

HYDROGRAPHIC SHIPS - HOSPITAL FERRIES.

PR LINE:-

"Three Hydrographic vessels are being used as hospital ships with the Falkland Islands Task Force. HMS Hydra and HMS Herald are at Portsmouth preparing for their basic role as casualty ferries between the area of operation and the larger hospital ships (Uganda and Canberra\*). HMS Hecla has left Gibraltar and is on her way to join the Task Force."

*Shirley*

DFC(N)

19.4.82 1030

Source DS5 Charles McLoughlin.

PS Hospital ships must, under the Geneva Convention, be declared to both sides ten days before being used.

\* May be declared - but has not been declared yet.

KARG - UPDATE ON PR LINE

PR Line

"We have no plans to use her".

41A

FALKLANDS ISLANDS - REQUISITIONING OF SHIPS

PR LINES

1. Europic Ferry. This ship is a North Sea roll-on roll-off ferry owned by Townsend Thorosen. She is 4190 gross registered tons and is being requisitioned for use with the Task Force. She is currently at Southampton undergoing minor modifications for her role.

2. Anco Charger. She is a tanker 15,974 gross registered tons and she will be chartered for use in the Falkland Islands operation. She is currently at Portsmouth. She is jointly owned by Ocean Transport & Trading and PO Line.

*Sm. Rec. at*

DPO(N)  
19.4.82 1130

Source: DS5

2 PARA GROUP

2 Parachute Group, which includes artillery, engineers, air and logistic personnel, are to embark on board the MV Norland at Hull, starting from mid-day today, Monday, and on the Europic ferry at Southampton on Wednesday.

Q. What equipment are they taking?

A. Their normal equipment. This includes helicopters and blowpipe air defence missiles.

Q. Who is replacing 2 PARA in 5 Bde?

A. Another battalion has joined 5 Bde and is training with the rest of the brigade in Wales. 5 Bde is the out of area brigade.

Q. Does this include the Gurkhas?

A. A gurkha battalion is part of the Brigade.

Q. 2 PARA was to go to Belize. Who replaces them?

A. 3 Royal Anglian.

Q. Are there any facilities at Hull and Southampton?

A. No.

*[Signature]*  
SPO(A)  
1135 19.4.82

Authority: ASD 2  
DPR(A)

45A

46A

FALKLAND ISLANDS - CRITERIA USED IN CHARTERING OR REQUISITIONING SHIPS

PR LINE

The Ministry of Defence policy on this matter is as follows:

- "a. If a ship is charterable and the charter is convenient for our purposes - we charter.
- b. If it is not charterable and we need the ship nonetheless - we requisition".

*Stu Reed.*

DPO(N)  
1600 19.4.82

PS: No company has offered any resistance to MOD attempts to requisition or charter any vessel (may be used).

FALKLAND ISLANDS - NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Lord Trenchard, answering an early question at question time in the House of Lords, made the following statement which we should use as a PR line and not go beyond it:

"There is no question, <sup>that</sup> that nuclear weapons are not applicable in the current situation in the Falkland Islands area".

FURTHER BACKGROUND

As with nuclear questions generally, we do not deny the capability but never ever confirm or deny the presence of nuclear weapons.

*Stu Reed.*

DPO(N)  
1620 19.4.82