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By A1

10 Apr

The En's were caught by surprise
the attack from the South

BRIEF FOR ISL ON MILITARY ASPECTS OF THE INVASION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

1. The following is a distillation of a short debrief by Major Norman and Major Noott given in Dept of CGRM PM 5 April.

PREAMBLE

2. Majors Norman and Noott were given a warning order of the likelihood of an imminent Argentine invasion by HE the Governor of the Falkland Islands at 1530 (local) on Thursday, 1 April. At this stage the Naval Parties were half way through their administrative handover.

3. Ranks were recalled and briefed and Major Noott sent a Sitrep to CINCFLEEF.

4. The Naval Parties then proceeded to prepare defence positions, on the basis that the invasion was likely to start with an amphibious assault onto a particular beach north of the airfield suitable for landing craft and this would be accompanied by a helicopter assault onto the airfield, and ships entering the harbour through the narrows. The Governor was keen to avoid house to house fighting in Port Stanley and so sections prepared positions on the narrow approach route from the beach/airfield area into Port Stanley. Sections had orders to open fire on advancing troops, causing them to deploy; when they were pressed to leap-frog back to Port Stanley. (Rapid extraction from a defence position is difficult due to the terrain, which does not take a landrover. One route required a motor cycle and the prepositioning of a canoe). Other sections prepared positions across other axes to Port Stanley, and one section was placed at the point of the Isthmus overlooking the narrows into the harbour.

DATE 6/4/82

1 CDS

2 SASA

5. Overnight preparations continued and MFV FOREST made two sorties in order to carry out radar sweeps. The likely beach which was suitable for landing craft was wired and the airfield blocked by oil drums and airfield vehicles. The lighthouse light was extinguished. Defence positions were occupied from 0200, 2 April. Major Norman made himself responsible for the conduct of the defence out on the ground, Major Noott with his knowledge of the whole area was responsible for controlling re-deployment from the Ops Room, and advising HIE The Governor, who he knew well after one year in post.

THE ASSAULT

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6. In the event the first indication of assault was 020605 (first light being 0630) when explosions and firing were reported at Moody Brook Camp (which was empty of men who had all deployed). Ten minutes later at 0615 a direct assault was launched onto Government House from the South. These attacks were launched by a company plus of SAS Style commandos who may have been landed to the South by landing craft or helicopter, with the intention of neutralising the garrison at Moody Brook, and at the same time seizing the seat of Government. At the latter a determined attack was pressed using stun grenades and heavy firing, and repulsed, leaving three wounded between 10 and 20 yards from the residence (two of whom died later). During the attack there was a lot of shouting "bring out Mr Hunt".

7. As soon as the initial attack on Moody Brook had occurred Major Norman, alive to the possibility of rapid capture of Government House, decided to order back numbers 1 and 5 Sections from the area of the airfield and approach road, to thicken up the defence at the residence, believing this to be the vital requirement.

8. At 0635 Amtracks were reported moving over the beach adjacent to the one wired, and 10 minutes later helicopters were reported to be landing at the airport.

9. Around Government House the enemy continued their sniping tactics, shooting when they could observe movement, while Major Norman re-organised the defence. The impression was that as the initial assault had failed, the company around the residence were now prepared to "sit it out" and await the arrival of the Amtracks from

2614

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the beach. The Governor has remarked at this stage that there were no FM casualties, because field craft was good and Argentinian marksmanship obviously inaccurate.

10. The number of APCs moving towards Port Stanley built up to 12, armed with 13mm cannon. The leading APC was engaged by the section at Look Out Rocks on the edge of the town, who fired an 84mm round at the front of the APC and a 66mm round at the rear. The APC halted, no-one emerged and the remainder of the APCs withdrew and debouched their troops, whom the Section then engaged with GPMG. This Section then moved back to consolidate at the residency, having to fight their way back through some commandos in the town.

11. At 0830 the Governor decided to institute negotiations with the Argentinian VC Commandarie (the controller of Argentine air transport in the Falkland Islands) whom he knew and this lead eventually to the final negotiations with Admiral Bussor who was brought to the residency. The Governor's attitude had been robust from the start, however the factor that weighed most heavily on his mind was the arrival of the armed vehicles with cannon, and the prospect of unnecessary loss of life amongst local civilian and amongst service personnel.

12. Throughout this half hour of negotiations firing continued, as the surrounded troops were tending to creep forward. Major Noott at this stage forced an entry into a room, disarmed and took prisoner three commandos of the assault, who had got into the servants' quarters.

13. Major Norman advised the Governor at this time that he had three courses of action: he could with the Marines break out of the residency and move to another area personifying the continuation of the British Government: the Garrison could continue to fight from the residency which the Garrison were most prepared to do: or they could arrange a truce. The Governor's decision which he has expressed on television was that because of the threat of cannon to civilians and the Garrison he should carry out a truce. The attitude of the Garrison and the Marines to this order has been described as generally "fed up", however, they respected the Governor, and believed his decision in retrospect was a sound one. At 0925 HE The Governor of the Falkland Islands ordered Major Norman, the OCRM NP8901 to order his Marines to lay down their arms. They did so.

14. During the action the detachment had fired 6,000 rounds. They believe they killed five and wounded 17 with a possibility of a further ten dead or wounded in the hit APC.

THE GET AWAY PARTY

15. Before the action Major Noott had prepared two sections including himself, with a rucksack to make a get away in the event of an invasion, to act as a stay behind surveillance party in accordance with a section in CINCFLEET's Op order. However because of the threat to the residency, these two sections had become involved in the defence of the residency, and had been surrounded.

16. Ten minutes before ceasefire Major Norman made the decision to order Cpl York and 5 Section on the point of the Isthmus (the only section to be detached at this stage from the residency) to carry out this role. They acknowledged an order to "go to ground" on the radio. On a subsequent radio check they were out of communication. Unfortunately this section started off with several disadvantages, having been at the Island for only 2 days, they did not know the country, nor were they in possession of the prepared survival rucksacks.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

17. Major Norman has said that the Garrison was treated with respect and cordiality by the commandos. The treatment by the hands of the 2nd Marine Battalion was less pleasant, and it was at this stage that they were forced to lie on the ground with their arms above their heads.

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- KEY
- A - GOVERNMENT HOUSE
 - B - MOODY BROCK CAMP
 - C - AIRPORT
 - D - PREPARED BENCH FOR LC TREAT
 - E - ATTACK ASSAULT
 - F - ICECUT ROCKS
 - G - 5 SECTIONS POSITION