

A 940/325/12		
R2C	31 MAR 1982	
DESK	SECRETARY	
INDEX	PA	Action Taken

CONFIDENTIAL

Secretary of State PA

Mr Swatt
3/3
Mr Christie
Mr Baynes

Mr Fearn (SAND)
over the subsequently
MH 30/3

101
13/3

Private Secretary

SOUTH GEORGIA

1. Mr Luce has seen Mr Fearn's and Mr Ure's minutes of 26 March. He agrees that, if the Argentine response to our latest proposal is unhelpful, we should take the action recommended in paragraph 3(a) of Mr Fearn's minute. He agrees with Mr Ure that we should not postpone the message to Mr Haig once we have had the next negative response from the Argentines. He also agrees with the suggestions in paragraph 4(a) and (b) of Mr Fearn's minute: he agrees with Mr Ure that if pressed we might tell the press that diplomatic exchanges continue.
2. You may also like to know that Mr Wiggin (PUSS/MOD) told Mr Luce on the telephone this morning that the MOD had agreed that HMS Endurance would remain on station for the time being. MOD and FCO officials should work out how and when this might be announced. He indicated that the MOD would be content for HMS Endurance to remain for a further two or three months. In announcing this, we could say if pressed that HMS Endurance would remain for a few weeks and that the whole question of security in the South Atlantic area was under review. He thought however that a meeting of OD would have to consider the longer term question of whether HMS Endurance should be kept on. He pointed out that the problem was one of money: it would cost about £2.5 million for HMS Endurance to be refitted and the ship's running costs were about £2 million per year. Mr Luce said that a commitment to keep HMS Endurance for the time being should be sufficient to hold the line in Parliament and in public for the moment.
3. Mr Wiggin said that he had ordered an RFA vessel to leave Gibraltar next Monday (29 March) to replenish HMS Endurance: it would take about 3 weeks to reach the Falkland Islands area. He indicated that MOD were considering sending an alternative vessel (or vessels) to replace HMS Endurance short-term when Endurance came off station.
4. Mr Wiggin said that he had wanted to give the Captain of HMS Endurance discretion to fly his helicopters as and when he thought appropriate. He understood however that the FCO had countermanded this (this was news to Mr Luce). Mr Luce thinks that the Captain should be given discretion to fly his helicopters, as long as they do not take provocative action. I understand that Mr Fearn,

/we could say that

/who

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who was also unaware of the question raised by Mr Wiggin, is looking into this with MOD officials.

5. Mr Luce will be available at home over the weekend in case he needs to be consulted.

J M Cresswell

J M Cresswell
PS/Mr Luce

26 March 1982

cc: PS/LPS
PS/PUS
Mr Giffard
Mr Ure
Mr Fearn, SAmD
Defence Department
News Department