

(F.I's)

Barker

Prime Minister

INTERVIEW BY CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BARKER RN,
COMMANDING OFFICER OF HMS ENDURANCE

1. We discussed this yesterday.
2. Herewith Memorandum of today's
date which Aubrey Buxton has prepared
and sent round.

25th June 1982

IAN GOW

Interview with Captain Barker - Private report by Chairman of ITN

I was mystified when this occurred on TV and radio because I knew that an ITN interview with Captain Barker would have been impossible. (It was not claimed by ITN as such, but referred to on BBC radio as "an ITN interview".)

On Board Endurance from February to April was a free-lance director called John Tippey with a sound/camera crew, contracted by MOD to make a second feature cinema film on the Navy. They had no connection at any time with ITN or television.

Tippey's contract with MOD expired at the end of March and they were due to leave Stanley for Montevideo on Endurance on March 21, and then fly home. But Endurance was ordered back to South Georgia on March 21 and Tippey and crew went with her.

Apparently Tippey took the view (and I believe MOD also) that all film and sound taken after the termination of his contract, belonged rightfully to Tippey, (although the crew were still aboard Endurance). Accordingly when Tippey finally arrived back via Ascension in the middle of April, he immediately offered and sold his additional material to ITN, who acquired it at once in a normal and proper manner. In fairness to everyone, the Government and the media were desperate for news footage and Tippey's shots of Grytviken etc. were greeted with open arms (just as Cindy's "war footage" was 4 weeks later).

No more was thought about this material in ITN until the recent debate about "invasion signs and warnings". Then some bright spark in the ITN editorial considered the Barker interview to be relevant and out it came.

I have taken issue with the Editor and we differ about the use of this interview on a number of aspects:

- (i) the interview was recorded 3 months ago and had a somewhat different significance at that time;
- (ii) I much regret the use of the interview from my own standpoint, but if I was a member of the opposition I would have objected equally to its suppression;
- (iii) I want to make it clear that Captain Barker never knew that what he was doing would be used in this way (he thought it would be considered for use in an MOD film in due course);
- (iv) I therefore think Barker has been wrongly presented out of context and he might be invited by telephone to update his opinions. If it helps I would be prepared to talk to him.

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IN CONFIDENCE

29th June 1982

Thank you very much for having sent to me a copy of your letter of yesterday's date, addressed to the First Sea Lord, which I have shown to the Prime Minister.

IAN GOW

The Lord Buxton of Alsa MC DL

Has Captain
Barker made any

comment about the

use of this

interview? not

Mr Gow.

I am afraid that the MOD have had difficulty in establishing the facts with Captain Barker because, of course, he is still in the S. Atlantic. From the answer to the Prime Minister's question is that he says that he did not know that the witnesses were in fact Clive Whitmore to the use of the ITN name of it. It is, however, worth being in mind that since the end of the Falkland operation he has not shown much reluctance to get into the headlines again.

CAPTAIN NICHOLAS BARKER

Neil

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1. Herewith copy letter dated 28th June which was sent to the First Sea Lord by Aubrey Buxton, plus copy of my reply.
2. Could you very kindly let the Prime Minister know, please, the answer to the question which she has asked?

1st July 1982

IAN GOW