

EVENTS THIS WEEK

By the beginning of this week it was clear that our efforts to solve the South Georgia dispute through diplomatic channels were getting nowhere. On Wednesday my Noble Friend the Foreign Secretary proposed to Costa Mendez (Argentine Foreign Secretary) that we should despatch a special emissary to Buenos Aires.

Later that day we received information which led us to believe that the Argentine fleet was not engaged on exercises but that a large number of ships, aircraft carriers, destroyers, launching craft, troop carriers and submarines were heading for Port Stanley, and that an invasion was probable. I contacted President Reagan and asked him to intervene with the Argentine President directly. We promised in the meantime to take no overt action to escalate the dispute for fear of precipitating the very event that our efforts were directed to avoid

On Thursday -

1. Costa Mendez rejected the idea of an emissary and told our Ambassador that the diplomatic channel as a means of solving this dispute was closed.
2. President Reagan had a very long telephone conversation with the Argentine President but his strong representations fell on deaf ears. I am grateful to him and Secretary Haig for their strenuous and persistent efforts on our behalf.

3. The UN Secretary General De Cuellar summoned both British and Argentine Permanent representatives to speak to both to refrain from the use or threat of force in the South Atlantic. Later that evening we sought an emergency meeting of the Security Council.

On Friday, as the House knows the Argentines invaded. Before indicating some of the measures taken, I should like to make three points -

1. Even if ships had been instructed to sail the day the Argentinians landed on Georgia to clear the whaling station, the ships could not have got to Port Stanley before the invasion.

2. There have been several occasions in the past when an invasion has been threatened and the only way to prevent it would have been to keep a massive fleet close to the Falklands, some 7,000 miles away from base. No government has ever been able to do that, its cost and the cost of keeping it supplied with everything required would be enormous.

3. Aircraft unable to land on the Falklands because of the frequently changing weather would have had little fuel left and their only hope of landing safely would have been to divert to Argentina. Indeed most of the air and sea supplies for the Falklands come from Argentina - which is but 300 miles away compared with our 7,000.

/This is

This is the background against which we have to make decisions and to consider what action we could best take. I cannot tell the House precisely what dispositions have been made - some ships are already at sea others were put on immediate alert on Thursday evening. The Government has now decided that the fleet will sail as soon as all preparations are complete. Invincible will be in the lead and will leave port on Monday.

[If asked about Prince Andrew it is the express wish of The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh and of Prince Andrew himself, that if Invincible sails he sails with her.]

I stress that I cannot foretell what orders the task force will receive as they proceed. That will depend on the situation at the time and the extent to which our continued diplomatic efforts meet with success.

Events this week.

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the Member President, directly We proposed - the
 members to take no over-act-
 On Thursday - to exclude the dispute for
 them of preventing the
 very event on that day

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 idea re-emerging and told our
 Ambassador that the diplomatic channel
 as a means of solving this dispute
 was closed.

2) President Ruyon L. d. Long
 telephone conversation with the
 Mexican President, ~~and his~~ ~~brother~~
~~stated~~ ~~that~~ ~~his~~ ~~strong~~
 representation fell on deaf ears.
 1 - related to his - ~~family~~ ~~group~~ ~~for~~ ~~their~~

3) the U.N. Security Council
 The Council summoned both
 British & Mexican Permanent-
 representatives to speak to both
 to refrain from the use of threat or
 force in the South Atlantic
 After a meeting of the Security
 Council was called later that evening
 Later that evening we sought a
 meeting of the Security Council

emergency

On Friday, as the Home knows the Bygone
was included. ~~with the left hand, such as~~
~~that had to do with that had such that had.~~

Before withholding some of the
necessary papers, ~~by the~~ I should like to
make 3 points

1) Even if papers had been included to
said the day the Bygone landed
on Georgia to show that withholding,
the papers would not have followed to Port
Henry before the invasion.

~~2) There has been no evidence
of the fact of the invasion
has suggested that could be
in invasion but none on the fact~~

2) There has been no evidence in the
particular invasion has been thundered
and the only way to prevent work have
been to less a man that was
done to the Falklands (the South Atlantic
islands); for some 7,000 miles away,
at the same time for base.

~~The cost of supplying~~

~~the job~~

No government has ever been able to do that, it cost the rest of them if it supplied ~~would be~~ with every ~~unit~~ required would be enormous.

37 ~~The fact the leading ~~supplies~~~~

~~take a number~~

3) Britain is not well to ^{on the Falklands} land because ^{would have} only ^{had} ^{the only hope} ^{of the leading supply} ^{would have been to} ^{desert to Argentina} ^{the air} ^{the -1970s} ^{for the Falklands} ^{come from} ^{Argentina} - but 300 miles away compared with over 7,000.

This is the background against which we have to make decisions and to consider ~~what~~ ^{what} ~~we~~ ^{we} could ^{best} ~~do~~ ^{do}.

I cannot tell the Home Secretary what

dispositions have been made - Some things
 already ~~and the~~ others were put on immediate
 about on Thursday evening. The job
 has now decided that the Fleet will sail on 15th
 as ~~early as~~ ^{the} ~~possible~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~purpose~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~service~~ ~~is~~ ~~complete~~.
 Inquiries will be in the land will leave port
 on Monday.

[If asked about Prince Andrew
 it is the answer with a Prince Andrew, the
 Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and a Prince Andrew
 himself, that if Inverurie says he says
 with her.] ~~Light the house with inland the~~
~~from some time of day onwards,~~
~~can only come at the~~ ~~and resolution~~
~~have considered my advice and decided~~
~~I should not~~
~~consult with her to~~ ~~consult her~~
~~in fact since and our country are peaceful~~
~~stable and our Royal family has themselves~~
~~in structure).~~

I shall then that I cannot forget
 what orders His Majesty will receive

ILLEGAL LANDING ON SOUTH GEORGIA: CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

19 March:

Fri

A British Antarctic Survey field party report that an Argentine Navy cargo vessel is anchored in Leith harbour. A party of about 60 Argentines have set up camp and an Argentine flag has been hoisted.

20 March:

Sat

The BAS field party informs the Argentines that they have landed illegally and that they must leave.

The Ministry of Defence instruct HMS Endurance to prepare to sail to South Georgia with a detachment of Marines from Port Stanley.

HM Ambassador Buenos Aires informs the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs that we are treating the infringement of our sovereignty very seriously. The Argentine Charge d'Affaires is called in to the Foreign Office and told the same. The Argentine Government profess ignorance but agree to look into the matter urgently.

21 March:

Sun

HMS Endurance departs for South Georgia.

Argentine MFA inform us that the ship will leave South Georgia shortly and that no service personnel are involved.

22 March:

Mon

We receive confirmation that the ship has left but there are doubts about whether all the men have gone.

News Department issue statement on incident.

In the evening, BAS confirm that about six men and some equipment remain.

23 March:

Tues

HMS Endurance is instructed to sail on for South Georgia and remove the men, if possible without using force.

Mr Luce makes a statement to the House of Commons.

Argentine Government later warns that use of HMS Endurance would be gravely provocative. They are told we wish to avoid this if possible: if they can propose an acceptable alternative method of removing the men, we are prepared to let them do so.

24 March:

Wed

HMS Endurance ordered to anchor in Grytviken harbour, but not to proceed to Leith.

Argentine MFA say they wish to prevent the situation escalating if possible, but need time to consider.

25 March:

Thurs.

Argentine naval vessel is sighted at Leith delivering further supplies.

We ask the Argentines for an early response to our request that they remove the men.

Argentine MFA then say that by deploying HMS Endurance we have made it impossible for them to contain their position.

We reply that we wish to do everything possible to avoid confrontation and propose that if the party request the proper authorisation from Grytviken, it will be given.

26-27 March:

Fri. Sat.

No formal reply from the Argentine MFA. But they issue a press statement announcing that the men will be given all necessary protection and the press reports that several Argentine Navy vessels have been ordered into the area.

28 March:

Sun

Argentine Foreign Minister sends a message to the Secretary of State making it clear that the Argentines have no intention of agreeing to our proposal.

The Secretary of State sends a message to Mr Haig, asking him to intervene and urge restraint on the Argentines.

30 March:

Tue.

Secretary of State makes statement in House of Lords.

Argentines reject US proposal for a solution based on regularising the men's presence.

31 March:

Wed

Secretary of State sends message to Costa Mendez proposing the despatch of an emissary.

We receive information from secret sources that Argentine fleet will be grouping for Port Stanley on 2 April. Prime Minister sends message to Mr Reagan asking him to intervene.

1 April:

Thurs

Costa Mendez rejects proposal to send emissary and says diplomatic channel is now closed. Only remaining point of discussion would be the transfer of sovereignty to Argentina.

UN Secretary General summons British and Argentine Permanent Representatives to appeal to both to refrain from the threat or use of force in the South Atlantic.

After receiving further evidence that an Argentine attack was imminent, we seek an Emergency meeting of the Security Council, which results in a presidential statement calling on both sides to refrain from the use of force in the area. The UK Permanent Representative agrees; the Argentine says nothing.

We undertake intensive lobbying of US and EC countries asking them to intervene on our behalf. The Americans have taken action at the highest level but the Argentines remain unresponsive. *(Reagan)*

2 April:

Fri

The Lord Privy Seal makes statement in the House of Commons at 1100 expressing HMG's grave concern at the situation.

As at 1230 the British Antarctic Survey ship reports that landing operation has begun. This is not yet confirmed by the Ministry of Defence.