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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

31 January 1986

Prime Minister
Some good
progress.

COP. 3/11

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Dear Charles,

Falkland Islands: Fisheries

In his minute of 17 December, Sir Geoffrey Howe reported on this subject, recommended that we should continue to pursue the multilateral initiative and noted that he had been in touch with the Japanese and Koreans with a view to securing their agreement to exercise restraint.

The Foreign Secretary's approaches to his Korean and Japanese colleagues have met with a positive response. Once they had understood that this was a political problem, the Koreans raised no difficulty about meeting our requirements. The Japanese, notwithstanding a good deal of determined lobbying by us, took longer to yield. However, by exploiting the leverage Mr Abe's visit gave us (his calls on the Prime Minister and Sir Geoffrey Howe), we were able finally to secure formal agreement to virtually everything we had asked. Although they could not quite meet us on numbers of ships, Foreign Minister Abe did give an assurance that the level of Japanese fishing effort would be no higher than last year.

The Japanese and Koreans have now agreed that none of their vessels will fish in the FIPZ before 1 March and that between then and the end of the squid fishing season, the number of their vessels permitted to fish in the FIPZ will be 55 and 20 respectively. We are discussing with both Governments the modalities for monitoring these arrangements.

Although we have no relations with them, our next target is the Taiwanese, whose fishing effort devoted to squid is also set to increase. We hope to receive comparable assurances on self-restraint from them. Success with the Taiwanese would mean that we had succeeded, rather against the odds, in securing assurances that the very steep increase in effort devoted to squid in the FIPZ in prospect a month ago will not materialise. That would help to enhance the prospects for a multilateral regime. In the absence of indications that the fishing effort of other fleets would increase, we have not sought such precise undertakings from them but have, of course, made them aware of our concern that 1985 fishing levels should not be exceeded. We shall in any event be monitoring their activities closely.

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The formal assurances we now have are of value both in substance and presentationally. The effectiveness of what has been agreed will not be fully tested until after 1 March. Moreover, as with any voluntary restraint agreement, 100% compliance is unlikely. For these reasons, the Foreign Secretary believes that while we can justifiably take credit for what has been agreed, we should not make too much of it in public, and confine ourselves, as occasion offers, to giving a full account of what has been done.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries of OD members, Mr Jopling's Private Secretary and Sir Robert Armstrong's Private Secretary.

Yours ever,

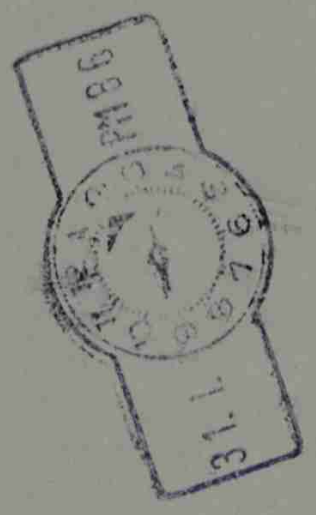
Len Appleyard

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ARGENTINA: Relations: PL 40



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