

COS 7TH MEETING/82

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

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MINUTES of a Meeting held in Room 5301, Ministry  
of Defence, Main Building, Whitehall,  
on TUESDAY 6 APRIL 1982 at 9.30 am

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PRESENT

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Terence Lewin,  
Chief of the Defence Staff

Admiral Sir Henry Leach,  
Chief of the Naval Staff

General Sir Edwin Bramhall,  
Chief of the General Staff

Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Beetham,  
Chief of the Air Staff

ALSO PRESENT

The Rt Hon John Nott MP  
Secretary of State for Defence  
(Item 1 only)

Air Chief Marshal Sir David Evans,  
Vice Chief of the Defence Staff  
(Personnel and Logistics)

Lieutenant General Sir James Glover,  
Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff  
(Intelligence)

Air Vice-Marshal J A Gilbert,  
Assistant Chief of the Defence  
Staff (Policy)

Rear-Admiral D W Brown,  
Assistant Chief of the Defence  
Staff (Operations)

Colonel D J Milton,  
Representing the  
Assistant Chief of the Defence  
Staff (Signals)

Colonel M M S Finnis,  
Representing the  
Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff  
(Personnel and Logistics)

Brigadier R E L Jenkins,  
Director Defence Operational  
Movements Staff

Sir Frank Cooper,  
Permanent Under Secretary

Mr I S McDonald,  
Deputy Chief of Public Relations

Mr P R H Wright,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

SECRETARIAT

Brigadier J A C G Eyre  
Captain J E S Raymond RN  
Lieutenant Colonel W S Bale  
Wing Commander A M Wills  
Lieutenant Colonel J B R Peacock  
Commander M Bickley

C O N T E N T S

PART I - ITEMS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING

- 1-7 (1) OPERATION CORPORATE  
8-9 RECORDED IN THE SECRETARY'S STANDARD FILE  
10 (1) GIBRALTAR

PART II - ITEMS DEALT WITH PRIOR TO THE MEETING

N11

Note:

1. Issued as a Confidential Annex.

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COS 7TH MEETING/82

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TO

COS 7TH MEETING/82 HELD ON  
TUESDAY 6 APRIL 1982 AT 9.30 amITEM 1. INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT

1. SIR TERENCE LEWIN (Chief of the Defence Staff) invited LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLOVER (Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Intelligence)) to update them on the situation in the Falkland Islands and South Georgia.

2. LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLOVER said that he was beginning to detect a change in the Argentine mood, with perhaps the first hint of apprehension following their invasion of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. He reported that the Chilean President and his Commanders-in-Chief had delayed their meeting, mentioned in his intelligence report (1) yesterday, until 2300 GMT today. Continuing, LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLOVER said that probably the Argentine Naval dispositions were now:

a. The carrier had a mechanical problem, was returning to Mar Del Plata and it was assumed that its escorts, 2 x Type 42s and the icebreaker, were in company.

b. The original landing group had now dispersed; the submarine Santa Fe was returning towards Argentina to refuel. The LST was possibly being used as an accommodation ship at Port Stanley, and the whereabouts of the destroyer was not known.

c. There was one merchant ship at South Georgia. The frigate GUERRICO, damaged by the Royal Marines during the initial attack on the Island, was in company with the BAHIA PARAISO. A report had been received which indicated she had the Argentine dead, wounded and a number of non-Argentine citizens on board. It appeared she was returning to Buenos Aires but would first call at Puerto Belgrano.

## Note:

1. COS 5th Meeting/82.

Part 1 to COS 7th Meeting/82  
6 April 1982

d. The two French built corvettes, which had been patrolling between South Georgia and the Falkland Islands, had redeployed, and now appeared to be patrolling at Latitude 50° South. Of the two German built submarines, one was coming out of Bahia Blanca and the other was still believed to be with the corvettes.

3. Continuing, LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLOVER said that in the Falkland Islands Argentine troops probably now numbered just over 3000; two portable air defence radars, with no fire control capability, had been installed at the airport; the carrier might have disembarked some helicopters; and the Army had some 105mm artillery and 81mm mortars ashore. Further to his report (2) yesterday, he said that further information had become available which indicated that the Argentines do not possess ROLAND.

4. Concluding, LIEUTENANT GENERAL GLOVER summarised the first debrief of the Royal Marines who arrived back in the United Kingdom yesterday. The Royal Marines had reported that:

a. Argentine intelligence had been excellent; they had known the names and numbers of all the Royal Marine personnel.

b. The jetty at Port Stanley was not entirely sound, but the port and airport facilities were intact.

c. The Argentine troops were young, inexperienced, appeared to have little initiative, and lacked determination under fire. Although they would try to dig in, they would have difficulty in the predominantly peat soil with its high water table.

5. In discussion, the following points were made:

a. The Argentine troops had effective communications, both tactical, and rear link to Buenos Aires.

b. A JIC assessment, and also an updated version of the paper on the Capabilities of the Argentine Armed Forces (3), would be available by midday today. The latter would be progressively updated as information became available.

Note:

2. COS 5th Meeting/82.
3. DCDS(I)/26.

Part I to COS 7th Meeting/82  
6 April 1982

- c. There were some indications that the Argentine marines, who had provided the main assault troops for the landing, were being withdrawn and that the garrison would now comprise mainly soldiers of the 9th Infantry Brigade.
  - d. Apart from the Intelligence debrief from the Royal Marines, a more general debrief was required.
  - e. The Argentine topographical intelligence appeared inadequate; their clothing was unsuitable; and these indicated some of the deficiencies of their plans.
  - f. The ability of the Port Stanley airfield to cope with heavy utilisation required urgent re-appraisal.
  - g. A comprehensive intelligence assessment of the air threat in the likely operations area was required.
6. MR PATRICK WRIGHT (FCO Defence Department) said that international reaction varied widely. He informed the Committee that:

- a. United States. President Reagan's performance on American television last night had been equivocal in that he had felt obliged to stress his friendship with both countries involved in the dispute. The Organisation of American States would be meeting in Washington today with the Argentine representative being the sole speaker, and there was a strong possibility that Argentina would try to invoke the Rio Treaty.
- b. Soviet Union. The Soviet attitude was unclear in that they appeared to be having difficulty in establishing a policy; they were most unlikely to take any lead and they might well try to delay for as long as possible before tacitly accepting the United Kingdom's actions.
- c. South America. Chile had deplored Argentine action and had supported the United Kingdom so far; Brazil appeared intentionally ambiguous; Ecuador had indicated that they had received intelligence that Argentina was prepared to negotiate and had the best intentions.
- d. Africa. Constructive help for refuelling had been offered by Senegal and Sierra Leone.

7. In discussion following the briefing on international reactions it was agreed that an approach should be made to establish Brazil's attitude to permitting Nimrod reconnaissance to be made from one of her Southern airfields, and to investigate the likelihood of her agreement to permit the refuelling of ships taken up from Trade. If necessary, the approach should make clear that the first priority was to obtain permission to fly Nimrod reconnaissance.

ITEM 2. PUBLIC RELATIONS

8. MR McDONALD (Deputy Chief of Public Relations) reported three main themes in today's newspapers; the political scene; the departure of the Task Force; and the return of the Governor and the party of Royal Marines from the Falklands. The requisition of the CANBERRA had been well reported and without adverse comment.

9. Continuing, MR McDONALD said that a selection of reporters from all the major newspapers were travelling with the Task Force, together with representatives from BBC Television and Radio, ITN and IRN. It must be anticipated that there would be problems with the overloading of teleprinter inputs and the pressure which would be exerted by reporters trying to meet deadlines.

ITEM 3. DECISIONS REQUIRED

10. The Chiefs of Staff reviewed the forecast of decisions which had been identified (4). An updated forecast is attached at Annex.

ITEM 4. MILITARY APPRECIATION

11. The Committee discussed a revised draft (5) of the Military Appreciation which the Chief of the Defence Staff had given (6) to the Secretary of State after their meeting (7) the previous evening.

12. Summing up their discussion SIR TERENCE LEWIN said they would wish to instruct their Secretary to amend the paper in the light of their comments, and to circulate it for their agreement out of committee.

Notes:

4. COS 6th Meeting/82.
5. COS(Misc) 88/742/1 dated 5 April 1982.
6. CDS 2038/1 dated 5 April 1982.
7. COS 6th Meeting/82, Item 2.

Part 1 to COS 7th Meeting/82  
6 April 1982

Note by the Secretary

The Appreciation has been circulated (8).

ITEM 5. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR SSNs

13. The Committee discussed revised Rules of Engagement (9) for SSNs on Operation CORPORATE which took account of their previous comments (10).

14. Summing up SIR TERENCE LEWIN said they would wish to agree that he should invite the Secretary of State to agree that these Rules, amended in the light of their discussion, should be issued to HMS SPARTAN by midday the next day.

Note by the Secretary

The submission (11) has been forwarded.

ITEM 6. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

15. SIR FRANK COOPER (Permanent Under Secretary of State) said that a balance needed to be struck between the widest dissemination of information to the press and advice to the press on which information was sensitive. The subject was being investigated by his department and he undertook to keep the Committee informed.

ITEM 7. ARGENTINE COMMUNICATIONS

16. The Committee discussed the feasibility of jamming communications between the Argentine mainland and the Falkland Islands.

17. Summing up SIR TERENCE LEWIN said they would wish to instruct the Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Operations) in consultation with the Government Communications Headquarters to prepare a short paper on the jamming capabilities of the Task Force, ways in which this might be augmented, and the effect that this might have on Argentine communications.

Notes:

8. COS(Misc) 90/742/1 dated 6 April 1982.
9. COS S6(7) dated 6 April 1982.
10. COS 6th Meeting/82, Item 2.
11. CDS 2038/1/1 dated 6 April 1982.

OPERATION CORPORATE - FORECAST OF DECISIONS OR ACTIONS REQUIRED

ITEM	ARISING FROM COS MEETING	DECISION OR ACTION REQUIRED	BY	CONTINUED	CURRENT STATE
0001	2/82 Item 4 para 8a	ROE for SSNs.	Ministers	5/82 Item 5 6/82 Item 2 7/82 Item 5	With S of S
0002	2/82 Item 4 para 8a	Likely employment of SSNs	Ministers		COS to discuss
0003	2/82 Item 4 para 8b	Directive for Task Force Commander.	Ministers		ND have under review - can be signalled after Force sails. COS will need to discuss.
0004	2/82 Item 4 para 8b	Directive for Embarked Military Force Commander.	Ministers		ND have under review - can be signalled after Force sails. COS will need to discuss.
0006	2/82 Item 4 para 8d	Legal position of UK in dispute with Argentina.	Ministers	See also 0014	FCO are investigating
0007	2/82 Item 4 para 8e	Advice on evacuation of British Nationals (1000) from Argentina.	Ministers	TWC 5 April	FCO advise that this could be undertaken by routine civilian air services.



ITEM	ARISING FROM COS MEETING	DECISION OR ACTION REQUIRED	BY	CONTINUED	CURRENT STATE
0009	4/82 Item 3 para 11	Availability of Chilean airfields.	Ministers		FCO are investigating.
0012	4/82 Item 5	Clearance for staging facilities at Dakar, Freetown and Cape Verde.	FCO		Facilities at Dakar approved.
0014	4/82 Item 7 para 16	Clarification of legal aspects of Article 51 of UN Charter.	FCO	See also 0006	FCO are investigating.
0015	5/82 Item I para 7	Sale of Hunter aircraft to Chile.	FCO		FCO have despatched signal
0016	5/82 Item I para 7	Falkland Islands airfield.	DCDS(I)		COS Brief by DCDS(I) by 071200A Apr - (Out of Committee)
0019	Spare				
0022	5/82 Item 7	Delay Belize Withdrawal by 3 months.	VCDS(P&L)		Draft submission with CDS.

ITEM	ARISING FROM COS MEETING	DECISION OR ACTION REQUIRED	BY	CONTINUED	CURRENT STATE
0023	6/82 Item 1	Military Appreciation	COS	7/82 Item 5	For clearance Out of Committee
0024	6/82	FRG to delay FF delivery	FCO	7/82	FCO investigating
0025	7/82 Item 1	Record of RM debrief	DCDS(I)		DCDS(I) producing with CGRM.
0026	7/82 Item 1	Details of Argentine air threat.	DCDS(I)		DCDS(I) investigating.
0027	7/82 Item 1	Use of Brazilian airfield by Nimrods.	Ministers		FCO investigating.
0028	7/82 Item 1	Use of Brazilian ports.	Ministers		FCO investigating.
0029	7/82 Item 7	Argentine Communications	ACDS(Ops)		Prepare a paper
0030	7/82 Item 8	Intelligence matters	DCDS(I)		Not to all, nor needed

OPERATION CORPORATE - RECORD OF DECISIONS OR ACTION COMPLETED AND REMOVED FROM ANNEX A

ITEM	ARISING FROM COS MEETING	DECISION OR ACTION	FURTHER REFERENCES	COMPLETION
0005	2/82 Item 4 para 8c	Instructions for RFA FORT AUSTIN		By ND
0008	3/82 Item 4 para 11	Use of facilities at Ascension Island		PUS reports no difficulty with blanket use of facilities at Ascension
0010	4/82 Item 5	Movement of HMS ENDURANCE either East or West		ENDURANCE withdrawn to Ascension
0011	4/82 Item 5	Movement of Spearhead Bn and an SAS Sqn		Spearhead Bn to deploy with 3 Cdo Bde. SAS decision out of committee
0013	4/82 Item 6 para 15	Positioning of RM SBS	7/82 Item 4	1 section to embark FORT AUSTIN 1 section to embark CONQUEROR
0017	5/82 Item 1 para 7	Details of Argentina's ROLAND weapon systems	7/82 Item 1	DCDS(I) stated equipment not held
0018	5/82 Item 2 para 11	Swiss Government to be invited to represent interests of BAS civilians		FCO
0020	5/82 Item 6 para 19b	South Georgia		Included in Item 0023
0021	5/82 Item 5 para 17a	SSN Communications		S of S Briefed by ND

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ITEM 10. GIBRALTAR

21. The Committee discussed the possible need to take precautionary measures in Gibraltar if Spain should try to take advantage of the present situation in pursuit of her claim for sovereignty over Gibraltar.

SIR EDWIN BRAMALL informed them that he had recently spoken to the Governor of Gibraltar, who was reviewing extant reinforcement plans both in respect of the priority of reinforcement and to determine whether additional reinforcements such as MILAN detachments might be needed. The Governor intended to inform the Chief of the Defence Staff of any changes he considered necessary.

22. Summing up SIR TERENCE LEWIN said that they should be prepared to respond quickly to any request for reinforcements.

One page only

COS S10(9)

SECRET