

2038/1

*seen by Sec S**67/2*

PSO/CDS

MEETING AT CHEQUERS ON 10 APRIL

1. CDS debriefed CNS, VCNS, DUS(P), ACDS(Ops), DMSI and Mr Pearce (FCO) at 1715 today.
2. The meeting was attended by PM, FCS, SofS and CDS only. It was decided that:
 - a. HMG has no intention of changing current instructions on ROEs issued to SSNs, but wants to retain flexibility as long as possible, in case Haig comes up with something in Buenos Aires. ND was therefore to signal immediately to the effect that ROE 2 was in force from 120400Z. If the FCO had not asked for a stay of execution by 111600Z, ROEs 4, 10 and 13 would be reinstated. Ministers would have to be reassembled to decide a stay of execution. Action in self-defence would continue to be allowed.
 - b. Britain is beginning to lose the propaganda battle. DIS is to let the FCO know the number of Argentine ships in harbour so that potential targets can be seen to be few. ND is to assist in discrediting Argentine TV film showing their small patrol craft allegedly off the Falkland Islands.

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FALKLAND ISLANDS: OPERATIONAL ORDERS FOR SSNs

1. Under her present orders the first SSN in the Falkland Islands Exclusion Zone has orders to sink an Argentine ship as soon as the Zone comes into force at 0400 hours on 12 April.
2. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary considers that there may be diplomatic developments as a result of Mr Haig's activities which make it desirable to be able to stop the SSN executing these operational orders up to the last possible moment. At present this last possible moment is 10 p.m. on Saturday 10 April.
3. This position can be altered by sending a signal to the SSN to cancel its previous instructions and to say that Rule 2 will be in operation from 0400 hours on 12 April (Rule 2 simply provides for self defence). Thereafter Ministers can decide to revert to the previous instructions at any time and be confident that such instructions will be received by the SSN within 12 hours. If Ministers delay reverting to the previous instructions beyond 1600 hours on Sunday 11 April there is a possibility that the SSN will not receive and therefore act on the previous instructions until some time after 0400 on 12 April. This is the only positive penalty of this procedure. But there could be other operational implications: the reason for the present earlier deadline is to guard against the risk of communication breakdown and to give the SSN Commander more time to plan his operations.

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- FCO (Def Dept)
- SECCOS
- DS 5

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR THE SSNs

References:

- A. CDS 2038/1/1 dated 6 Apr 82
- B. MOD UK Navy's AAA/I9F/JEE 071045Z Apr 82

1. As discussed, I have amended Rule Five of the ROE promulgated to the Commander in Chief Fleet in Reference B. The amendment is a pure technicality to remove any possibility of ambiguity in the event that rule five and rule four are in force concurrently. Rule five now reads:

"Any submarine detected may be presumed to be Argentinian and may be attacked".

2. The amended Rule Five, which is not currently in force, has been passed to CINCFLEET

10 April 1982

Vice Chief of Naval Staff

Acting C.M.D.