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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

9 December 1982

Dear Nicholas,

Thank you for your letter of 3 December with which you enclosed one from Mr. John Cockton.

There is little I can add to the reply that you will be sending to Mr. Cockton. As you say, the House set up the Franks Committee to examine the events leading up to the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands. I do not think it would be sensible to comment on many of Tam Dalyell's accusations in advance of the Committee's report.

As for his comment that the attack on the 'General Belgrano' was made simply to forestall an Argentine withdrawal, I agree with Mr. Cockton; the ship was sunk because we considered that it represented a threat to British forces, and it is a fact that the Argentine did not implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution 502.

Yours

Raymond

Nicholas R. Winterton, Esq., M.P.,

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