

WORLD AT ONE: THURSDAY 6 MAY

Interviewer: The United Nations Secretary General said early today that Argentina had accepted his proposals aimed at settling the Falkland's crisis. He said, and I quote: "I have got a positive reaction from the Argentine Government. They have expressed to me that they are considering with great interest and a sense of urgency the ideas I have proposed to them. I hope that I may have a positive reaction from the United Kingdom." Well, that response is expected today to what is thought to be a plan involving a phased withdrawal of British and Argentine forces, an interim UN administration over the Islands, and a negotiated settlement. On the 'phone now from New York I have Sir Anthony Parsons, Britain's Ambassador to the United Nations. Sir Anthony, I don't know whether you heard that. If you did, is that a rough outline of the plan?

Sir Anthony Parsons: Well, no. It's not really quite accurate. The plan is both more and less precise as it were. The plan is much more procedural in stages, a number of stages, and it is less precise about who would be aware at interim periods and so on. Would you like me to go on and make a comment immediately about the Argentine response?

Interviewer: I would indeed.

AP: I think there is a certain amount of exaggeration, at least there was last night, and I think it has been corrected in the American media this morning. As I understand it, because I was there at the time - I didn't actually read the Argentine letter but it was pretty short, I mean it was about half a dozen lines - I think what they have done is they have said to the Secretary-General, we need accept your de marche as it were, rather in the sense that, yes, we will do business with you. I don't believe they've accepted all the propositions, all the range of ideas that he's put forward, in fact I'm perfectly sure they have not. In the American media this morning they are saying that the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs is

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making remarks like, we have not of course agreed to withdraw and the whole question of sovereignty is not negotiable and there's a great deal more to study. In fact, I think the letter did say that the details would be subject to discussion. So I think to put it in the sense that they have accepted it lock, stock and barrel is really very misleading.

Interviewer: From what you're saying, it would seem that the opposite almost seems to be the case.

AP: Well, no, I wouldn't say that, but I mean I think they've said yes, we'd accept that you have put forward proposals and that we will discuss them with you. I mean that is my understanding of it, the Argentines might correct that. I think that if we do put in a reply today about which of course I was in communication with London yesterday, I would expect ours to be much more substantial as it were actually commenting on the ideas themselves.

Interviewer: Sir Anthony, perhaps you can help us with this matter of the United Nations. Can I take it that some form of United Nations administration or perhaps a United Nations trusteeship council has been mentioned in the points that have been proposed?

AP: No, that is not the case. So far as I can remember, I haven't got the points in front of me and again, when we talk about the points, here again it is becoming a little over-precise, I mean there is a whole, long range of ideas and they are much more procedural ideas than substantive ideas. The whole question of UN trusteeship or anything like that just simply doesn't come into it at this stage. That is absolutely true.

Interviewer: Can you give us any further indication of what you mean by procedural notions or ideas?

AP: Well, the ideas deal with as it were concepts like at what stage certain things should happen, I mean at what stage withdrawal should happen, at what stage negotiations should start to take place, but it doesn't go on to say what the negotiations

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should necessarily contain.

Interviewer: So things are at the moment are certainly in a very fluid stage but from your own feelings do you begin to detect a glimmer of light?

AP: I don't think anything has changed particularly here. I mean, I think that this very short and very formal, as it were in the sense that it's not substantive Argentine response, was blown up out of proportion here yesterday evening and it gave an impression which I think is already dying down in the New York Media that you know some enormous breakthrough has taken place . I do not believe that to be the case. I think that Mr. Pym's initial answer, which said that we are studying your proposals, we are considering your proposals, or we are considering your ideas with great interest and urgency clearly was the equivalent of what the Argentine's said last night. We will put in substantive proposals, we will then see if there is a possibility of making progress here but so far we are still as you put it at a very fluid - and as I would put it - at a very preliminary stage.