Committee, if it chooses, judge how far Mr Williams' reports were disregarded in London. Those at this end feel that he did not fully understand the domestic constraints upon Ministers which made it difficult to bring pressure to bear on the Falkland Islanders to discuss with the Argentines the kind of changes which the latter were seeking.

Antony Acland

Antony Acland

29 July 1982

24/8
1) Mr Jackson - bi
2) pla + b/o
to Mr Bright to
see etc.

PUS