

File 28/1



CABINET 14TH APRIL 1982

A. MILITARY DISPOSITIONS: UK

S/2

SSNs

1. HMS SPARTAN is at present within the maritime exclusion zone around the Falklands.

HMS SPLENDID arrives in the zone during tonight (14th April).

HMS CONQUEROR is moving southwards and is expected to arrive in the South Georgia area on 19th April.

This information is extremely sensitive.

SURFACE SHIPS

2. Elements of the Battle Group - INVINCIBLE, HERMES, two frigates and one RFA-are west of Freetown, Sierra Leone and due to arrive Ascension on 16th April,

3. Remaining units of the Battle Group - four destroyers, two frigates and one RFA tanker - are already at Ascension.

4. HMS FEARLESS is 170 miles SW of Dakar, Senegal and expected to reach Ascension on 17th April. It has gone ahead of frigate HMS ANTELOPE, four amphibious landing ships and two RFAs, which are 180 miles WNW of Dakar and expected to reach Ascension on 19th April.

5. Task unit consisting of destroyer HMS ANTRIM, frigate HMS PLYMOUTH and one tanker are approximately 1000 miles South of Ascension Island.

6. Amphibious craft Sir Tristram is west of Ascension, due to arrive 16th April.

7. Canberra and Elk are 50 miles South of Canary Islands heading for Freetown, Sierra Leone for bunkering on 17th April.

8. 'Uganda' is being taken up as hospital ship - heading for Gibraltar for conversion - due to arrive 16th April.

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9. Ascension Island is approximately 10 days sailing from the Falkland Islands at 14 knots.

MISSING ROYAL MARINES

10. There is as yet no firm news of the twenty two Royal Marines from South Georgia. Their names and details have been passed through the Foreign Office to the Swiss Embassy (British Interest Section) in Buenos Aires who are endeavouring to discover their whereabouts from the Argentinian authorities. There are unconfirmed news reports that the South Georgia Marines are being sent to Deseada on the Argentinian mainland and that the seven Marines from the Falklands have arrived at Comodoro Rivadavia.

B. MILITARY DISPOSITIONS: ARGENTINA

NAVAL FORCES

11. The majority of the Argentinian Naval Forces are still in harbour though there are indications that they are preparing to go to sea. The Argentinian frigate GRANVILLE is still at sea but outside the Maritime Exclusion Zone.

GROUND FORCES

12. It is believed that an expanded infantry brigade of approximately 7000 troops is on the Falkland Islands. The brigade has an artillery battalion of 18 x 105mm guns.

AIR FORCES

13. Unconfirmed reports suggest that 3 x Mirage III aircraft are at the Port Stanley airfield. There are further reports of work on extending the runway.