

ds
4



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 April 1982

You asked me if we could let your Secretary of State have a copy of any paper which the Prime Minister used as a basis for answering Questions about the timetable of recent events in relation to the Falkland Islands.

I enclose a copy of the paper we prepared for the Prime Minister and which she used as a basis for replying to Questions on these matters in the House yesterday.

May I re-emphasise what I told you on the phone. This is a chronology of events as seen from the Prime Minister's office. Because it was prepared as a background for Questions and speeches, the classification has been limited to secret, and it is therefore not necessarily fully comprehensive. Nevertheless, we hope that it will help those involved in this afternoon's debate to be starting from a common point in respect of public comment on the sequence of events.

The paper should not be treated as a complete chronology of Government information on events, and it would therefore be sensible if you could return it to me after today's debate. I should be grateful if you could ensure that no copies are taken, and that it remains in the Private Office.

I am sending a copy to Brian Fall on the same basis. John Coles has already been in touch with him about his Secretary of State's speech, and we hope to be able to compare notes on timings with him before the text of Mr. Pym's speech is finalised.

M. A. PATTISON

S

Derek Piper, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

ILLEGAL LANDING ON SOUTH GEORGIA: CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

FRIDAY 19 MARCH: A BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY FIELD PARTY REPORT THAT AN ARGENTINE NAVY CARGO VESSEL IS ANCHORED IN LEITH HARBOUR. A PARTY OF ABOUT 60 ARGENTINES HAVE SET UP CAMP AND AN ARGENTINE FLAG HAS BEEN HOISTED.

SATURDAY 20 MARCH: THE BAS FIELD PARTY INFORMS THE ARGENTINES THAT THEY HAVE LANDED ILLEGALLY AND THAT THEY MUST LEAVE.

THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE INSTRUCT HMS ENDURANCE TO PREPARE TO SAIL TO SOUTH GEORGIA WITH A DETACHMENT OF MARINES FROM PORT STANLEY.

HM AMBASSADOR BUENOS AIRES INFORMS THE ARGENTINE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAT WE ARE TREATING THE INFRINGEMENT OF OUR SOVEREIGNTY VERY SERIOUSLY. THE ARGENTINE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IS CALLED IN TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND TOLD THE SAME. THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT PROFESS IGNORANCE BUT AGREE TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER URGENTLY.

SUNDAY 21 MARCH: HMS ENDURANCE DEPARTS FOR SOUTH GEORGIA. ARGENTINE MFA INFORM US THAT THE SHIP WILL LEAVE SOUTH GEORGIA SHORTLY AND THAT NO SERVICE PERSONNEL ARE INVOLVED.

MONDAY 22 MARCH: WE RECEIVE CONFIRMATION THAT THE SHIP HAS LEFT BUT THERE ARE DOUBTS ABOUT WHETHER ALL THE MEN HAVE GONE.

IN THE EVENING, BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY CONFIRM THAT ABOUT SIX MEN AND SOME EQUIPMENT REMAIN.

/ TUESDAY 23 MARCH

TUESDAY 23 MARCH: HMS ENDURANCE IS INSTRUCTED TO SAIL ON FOR SOUTH GEORGIA AND REMOVE THE MEN, IF POSSIBLE WITHOUT USING FORCE.

MR. LUCE MAKES A STATEMENT TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT LATER WARNS THAT USE OF HMS ENDURANCE WOULD BE GRAVELY PROVOCATIVE. THEY ARE TOLD WE WISH TO AVOID THIS IF POSSIBLE: IF THEY CAN PROPOSE AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF REMOVING THE MEN, WE ARE PREPARED TO LET THEM DO SO.

WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH: HMS ENDURANCE ORDERED TO ANCHOR IN GRYTVIKEN HARBOUR, BUT NOT TO PROCEED TO LEITH.

ARGENTINE MFA SAY THEY WISH TO PREVENT THE SITUATION ESCALATING IF POSSIBLE, BUT NEED TIME TO CONSIDER.

THURSDAY 25 MARCH: ARGENTINE NAVAL VESSEL IS SIGHTED AT LEITH DELIVERING FURTHER SUPPLIES.

WE ASK THE ARGENTINES FOR AN EARLY RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST THAT THEY REMOVE THE MEN.

ARGENTINE MFA THEN SAY THAT BY DEPLOYING HMS ENDURANCE WE HAVE MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO CONTAIN THEIR POSITION.

WE REPLY THAT WE WISH TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AND PROPOSE THAT IF THE PARTY REQUEST THE PROPER AUTHORISATION FROM GRYTVIKEN, IT WILL BE GIVEN.

FRIDAY 26 /
SATURDAY 27 MARCH:

NO FORMAL REPLY FROM THE ARGENTINE MFA. BUT THEY ISSUE A PRESS STATEMENT ANNOUNCING THAT THE MEN WILL BE GIVEN ALL NECESSARY PROTECTION AND THE PRESS REPORTS THAT SEVERAL ARGENTINE NAVY VESSELS HAVE BEEN ORDERED INTO THE AREA.

/ SUNDAY 28 MARCH

SUNDAY 28 MARCH:

ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER SENDS A MESSAGE TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE MAKING IT CLEAR THAT THE ARGENTINES HAVE NO INTENTION OF AGREEING TO OUR PROPOSAL.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE SENDS A MESSAGE TO MR. HAIG, ASKING HIM TO INTERVENE AND URGE RESTRAINT ON THE ARGENTINES.

MONDAY 29 MARCH:

CONVERSATION AT NORTHOLT.

TUESDAY 30 MARCH:

SECRETARY OF STATE MAKES STATEMENT IN HOUSE OF LORDS.

ARGENTINES REJECT US PROPOSAL FOR A SOLUTION BASED ON REGULARISING THE MEN'S PRESENCE.

WEDNESDAY 31 MARCH:

SECRETARY OF STATE SENDS MESSAGE TO COSTA MENDEZ PROPOSING THE DESPATCH OF AN EMISSARY.

WE RECEIVE INFORMATION * ~~~~~ * THAT ARGENTINE FLEET WILL BE GROUPING FOR PORT STANLEY ON 2 APRIL. PRIME MINISTER SENDS MESSAGE TO MR. REAGAN ASKING HIM TO INTERVENE.

THURSDAY 1 APRIL:

COSTA MENDEZ REJECTS PROPOSAL TO SEND EMISSARY AND SAYS DIPLOMATIC CHANNEL IS NOW CLOSED. ONLY REMAINING POINT OF DISCUSSION WOULD BE THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY TO ARGENTINA. PRESIDENT REAGAN REBUFFED BY GALTIERI.

UN SECRETARY GENERAL SUMMONS BRITISH AND ARGENTINE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO APPEAL TO BOTH TO REFRAIN FROM THE THREAT OR USE OF FORCE IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC.

AFTER RECEIVING FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT AN ARGENTINE ATTACK WAS IMMINENT, WE SEEK AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, WHICH RESULTS IN A PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT CALLING ON BOTH SIDES

* ~* Passage deleted and retained under Section 3(4).

Wayland
21 February 2012

/ TO REFRAIN

SECRET AND PERSONAL

TO REFRAIN FROM THE USE OF FORCE IN THE AREA,
THE UK PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AGREES; THE
ARGENTINE SAYS NOTHING.

WE UNDERTAKE INTENSIVE LOBBYING OF US AND EC
COUNTRIES ASKING THEM TO INTERVENE ON OUR BEHALF.
THE AMERICANS HAVE TAKEN ACTION AT THE HIGHEST
LEVEL BUT THE ARGENTINES REMAIN UNRESPONSIVE.

LAST MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM FALKLANDS (2155 HRS.
OUR TIME).

FRIDAY 2 APRIL:

ALL BST

0833 - TELEGRAM SENT TO FALKLANDS.

0845 - COMMUNICATIONS CEASE.

0945 - CABINET INFORMED THAT ARGENTINE INVASION
IMMINENT. DECIDE THAT NAVAL AND MILITARY
PREPARATIONS SHOULD CONTINUE AS PLANNED.

1100 - THE LORD PRIVY SEAL MAKES STATEMENT IN *Humphrey*
THE HOUSE EXPRESSING HMG'S GRAVE CONCERN AT *Monte*
SITUATION.

*Passage deleted and retained under
Section 3(4). O'Wayland*

21 February 2012

7.30pm FOLLOWING FURTHER REPORTS FROM MEDIA AND OTHERS,
CABINET DECIDES THAT NAVAL TASK FORCE SHOULD
SAIL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UK AND
ARGENTINA BROKEN OFF.

BRITISH OFFICIALS AND MARINES FLOWN FROM FALKLANDS
TO MONTEVIDEO.

MESSAGE FROM COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL TO
ALL COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT URGING
CONDEMNATION OF ARGENTINE ACTION.

/ MESSAGES

MESSAGES ALSO FROM PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN SECRETARY TO WIDE RANGE OF GOVERNMENTS.

UK CALLS IMMEDIATE MEETING OF SECURITY COUNCIL.

SATURDAY 3 APRIL:

DEBATE IN BOTH HOUSES. PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES THAT TASK FORCE WILL SAIL, ARGENTINE BALANCES IN THE UK HAVE BEEN FROZEN, AND ECGD COVER SUSPENDED.

PRESIDENT MITTERRAND TELEPHONES PRIME MINISTER. UN SECURITY COUNCIL CALLS BY 10 VOTES TO 1 WITH 4 ABSTENTIONS FOR ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL.

SUNDAY 4 APRIL:

BRITISH OFFICIALS AND MARINES EXPELLED FROM FALKLAND ISLANDS LEAVE MONTEVIDEO FOR UK.

WE RECEIVE CONFIRMATION THAT SOUTH GEORGIA HAS ALSO BEEN ATTACKED AND IS NOW IN ARGENTINE HANDS.

REPORTS THAT THE MARINES DEFENDING GRYTVIKEN HAVE INFLICTED CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE ON THE ARGENTINES.

WIDE RANGING DIPLOMATIC ACTION TO SECURE CONDEMNATION BY OTHER COUNTRIES OF ARGENTINE ACTION AND ALSO TO DISSUADE OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO TAKE ECONOMIC ACTION SIMILAR TO OUR OWN.

ORDER IN COUNCIL PROVIDING FOR REQUISITIONING OF SHIPPING.

MONDAY 5 APRIL:

GOVERNOR, STAFF AND MARINES ARRIVE BACK IN THE UK. DEBRIEFINGS AND PRESS CONFERENCE.

TASK FORCE DEPARTS FROM THE UK.

WIDE RANGING TRADE SANCTIONS ANNOUNCED.

BRITISH CITIZENS ADVISED TO CONSIDER LEAVING ARGENTINA (BBC WORLD SERVICE BROADCAST).

ILLEGAL LANDING ON SOUTH GEORGIA: CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 19 March: A British Antarctic Survey field party report that an Argentine Navy cargo vessel is anchored in Leith harbour. A party of about 60 Argentines have set up camp and an Argentine flag has been hoisted.
- 20 March: The BAS field party informs the Argentines that they have landed illegally and that they must leave.
- The Ministry of Defence instruct HMS Endurance to prepare to sail to South Georgia with a detachment of Marines from Port Stanley.
- HM Ambassador Buenos Aires informs the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs that we are treating the infringement of our sovereignty very seriously. The Argentine Charge d'Affaires is called in to the Foreign Office and told the same. The Argentine Government profess ignorance but agree to look into the matter urgently.
- 21 March: HMS Endurance departs for South Georgia.
- Argentine MFA inform us that the ship will leave South Georgia shortly and that no service personnel are involved.
- 22 March: We receive confirmation that the ship has left but there are doubts about whether all the men have gone.
- News Department issue statement on incident.
- In the evening, BAS confirm that about six men and some equipment remain.
- 23 March: HMS Endurance is instructed to sail on for South Georgia and remove the men, if possible without using force.
- Mr Luce makes a statement to the House of Commons.
- Argentine Government later warns that use of HMS Endurance would be gravely provocative. They are told we wish to avoid this if possible: if they can propose an acceptable alternative method of removing the men, we are prepared to let them do so.

24 March:

HMS Endurance ordered to anchor in Grytviken harbour, but not to proceed to Leith.

Argentine MFA say they wish to prevent the situation escalating if possible, but need time to consider.

25 March:

Argentine naval vessel is sighted at Leith delivering further supplies.

We ask the Argentines for an early response to our request that they remove the men.

Argentine MFA then say that by deploying HMS Endurance we have made it impossible for them to contain their position.

We reply that we wish to do everything possible to avoid confrontation and propose that if the party request the proper authorisation from Grytviken, it will be given.

26-27 March:

No formal reply from the Argentine MFA. But they issue a press statement announcing that the men will be given all necessary protection and the press reports that several Argentine Navy vessels have been ordered into the area.

28 March:

Argentine Foreign Minister sends a message to the Secretary of State making it clear that the Argentines have no intention of agreeing to our proposal.

The Secretary of State sends a message to Mr Haig, asking him to intervene and urge restraint on the Argentines.

30 March:

Secretary of State makes statement in House of Lords.

Argentines reject US proposal for a solution based on regularising the men's presence.

31 March: Secretary of State sends message to Costa Mendez proposing the despatch of an emissary.

We receive information* ~~~~~* that Argentine fleet will be grouping for Port Stanley on 2 April. Prime Minister sends message to Mr Reagan asking him to intervene.

1 April: Costa Mendez rejects proposal to send emissary and says diplomatic channel is now closed. Only remaining point of discussion would be the transfer of sovereignty to Argentina.

UN Secretary General summons British and Argentine Permanent Representatives to appeal to both to refrain from the threat or use of force in the South Atlantic.

After receiving further evidence that an Argentine attack was imminent, we seek an Emergency meeting of the Security Council, which results in a presidential statement calling on both sides to refrain from the use of force in the area. The UK Permanent Representative agrees; the Argentine says nothing.

We undertake intensive lobbying of US and EC countries asking them to intervene on our behalf. The Americans have taken action at the highest level but the Argentines remain unresponsive.

2 April: The Lord Privy Seal makes statement in the House of Commons at 1100 expressing HMG's grave concern at the situation.

* ~~~~~ *

* ~* Passages deleted and retained under Section 3(4).

Wayland

21 February 2012