

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

Honourable Members,

In welcoming you to the meeting of this Council it is my pleasant duty to welcome particularly the Hon Member for West Falkland, the Hon Tim Blake, and to congratulate him on his success in the recent by-election. He is no stranger to this House, having been a member from 1964 to 1968 and again from 1972 to 1977. I am sure that his long experience and sage advice will be most valuable in the important deliberations that we have before us in what is left of the life of this Council. I also welcome the Hon the Acting Chief Secretary, who is well known to you all, but not in his present capacity.

The main purpose of this meeting does not appear on the Order Paper but will, with the leave of Council, be debated as a matter of urgent public importance. I refer, of course, to Mr Ridley's request to let him have your views - and, through them, the views of your constituents - on his ideas for the next round of talks with the Argentines. As Hon Members well know, he came to the Islands at the end of November to seek Councillors' views on the possible options that he might discuss with the Argentines, and to explain that, next time, the Argentines would expect to have substantive talks on sovereignty. At your request, he explained his ideas in public throughout the Islands, and public debate has continued ever since. We meet today to hear Islanders' views on the way ahead. I am the first to admit that none of the options open to us appears particularly attractive; but I think the majority would agree that we cannot stay as we are: we must either go forward or go back - life is too impermanent for us to try to stay as we are. As there still appears to be some confusion following Mr Ridley's visit, let me reassure you that Britain has no doubt about her sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and she has made this perfectly clear throughout to the Argentines. The British aim for the Islands is quite simple: it is to secure a viable economic and political future for you under British administration in accordance with your wishes. The heart of the problem, however, is that you cannot enjoy such security as long as the dispute with Argentina continues. The dispute overshadows your daily lives and blights your economy. The result is economic stagnation and a declining population. If we are to reverse this trend, we have to look for ways of ending the dispute. That is why Mr Ridley put forward a number of suggestions for your consideration. I should stress that, in endeavouring to find a solution to this long-standing dispute, he was not subjecting Islanders to any pressure. He emphasised that your wishes were paramount - that is why he came to seek your views on how we might proceed. If you now recommend any particular course of action, he is committed to act in accordance with your wishes and to refer back to you any specific proposals that may emerge from further talks with the Argentines. Any decision by you would then have to be further endorsed by the British Parliament. I do not think therefore that there is any danger of a settlement being reached without the agreement of the vast majority of Islanders. I look forward to an interesting and responsible debate on this subject and hope that a constructive Motion will be tabled which manifestly represents the views of Islanders as a whole.

The next most important issue before us is the sombre state of the Colony's finances. Owing to the depressed state of wool prices and the rising costs of production, company tax from the farms this year is likely to be down to about 20 per cent of last year's figure.

/The Colony's.....

The Colony's reserves by the end of this financial year, that is June 1981, are estimated to be about £670,000. Unless we can find some unexpected source of revenue, or make some drastic cuts in public spending, we expect to have a deficit on the recurrent Budget of £½ million by June 1982. That will virtually wipe out what is left of our reserves, and there will be nothing in the Development Fund.

Against this gloomy forecast, I think that the Review of the Salary Structure and Conditions of Service of the Civil Service of the Falkland Islands recently undertaken by Mr Ritchie goes as far as it reasonably can to meet the representations of the Civil Servants' Association. The detailed recommendations have yet to be studied by Executive Council, but I can say that it is recognised that salaries of the Civil Service as a whole have lagged behind increases given to employees covered by the Agreements with the General Employees' Union and that Government accepts the need for some upward adjustment in the general level of Civil Service salaries. I should, however, utter a word of warning. In view of the current financial and economic position, Mr Ritchie recommends that Government should not commit itself in future to automatic adjustment based on the increase in the cost of living. What we must aim for is a salaries structure which the Colony can afford and which will not result in leapfrogging in other sections of the economy to the detriment of our major industry. It seems to me that the quarterly Cost of Living adjustments now being made under the two agreements with the General Employees Union are fast becoming - if indeed they have not already become - more than the economy can bear in present circumstances. The increasing wage bill is now reaching levels which the wool industry will find difficult if not impossible to meet unless there is a substantial increase in wool prices, and this seems unlikely in the short term.

Before leaving the financial scene, I should like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Ritchie on behalf of the Falkland Islands Government and the Civil Service for his sterling efforts in producing a most thorough and efficient review in the remarkably short time of 21 days - including the Xmas holidays. He leaves the Islands today and I wish him Godspeed and a well-earned rest.

Even more important than the Colony's finances is the Colony's population. As Hon Members know, we carried out a Census last month and, although the Census Forms are still being analysed, the Census Supervisor has let me have some provisional figures. Subject to minor corrections, total population of the Islands as at 7 December 1980 was 1,812, broken down as follows:

Stanley	-	1,053
East Falkland	-	435
West Falkland	-	324

These figures do not include the Royal Marine detachment at Moody Brook, or people on board ships in the harbour at the time. The total is slightly better than we had feared after last year's immigration figures, which showed a net loss of over one hundred. But there is no room for complacency and we must continue to do what we can to attract more people to these Islands. I should like to thank all those who took part in the Census and particularly Farm Managers and the police in Stanley for acting as enumerators in addition to their already onerous duties. Some of the questions in the Census Form may have seemed a bit odd, or unduly inquisitive, but I assure you that it was a very worthwhile exercise and that we shall be able to extract lots of useful information from it.

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I mentioned the Police just now, and I should like here to pay tribute to that grossly understaffed and overworked force. They have had more than their share of trouble recently and their normally long and unsocial hours may have stretched to the utmost. I'm glad to say that Mr Ritchie has recognised their heavy responsibilities in his salary recommendations, and I hope that his proposed regradings, if accepted by Government, will go some way to attracting more recruits. I am optimistic, too, that with ODA's help we shall soon be able to recruit a Chief Police Officer from the UK, and perhaps, too, a Sergeant. The Chief Secretary is actively pursuing this in England during his current leave and, when he spoke on the telephone the other day, he confirmed that ODA had agreed to pay supplementation for the Chief Police Officer, and the new Overseas Police Adviser was sounding out suitable nominees for him to interview. As Hon Members may recall, we also have an Islander undergoing police training in the UK at the present time. He is due back in April of this year and this should also help to bolster up the Force.

While on the subject of staff, I should like to take this opportunity of welcoming Dr Daniel Haines and Dr Hilary Haines, who arrived last week to take up duties in the Medical Department. Dr Daniel Haines will take over from Dr Summers as SMO when the latter leaves, but at present we have the unprecedented number of five doctors in the Colony. Our third pilot, Mr Selwood, is due to arrive early next month, by which time I hope that the spare parts for the Islander will have arrived and she will be flying again.

Finally, I should like to say a few words about our roads. The Darwin road is now progressing well and has reached 11 kilometres from Stanley. So far this season the road gang has constructed 2 kilometres and, if the weather holds, they should do another six before the winter sets in. The Stanley road gang is currently working on the airport road. They should complete the repair and resealing of this road by the end of January and their next job is to seal the Islander hangar taxi-way. They will then repair Davis Street and remake Brandon Road, with the aim of having a throughway from the west end of the airport road to the beginning of the Darwin road.

I now wish Hon Members well in their deliberations in this, the last year of the life of the present Council, and adjourn this session for half an hour.

MOTIONS

T. J. D. Miller

Your Excellency, I have a Motion on a matter of urgent public importance which Members have discussed and we wish to be debated.

President

Thank you very much. This is a Motion for the adjournment of Council on a matter of urgent public importance. This is the Motion:

"While this House does not like any of the ideas put forward by Mr. Ridley for a possible settlement of the sovereignty issue with Argentina it agrees that HMG should hold further talks with the Argentines at which this House should be represented and at which the British delegation should seek an agreement to freeze the dispute over sovereignty for a specified period of time."

I ask leave of Council for this Motion to be debated. We adjourn the rest of the Motions until this lengthy Motion is debated. Do we have a seconder for this Motion?

W. H. Goss

Yes, I beg to second the Motion.

President

The Honourable Member for East Stanley, the Honourable W. H. Goss seconds. Honourable Member for Camp Division would you like to propose?

T. J. D. Miller

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. In rising to propose this Motion I must say that the basic wording of it was only agreed amongst ourselves after some considerable debate and some of us may still not be too sure of it as our opinions differed somewhat as to how we want talks to continue with Argentina. I find myself in a bit of a fix in proposing this Motion at short notice as I had understood that the Honourable Member for East Falkland was going to, at least I understood that he was going to yesterday when we talked about this. None of us found any of Mr. Ridley's proposals very attractive but I think we are all agreed from our discussions with the people whom we represent that we must talk to try and get somewhere. At least if we talk we will find out what the other side thinks and until we do that we just really don't know where we are. Personally I would have preferred a more flexible Motion giving more opportunity to sound out, without commitment, Argentina's views on other options as well. However, this is the one that I think we can all be in general agreement on at this time and it is certainly the one that the people of these Islands find least objectionable to all the proposals. Many people whom I spoke to and listened to, and I would like to mention here that unlike the Member for East Falkland I listened to my constituents, I didn't try to force my opinion down their throats whether they approved of it or not, I sat and listened to them. Many of the people whom I sat and talked to and listened to realise and accept that we must at least discuss things with Argentina but were very, very wary of even discussing a lease-back and some felt that we might well lose support if we broached the subject to Argentina first. I was elected to Council three years ago largely on a mandate of keeping the

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Falklands British and not talking much to the Argentines. Times may have changed and realisation of the situation has caused me to feel that we will probably have to talk seriously, some time, but as we are coming to the end of this Council I feel that I must go along with what appears to be the majority opinion of my fellow Councillors and the people whom I represent and that is that we should ask Her Majesty's Government to negotiate a sovereignty freeze and find out from Argentina what sort of deal would be agreeable in this area. We just don't know what the price might be until we try. These issues are very awkward ones for all of us in the Islands to discuss and think about and it can be argued that we need more time. However, discussion and thought must be done quietly and reasonably and dement outbursts from people who try and dictate to others as to what they should and should not do I deplore totally. The Falklands are a democracy not a dictatorship and whilst I respect individuals for their views it is a pity that important people such as the Member for East Falkland could not take a more democratic line when approaching his constituents. He claims that everybody agreed with his thoughts, or a great majority agreed with his thoughts, this may well be so. However, I do know that some people to whom he talked to told me that they resented being told what should be acceptable and what shouldn't be acceptable and that if they didn't agree with that they would have to get somebody else to represent them. Your Excellency, I very much appreciated your recent talk over the radio when you said that if you felt you were being pushed by the United Kingdom and Foreign Office into proposing to us something that you felt was unacceptable to the Falkland Islanders then you would resign. I very much appreciated your saying that and also I know that in this debate we can rely on official members of Legislative Council to be quite open in their speaking and voting on this Motion which is of such crucial importance to the future of these Islands. Supposing we fail to negotiate suitable terms for a freeze? What then? Will we be forced to accept a lease-back on any conditions? No, I don't think so. We might possibly at that time decide to try and find out from the Argentine their views on the lease-back, that's if she hasn't already made them clear to us, and I think that might be quite likely at the next round of talks, even if we don't agree to talk about them I think they may well bring them up. The other alternative, if we don't like the idea of a lease-back, and a freeze doesn't work out, is the possibility of seeking independence if we can get it guaranteed and backed-up by Britain and the United Nations. I do not know if many people in the Islands have thought much about independence so perhaps we should start to think about it as an alternative if need be. Some may feel that the British Government doesn't want to talk about a freeze and that the only thing they want is a lease-back and that they won't be very determined in pushing for anything else such as we may propose. Well I think we are all aware, and especially those of us who have been to previous talks, that if the Falklands representatives feel that our side is being let down by lack of push by the British delegation in any way there is no better way of making our feelings known than simply walking out of the delegation. That round of talks then immediately ceases. So there is nothing to fear on the score that because we want a freeze and we ask Britain to negotiate a freeze that she won't do it very well because Britain is only really interested in a lease-back.

It will be far more suspicious if a round of talks were to be held on our request that the British Government should seek an agreement that there should be a freeze of the dispute over sovereignty if we weren't represented there. Then I think you would have to be very worried indeed. Sir, I wish to propose that the Motion be adopted.

/W. H. Goss.....

W. H. Goss

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. In rising to support this Motion a freeze is a thing which as you all know is the only one of the three options put up by the Minister that I would give any support to. It would have to be a long freeze, not less than 25 years, and during the freeze let us participate in fish and oil and see where we go from there.

The lease-back - I can see grave disadvantages to that. At the end of the lease-back I think there would be nothing left. You would have exploitation of these Islands in a form hitherto not known to us. With a lease-back it would open the back door and the front door for people in other countries who wanted to use this as a means of getting money out of the country to somewhere else. I could not support a lease-back. There are too many disadvantages to it. It has been said that perhaps we would get independence at the end of the lease-back. The only way in which we would get independence after the lease-back is if the Islands were just a cluster of little empty blisters on the top of the earth and of no value to anybody. Then of course there would be the possibility of independence. They have got value to other people at the moment. There is value to us but we are not able to utilise that value. A freeze is the only thing that I would give any thought or consideration to. That is not the feeling of the majority of my constituency, they say stand, they don't want any of it, they don't like any of it, but they do more favour a freeze than they do a lease-back or a condominium. It has been said, independence - well we probably could, it's worth pursuing, worth looking into, the possibilities of independence, whether we can get that or not I don't know. There is one other possibility too, there's the possibility of becoming part of the Commonwealth of Nations. Could that not also be pursued. We know of other places that are small places, much smaller than the Falklands, that are members and under the protectate of the Commonwealth of Nations and I think that that is quite a feasible possibility.

Regarding the attack on the Member for East Falklands, I think it has been a little undue. He was very out-spoken - perhaps more out-spoken than most of us have been - but my findings through feed-back from various parts of the Camp where everyone was supposed to be so in favour of a lease-back, on speaking to people from those areas I couldn't find a soul who was. They were just as much at a loss as many people are in Stanley to make a decision on any one of the three points and I think the Member for East Falklands was very right in coming out as strong as he did on the issue. Most of us, particularly Councillors, have sat on a fence, they haven't said anything, there have only been a few of us that have really come out and said what we thought, most didn't.

I beg to support the Motion.

W. E. Bowles

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. First of all may I say that I have no doubt about Her Majesty's position concerning our wishes, and I stress the word wishes. The question is to talk or not to talk, with emphasis on the word talk. Britain and Argentina have been asked by the United Nations to settle the dispute over the Falkland Islands peacefully. The word peacefully applies to all concerned and the best method I know of is via the conference table. The sudden rush to agree to talk on any suggestion or idea at this stage is potentially

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risky. The Minister made it very clear to me, don't rush it, take your time and if any further ideas for talks come forward let's have them, as many as you like. Nothing worthwhile ever happened in a hurry. We have a right to self-determination, a right recognised by the United Nations. In my opinion talks should continue on the lines of the Motion before this House. This should then satisfy most of the population we are responsible for. No-one is ceding sovereignty or giving away anything. We will give ourselves time to consider things more in depth. After all, the whole impetus is barely one month old. Some of us have hardly got over the shock, let alone found time to come to a clear consensus over any issue. Now is the time for listing ideas, and talks later.

Sir, with those few words I beg to support the Motion.

A. B. Monk

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. In rising to speak to the Motion I must endorse what His Excellency said that without doubt the main talking point in these Islands recently has been Mr. Ridley, the Minister of State's visit here, and what he said. The Honourable Camp Member pointed out that I had originally agreed to propose this Motion. However on reflection I became certain that we were being rushed and that other options should be considered first. The Proposer said maybe we need more time and I think that is quite right. It is only a matter of weeks since Mr. Ridley's visit and we are being asked to agree to something of this importance. Without doubt the vast majority of Islanders, both in Stanley and the Camp, find any ideas about transferring our sovereignty either by lease-back or by any other method, entirely unacceptable and I am sure the Member for West Falklands would have taken that on board. In connection with this I must sincerely thank all those who sent me telegrams of support after my recent short broadcast. It was very heartening indeed to find that so many people from all over the Falklands value their British sovereignty so much. People have decisively shown that they want the British way of life more than they want some vague promises in return for their hand-over of sovereignty. Councillors in my view should now tell Mr. Ridley firmly that we want no talks about any form of sovereignty transfer. With regard to the present Motion and the proposal to talk about a freeze. I personally don't think Mr. Ridley is the person we would want to have talking to the Argentine Government. He made so plain what he considered we should go for - a lease-back solution - and I cannot see him putting his heart into talking about anything else. One thing this sovereignty give-away campaign has shown which is of great value I think, is people here have been able to express their views very freely in public. We have seen no repression, no censorship. That's the British way of life. Who would want to change it to the mainland form of Government, who would want to wish it on their descendants. Since I gave my short address on the radio a lot of discussion has taken place publicly. A lot of hard things have been said and I don't think anybody who wants to keep our British sovereignty and who objects to the lease-back solution will be convinced that he or she is mistaken by all the verbiage and slanted propaganda. Those supporting a lease-back solution are able to offer nothing more concrete to us than that you might get development and riches if you knuckle down and give away sovereignty. They of course don't know that you would get it. I can only suppose they think any price is not too high if one can get the possibility of peace in our time. Well a certain British Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain, adopted that attitude many years ago with Hitler, with disastrous consequences and which I became fully involved in. Unfortunately appeasement seldom gets you any long-term reward. The only certain thing that is known about adopting a

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lease-back solution is that you are giving away sovereignty. We are told that we will gradually collapse in the stagnation of our economy and the withdrawal of services etc. unless we knuckle down to Argentina. We are told by some that we must trust Mr. Ridley to do his best for us and yet at the same time we are told that the British Government is not interested in us and will not support us, will not supply adequate services etc. if we turn down the sovereignty give-away proposal. The fact is no-one really knows what lies in the future, whatever course we take, except that if you adopt a lease-back policy you give away your sovereignty, refuse to do that and you retain it, anything else is pure conjecture. It has been said, among other things, that I only propose to live in the Falklands for two years after my impending retirement in May. That is completely untrue. I propose to retire here but, I say this quite definitely, only if no change in sovereignty takes place. I am not living here if sovereignty is ceded either by lease-back or any other agreement, no rented country is for me thank you. There are however other alternatives, independence, the freeze, and I think we should make exhaustive enquiries about the possibilities of these alternatives to see what support etc. we get from other countries before we jump into negotiations only a few weeks after the proposals have been put to us. I think we should see what the United Nations view is on this, what the general world opinion would be on this. I think we should require more time before any further talks take place. Now, I am not inferring that I oppose talks, I think that talking is the only way that we can make headway but I do think that we require more time to consider any other possible alternatives and see what outside support we get for them. We are being rushed and I don't think that we should support this Motion because of that fact, and that fact only. If it is supported by a majority Mr. Ridley will go to the Argentines and will soon be back to us saying no go, they want sovereignty. Then all the pressures we have recently experienced and more will again be ascertained upon us. We will in effect have expended one of our options needlessly. I think there is no way forward without talking but don't let's be rushed. This is absolutely vital for all of us. It is in effect about whether you and your descendants wish to reside on British soil or Argentine soil. Before we give away the authority to speak for us let's explore all the options, a negotiated moratorium on sovereignty perhaps, independence, maybe others, and before we give anybody permission to negotiate with Argentina about our future we must insist that we have a categorical assurance from the British Government that all Falkland Islanders have the right of entry into Britain. I have been accused of rabble rousing. I must say that I am proud to be supported by the numerous rabble who have supported me on my sovereignty stand. Far from insulting me I think these people who say that are insulting many hundreds of Falkland Islanders by referring to my supporters as rabble. As I think more time is needed I therefore cannot support this Motion.

S. B. Wallace

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. I rise to support this Motion. I believe that of Mr. Ridley's, or rather the British Government's, proposals, the idea of a freeze is the only one which the people here are prepared to have discussed at this time. No-one is interested in a condominium and few are interested in a lease-back arrangement, but almost without exception people wish the talks to continue and would be prepared to compromise in order to achieve a settlement, but to sell sovereignty for a mere hope of gain is repugnant to most people. We may be in some difficulty but it is not that desperate. I have

met and talked with many people during the last weeks and I received that message loud and clear. We have rehearsed the arguments for and against allowing Her Majesty's Government to discuss a possible lease-back over and over again. It is my view that to allow HMG to do this at this time would be disastrous. I am convinced that at a word of support from us a lease-back would be arranged in a very short while. I am equally convinced that the argument to the effect that to discuss it does not commit us is naive to say the least. There is a placid acceptance of the principle that if we allow a lease-back to be discussed it is ridiculous furthermore for anyone to say, well we are against it but HMG can discuss it. We would soon find ourselves holding a referendum which would not be on the principle but, in effect, on the price. If we accept a lease-back we have taken an irreversible step. We will have given away our sovereignty for some empty hopes. There is no guarantee whatsoever that everything would be rosy. It is a very, very long chance. There would be no going back on such an agreement. We must try every possible option. The argument against the freeze goes along the line that basically the Argentines being aware of Her Majesty's Government's preference for a lease-back will not be interested. Well, at least we can establish what their attitude is without any danger of being seen to consider ceding sovereignty and in my view we must allow Her Majesty's Government to discuss any option that does not involve ceding sovereignty in exchange for a mere lease on our land. I also feel that Her Majesty's Government should be asked for a formal undertaking before any agreement with far reaching effect is agreed that in the event of such an agreement either failing or having an adverse effect on the community to the extent that we wish to leave then HMG will guarantee re-settlement. The thought that if things go wrong we could be left worries many people. There has been some criticism of Mr. Ridley making HMG's proposals public, and that by showing his obvious preference for a lease-back settlement he has weakened his negotiating position. In my opinion these proposals had to be made public. They demand the widest possible consideration and they have had it. Imagine the reaction if Mr. Ridley had not said a word about the purpose of his visit. The situation would be impossible. I accept the publicity given to the lease-back proposals, or rather Mr. Ridley's obvious preference to them, means that the Argentines are now aware that HMG are willing to talk about such a possibility now, but do we really believe that this was the first time they had heard of it? I cannot.

I would like to refer briefly to the attacks on the Honourable Member for East Falkland's address the other evening. I would agree that to some extent some, perhaps, of the personal remarks in that speech were uncalled for but I think that the general tenor of the speech was needed and that in fact that speech could only have been made by him.

I do not feel that if Ridley goes off and comes back with a no go we have lost anything at all. I do not think that we have lost an option, we will have tried an option, we will have gained the Argentines attitude. I think however that we should continue to explore every possible alternative and I also think that we should give serious and urgent consideration to our going to talk with the United Nations.

Thank you Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

L. G. Blake.....

L. G. Blake

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. I cannot claim to have sounded out public opinion on this issue as I was unable to do so. You Sir, appointed my predecessor to do that job and he did that job just as well as he could. He went and he listened and his work and his effort was greatly appreciated by all on West Falklands. In rising to support this Motion laid before the house I must be disappointed because I believe the mandate I was given was to find out what the bidding was and this is only going to find out what some of the bidding is. But support the Motion I most strongly do. But I still believe that the majority of the residents of these Islands wish to know under what circumstances we could settle our dispute with Argentina. The Honourable Member for East Falklands has received a lot of stick and I regret I am going to add to it. But I feel I must do so, he may dispute the mandate I was given because of the cables of support he had but I must deplore his broadcast on two accounts: the first was that it attacked two residents who had made statements in all good faith and for the second I believe that it set out to sew the seeds of distrust. Not very many years ago we had a similar sort of period. The distrust was not with regard to the British Government and its attitudes but within the Colony and it has taken about five years to get over that distrust and it is for this reason that I add to the pile of stick. Council in their addresses today have stressed that there is no guarantee that we would gain anything by settling the dispute. I would remind them that the hottest topic I think probably that this Colony has had since before Ridley were the tons and tons of fish that went out through the harbour entrance in the Polish trawlers and all we could do was collect a little bit in harbour dues. I have said before that we need that fish and oil and I believe that we must have that fish and oil but in the short term the fish is the most necessary.

There has been mention in the House today of the possibility of becoming independent. I understood that the desire of this Colony was to remain British. It would appear that the basic desire is to retain our sovereignty no matter what our nationality. I would remind them of the one example of a small territory which went independent, the Western Sahara, I have mentioned it before in this House. They went independent among the rejoicings of the major powers and the third world and all their guarantees. Six weeks later Moroccan and Algerian troops entered their borders and that was the last sight the world had of an independent Saharian nation. I would not countenance that possibility to these Islands.

We have heard a lot about the support that we have in Britain and I think it was probably the saving grace of our situation that we have that support both inside and outside the House of Parliament. But if anybody believes that this Government, and I refer now to the British Government, which will stand by while 10,000 plus steel workers become redundant, unemployment rise to towards 3 million, is going to dig its hand into its pocket to increase and supplement our budget - well, they're deluding themselves. We need that fish and oil and if as a result of talking to the Argentine we can get our hands on a little bit of it then this Council will have done this Colony a major service. It is my fervent hope that a solution can be found to our problems by a long term freeze on our sovereignty dispute which would enable us to make use of our off-shore resources but if negotiations on that topic fail I also hope that in those discussions we may have learnt what other options are open to you.

Your Excellency, I beg to support the Motion.

/Financial Secretary.....

Financial Secretary

Your Excellency. As an Ex-officio Member of this Council I feel that this is one time that I should not refer to other Members views and therefore I will give my personal views on the options which have been given to us and also my views on the political situation and the future of the economy of the Islands.

Firstly, the condominium. I agreed with what I've heard over the radio and from other sectors here that it is not a matter for real consideration.

On the matter of the lease-back, I have discussed this with a number of friends and colleagues and generally it would seem that there would be some doubt in long-term development of the Islands. There is the question that people may leave the Islands if there was a lease-back arranged and quite frankly I don't think we can afford to lose any more people from the Islands. There are also the smaller holdings which we are encouraging for the Green Patch sections of the Islands. These people who are thinking of their grand-sons and their great grand-children and so forth and so on must give any change in the sovereignty, even though it may be after a hundred years, very deep consideration and therefore I am doubtful whether there will be much development on these lines. That is my own personal view. Also there is the question of fish and oil. I agree that we need revenue from fish and oil and I agree that we should seek a solution to the problem if we can but one that is satisfactory to the whole community of the Falkland Islands.

I see no harm in talking of a freeze. The Minister has made it clear at this stage that it is only talking and I think that a further freeze, if the oil and fish can be extracted during that period may be worth considering.

On the question of a lease-back, as far as I can understand, this would not be acceptable and I think it would be rather dishonest to tell the Minister to go ahead and talk on this matter when we know he will come back here and say no. He was being very frank with us and I appreciate his frankness and I think we should be frank with him.

I support the Motion.

Chief Secretary

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. I am very much aware that I am, too, an ex-officio member of this Council and therefore do not represent any section of the community and that I am only here because the Chief Secretary is on leave. Having said that I, of course, having been born and bred here, have my own opinions about this predicament in which we find ourselves. I, too, have no objection to the Minister going and talking about a freeze but I do have reservations and dislike the idea of the Minister talking about a lease-back. When I hear talk about a lease-back I get alarm bells ringing in my head because I fear that that is the end of the road and we should not only be thinking of ourselves, well those of us who are present here at the moment, but those who are going to come along and work and live in these Islands. I don't think there is anything else I can add to the speeches of my colleagues around this Table and all it leaves me to say is that I support the Motion.

/T. J. D. Miller

T. J. D. Miller

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. In rising to wind up the debate on this Motion it would appear that there is agreement on this Motion to go forward in general. The only hesitation being that some of us feel that we are being rushed, but I feel that the majority of us have made it clear. We haven't ruled anything out, anything else out, in the future by agreeing to talk about a sovereignty freeze for a period of time. In the meantime we will all of course keep our options open and think of other possibilities, should the line that we are going to take not work out. Obviously the freeze should be for as long as we can get. My Honourable colleague for Stanley East suggested 25 years, I would be inclined to go for 50 years, but its just a case of seeing what comes out of the talks. We really don't know where we are until we hear from the other side. Our right to self-determination, to which we are entitled, I believe somebody said that it was recognised by the United Nations. Well I would dispute that. That is precisely our problem at the moment, our right of self-determination is not recognised by the U.N. We have said and Britain has voiced time and time again in the U.N. that we do not wish to become under Argentine sovereignty and that at present we wish to remain British, and yet still at least 130 countries in the United Nations, every time there is a vote, vote solidly against us, so our right of self-determination is not yet recognised there. However I agree most strongly that we should do all we can to either get the United Nations to come here or us to go there and try to find a way of putting this matter right for the future. I don't think there is anything left for me to say other than I think that the Motion finds the general support of the House.

President

Thank you. Well I shall put the Motion formally -

"While this House does not like any of the ideas put forward by Mr. Ridley for a possible settlement to the sovereignty dispute with Argentina, it agrees that Her Majesty's Government should hold further talks with the Argentines at which this House should be represented and at which the British delegation should seek an agreement to freeze the dispute over sovereignty for a specified period of time."

Those that are in favour say aye. Those that are against say no.
So the Motion is carried with one no.

(All Councillors, with the exception of the Honourable A. B. Monk, voted aye).

MOTION by the Honourable T. J. D. Miller

That this House requests that Her Majesty's Government grants full British Citizenship to Falkland Islanders.

T. J. D. Miller

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. In rising to propose this Motion I must say of course that this isn't the first time that a Motion along these lines has been before us. This is virtually a repeat of a Motion proposed and adopted by this House in June 1978 by the previous Member for West Falkland, Derek Evans. However, since that time there has been a change of government in the United Kingdom. The proposed British Nationality Act is coming up to the fore, I believe there are proposals in hand in England for it to be debated in this present session of Parliament, and also of course, since the visit here of Mr. Ridley, our own situation has changed somewhat considerably - as many speakers said when we were debating the previous Motion. I think it is essential that we have this Right of Citizenship and the Right of Entry to the United Kingdom, that we have full British Citizenship, particularly if we are going to become involved in any discussion with the Argentine on political affairs. What I would like to see happen, if this Motion is adopted, is that all Councillors would send a sort of open letter to all Members of Parliament and all Members of the House of Lords, putting forward our case with the Motion rather than just leave it up to the Foreign Office. If I may, I have prepared a possible paper, I would just like to say a few things from it as to why it is that we are seeking full British Citizenship. Almost 100% of Islanders have their origins in the United Kingdom and in no case are their origins more than 147 years old. We are descendants of the Colonialists who were sent here as part of UK policy to colonise the Falkland Islands. There was no indigenous population nor has there been any introduction of other nationalities since colonisation. The only language we speak is English. Although geographically close to South America we have nothing in common with any South American country whose culture is alien to our way of life. Our only ties are with the United Kingdom. It is the wish of Islanders to strengthen ties with the United Kingdom where possible. A substantial proportion of the total population of about 1800 would retain full rights of entry to Britain as British citizens by mere descent under the proposed British Nationality Act. The smallness of the numbers in the rest of the population would have no significant impact on Britain's economy or social life if in the unlikely event we all decided we wanted to go to Britain. We have been offered in the past repeated assurances that it will be all right if the going gets rough, we will see you're OK somehow and if anybody wants to come to England, well just let us know and we will see if it can be arranged. Well like many others I don't like being regarded as a second-class citizen of my own Mother Country. We feel that we have a right to go to Britain if we so wish. According to the ideas behind the proposed British Nationality Act the granting of full British Citizenship will be for people who have a close link with the United Kingdom, identification with British society. Well I think we fully fulfill both of those qualifications. I know one argument used against the Home Office to the granting of the right of entry to Falkland Islanders is that what they do for one Colony they have to do for all the others. I can understand that argument to a point but its fair to say that I don't think the Home Office can feel that we are in a unique position in that we are virtually all of direct British descent and we are under claim by a large foreign country;

and also should we hopefully be granted full British Citizenship and the Right of Abode in the United Kingdom for Falkland Islanders, I think our own existing immigration laws would prevent any mass influx of people from other Commonwealth countries coming here so that they could then register to go to England. As it is under present legislation you have to be at least resident in the Falklands for 7 years to qualify for citizenship, so I don't think that the Home Office can use that excuse very well. Sir, I wish to propose the Motion.

A. B. Monk

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. I wish to second the Motion. I have very little to add to the Honourable Member's words. The only thing is I'm very unhappy that the Motion is not put in such a way that further talks with the Argentine are not continued upon Britain first granting this very reasonable request. We definitely have a lever. There is no question about it, the British Government wants us to talk, and badly, and come to a settlement with Argentina. Therefore we had the ideal opportunity to press this request for British Citizenship, but by tamely agreeing to just go and talk, just like that, whenever we are told, we have no lever left. We will talk and we still won't have British Citizenship, but however the concept that people should be granted full British Citizenship is one that I entirely agree with, and I support the Motion.

S. B. Wallace

Your Excellency, Honourable Members. I also do not have much to add to the Honourable mover of this Motion's presentation. It is certainly a matter uppermost in a lot of people's minds and one which we have attempted to change the attitude of the British Government on. We have tried with no success whatsoever to get Falkland Islanders the right to live and work in the United Kingdom. I believe that we must press Her Majesty's Government again to reconsider their attitude to us in this respect, especially now as we have already discussed our situation, and in fact our position has to a practical extent worsened since Mr. Ridley's visit. People are more worried about it. I think that were we granted the Right of Abode it would have a stabilising effect on the community. We have also, as we never cease to be thankful for, a large lobby in both Houses of Parliament which we must use if possible. I think in fact we should make more use of these friends. One of the problems is that our link of course is through official channels and I imagine that that means that any request of this nature would normally go to them alone and it is possible that our friends in Parliament could perhaps never hear of our request. I entirely agree with the Honourable Member for the Camp that we must give this Motion wider publicity than in the past. Thank you.

President

I think I might offer a word of explanation that any Motion that is debated in this House, the record of the debate, is sent to UK and is available in both Houses of Parliament for all MPs.

L. G. Blake

Your Excellency, Honourable Members, "I too Brutus" or whatever the words were that the famous Roman gentleman said. I would like to support the Motion most strongly. I am sure that Britain will be waiting for the results of our last debate very keenly and would ask if perhaps the Administration, in their rush to get those results off to Britain, should inadvertently staple this debate on to the copies that they send forth. Your Excellency, I beg to support the Motion.

President

I can assure you that it will be done not inadvertently.

W. H. Goss

Your Excellency, in rising to support this Motion, the point has been made to me by a large number of people, and I would like to re-iterate what the Honourable Member for East Falkland said, that our position should be clarified with Britain before any talks take place. I think that this is a very very valid point too, although we have passed this other Motion, to talk on a freeze, we haven't given away anything on talking about a freeze. I am quite certain that the people would want their position clarified before anything substantive was discussed. I beg to support the Motion.

W. E. Bowles

Your Excellency, Honourable Members, I naturally support this Motion, but I think the history leading up to this Motion as I recall it is probably caused by the difference there is between the Home Office and the Foreign Office. Any Falkland Islander going to Britain and then wishing to stay after he's got there, by making application to the Home Office, is the one that has usually come unstuck. If he applies to live in Britain before he leaves here, an application is made through the proper channels and I understand that there has never been any problem. anyway, but this would allow the thing to come out in the open and be absolutely clear, and for that reason alone, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

Financial Secretary

Your Excellency, I would just like to rise and support the Motion.

Chief Secretary

Your Excellency, Honourable Members, I too support the Motion. I think it will be a good thing if we get it through but I do have some reservations as the Minister said that he saw difficulties in providing something like six million other people with similar facilities if they gave it to the Falkland Islands, but I do hope that we can achieve something.

President

Thank you. The Motion is passed unanimously.