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FALKLAND ISLANDS - DE-BRIEF REPORTS

1. I attach a report consolidating the highlights of the debriefing of the 14 Falkland Island refugees, including the 2 RAF technicians, who returned on 15 April 1982. You may find it of interest, especially the trace.

2. Copies have already been passed to CINCFLEET, SAS Hereford and, of course, DCGRM.

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DCDS(I)

20th April 1982

CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF	
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FALKLAND ISLANDS - KEY ASPECTS FROM REFUGEE DEBRIEF REPORTS

1. Introduction These notes are the consolidated highlights extracted from the debriefing of the 14 refugees who returned from the Falkland Islands on 15 April 1982; amongst the 14 were two RAF Technicians. The information given relates to events and sitings up to the 13 April 1982 when the party left Port Stanley. Detailed aspects have been produced on a trace (circulated separately), and copied to the Task Force.

2. Troop Dispositions It would seem that the major troop concentrations are at Port Stanley, Goose Green settlement (Darwin) and Fox Bay (West Island). Estimates of the numbers present vary, but the consensus view gave numbers (as at 13 Apr 82) as follows:

Port Stanley - 3000 approx
Goose Green - 200 approx
Fox Bay - 300-500 approx

Within Port Stanley troops appear at present to be concentrated on the airfield, at Moody Brook camp and on the outskirts of Stanley town rather than in the actual town. (Comment: The refugees tended to give the impression of less troops being present than some of our estimates suggest. We should not draw too many conclusions from this as those questioned had not travelled widely, and military restricted zones have been established near to troop concentrations.)

3. Ground Forces Weapons and Equipment The following items of equipment and weapons were identified:

a. Armour

(1) LVPT 7s The LVPT 7s (Amphibious APCs) seem to have been withdrawn from Port Stanley about one week after the invasion, and some reports suggested that a few have been seen at Goose Green and Fox Bay.

(Comment: This is consistent with reports of Marine Infantry Battalions being withdrawn from Port Stanley, some of which could have been redeployed throughout the islands.)

(2) Panhard AML H90 Two Panhard armoured cars were seen at Port Stanley airport. (Comment: These could be elements from the Armoured Squadron reported to be deployed to Falklands.)

b. Anti-Tank 105mm Recoilless Rifles and 3.5" RL have been seen both at Port Stanley and at the Airport.

(Comment: These would be standard Argentine Infantry Battalion Weapons.)

c. Anti-Aircraft Twin barrelled AA guns (20 or 30mm?) were seen at Port Stanley airport, and one suggestion of a covered vehicle that might have housed a Tiger Cat firing unit. (Comment: This, associated with reports of an early warning radar being located at the airport, would indicate that an attempt is being made to create an air defence zone around Port Stanley airfield, and possibly around the town.)

d. Artillery Some refugees reported seeing 105mm Howitzers at the airfield. (Comment: This is consistent with other reports of an Artillery Battery/Battalion having been deployed to the Islands. It is possible that these guns might be moved from the airport into the town in due course.)

e. Mortars Several reports of 81mm being seen both in Port Stanley and at Airport. (Comment: These are probably from Infantry Battalion Heavy Weapons Companies.)

f. Small Arms Troops seem to be armed with 7.62mm Rifles and some heavy machine guns.

4. Morale The majority of the troops that replaced the initial landing force (Marines) appeared to be young, bewildered conscripts, largely from the North of the Argentine. The arrangements for their accommodation and feeding seem to be fairly chaotic, with troops trying to supplement their rations from local resources. Many were still being accommodated in tents although some public owned accommodation was being requisitioned. Very few of the conscripts speak any English although those officers in key appointments do. Officers seem to be efficient and to know their jobs. (Comment: It would seem that, whilst being well prepared for an occupation of the Islands, the Argentines did not anticipate having to defend them against a major force.)

5. Defensive Preparations Some defensive positions appeared to be being prepared, particularly around the airfield and the town. Mines were reported as being laid along the sides of the road to the airport. HQs, and other VPs, were being guarded with machine guns sited on top of buildings. After an abortive attempt at vehicular movement by road/track outside Stanley, all troop movements are now conducted by helicopter. Five

gemiini-type craft (each containing 2-5men) were reported patrolling Stanley Harbour on an intermittent basis. (Comment: Some attempt seems to be being made to pull the defence of Stanley into shape, but at this early stage (13 April) the refugees did not give the impression of seeming a very well coordinated defensive position being constructed.)

6. Airfield A detailed report on the airfield has been issued separately. In general, while heavy engineering equipment has been landed from ships along with metal trackway, the refugees only reported seeing improvements being made to the apron area. (Comment: We would expect to see the Argentines attempting to extend the length of the main runway in the near future.)

7. Aircraft Movements

a. Types The following types of aircraft were seen using Stanley airfield:

6 x Pucara
5 x Pumas
2 x Chinook
2 x Trackers
2 x Bell Huey
1 x Augusta 109
C 130s
F27
F28s
737

b. Movements Up to three C-130s were seen on the airfield at the same time, and were considered to be generating up to 12 sorties every 24 hrs. The airfield was being used at night, with paraffin flares being used to mark the runway.

c. Radar One air search scanner of the AN/TPS 43 type is reported as being on the western end of Stanley airfield. (Comment: The Argentines appear to be placing great reliance on the airfield and have shown considerable ingenuity in both its use and the type of aircraft that they have been landing on it.)

8. Civil Population There appears to be general non-cooperation by the Islanders with the force of occupation but no open hostility. The Argentines seem to have been well prepared for the occupation, with lists of personalities etc. They also seem to have appointed an Argentine Officer as Police Chief (Intelligence), who is not making himself popular with the Islanders; and could be a 'hard-liner'. Outside Stanley there are currently no restrictions on civilian movement by foot or vehicle and ID checks and body searches are not being made. The refugees reported that up to 50% of the Port Stanley residents had left the town and gone to live on the 'Camp'. (Comment: Recent press reports would raise even further the number of civilians who have left Port Stanley. We would expect tighter controls of the civilian population to be imposed once the Task Force closed on the Islands.)

STANLEY DEFENCES 13 APR 82



- AAA GUNS
- MG
- ⊗ MINES
- ↗ DEFENDED AREAS

+ 26/FU/2
136

PORT HARRIET

68

Seal Point

Harrow Point

Lake Point

Goose Green

Horse Point

Phillips Point

45

44

43

42

41

40

39

38

37

36

35

47

48

STORES

SU BA

Stanley Airport

Mary Hill

WHALEBONE COVE

42

41

CAROLINE HILL

50

YORK BAY

Ordnance Point

GYPST COVE

2 CHINOOK

AM

2 HUEY

W6 PUMA

PORT

Doctor Point

Sparrow Point

HAMBLIN COVE

AML 30

Charles Point

Arrow Point

30

25

89

88

87

86

6

30

100

75

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