

Scott

5th October 1981

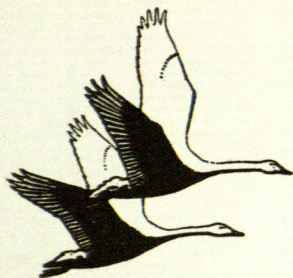
Mr Gow is away from the office until the end of this week and so I am writing to acknowledge your letter to him of 29th September, together with the copy of the letter which you wrote to the Prime Minister on the same date.

I will, of course, make sure that Mr Gow sees this as soon as he returns and I know that he will be most grateful to you for letting have a copy of this letter.

Miss Tessa Jardine Paterson
Political Office

Sir Peter Scott CBE DSC

From: Sir Peter Scott CBE DSC



THE NEW GROUNDS
SLIMBRIDGE
GLOUCESTER GL2 7BT

Tele: Cambridge (045-389) 333
Cables: Wildfowl Dursley

29th September 1981.

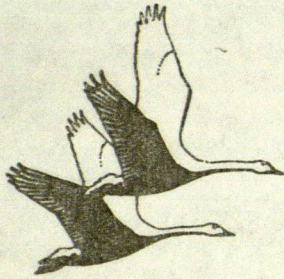
Dear Mr Gow

As I know you have been in the Falkland Islands I thought you might like to see a copy of a letter I have sent to the Prime Minister on the subject of the proposed withdrawal of HMS Endurance.

Yours sincerely

Peter Scott.

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Dem Prime Minister

HMS Endurance

I was two and a half years old when my father reached the South Pole in 1912, and so I have had a great interest in the Antarctic throughout my life. I have been there five times, including a three day visit to the Pole, and on three occasions the itinerary has included the Falkland Islands. I am Chairman of the Trustees of the new Falkland Islands Foundation, of which I was one of the founders.

These circumstances embolden me to write to you now because of my very great concern about the reported impending withdrawal of HMS Endurance from the region. We do not any of us know what the precise situation will be when the Antarctic Treaty expires in 1990, but it seems certain that the natural resources of Antarctica and the Sub-Antarctic Islands will eventually be exploited. At that time it would be a major tragedy if our traditional interests and our sovereignty in the Falklands had been allowed to lapse through lack of understanding and determination in this country. The potential loss to Britain could be very great indeed.

Having travelled in Argentina and visited their bases on the Antarctic Peninsula, where contrary to the Treaty military uniform is worn by all personnel, and having been invited to hold the first baby to be born on the Antarctic continent (then 10 days old), whose mother had been flown in, when pregnant, for the purpose, I am well aware of Argentinian ambitions in that part of the world.

I have been hospitably received and entertained by many of the farmers in the Falklands, who are as loyal to their Queen and Country as anyone in the British Isles and clearly wish to remain British. In this equation HMS Endurance is a vital, if symbolic factor. For all these reasons I beg you to reconsider her withdrawal at least she can be replaced by another of Her Majesty's warships.

Yours sincerely

Peter Scott

bcc: I. Gow M.P.