

GPS 540
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FROM PORT STANLEY 231330Z AUG

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TO PRIORITY FCO TEL NO 234 CF 23 AUGUST

MY TEL NO 179: FALKLANDS SITREP

1. DESPITE THE RETURN OF SNOW AND GALE-FORCE WINDS, THE GOOD PROGRESS REPORTED IN TUR IS CONTINUING. WE NOW HAVE A MOST EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MILITARY, STANLEY IS LOOKING CLEANER AND BRIGHTER, 7 OF THE DAMAGED GOVERNMENT HOUSES HAVE BEEN FULLY REPAIRED AND PWD ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON 12 OTHERS. THERE ARE ALSO THREE CONTRACT GANGS WORKING ON DAMAGED PRIVATE HOUSES.

2. THE COMMAND SECRETARY AND HIS TEAM HAVE SETTLED IN AND THE CLAIMS OFFICER HAS ALREADY AUTHORISED BETWEEN £80,000 AND £90,000 IN COMPENSATION CLAIMS. THE LANDS OFFICER IS READY TO START NEGOTIATING LEASES FOR LAND AND BUILDINGS OCCUPIED AND DUE TO BE OCCUPIED BY THE MILITARY AND WILL BE ADDRESSING EX CO ON THE SUBJECT THIS WEEK.

3. THANKS TO PEOPLE SHARING THEIR PEAT STOCKS, NO ONE HAS YET RUN OUT. ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF HEATING AND COOKING FOR THE FEW WHO ARE DEPENDENT ON GAS ARE BEING PROVIDED AND WE ARE NOW REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT NO ONE WILL BE WITHOUT SOME SORT OF FUEL BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE AES IN MID-SEPTEMBER.

4. ACCOMMODATION REMAINS THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEM IN STANLEY. THERE ARE SOME 1,400 MILITARY STILL IN TOWN AND IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THIS FIGURE WILL BE REDUCED UNTIL THE TURN OF THE YEAR. AS YOU KNOW, WE ARE ALSO INCREASING

THE CIVILIAN POPULATION BY RECRUITING KEY PERSONNEL FROM THE UK, ~~AND~~ THE SITUATION IS LIKELY TO BE TIGHT FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. TO LIGHTEN THE BURDEN ON THE ADMINISTRATION AND AVOID UNNECESSARY FRICTION, WE HAVE TAKEN OVER ACCOMMODATION LIAISON WITH THE MILITARY FOR THE TIME BEING.

5. STANLEY AIRPORT CLOSED AS SCHEDULED ON 14 AUGUST AND WORK IS PROGRESSING WELL, DESPITE THE INCLEMENT WEATHER. ALL MILITARY ENGINEERING RESOURCES ARE NOW DEVOTED TO THE AIRPORT. ENGINEERS ARE WORKING A 24 HOUR DAY THREE HOURS ON AND NINE OFF,, TO GET THE ALUMINIUM CLADDING LAID BY 28 AUGUST. IT IS A MOST IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE AND I CANNOT PRAISE THE SAPPERS TOO HIGHLY. THE SUCCESSFUL DROP AND SNATCH OF MAIL BY HERCULES HAS BEEN A GOOD MORALE BOOSTER AND AGAIN I CANNOT PRAISE THE HERCULES CREWS TOO HIGHLY. THERE IS OF COURSE KEEN INTEREST IN THE SITING, SIZE AND CAPABILITY OF A POSSIBLE SECOND AIRPORT.

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6. I AM MANAGING TO VISIT THE SETTLEMENTS AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK AND IN ALL CASES I FIND MORALE HIGH AND GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ISLANDERS AND THE MILITARY. THE EMERGENCY^C RESUPPLY OPERATION ORGANISED BY THE NAVY HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND THE FORREST AND MONSUNEN ARE NOW OPERATING NORMALLY (THOUGH THE MONSUNEN IS OVERDUE FOR HER REGULAR OVERHAUL IN PUNTA ARENAS AND WILL HAVE TO GO WITHIN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS). AIR SERVICES TO THE REMOTER SETTLEMENTS ARE STILL A DIFFICULT PROBLEM AND THE NEWS OF THE PURCHASE OF A BEAVER AIRCRAFT WAS MOST WELCOME. WE HOPE THAT IT CAN BE FLOWN DOWN HERE AND PUT INTO OPERATION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

7. WITH THE HELP OF THE MILITARY, THE FALKLAND ISLANDS BROADCASTING SERVICE HAVE IMPROVED THEIR TRANSMISSIONS WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW VHF TRANSMITTER AND LONGER BROADCASTING HOURS.

8. FINALLY, ON A LIGHTER NOTE, THE FOOTBALL FIELD HAS BEEN RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL FUNCTION AND CIVILIANS AND THE MILITARY ARE BOTH PLAYING REGULAR MATCHES. OUR ROADS ARE CLUTTERED BY JOGGERS PREPARING FOR THE OCTOBER HALF-MARATHON.

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*We can discuss at
ODFAF on Wednesday.*

ms A.S.C. 26/7

1. THE LAST FEW DAYS HAVE SEEN THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW MILITARY COMMISSIONER AND THE QUEENS OWN HIGHLANDERS AND THE DEPARTURE OF THE WELSH GUARDS AND GURKHAS. WE ARE NOW MOVING FROM THE AD HOC ARRANGEMENTS OF A LIBERATION FORCE TOWARDS A MORE STRUCTURED ARRANGEMENT WITH A PERMANENT GARRISON.
2. THERE CONTINUES TO BE EXCELLENT PROGRESS IN SETTLEMENTS. COOPERATION BETWEEN COMPANY COMMANDERS AND FARM MANAGERS HAS INVARIABLY BEEN EXEMPLARY. THE MILITARY ARE HELPING TO REPAIR BUILDINGS, ESSENTIAL SERVICES, FENCES ETC. THERE HAVE BEEN PROBLEMS IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF FUEL, BUT THE ROYAL NAVY ARE NOW ENSURING THAT ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES GET THROUGH UNTIL THE SUPPLY SHIP MONSUNEN, DAMAGED IN THE FIGHTING, CAN BE PUT BACK INTO SERVICE. OF LONGER TERM CONCERN IS INTERNAL AIR COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING THE DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF MAIL). THE MILITARY CONTINUE TO GIVE HELICOPTER LIFTS TO CIVILIANS WHENEVER THESE CAN BE FITTED IN WITH OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS BUT THE NUMBER OF HELICOPTERS IS RAPIDLY RUNNING DOWN. IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT THERE CAN BE EARLY PROGRESS ON RESTORING THE FALKLAND ISLAND GOVERNMENT AIR SERVICE. (I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANY NEWS FURTHER TO MY TEL NO 051).
3. THE SITUATION IN STANLEY INEVITABLY REMAINS MORE COMPLICATED. THE TOWN IS STILL SUBMERGED BY THE MILITARY AND THE PRESSURE ON ACCOMMODATION REMAINS THE DAILY HEADACHE. OVER 1,400 SOLDIERS ARE BILLETED (LODGED WOULD BE THE BETTER WORD, AS NOBODY HAS BEEN MADE TO TAKE A SOLDIER IN AGAINST HIS OR HER WISH) IN A TOWN IN WHICH THERE ARE ONLY 350 HOUSES. 1,800 MORE COME IN DAILY FROM THEIR ACCOMMODATION ON SHIPS AND THERE ARE ALMOST 500 MORE AT THE AIRPORT. THE SHORTAGE OF SOLID FUEL (MY TEL NO 045) IS BECOMING SERIOUS FOR CIVILIANS AND KEROSENE AND PROPANE GAS ARE ALSO SCARCE (MY TEL NO 092). (GRATEFUL TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WHEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HELP). ESSENTIAL SERVICES ARE BEING MAINTAINED. WITH MILITARY HELP THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IS NOW SECURE BUT THE WATER SUPPLY REMAINS PRECARIOUS—THE RESERVOIRS WERE EMPTIED LAST WEEK AFTER ANOTHER MAJOR PIPE BURST. (THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT WE MUST RE-CONSTRUCT THE ENTIRE WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM AND I SHALL BE TELEGRAPHING SEPARATELY ON THIS).
4. THERE REMAINS AN AIR OF LETHARGY AMONG THE CIVILIAN POPULATION IN STANLEY. THE SECRETARIAT, A LARGELY INEFFECTIVE TEAM EVEN BEFORE THE INVASION, HAS SO FAR PROVED INADEQUATE FOR THE DIFFICULT TASKS THEY NOW FACE. THERE IS A TENDENCY TO GIVE UP THE STRUGGLE, PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE ENORMITY OF THE PROBLEMS AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE INEVITABLE DIFFICULTIES OF FINDING A WAY TO THE APPROPRIATE

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MILITARY AUTHORITIES, WHO HAVE BEEN COMING AND GOING BEWILDERINGLY FAST. TOO MANY PEOPLE ARE TOO READY TO SIT BACK AND WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO CLEAR UP THE MESS. THIS IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF WHAT LORD SHACKLETON CALLED ISLANDERS' "DEPENDENCY MENTALITY". THERE IS STILL TOO MUCH BACK-BITING ABOUT WHO STAYED AND WHO LEFT DURING THE OCCUPATION.

5. THE SAPPERS ARE WORKING FLAT OUT ON THE AIRPORT AND CLEARANCE OF MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS. THE INFANTRY HAVE BEEN HELPING IN THE TOWN AND ARE READY TO DO MORE. THE MILITARY ARE HOWEVER RIGHTLY CONSCIOUS OF THE DANGERS OF TAKING OVER HERE COMPLETELY (AS THEY WOULD HAVE DONE IN AN OCCUPIED TOWN IN ENEMY TERRITORY). I HAVE TAKEN THE LINE THAT THE QUICKEST WAY TO RESTORE NORMALITY IS TO KICK AWAY THE CRUTCHES SUPPORTING THE CIVIL POPULATION SO THAT THEY HAVE TO STAND ON THEIR OWN FEET: BUT IF WE DO THIS TOO FAST THE PATIENT MAY COLLAPSE.

6. BUT I DO NOT WISH TO PAINT TOO GLOOMY A PICTURE OF STANLEY. MORALE IS LOW BUT THIS IS BECAUSE OF IMMEDIATE PRACTICAL UNCERTAINTIES OVER FUEL, COMMUNICATIONS, ETC. ONLY ONE OR TWO ISLANDERS ARE YET TALKING OF LEAVING FOR GOOD. RELATIONS WITH THE MILITARY REMAIN BY AND LARGE EXCELLENT AND THERE IS A WILLING ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEED WHATEVER THE DISLOCATION TO CONTINUE TO FIND BILLETTS FOR THEM FOR THE NEXT FIVE OR SIX MONTHS. THERE IS A REALISTIC APPRECIATION THAT REHABILITATION WILL TAKE A LONG TIME. BUT TO RESTORE MORALE I DO NEED SOON TO BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE HARD FACTS ON COMPENSATION, COMMUNICATIONS (EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL), FUEL NEW ACCOMMODATION, FORCE LEVELS AND THE SITING OF THE PERMANENT GARRISON.

7. THERE IS LITTLE TALK AT PRESENT ABOUT THE FUTURE STATUS OF THE ISLANDS. WHAT THERE IS IS GENERATED LARGELY BY VISITING JOURNALISTS. THE LEG CO MOTIONS REPORTED IN MY TEL NO 099 WERE TABLED BY THE DISAFFECTED COUNCILLOR PECK, WHO HAS BORNE A GRUDGE AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT (PARTICULARLY EXPATRIATED) SINCE MY PREDECESSOR FORCED HIS RESIGNATION AS CHIEF POLICE OFFICER IN 1979. HE HAD A DISTINGUISHED WAR AND HAS MUSTERED SOME SUPPORT FOR AN ATTACK ON MYSELF, HIS FELLOW-COUNCILLORS AND THE ADMINISTRATION FOR "KEEPING THE PEOPLE IN THE DARK" AFTER THE NEW YORK TALKS. ESSENTIALLY, HE IS LOOKING BACKWARDS, NOT FORWARDS (THOUGH HE MAY FANCY HIS CHANCES AS THE FIRST ELECTED CHIEF MINISTER). HE DOES NOT REFLECT THE MAJORITY VIEW. YOU ARE, I BELIEVE, FOR THE MOMENT JUSTIFIED IN CONTINUING TO TAKE THE LINE THAT IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE THE ISLANDERS WILL ADDRESS THEMSELVES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR FUTURE. I SHALL REPORT FURTHER IF THIS WEEKS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PRODUCES POINTS OF INTEREST. HUNT

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