

15/4

PRIME MINISTER

PRESS DIGEST

FALKLANDS

Treatment:

The press this morning stresses the near unanimity in Parliament; the decision to strengthen the Task Force; and Mr Haig's next trip to Buenos Aires.

- We fight if we must - Mirror; your message to nation is - our diplomacy is backed with strength - Express; War zone warning to junta - Telegraph; Britain remains committed to principle that wishes of Islanders are paramount - Guardian; and Mail features the expulsion of 35 Islanders at gunpoint.

News:

Expelled Britons say Islanders are waiting for us to come and save them.

Some calls in debate for stronger support from Americans.

- FT says We Back Britain badges are selling for \$1 a time in USA where Americans are almost unanimously behind John Bull.
- Mail says Haig is coming off fence. EC trade ban with Argentine will last for a month in the first instance.
- Guardian says 13 members of BAS and two women filmers have escaped captivity and are in hiding in interior of South Georgia.
- Times estimates there could be as many as 3 dozen Tory MPs who hold that Argentina should not benefit from aggression.

Arms:

- D/Star feature on Invincible and Sea Harrier.
- 29 Marines picked up in South Georgia expected to arrive in Argentine today.
- Row over claims that USA is spying for Britain.
- Argentine says Falklands have been made into an unassailable fortress.
- MoD denies Lord Wigg's claim that Hermes has run into mechanical trouble.
- Times says Perus and Bolivia have offered direct military aid to Argentina but FT says its neighbours are half-hearted.

Sport:

- Mail asks whether British teams will boycott World Cup because Argentina is playing in it - a Cabinet Committee considers issue.

Economic:

- Telegraph says a stream of encouraging UK economic and financial news is going by almost unnoticed; a successful diplomatic solution of Falklands dispute would bring sharp revival in financial markets.

- Russians trying to cash in on cruise trade because of requisitions.

COMMENT

- D/Star: asks misguided 10 Labour MPs who want Britain to withdraw whose side they are on.
- Sun You were at your best in Commons; gave eloquent voice to nation's unyielding determination; Foot and Owen offered statesman-like support and left to quivering Hart to preach appeasement.
- Mirror: Someone has got to climb down very soon and after debate it's got to be Argentina; everyone, including opponents of military action, agree they will have to leave.
- Express: Nation unites; opposition parties come together with Government; we achieve a national sense of purpose; uses extracts of your speech on feature page.
- Mail: Mrs T sticks to her guns; your speech refreshing for clear cut position; Argentine Government should now reflect on danger to tottering economy of EC trade embargo; if their original objective was to achieve a quick victory to divert attention from home problems it has failed.
- Paul Johnson says no one should be surprised Russians are helping Argentinians - they can't feed themselves.
- Telegraph: Yesterday's debate will have greatly encouraged Government but Opposition parties careful not explicitly to support use of force even though it makes sense to threaten its use only if we are prepared to do so if necessary.
- Guardian: Message from Labour and Alliance is clear - so long as strategy is diplomacy backed by strength we are with you; but if shooting starts and we get involved in bloody war with outlines of eventual settlement discernible, Government will be out on its own.
- Times: Unity in House over negotiation from strength but results may not be easy to achieve - or come early.
- FT: Debate can have left no doubt that practically the entire House is united behind Government policy; dispute has been turned into test of international order; if settled peacefully we shall have to thank Haig and UN which could then have new status.

OTHER NEWS

Unions/Pay

- NATSOPA and SOGAT to merge in July.
- Scanlon not to be reappointed to chair Engineering ITB in July.
- DHSS says NHS staff who took time off yesterday to protest over pay will lose an hour's wages.
- Sun hopes nurses won't depart from their high standards of dedication in row over pay.
- BBC news may be disrupted from tonight because of journalists' dispute over pay.

Education

- Lord Beloff says teachers' unions have done much to prevent raising of levels of State education; envy and revenge are behind campaign to destroy public schools.

- STOPP says Government could face £4bn bill if all parents whose children have been caned since 1960s sued for compensation - and it wants them to do so.
- NAS member claims teachers in riot areas deserve same pay rise as police; union to fight further cuts in educational spending and to strike in future, if arbitration not conceded.
- NUT commits itself to nuclear disarmament.
- BSC says more than 5,000 jobs will be created at Corby by 1984.
- American firm buys ACC's chain of 130 Classic Cinemas.
- Burmah Oil pre tax profits up 32%.

Race:

- Narayan barrister, who is facing investigation by Bar Council, to report to Attorney General and DPP to Council for racist attitudes before they took jobs.
- Sun feature on 4 West Indians who have made a success of business in spite of popular image that they are happy-go-lucky and won't work.

Law and Order:

- 168 men held in police cells because of warders at Wandsworth demand an end to overcrowding.
- Paintings worth £6.5m stolen from Mayfair house because someone fails to switch on burglar alarms.
- Michael Meacher, in D/Star, claims Government has more than 220 points that involve collecting and storing personal information on computers.
- Doctor claims they are increasingly involved in "convenience killing" of severely handicapped infants.

Ireland:

- Tyrie, self-styled commandant of UDA, and two others arrested when UDA HQ are raided.

Politics:

- Gallup shows Hillhead and Jenkins give SDP/Alliance a 4% fillip - 37%; Conservative 31.5%; Labour down 40% to 29%.

Local Authority:

- Strathclyde Council to see George Younger for acting illegally in restricting grant for past 2 years.

International:

- Middle East - Token strike by over a dozen Arab countries in protest against shooting in Jerusalem mosque.
- Canada - Queen arrives today for patriation celebrations.
- Pope - ceremonial entrance to Canterbury Cathedral cancelled by security adviser.
- China - Turns blind eye to US sale of arms spares to Taiwan.
- El Salvador - Christian Democrats seek new junta with army and right wing.
- Russia's record 44m tonnes grain imports to June 30.