



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

5 April 1982

Dear Sir,

Call on the Prime Minister by the Governor of
the Falkland Islands

The Governor of the Falkland Islands, accompanied by Major Norman and Major Noott of the Royal Marines, called on the Prime Minister at 1230 this morning.

The Prime Minister congratulated the party on the courage they had shown during the recent Argentine invasion of the Islands. She described in confidence some of the measures which had been adopted in London and, after explaining the shortage of reliable information on Argentinian intentions in London, enquired whether those in Port Stanley in the days preceding the invasion had been any more aware of the likelihood of an invasion. The Governor replied in the negative. He had been inclined to think that the Argentine President was sabre rattling as on previous occasions. Even when it was known that the Argentine Navy was on the move, it was reasonable to think that their objective might have been to position themselves between South Georgia and the Falkland Islands in order to intercept Endurance.

The Governor explained the difficulties which he had had with communications. He had sent a signal about the invasion about 0515 hours Falkland Islands time but Cable and Wireless had been unable to transmit the message.

Major Norman said that Argentinian intelligence had appeared to be rather good. For example, they knew his name and that he had only arrived three days previously. The Governor added that the Argentine invading forces possessed the names of all the marines though these were obtainable from flight lists when the marines had travelled on earlier occasions to Montevideo by civilian airlines. The Admiral in charge of the assault group had been gentlemanly, but the General who had taken over as "Governor" of the Islands was of a different character.

/Major Noott

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Major Noott said that the Argentine forces had not appeared to be particularly skilled or brave. They had, for example, shown reluctance to go outside Port Stanley because they had heard that a section of six marines were still at large in the rest of the Island. The Governor added that they had obviously been shaken by what they had heard of the resistance at Grytviken. They had probably assumed that there were no marines left there and had therefore only put forty of their own ashore. Major Norman described the assault on Port Stanley. The bulk of the Argentine troops had arrive from the landward side. When they reached Government House only the HQ staff were present. Nevertheless, three of the Argentinians were badly wounded and two of them had since died. The British troops had assumed that the Argentinians would regroup at once and return, as our own troops would have done in similar circumstances. But they did not do so. Three Argentinian soldiers had taken refuge in the maids' quarters, had made no attempt to join in the fighting and had then been captured for a time.

Major Norman said there was a conviction among the Argentinian troops on the Falkland Islands that the British Government would not launch an attack to retake the Islands. The Prime Minister said that there were lessons to be drawn here for the psychological effort which would be necessary. The Governor added that he believed the Argentinians were determined to stay. They felt very strongly about the issue. They were pouring men and equipment into the Islands.

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I am copying this letter to David Omand (Ministry of Defence).

John
John

John Holmes Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF MAJOR NOOTT AND MAJOR NORMAN

Major Gareth (Garry) Noott

Born 26 October 1944; joined Royal Marines 27 January 1964; various postings include Officer Commanding Royal Marines on HMS Endurance; married with three daughters; lives in Topsham, Nr. Exeter.

Major Mike Norman

Born 7 October 1943; joined Royal Marines in the ranks 1962; commissioned 1964; various postings also include Officer Commanding Royal Marines on HMS Endurance; married, no children; lives in Poole.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE GOVERNOR OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

Mr. Rex Hunt

55 year-old Mr. Hunt has been Governor in Port Stanley since February 1979, where he has been accompanied by his wife Mavis. His teenage son and daughter have been at boarding schools in Britain visiting the Falklands for school holidays.

Following service with the RAF from 1944-48, Mr. Hunt spent the early years of his overseas career in the colonial service, finishing in Uganda in 1963. Subsequently he has spent the greater part of his time in South East Asia on diplomatic postings to Sarawak, Sabah, Brunei, Indonesia, Vietnam (when he left Saigon when it fell in 1975) and Malaysia.

In the Falkland Islands he commanded the respect of the Islanders for his open approach to the government of the Colony and for his obviously genuine interest in the people's welfare.