

43. Situation Report Prepared by the Department of State Falkland Islands Working Group¹

Washington, April 2, 1982

Situation Report No. 1

Situation in Falkland Islands as of 0600 EST

1. Argentine press reports invasion of Falkland Islands began at 0400 EST April 2.² There is no official confirmation, but UK FCO reports it has lost communications contact with Port Stanley.³ However, HMG thus far is saying "that no invasion has taken place."

2. At the urgent request of the British, the Security Council met evening of April 1. UK permrep said that an Argentine force was heading for the Falklands and an invasion could occur as early as the next morning. Both sides presented their versions of the long-disputed sovereignty of the Falkland Islands and the dependencies of South Shetlands and South Georgia Islands. The President of the Council read a statement previously accepted or acquiesced in by all members which expressed concern and called on the two governments to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from use or threat of force in the region. The US rep supported the President's statement as did the UK rep.⁴

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330-84-0003, Argentina (Jan-15 May) 1982. Confidential.

² At 9:40 a.m. Buenos Aires time, the Argentine Junta released an official statement announcing the commencement of the operation. According to an Embassy translation of the statement, the "combined operation" was launched "with the objective of recovering for the national patrimony the territories of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands." (Telegram 1917 from Buenos Aires, April 2; Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820175-0906)

³ Ure informed the Embassy in London at 11:30 local time (GMT + 1 hour) that the U.K. Government had "lost communications contact with Port Stanley because of technical and weather problems, was trying to patch in a link through HMS *Endurance*, and was not sure at that moment whether the Argentines had landed." Ure added that he planned to telephone Henderson and instruct him to ask Haig to issue a "prompt, public condemnation of Argentine military action if it were confirmed, and to request U.S. help in getting other countries to condemn the aggression and to call for a withdrawal of troops and a cessation of hostilities." (Telegram 7330 from London, April 2; Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Europe and Soviet Union, United Kingdom (04/01/1982-07/31/1982 (3)) For an account of Henderson's April 2 morning meeting with Haig, see Document 46.

3. The British have notified us they are contemplating using Wide-awake Air Force Base on British-owned Ascension Island to debark limited number of personnel for transfer to navy ship. We believe this is a courtesy notification, but are checking.

4. We are telling the press the US strongly supports the UN Security Council's call for the exercise of the utmost restraint and avoidance of the use of or threat of force.⁵

Robert E. Service

Falkland Islands Working Group

Richard W. Erdman

Senior Watch Officer

⁴ For a summary of the Security Council meeting of April 1, including the text of the UNSC President's statement, see *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1982, p. 1320.

⁵ The White House issued a statement at the daily news briefing, which began at 12:40 p.m. See *Public Papers: Reagan, 1982*, Book I, p. 411.