

Sir A. Parsons

First statement in Security Council.

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UNCLASSIFIED

DESKBY FIRST CONTACT BUENOS AIRES AND PORT STANLEY  
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TO F L A S H FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 363 OF 1 APRIL  
AND TO F L A S H COI  
INFO IMMEDIATE BUENOS AIRES, PORT STANLEY, WASHINGTON

MIPT: FALKLAND ISLANDS CRISIS

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MY MAIN STATEMENT IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON 1 APRIL:

AS MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE AWARE, THERE HAVE BEEN DIFFERENCES FOR MANY YEARS BETWEEN MY GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARGENTINA CONCERNING THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. MY GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED FOR THIS EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL BECAUSE IT NOW HAS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA IS PLANNING TO ATTEMPT TO INVADE THESE ISLANDS.

THE FALKLANDS ARE SITUATED IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC, SOME 770 KILOMETRES NORTH EAST OF CAPE HORN. THEY HAVE A POPULATION OF ABOUT 1900 PEOPLE. THESE ARE PEOPLE OF MAINLY BRITISH ORIGIN, MOST OF WHOM HAVE BEEN BORN THERE TO FAMILIES WHICH HAVE LIVED THERE FOR GENERATIONS. THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT ARGENTINE ELEMENT IN THE POPULATION. THE UK HAS EXERCISED SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE FALKLAND ISLANDS SINCE EARLY IN THE 19TH CENTURY AND CONTINUES TO DO SO TODAY.

FOR SEVERAL YEARS, THE AFFAIRS OF THE FALKLANDS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THE FALKLANDS ARE ONE OF THOSE TERRITORIES ABOUT WHICH THE UNITED KINGDOM REPORTS TO THE UNITED NATIONS UNDER ARTICLE 73(E) OF THE CHARTER. AT THE MOST RECENT SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, A DECISION WAS ADOPTED TO THE EFFECT THAT THE COMMITTEE OF 24 SHOULD KEEP THE SITUATION IN THE TERRITORY UNDER REVIEW. THE ASSEMBLY HAS NOT ADOPTED A RESOLUTION ON THE SUBJECT FOR SEVERAL YEARS BUT HAS CONTENTED ITSELF WITH TAKING NOTE OF DEVELOPMENTS.

MY GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA HAVE HELD A SERIES OF MEETINGS TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. IN THESE MEETINGS, ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LOCAL POPULATION HAVE REGULARLY TAKEN PART. REPORTS HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ABOUT THESE MEETINGS, MOST RECENTLY IN NOTES DATED 1 APRIL 1981 (DOCUMENT A/36/156). IN THIS NOTE, IT

"BOTH DELEGATIONS AGREED THAT THIS QUESTION SHOULD BE EXAMINED IN FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS AT AN EARLY DATE".

SUCH DISCUSSION DID IN FACT CONTINUE, MOST RECENTLY IN NEW YORK AT THE END OF FEBRUARY. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS CONFIRMED ON THAT OCCASION THEIR WISH TO CONTINUE THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE NEGOTIATING FRAMEWORK REFERRED TO IN THE RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. BUT REGRETTABLY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO HAVE DECIDED, FOLLOWING THOSE DISCUSSIONS, THAT IT DID NOT WISH TO CONTINUE ON THIS COURSE. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE WHICH HAD BEEN AGREED AT THESE TALKS IN NEW YORK WAS NOT PUBLISHED IN BUENOS AIRES.

RECENTLY, RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ARGENTINA DETERIORATED AS A RESULT OF AN INCIDENT IN SOUTH GEORGIA, ONE OF THE DEPENDENCIES OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, WHICH IS OVER 1300 KILOMETRES FROM THE FALKLAND ISLANDS THEMSELVES. THE UNITED KINGDOM HAS EXERCISED SOVEREIGNTY OVER SOUTH GEORGIA SINCE 1775 WHEN THE ISLAND WAS DISCOVERED BY CAPTAIN COOK. A BRITISH GOVERNMENT STATION HAS EXISTED ON SOUTH GEORGIA SINCE 1939. AT PRESENT A BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY BASE PROVIDES AN ALL THE YEAR ROUND BRITISH PRESENCE. THE ARGENTINE CLAIM TO SOUTH GEORGIA DATES ONLY FROM 1927 AND IS PRESUMABLY BASED ON THE ISLAND'S ALLEGED PROXIMITY TO THE ARGENTINE MAINLAND.

THE COMMANDER OF THE BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY BASE AT GRYTVIKEN ON SOUTH GEORGIA REPORTED ON 19 MARCH THAT AN ARGENTINE NAVY CARGO VESSEL WAS ANCHORED IN NEARBY LEITH HARBOUR AND THAT A LARGE PARTY OF ARGENTINES WERE SETTING UP CAMP. THE ARGENTINE FLAG HAD BEEN HOISTED. THE BASE COMMANDER TOLD THE MEN THEY HAD NO RIGHT TO LAND ON SOUTH GEORGIA WITHOUT SEEKING PERMISSION FROM THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES AND ORDERED THEM EITHER TO SEEK THE NECESSARY CLEARANCE OR TO LEAVE. THE UK GOVERNMENT SOUGHT IMMEDIATE CLARIFICATION FROM THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT, BOTH IN BUENOS AIRES AND LONDON, MAKING CLEAR THAT WE REGARDED THIS AS A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS INCIDENT AND ASKING THE ARGENTINES TO ARRANGE FOR THE IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE OF THE SHIP AND PARTY. HMS ENDURANCE, A LIGHTLY-ARMED ICE-PATROL VESSEL, WAS ORDERED INTO THE AREA.

THE ARGENTINE SHIP AND MOST OF THE PARTY LEFT ON 21 MARCH. BUT ABOUT TEN ARGENTINES REMAINED. THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT, WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE HAD NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE LANDING, ASSURED US THAT NO SERVING MILITARY PERSONNEL WERE INVOLVED:

ARGENTINE CITIZENS IN SOUTH GEORGIA BUT PRESSING INSTEAD FOR DISCUSSION NOT ONLY OF THIS ISSUE BUT ALSO OF THE WIDER SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE.

*Tuesday*

ON 30 MARCH, STATEMENTS IN BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT IN LONDON MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD NO WISH TO INTERFERE WITH A STRAIGHTFORWARD COMMERCIAL CONTRACT BUT THAT WE COULD NOT ACCEPT AN ILLEGAL UNAUTHORISED PRESENCE ON BRITISH TERRITORY. THE STATEMENT EMPHASISED OUR WISH TO DEFUSE THE ISSUE AND TO PURSUE A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION TO IT.

ON 31 MARCH THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN BUENOS AIRES PROPOSED TO THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT A SENIOR OFFICIAL SHOULD VISIT BUENOS AIRES TO DISCUSS A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION, ADDING THAT THE DEFUSING OF THIS INCIDENT WOULD HELP PREPARE THE WAY FOR A RESUMPTION OF A DIALOGUE ON THE BROADER SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE.

EARLIER TODAY, THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER GAVE THE REPLY OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN BUENOS AIRES. HIS REPLY WAS NEGATIVE. HE DECLINED TO DISCUSS FURTHER THE PROBLEMS OCCASIONED BY THE ILLEGAL PRESENCE OF ARGENTINE NATIONALS ON SOUTH GEORGIA. HE SPECIFICALLY STATED THAT HE NO LONGER WISHED TO USE DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION IN SOUTH GEORGIA.

MR PRESIDENT, I HAVE DESCRIBED IN MORE DETAIL THIS RECENT INCIDENT AFFECTING SOUTH GEORGIA. BUT THE PURPOSE OF MY GOVERNMENT IN CALLING THIS MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IS TO CONSIDER THE THREAT NOT TO SOUTH GEORGIA BUT TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, WHICH, AS I HAVE ALREADY SAID, ARE MORE THAN 1300 KILOMETRES AWAY. WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT THE ARGENTINE NAVY IS ABOUT TO LAUNCH AN INVASION, POSSIBLY AS EARLY AS TOMORROW MORNING. THE ARGENTINE PRESS HAS FOR SEVERAL DAYS BEEN CARRYING NOT ONLY DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF ARGENTINE NAVAL MOVEMENTS "IN READINESS FOR OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC" BUT ALSO STATEMENTS ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE MOVEMENTS BY THE ARGENTINE MINISTER OF DEFENCE. ON 29 MARCH ALL NAVAL LEAVE WAS CANCELLED. IT IS CLEAR THAT ALMOST ALL THE ARGENTINE FLEET, INCLUDING AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER, DESTROYERS, CORVETTES AND SUBMARINES, IS NOW AT SEA. YESTERDAY ALL ARGENTINA'S C130 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT LEFT THEIR BASES. THEIR DESTINATION WAS NOT REVEALED BUT ACCORDING TO THE ARGENTINE PRESS THEY ARE BEING PREPARED TO AIRLIFT TROOPS TO THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY. ON 30 MARCH, AT LEAST TWO AIRCRAFT OF THE ARGENTINE AIR FORCE OVERFLEW THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE HAVING BEEN

*Wed*

*Tuesday*

FALKLAND ISLANDS, WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE HAVING BEEN SOUGHT IN ACCORDANCE WITH NORMAL INTERNATIONAL PROCEDURES, ONE OF THESE OVERFLIGHTS WAS BY NIGHT AND THE AIRCRAFT CARRIED NO LIGHTS. ALL OF THIS ACTIVITY, AND THE STATEMENTS BY ARGENTINE MINISTERS THAT HAVE ACCOMPANIED IT, HAVE GIVEN MY GOVERNMENT REASON TO BELIEVE THAT AN ATTEMPT IS ABOUT TO MADE TO USE FORCE TO CHANGE THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS AGAINST THE WISHES OF THE INHABITANTS.

MR PRESIDENT, MY GOVERNMENT VIEWS THE PRESENT SITUATION WITH THE UTMOST SERIOUSNESS. WE CALL ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION IN ORDER TO PREVENT AN INVASION. WE ASK THIS COUNCIL TO EXERCISE ITS RESPONSIBILITY UNDER THE CHARTER TO MAINTAIN INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY. WE ASK THIS COUNCIL TO CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA TO REFRAIN FROM THE THREAT OR USE OF FORCE AGAINST THE FALKLAND ISLANDS AND TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT. I CAN ASSURE THE COUNCIL THAT MY GOVERNMENT HAS CONDUCTED THE RECENT NEGOTIATIONS IN PERFECT GOOD FAITH AND THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT STANDS READY TO CONTINUE THESE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE FUTURE. WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE IS AN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THE SITUATION BY FORCE.

THIS MORNING THE SECRETARY GENERAL SUMMONED THE DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA AND MYSLEF SEPARATELY TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AND TO URGE RESTRAINT ON BOTH SIDES. AT NOON TODAY HE ISSUED A STATEMENT URGING THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO CONTINUE TO USE DIPLOMATIC MEANS TO RESOLVE THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. I AM AUTHORISED TO INFORM YOU MR PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL THAT IT IS THE FERVENT WISH OF MY GOVERNMENT TO USE DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND TO AVERT A CRISIS. AS I HAVE JUST DESCRIBED TO THE COUNCIL, MY GOVERNMENT HAS MADE REPEATED EFFORTS TO ENGAGE THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT IN THE SEARCH FOR A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION. THOSE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN REBUFFED THIS MORNING IN BUENOS AIRES.

IT IS THIS REFUSAL OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO PURSUE THE PATH OF NEGOTIATION, COMBINED WITH ITS DISTURBING NAVAL AND MILITARY PREPARATIONS, WHICH HAVE LED MY GOVERNMENT TO REQUEST THIS URGENT MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. WE ASK THE COUNCIL TO CALL UPON THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA TO EXERCISE THE UTMOST RESTRAINT AND TO REFRAIN FROM THE USE OR THREAT OF FORCE IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC. THIS IS THE WAY FOR THE COUNCIL TO GIVE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO THIS MEANACING SITUATION IN THE AREA.

PARSONS