

INTERVIEW GIVEN BY MR PYM TO TREVOR McDONALD 'NEWS AT TEN'
ON FRIDAY 11 JUNE 1982

FALKLANDS ~~AND MIDDLE EAST~~

Diplomatic activity?

Question: Foreign Secretary, you've always made the point, and the Prime Minister's made the point, that the military and diplomatic pressures in Argentina were quite separate and that they were aimed at getting Argentine troops off the Islands. Does it now concern you that the emphasis now appears to be entirely on the military side with apparently no diplomatic avenues open?

Answer: I'm still in touch with the Secretary-General and he would always be available to help if there was any sign of the Argentines changing their mind. After all, we have been negotiating in various ways for over two months and unfortunately we've always come up with the same non-response from the Argentine side. ~~so it's quite true to say that~~ Diplomatic activity at the moment, unfortunately, is minimal but the Secretary-General is there and if a new opportunity came then, of course, advantage could be taken of it. ~~and~~ If only the Argentines would say now that they would withdraw then any further casualties could be stopped and I think everybody would be much relieved about that. But there's no sign of that happening, sad to say.

Question: In the interests of a long term solution, does that lack of diplomatic activity worry you?

Answer: Well, not immediately. We couldn't have tried harder, could we? What other effort could we have made? We've had a number of proposals - three were positively put and turned down. The last one was publicly revealed by us, the last British position, and I think we've done all that we can. ~~and~~ If they're not prepared to withdraw then we're going to have to repossess the Islands, ~~and~~ Then immediately that happens, of course, there will be a lot of ~~diplomatic activity.~~ There will be activity to rehabilitate and restore the Islanders and to help them get on re-establishing their life; but also we will want to re-establish relations with the countries in that hemisphere. It will be ~~very~~ difficult immediately. I don't think we can do anything with the Argentine itself

Immediately but our objective will be to try and bring stability back there because in the long run that's crucially important for the Falkland Islanders. So there will be much diplomatic activity at that time.

U.S. Attitude

Question: You told the Americans that we're not quite ready to consider Argentine participation in any long-term future of the Islands at this point. Did the Americans give you any indication about how long they are prepared to wait on our decision upon this?

Answer: Oh, the Americans understand entirely that after what has happened, and after the refusal of all the proposals that we have made and that have been discussed, that it would not be possible for us to contemplate any Argentine involvement on the Islands, at any rate for the time being. Whether, in due course, that will be appropriate remains to be seen, but immediately it isn't practical and the Americans understand that perfectly well.

Question: Would the Americans join Britain in trying to secure the defence of the Islands?

Answer: That is possible. I'm sure it will be a British responsibility in the immediate aftermath of re-possession and perhaps for quite some time, but it's always been my view that it would be in the interests of the Islanders, for their prosperity and their future, if we could establish a broader-based international arrangement involving other countries. I think that might give them greater security and that I shall be trying to achieve. Again, I can't say at this stage with what success or how long it might take. But I see advantage in it from their point of view if other countries agree.

Latin American Cooperation

Question: So we're looking at the Americans and we're looking at other countries in Latin America as well?

Answer: Oh yes indeed. The Americans have an interest, but there are plenty of friendly countries in Latin America who hope that this whole argument can be brought to an end quickly and, once it is, once the Islands are re-possessed, of course, we want to re-establish the best relations that we can. I don't think we ought to under-estimate the difficulties, and I shall be setting about it just as soon as that event has taken place, whether by a sudden miraculous Argentine withdrawal or whether by military means.

Question: When you say that event having taken place, Foreign Secretary, are you talking about the fall of Port Stanley to our forces?

Answer: I'm talking about the re-possession of the Falkland Islands.

British Administration

Question: In the short term are we talking about restoring full British administration to the Islands to the point of having the Governor back on the Islands?

Answer: We are indeed talking about the restoration of British administration, we have taken no decision about the Governor himself and his return. Clearly that is a possibility, but there are other possibilities too. I don't think necessarily we will go back to exactly what existed before. There are other possibilities which we are considering and you can't take a final decision about it until we know the exact circumstances in which the Islands are re-possessed. It may be, miraculously, by a withdrawal. It may be after a very short battle with a surrender of troops. It may be after a much longer battle than people are hoping for and we can't tell. And we've got to wait for that moment before deciding exactly what decisions we ought to take in relation to the administration which we shall put back there once re-possession has been achieved.

No humiliation

Question: Foreign Secretary, you've made it very clear that by their backing, their coming down strongly on Britain's side, and by the assurances you've got after this trip from President Reagan and from the Secretary of State, Mr Haig, that the Americans are still supporting Britain in this. May I put to you what I perceive to be one American concern which is that we don't appear to humiliate the Argentines, or Argentina?

Answer: We've never had a wish to humiliate them. I think they should have withdrawn earlier. All we are interested in is re-possessing British territory which is inhabited by British citizens and humiliation isn't in our mind. And we haven't actually got a real argument with the Argentinian people except insofar as they are responsible for having a government with which we are in very deep dispute and military dispute. But "humiliation" has never been any part of our vocabulary, any more than "unconditional surrender" has been any part of our vocabulary.

Question: I just wonder how we convince the Palestinians of the genuineness of what you've just said, when one is unable to stop Israel from doing what she's just done.

Answer: Well, I think they do understand the genuineness of it. As a matter of fact I've been seeing the Foreign Ministers from three countries in that part of the world, in that region, this very day and they certainly are persuaded of it, because the European Community statement a couple of days ago was very strong and they know that we mean it because it's in sympathy with the Venice Declaration. We voted as we voted in the United Nations, Resolutions 508 and 509, so they know our position very very clearly, and they also know that we have an interest in having peace and stability in that region. ~~The truth of the matter is,~~ The fact of the matter is, unfortunately despite the efforts we've made, they've been unsuccessful and the situation, if anything, gets worse. The crucial influence is the United States and they are now putting their weight behind restraint on Israel.

U.S. role

Question: Some would say a little too late, Foreign Secretary

Answer: Yes, some people would say that and I don't know that I would necessarily disagree with that myself, but it is for the Americans to decide and they are certainly doing it now, they have certainly been doing it for some time now, and hopefully the ceasefire will come and then hopefully a withdrawal, but I am afraid the tensions will have increased because the Arabs will have had much suffering and damage inflicted on them and they will be bound to take note of that in their hearts, and the truth of the matter is that all of us, the United Nations, the United States in particular, and the Community, to the best of our ability have got to use our influence such as it is to try and help heal the whole wounds and to our way of thinking the Palestine problem, their rights are the key to it.

Foreign Secretary, thank you very much indeed.