

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 April 1982

Dear David,

ADL 16/4  
h.c.m.

Following this afternoon's discussion among Ministers on Rules of Engagement, we have been giving some thought to whether it would be prudent to make an approach in Moscow to warn the Russians to keep their surface vessels and submarines well clear of the South Atlantic area, and of our Maritime Exclusion Zone in particular, to minimise the risk of inadvertent encounters in any naval action that may prove necessary. You discussed this briefly with Brian Fall. I now enclose a draft telegram of instructions to Moscow to show the sort of lines along which we think this might be done. Perhaps we could have a further word about this early tomorrow morning.

I am copying this to John Coles (No 10).

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

D B Ormand Esq  
Ministry of Defence

File No. ....

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OUTWARD

TELEGRAM

Security Classification	
CONFIDENTIAL	
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FOR  
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TO ..... IMMEDIATE ..... MOSCOW ..... Tel. No. .... of .....  
(precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post) .....

AND SAVING TO .....

REPEATED TO (for info) .....

SAVING TO (for info) .....

Distribution:-  
PS  
PS/PUS  
Mr Onslow  
Mr Wright  
Mr Gillmore  
Defence Dept

[TEXT]

FALKLANDS

1. Please seek an early opportunity to speak to the Soviet Foreign Ministry at an appropriately senior level on the following matter, making it clear that you do so on instructions. You should present your approach as a natural follow-up to your meeting with Semeonov at the beginning of this week, at which you informed the Russians of our decision to declare a Maritime Exclusion Zone.
2. While HMG stand ready to find a negotiated solution to the problem created by Argentine aggression against the Falklands, as the Prime Minister made clear again in Parliament yesterday, we shall also be firm in implementing the Maritime Exclusion Zone against Argentine warships, submarines and naval auxiliaries and in taking

Copies to:-

whatever additional measures may prove necessary in exercise of our right of self-defence of British sovereign territory under Article 51 of the UN Charter. HMG wish it to be clearly understood by the Soviet Union that British naval deployments in the South Atlantic are strictly limited to supporting the Government's objective, which is to see that the Falkland Islands and their dependencies are freed from occupation and returned to British Administration at the earliest possible moment. We sincerely hope that this will not require the use of force. But the Government have made clear that they are prepared to use force if necessary and British military commanders will have the appropriate instructions should the need arise. At the same time Her Majesty's Government have no wish to involve the vessels of any other country in naval action and it was for this reason among others that we were careful to give ample notice of our declaration of a Maritime Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands and of the fact that additional measures might be needed. Her Majesty's Government express the hope that the Soviet Government will draw the appropriate conclusions for its own shipping <sup>in the South Atlantic area</sup> and will take all necessary precautions to keep well clear, in the interest of avoiding errors, accidents or misunderstandings.

3. (Strictly for your own information.) We are naturally concerned to minimise any risk of encounters between Royal Naval ships and Soviet surface vessels or submarines which might deliberately or inadvertently find themselves in or near waters where engagements with the Argentines may take

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

place. There are particular operational difficulties in regard to submarines. We therefore think it right to make this point as plainly as we can to the Russians now, given the recent signs of Soviet naval activity and interest in the South Atlantic area. But we do not wish to sound as if we are throwing down a challenge. It is more a question of sensible forethought.