

COS 69TH MEETING/82

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

ALO 050/1

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CONFIDENTIAL ANNEX

TO

COS 69TH MEETING/82 HELD ON
MONDAY 7 JUNE 1982 AT 11.00 am

F-8 JUN 1982

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OPERATION CORPORATE

ITEM 1. INTELLIGENCE

1. SIR TERENCE LEWIN invited the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Intelligence) to update them on current intelligence.
2. LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLOVER (Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Intelligence)) reviewed the intelligence published in the latest summary (1). He said the joint force exercise in southern Chile was creating considerable speculation, but he assessed that it was unlikely that Chile would take direct action against Argentina, although the possibility could not be totally excluded. He updated the Committee on possible sources of Exocet missiles, and said that it was now understood that the conversion of helicopter-launched missiles to fixed-wing launch was a simple task involving less than 1 day's work. Turning to naval matters, he said he would report further on the likelihood of Argentina having a replacement propeller for the Type 42 destroyer HERCULES.
3. LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLOVER went on to assess the Argentine capability in West Falkland. He said it seemed likely that reinforcements of at least 2 company strength had been airdropped on 4 June, and that 4 support helicopters had flown in during the following day. This would give the Argentines the capability to mount raids on the bridgehead and land lines of communication or reinforce Port Howard, and added greater weight to the possibility of the Argentines seeking to continue operations from West Falkland should they lose Port Stanley. He assessed that Pebble Island was still garrisoned by the Argentines, with a usable air strip and Skyguard radar, and possibly 2 Sea King helicopters armed with Pescador missiles. He said that resupply aircraft were still reaching the Falkland Islands, and assessed that the Port Stanley garrison

Note:

1. INTSUM No 128, 070600Z June 1982.

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probably had enough rations for 4 weeks. He also assessed the likely concentration points for the civilians remaining in Port Stanley. Finally he said the Argentines were obtaining valuable intelligence from monitoring the tactical radio sets of our land forces.

ITEM 2. OWN FORCES

4. REAR-ADMIRAL BROWN (Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Operations)) outlined the deployment and operations of the Task Force. In subsequent discussion the following points were agreed:

- a. The Vulcan aircraft held in Rio de Janeiro was not critical to Operation CORPORATE, and its release was of a lower priority in our negotiations with the Brazilians than our diplomatic efforts to try to stop the flow of arms to Argentina through Recife.
- b. The Defence Secretariat and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office should be invited to examine the possibility of obtaining the release of the one British prisoner of war known to be in Argentine hands in exchange for the Argentine prisoners in MV NORLAND, before the latter were released.

ITEM 3. PUBLIC RELATIONS

5. MR McDONALD (Deputy Chief of Public Relations) reported on press coverage. In subsequent discussion the following points were agreed:

- a. The News Release Group should prepare a defensive brief for use on the return of Lieutenant-Commander Astiz to Argentina.
- b. The News Release Group should prepare a briefing on the successful deployment of 5 Infantry Brigade to the Falkland Islands. The briefing should be given by an officer from the staff of the Task Force Commander.
- c. The News Release Group should examine the desirability of providing a press briefing on the work of the field hospital at San Carlos, possibly utilising an eye-witness from among the wounded returning in the Queen Elizabeth 2.
- d. The Secretary of State's authority would be needed if the Task Force Commander wished to hold a press conference during his planned visit to the Queen Elizabeth 2 before she docked.

ITEM 4. ACTIONS AND DECISIONS REQUIRED

6. The Committee noted the summary of actions in hand (2).

ITEM 5. THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL PRESS FACILITIES

7. The Committee had before them a paper (3) prepared by the Chief of Public Relations examining the need to provide additional press facilities in the Falkland Islands.

8. In discussion the following points were agreed:

- a. There was a need to provide more press facilities in the near future, and to control the probable influx of reporters making their own arrangements to get to the Falkland Islands.

- b. The timing of this would require careful judgement in relation to the fall of Port Stanley, possible continuing operations in West Falkland and on the high seas, the handling of probably large numbers of prisoners of war, and the limited facilities available.

- c. The need to control the large numbers of correspondents, and feed and accommodate them, could best be met by a ship taken up from trade, suitably modified to include a helicopter deck and appropriate communications, to act as a press base. The plan should exclude the use of Stanley airfield, which could take some time to repair and which would thereafter have limited handling capacity for non-operational tasks.

- d. All the merchant shipping presently with the Task Force would be required for supporting our own troops and transporting prisoners of war. Therefore a further ship should be taken up from trade specifically for the task as soon as possible. Time dictated that this should be a ship currently in South American waters, ideally flying a neutral flag, which should be modified locally.

- e. While it would be sensible for the Ministry of Defence to charter the ship, there should be no cost to Defence Votes.

Notes:

2. Annex A to COS 68th Meeting/82.
3. Attachment to COS (Misc) 261/742/1 dated 6 June 1982.

f. Control of the press corps should be exercised by an officer or official, as decided by the Ministry of Defence and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, responsible to the military commander. In addition, military conducting officers should be appointed in sufficient numbers to escort correspondents ashore.

9. Summing up, SIR TERENCE LEWIN said that, in taking note of the paper, they would agree there was an urgent need to plan for increased press facilities to be provided as soon as the operational situation permitted. They would agree that a Working Group should be set up as recommended by the Chief of Public Relations, and would wish it to include military representatives of the Central Staffs and the Task Force Commander. In conclusion, he invited the Permanent Under Secretary, in anticipation of the Working Group's report, to authorise the taking up from trade of a suitable ship so that the necessary modifications could be set in hand.

ITEM 6. SOUTH SANDWICH ISLANDS

10. SIR HENRY LEACH said that, in view of subsequent developments, he considered they should review their earlier recommendation (4) to take no action about the illegal Argentine base on Southern Thule in the South Sandwich Islands. He had been advised that the formation of pack ice was later than usual, and that HMS ENDURANCE should now be able to operate in the vicinity of those islands until the end of June.

11. Summing up a short discussion, SIR TERENCE LEWIN said he would invite the Task Force Commander to examine the options and availability of forces to enforce an Argentine evacuation.

Annex:

- A. Operation CORPORATE - Actions in Hand (1 page).

Note:

4. COS 31st Meeting/82, Item 5.

OPERATION CORPORATE - ACTIONS IN HAND

ITEM	ARISING FROM COS MEETING	DECISION OR ACTION REQUIRED	SPONSOR	ACTION/ DECISION BY	CONTINUED	CURRENT STATE
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
0023	6/82 Item 1 (re-titled 40/82)	Military Options for Repossession of the Falkland Islands	ACDS(Pol)	DPS/DS 11	7/82 Item 4 12/82 Item 6 35/82 Item 4 40/82 Item 7 43/82 Item 5 50/82 Item 5 54/82 Item 5 62/82 Item 5 COS(Misc) 256/ 742/1 dated 3 Jun	
0091	54/82 Item 5	Contingency Studies	ACDS(Pol)	ACDS(Pol)	62/82 Item 5 COS(Misc) 255/ 742/1 dated 3 Jun	
0092	59/82 Item 6	Future Garrison Studies	CDS	ACDS(Pol)	COS(Misc) 259/ 742/1 dated 4 Jun	For COS 9 Jun
0093	61/82 Item 6	Rules of Engagement	ACDS(Ops)	OD(SA)	OD(SA) 28 May	Periodic review by OD(SA)
0095	67/82 Item 1	Replacement of Stores and Equipment	DCDS(OR)/ DUS(P)	OD Jul 82		Draft for consideration by COS/PUS
0096	68/82 Item 7	Garrison Planning and Command Arrangements	CDS	ACDS(Pol)		
0097	69/82 Item 5	Provision of Press facilities	PUS	CPR/AUS (D Staff)		