

Leondee

STATEMENT TO THE PRESS BY MR PYM OUTSIDE 10 DOWNING STREET 2115 HRS
(APPROX) SATURDAY, 24 APRIL 1982

I reported to Mrs Thatcher this morning and I told you I would come back again this evening which I have done and we have been considering my time in Washington and what happened there with her and other colleagues. That's all I have to say tonight, thank you very much.

LATER, at approximately 2250 hrs as the Prime Minister was leaving 10 Downing Street for Chequers she was asked if she was still hopeful for a diplomatic solution. She replied ..." we're working for one, of course we are".

Ian Kydd

25 April, 1982

Scudde

C-19

STATEMENT BY MOD SPOKESMAN - 24.4.82 1200

"I regret to have to tell you that yesterday a Sea King helicopter from HMS Hermes ditched in the sea. The pilot was recovered but Petty Officer Air Crewman Kevin Stuart Casey is still missing despite an intensive search. His next of kin have been informed, he comes from Portland.

This sad occurrence is unfortunately one of the things which is not all that surprising with the amount of activities which are going on in a task force of this size."

Stu Reed

DPO (AV)

1300 24/4/82

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PRESS BRIEFING HELD ON 24 APRIL 1982 AT 1200

- Q. Only 2 people in a Sea King?
- A. It was a Sea King 4 and the normal complement for that is 1 pilot 1 crew.
- Q. Was the weather a factor?
- A. I do not know the details. There will be an enquiry.
- Q. When did this happen?
- A. The information I have is yesterday - 2200 our time.
- Q. Was the Petty Officer married?
- A. I think he was - we do not have any further details.
- Q. Has that held up Hermes?
- A. An intensive search took place but I cannot go further than that.
- Q. Any substantial Argentinian ships moved towards South Georgia?
- A. The majority of the Argentinian fleet had left harbour, and from time to time their dispositions change - in general they remain within their 200 mile zone along the Argentinian mainland coast. That is still the position.
- Q. When you say that the Task Force has not landed anywhere - is the task force ...?
- A. That is all I will say.
- Q. The list of ships that John Nott gave, is that the whole of the Task Force?
- A. The names were included in the Task Force.
- Q. Could you deny the Argentinian reports about a landing?
- A. The Task Force has not landed anywhere.
- Q. What about the Marines?
- A. I cannot elaborate in any way. "I would ask you to bear in mind that on Monday the OAS is going to meet and it would certainly be to their advantage to have made announcements about the British Task Force. All that we will be doing here is looking even more carefully at sources."
- Q. Would you expect later today to have anything further to say?
- A. As soon as I am able to say something further I will.

- Q. What are your means of letting us know when something happens?
- A. It depends on what there is to let you know and the timing of it - it could be a gathering of this kind or through tapes. When there is something to say we will be looking to see how it is best sent.
- Q. Yesterday you implied that:
- The Task Force had split and
 - A landing had taken place?
- A. I said "I have heard from a number of sources speculation about the Task Force, I was trying to say to you the words which I repeat again - The Task Force has not landed anywhere."
- Q. Does the Task Force include the men aboard?
- A. I am not going further.
- Q. Can you define any further?
- A. I cannot. I am not changing in any way today what I said yesterday. "There are many rumours going around but to put them at rest I can say that the Task Force has not landed anywhere."
- Q. Rumours about reservists?
- A. No change.
- Q. Weather situation?
- A. Bad as I understand it. Bad to worse to variable.
- Q. Do you have the latest number of ships in the Task Force plus back up?
- A. 35 and some will be coming off charter in a few days.
- Q. Any warships coming out of Chatham?
- A. I have no information on that specifically, anything coming out of Chatham is not employed specifically for the Task Force.
- Q. Have there been any other accidents?
- A. There have bound to have been minor accidents.
- Q. Can you say anything about the state of readiness of the Task Force?
- A. There are 3 states of readiness:
The Cruising State - normal state with only one watch on
The Defence State - the ships are now on a higher state of readiness than the Cruising State.
The Action State - The highest state of readiness with everyone closed up at their post.
At the moment they are in the Defence State.

- Q. How long can a ship go along in the Defence State and remain effective?
- A. The Defence State is calculated for people to stay on it as long as necessary. One watch off maintaining their efficiency.
- Q. Atlantic Conveyor - when does she embark the helicopters?
- A. 0600 - 25.4.82.
- Q. When will downstairs be open to us?
- A. If it becomes necessary to go to a bigger forum - we are making sure that it is ready.
- Q. How will we know that this is available?
- A. We will be phoning round.
- Q. Any Vulcans gone to Ascension ?
- A. I cannot comment on that.
- Q. The troops in Wales - still on refresher training?
- A. Yes they are.
- Q. Movements of the RAF?
- A. I will press the operations people to let me tell you more.