

REPORT BY THE CHIEFS OF STAFF DUTY OFFICER
FOR THE PERIOD 191800 MARCH TO 220900 MARCH 1982

CINC ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY

1. Admiral VAN BEEK, the Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Netherlands Navy, was killed in a car crash near Dan Helder at about midnight on 19 March. Mrs Van Beek was injured in the accident, and is in hospital at Leidsenden. The information came via the Duty Cdr from DA The Hague; CDS, CNS and CINCFLEET were informed, and CNS has sent a message of sympathy to the Royal Netherlands Navy.

ILLEGAL LANDING - SOUTH GEORGIA

2. At 1318 on 20 March, MODUK received an information copy of a signal (1) to the FCO from the Governor of the Falkland Islands (HEGFI) reporting an illegal landing at Leith Harbour, South Georgia, by a party of Argentinians. South Georgia is a virtually uninhabited island some 900 miles south-east of the Falklands, and Leith Harbour is approximately 3 miles north of the British Antarctic Survey Base at Grytviken. The landing had been reported by a field party from the base. HEGFI has already passed instructions back to the illegal landing party via the Base Commander at Grytviken that they were to leave the island forthwith; in the event that the party ignored these instructions, HEGFI recommended that HMS ENDURANCE, lying alongside at Stanley Harbour in the Falklands, sail to South Georgia with Royal Marines from the Falklands embarked. The Marines currently in the Falklands are due for roulement next week via Monte Video, and their replacements are due to leave UK on Tuesday 23 March.

3. Deliberations at the FCO continued throughout the afternoon. At 1630, the FCO replied to HEGFI (2) agreeing the instructions to the Base Commander, advising that further action was under consideration and requesting details of armament on the RFA equivalent which had landed the Argentinian party. The Governor replied at 1813 (3), reporting that the defence capability of the Argentinian ship was probably nil.

4. During the evening the Head of DS5 and the Head of South American Division FCO met to consider sending ENDURANCE to South Georgia. At approximately 2200, US of S (AF) agreed to the joint MOD/FCO view that ENDURANCE should sail for South Georgia and that numbers of Marines embarked should be as decided by HEGFI. This decision was relayed to HEGFI by FCO (4) and to ENDURANCE by CINCFLEET (5).

Notes:

1. Signal A3A 201125Z Mar 82
2. Signal A3A 201630Z Mar 82
3. Signal A3A 201803Z Mar 82
4. Signal A3A 202310Z Mar 82
5. Signal EAL/LDQ 202327Z Mar 82

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5. During Sunday 21 March the matter gradually cooled. A signal from HEGFI (6) advised that only 9 extra Marines would embark for the passage to South Georgia, and reported cordial relations with the illegal landing party. At 1530, a Diptel (7) from Buenos Aires announced that the Argentinians would withdraw their party from South Georgia, and at 1545 we received confirmation (8) that ENDURANCE had sailed. A further sitrep from ENDURANCE (9) indicated that although the Argentinian ship was preparing to leave, Base Commander Grytviken advised that the landing party had remained ashore. Further diptel traffic (10)(11) clarifies earlier statements by BAS field party, HEGFI and the FCO.

6. The majority of detailed naval work was carried out by the Duty Cdr and is recorded in the DNOT Handover brief. However, a record of actions taken and departments called by me, together with a brief summary of discussions held is at Annex to this report.

A M Wills

A M WILLS
Wing Commander
Chiefs of Staff Duty Officer

22 March 1982

Annex:

A. Diary to Events - 20/21 March 1982.

Notes:

6. Signal A3A 211125Z Mar 82
7. Signal A3A 211446Z Mar 82
8. Signal A3A 211545Z Mar 82
9. Signal A3A 211720Z Mar 82
10. Signal A3A 211930Z Mar 82
11. Signal A3A 212012Z Mar 82.

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DIARY OF EVENTS - 20/21 MARCH 198220 MARCH 1982

1318 Signal from HEGFI 201125Z Mar 82.

COSDO informed: Duty Cdr
Resident Clerk
DD of D Ops(RoW)
DISDO for Cabinet Office

Duty Cdr informed: CINCFLEET
DO CGRM
Hd of DS 5
Duty Press Officer

Notes compiled during afternoon.

1. ENDURANCE 2 days 4 hrs sailing for South Georgia.
2. 12 Marines embarked/42 Marines ashore.
3. Roulement of Marines due next week. Main party leave UK for Monte Video on 23 Mar 82, and ENDURANCE due to sail for Monte Video at 210930 Mar 82.
4. ENDURANCE has 2 helicopters/12 AS12 missiles. Marines embarked have Carl Gustav.
5. CINCFLEET making enquiries concerning effect of delaying roulement.
6. Exercise EXPANDED SEA, involving UK/French play in US sponsored NCS exercise also involves Argentina. FCO advised.

1630 FCO Signal agreement to HEGFI 201630Z Mar 82.

1. Protest via Field Party.
2. Protest via HMA Buenos Aires.

Possible Ministerial Meeting Wiggin/Luce this evening to be briefed by DS5.

1650 Briefed DD of D Ops (RoW).

1700 Briefed ACDS(Ops).

1720 From Duty Cdr: US of S (AF) is in his constituency in Somerset and will remain there. DS5 will brief him by telephone and the discussion Wiggin/Luce will be by telephone.

1745 Briefed ACDS(Ops). He advised no need to brief CDS at this stage, but that if Hd of DS5 was to speak to US of S (AF) he should speak with DD(RoW) first. Advised Resident Clerk.

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- 1755 Update from Resident Clerk. Conversation Wiggin/Luce will be purely to agreed ENDURANCE stays in situ for the time being pending further information from HEGFI.
- 1813 Reply from HEGFI, 201803Z Mar 82.
- 1955 Update from Resident Clerk.
1. Hd of DS5 has spoken with US of S (AF) who asked about other forces in the area: he was told that there are none.
 2. Argentinian Ambassador has been summoned to the FCO to explain himself.
 3. S of S has been briefed via his PS.
 4. PM informed.
 5. Hd of DS5 will now speak with Hd of South American Section in FCO at 2045. Decision required by 2130 on whether ENDURANCE should sail, in which direction, and with how many Marines on board.
 6. Duty Cdr has briefed ACNS(O). Hd of DS5 to speak with ACNS(O) before going to FCO.
- 2025 Briefed ACDS(Ops).
- 2030 Briefed PSO/CDS.
- 2035 Briefed CDS.
- 2130 No decision yet. Briefed ACDS(Ops).
- 2140 Briefed PSO/CDS.
- 2215 Hd of DS5 and Hd of South American Section FCO recommended ENDURANCE should sail at 210930 for South Georgia; numbers of Marines embarked to be decided by HEGFI. Rules of Engagement to be decided after further report from HEGFI on Argentinian actions.
- 2225 Resident Clerk confirms US of S (AF) agrees recommendation.
ENDURANCE to sail at 210930 for South Georgia.
Duty Press Officer briefed to refer any queries to FCO
- 2310 FCO signal (202310 Mar 82) to HEGFI announcing decision.
- 2327 CINCFLEET signal (202327 Mar 82) to ENDURANCE announcing decision.
- 21 MARCH 1982
- 0855 Briefed ACDS(Ops)
- 0900 Briefed CDS.
- 0910 Briefed PSO/CDS.

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- 1015 Updated DD Ops (RoW).
- 1223 Signal (211125 Mar 82) from HEGFI. ENDURANCE has embarked 9 extra Marines. Reports of cordial relations with illegal landing party.
- 1530 Diptel 84 (211446Z Mar 82) from Buenos Aires. Argentina will withdraw landing party and ship. ENDURANCE will continue on passage for South Georgia until confirmation received that illegal party have left.
- 1706 Sitrep (211545Z Mar 82) from ENDURANCE.
- 1810 Sitrep (211720Z Mar 82) from ENDURANCE.
- 1930 Diptel (211930Z Mar 82) FCO to HEGFI requesting clarification of initial reports to assist in enquiry into incident.
- 2131 Diptel (212012Z Mar 82) Reply from HEGFI.

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