

RESTRICTED

SAPU(82) 10

SOUTH ATLANTIC PRESENTATION UNIT

The attached paper issued at 1800 hours on 28 April 1982 contains suggested lines to take on the following:

1. Mr Haig's proposals
2. Total Exclusion Zone
3. Death of Argentine prisoner
4. International Opinion
5. Statement by UN Secretary General

Cabinet Office
28 April 1982

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LINE TO TAKE

1. Mr Haig's Proposals

The American Government put their formal proposals to the Argentine Government yesterday. They have now given us the text. The proposals are under consideration.

Are the proposals addressed to both sides?

- Both sides have the text and the proposals are under consideration. The crucial decision is whether the Argentine Government will agree to withdraw all its forces from the Falkland Islands in accordance with SCR 502.

What are the proposals?

- They are developed from the ideas which emerged from Mr Haig's "shuttle". The important difference is that they are now, for the first time, put to Buenos Aires with the full authority of the United States.

Is it true that the Americans have given Argentina an ultimatum?

- We understand that Mr Haig has made it clear that he expects an early response from Argentina.

2. Total Exclusion Zone (TEZ)

This will be in force from ¹²⁰⁰1100 Friday London time and will cover the same area as the Maritime Exclusion Zone. All ships and aircraft (including aircraft on the ground in the Falklands) operating in support of the Argentine forces will be liable to attack. It is a natural extension of the Maritime Exclusion Zone intended to cut all supply to Argentine occupying forces. We are continuing to seek a peaceful solution but Argentines have shown no sign of complying with Security Council Resolution after three weeks - so we must further step up pressure.

Will you attack merchant ships/civil aircraft/neutrals?

- Our intention is to deny all support to occupying forces. Therefore all ships and aircraft are liable to be attacked if they enter the zone without our authority.

Will the Islanders now starve?

- Naturally concerned about Islanders who remain our primary consideration. But they are largely self-supporting for basic foods.

3. Death of Argentine Prisoner

Incident took place on 26 April on South Georgia. Brazilian government has already been asked to inform the Argentines. Few details available. Board of Inquiry, required by Geneva convention, has been set up already. Will be completed as soon as possible.

4. International Opinion

There have been some most encouraging signs of continuing support for Britain in the last 24 hours:

(a) as Mr Pym said after the meeting of the Ten Foreign Ministers in Luxembourg yesterday our partners continue to be most robust despite the problems that unqualified support for Britain can cause them (large numbers of citizens living in Argentina, major commercial interests, etc)

(b) United States public opinion remains fully behind Britain and the reaction to the British Ambassador's regular appearances on US television confirms this. Resolutions are today being introduced in both Houses of Congress urging full US diplomatic support for Britain "in its efforts to uphold the rule of law".

(c) At the OAS meeting in Washington which concluded early this morning the Argentines got nothing like the degree of support they were looking for. It is true that the resolution (on which US, Chile, Colombia and Trinidad abstained) confirmed majority support for Argentine sovereignty over the Falklands, called on Britain to cease hostilities and deplored EC sanctions. All this was to be expected; but significantly it also insisted that all the terms of Security Council Resolution 502 be fulfilled (ie including the demand to Argentina to withdraw from Falklands), and called on Argentina to refrain from taking action that may exacerbate the situation. In explanation of vote several Ministers made telling comments eg. the Colombian complained that the meeting had been "an exercise in futility: in truth Argentina had committed an act of aggression and had abused the inter-American system by seeking to invoke the Rio Treaty".

5. Statement by the Secretary General of the UN (Mr Foot's Remarks in the House)

The Secretary General's statement was a low key statement put out by his press secretary ie. it had no formal status and was in no sense a major statement. But given the interest that it aroused the British Ambassador called on the Secretary General on the evening of 26 April and made it clear that any suggestion in his statement that the British Government had failed to comply with SCR 502 was unacceptable. It was Argentina which was in breach of the resolution. There was no question of Britain having acted aggressively or having in any way breached the terms of the resolution or having caused a breach of international peace and security. The Secretary General took these points.