

Mr Wright

AKG 050/1

22 JUN 1982

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Mr Gillmore
 Mr Giffard
 Mr Fearn. SAmD
 Mr McInnes, Information
 Mr Hulse

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE : 17 JUNE

The following points are worth noting from this afternoon's Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Intelligence

2. US overhead photography, now curiously available for the first time, confirms that a large part of the Argentine fleet is in port, including the submarines SAN LUIS and SANTIAGO. Of the surface fleet three destroyers and two frigates only are at sea. Analysis of Super Etendard- launched Exocet attacks on SHEFFIELD, CONVEYOR, INVINCIBLE and PENELOPE confirm that six air-launched Exocets have been fired and in DCDSI's view none remain. Latest calculations of remaining Argentine aircraft are Canberra 7, Mirage 14, A4 30, Super Etendard 5. This figure does not include Peruvian Mirages.

Own Forces

3. BIRMINGHAM (type 42 destroyer) and five other RN ships are due to leave the UK tomorrow for the South Atlantic. SIR GALAHAD is in such a poor condition that she will be towed out to sea and sunk. Of the 27 Sidewinder missiles fired by British aircraft during hostilities, 23 were successful, a success rate of 85%

Journalists

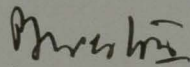
4. The plan remains to send a small administrative PR team under DPR (Army) to Punta Arenas where, assuming Chilean permission, civil aircraft will be chartered to run a service to the Falklands. The team will include an army Lieutenant Colonel, an FCO representative and an MOD PR man. The aim is to put 20 foreign journalists in every day for a period of 48 hours, with a maximum of 40 on the Islands at any one time. It is hoped that Chilean permission will be given once Argentine prisoners start to be repatriated. Sir Frank Cooper reports that editors he has spoken to are pleased with these arrangements, since part of the facility will be available for British journalists.

POWs

5. I reported on the action we are taking through the diplomatic channel to press the Argentines. CDS said that General Menendez was being encouraged to act as an intermediary for a message from our Commander in Chief to the Argentine Commander Southern Region at Comodoro Rivadavia. The message would simply say that CANBERRA was loaded with POWs, give the ETA and request that suitable arrangements be made to offload CANBERRA on arrival. It was not clear to me whether, if direct contact was made on this link, assurances about safe passage and cessation of hostilities would also be sought. But DCDSI had indicated earlier in the meeting that the period immediately after repatriation of POWs might be one of the most attractive if the Argentines were looking for a suitable target to indicate that hostilities had not ceased indefinitely. CDS also said that the number of Argentine POWs in special categories to be held back from initial repatriation should be around 1,000 and the British Commander Land Forces was being so directed. If by the time the other POWs had been repatriated there was still no satisfactory arrangement with the Argentines about wider cessation of hostilities, the intention was that these POWs should be brought back to the UK and held until further notice.

Belize

6. See separate minute.



P J Weston
Defence Department

17 June, 1982