

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT BY ARGENTINA RADIO

"The military junta, as the supreme organ of the state, today informed the people of the Argentina nation that the republic, by means of its armed forces and by means of the successful realisation of a joint operation has recovered the Malvinas islands, Georgia and the South Sandwich for the nation. In this way it has assured the exercise of Argentina's sovereignty over all the territory of the afore-mentioned islands and the maritime and airspace corresponding to them. (It befalls?) all the country to understand the profound and unequivocal national significance of this decision so that collective responsibility and endeavour should accompany this undertaking and permit, with God's help, to turn into a reality a legitimate right of the Argentine people patiently and prudently postponed for almost 150 years. And now, from the White Room of Government House, his Excellency the President of the nation will address a message to the country in the name of the military junta. Lt. Gen. Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri will now speak."

NB Words in brackets were unclearly heard by the BBC.

Lieutenant General Galtieri:

"Compatriots, in the name of the military junta, in my capacity as President of the nation, I speak at this crucial, historic moment to all the inhabitants of our soil, in order to convey to them ^{(the basis of the resolution taken} ~~the grounds which vouchsafe a resolution)~~ [Sense of this is unclear - BBC Monitoring Service] the responsibility for which has been fully assumed by the Commanders and Officers of the Armed Forces who in this way interpret the profound sentiments of the Argentine people. We have recovered, safeguarding the national honour without resentment, but with firmness demanded by the circumstances, the southern islands which form part of the national heritage by legitimate right.

This decision was dictated by the need to put an end to the interminable succession of evasions and delays which have been used by Great Britain to perpetuate its rule over the islands and their zone of influence. This stance was considered by the national Government in the present circumstances as conclusive proof of its ^(i.e. Great Britain's) lack of good-will towards beginning serious negotiations, ^{(without delay} ~~and in the short term)~~ on the central object of the dispute and acknowledging, once and for all, that its alleged rights have no other origin than an act of plunder.

The situation which arose concerned the virtual ^{ultimatum} (~~summons~~) to a group of Argentines to leave the Georgia Islands, where this group were legally carrying out a joint task, and in which their legal situation was protected by agreements established in their time by the two countries. The despatch of a Naval Force and the peremptory conclusion it wished to impose are clear demonstrations that it (note: Britain) is persisting in facing the question with arguments based on force and only sees a solution in the straightforward repudiation of Argentine interests. In the face of this unacceptable claim, the Argentine Government cannot have any other response than the one it has just made, in the realm of deeds.

The Argentine position does not represent any kind of aggression for the present inhabitants of the Islands, whose rights and way of life will be respected with the same generosity as were those of the peoples liberated during our memorable exploits of emancipation. But we cannot yield before the intimidatory deployment of British forces, who, far from having used the peaceful channels of diplomacy, have threatened the indiscriminate use of this force.

Our forces will only act to the extent strictly necessary. They will not disturb in any way the life of the inhabitants of the Islands. On the contrary, they will protect the institutions and persons who co-exist with us, but they will not tolerate any abuse of the territory of the Islands or the mainland.

The important step which we have just taken was done without taking any political calculations into account. It has been taken in the name of each and every Argentine citizen without distinguishing sectors or factions and with our minds set on all the Governments, institutions and persons which in the past without exceptions and for 150 years have struggled for the defence of our rights. I am aware, and we acknowledge it with great emotion, that the entire country is already expressing the joy of a new achievement and is getting ready to defend what belongs to it, heedless of sacrifice, which we will possibly make or with sectional problems which, no matter how understandable they may be, will never be placed before the supreme national interests where the existence or non-existence of the fatherland is at stake.

With Christian faith I pray that those who are today our adversaries may understand in time their error and may deeply reflect before persisting in a position which is rejected by all the free people's in the world and by all those who had their territory mutilated and endured colonialism and exploitation. With Christian faith I pray for our men deployed to the Southern Seas, for your children, husbands, fathers, soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers who make up the front lines of an effort which will not stop until final victory is achieved. Invoking the protection of God and his Holy Mother, let us all commit ourselves to complying with our duty like the generations of the past century ^{who did} ~~should but~~ not mind harsh weather, long distances, disease or poverty when it came to defending freedom.

By taking part in Belgrano's liberating men to Paraguay, in whose missions to the upper Peru - beyond the mountains - along the Pacific Coast with General San Martin as their leader or to the desert, they did not hesitate in leaving their families and comfort whether they have much or little. Is our generation capable of emulating their example? Or are we not capable of doing so? I believe in you. We must all believe in ourselves and together raise our national banner high as a symbol of freedom so that it can wave sovereignly and definitively over our great fatherland.

This will not prevent us from persisting in our tradition as a peace-loving nation and from respecting all world nations, nor will it prevent us from resuming, through friendly gestures stimulating from our natural generosity, dignifying diplomatic negotiations which may give an institutional basis to the situation which we have achieved, clearly safeguarding those legitimate interests we have always respected. Our arms will always be extended to conclude noble commitments and to forget past offences for the sake of building a peaceful future for the civilised world.

Glory to the great Argentine people. May this be God's will.