

FALKLAND ISLANDS: FCO SITREP: 0730 HOURS, 5 MAY

US/PERUVIAN PEACE PLAN

1. Revised proposals by Mr Haig for a ceasefire and settlement together with a timetable for implementation and a personal message to the Secretary of State were received at 0630 hours. Haig feared that our expanded version of his proposals of 3 May which were telegraphed to Washington last night would be rejected outright by Argentina and drive Peru into a more pro-Argentine posture. However he thinks his revised proposals stand a reasonable chance of acceptance. If acceptable to us Haig would like a reply by noon Washington time today, ie 5 pm London time.

SECURITY COUNCIL

2. The British Embassy in Dublin rang the FCO last night to say that Mr Haughey had stated in a radio interview that the Irish Government was respecting a request from the UN Secretary General not to press for a Security Council meeting until there was a response to the Secretary General's proposals. (This consisted of ideas put to Mr Pym and to the Argentine Permanent Representative to the UN last weekend).

3. Sir Anthony Parsons is using the need to await a reply to these "ideas" as a pretext for delaying a formal meeting of the Security Council, at which it might be necessary for the UK to veto a seemingly mild resolution calling for a cessation of hostilities. He has told the Secretary General that Mr Pym's reply to his ideas was not likely to reach him before 6 May. This will gain time for the US/Peruvian peace plan to mature.

4. Nevertheless the President of the Security Council has felt it necessary as a result of the earlier Irish request for a formal meeting of the Council to convene informal consultations of the whole Council at 8 pm GMT today. Sir Anthony will try to keep them at this level for the moment.

OAS

5. President Turbay of Colombia is reported to have called for an emergency meeting of the OAS in view of the latest developments.

SINKING OF HMS SHEFFIELD AND THE LOSS OF A SEA HARRIER

/ 6. Attached is the text of a statement made in the House by Mr Nott last night.

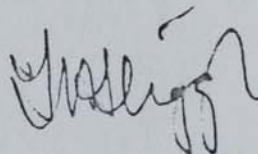
SINKING OF THE GENERAL BELGRANO

7. A Chilean vessel and Soviet fishing vessels near to the Falklands have been sent to help with rescue operations. Fresh reports say that some 680 survivors have been picked up so far.

/8.

SECRET

8. The MOD have confirmed with us that the Task Force ships will not interfere with rescue operations. (This is not for public consumption).



T H Steggle
Emergency Unit

5 May 1982

SECRET

Emergency Room - This is what we believe Mr Nett to have said this evening. It
NB: is not authoritative until confirmed by Hansard. *218-747*

Speaker,

a point order Mr Speaker - I would like to make a statement:

In my statement earlier today I said that we must expect further Argentine attacks on our forces. Mr Speaker, I deeply regret now to have to inform the House of such attacks.

In the course of its duties within the Total Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands, HMS SHEFFIELD, a Type 42 destroyer, was attacked and hit late this afternoon by an Argentine missile. The ship caught fire, which spread out of control. The order was then given to abandon ship.

There were accompanying vessels in the immediate area which picked up those who abandoned ship nearly all the ships company and the Captain are accounted for. However, I regret to say that initial indications are that 12 men are missing, and there are likely to be other casualties.

Communications with the operational area are difficult at present and this information must be treated as provisional until further reports are received.

Next of kin will of course be informed first, as soon as full details are received.

Further air operations were also conducted over the Falkland Islands today. In the course of Sea Harrier attacks, one of our aircraft was shot down. The pilot has been killed. His name will be announced after we have confirmation that his nex of kin have been informed. All the other Sea Harriers returned safely.

The Task Force is continuing with its operations as planned