

UNCLASSIFIED

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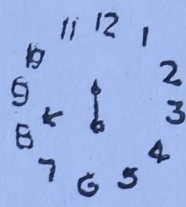
FY CENTROFORM LONDON 231010Z MAY

23 MAY 1982

RETRACT 00223MAY

OUT NUMBER 2

MOD1/23



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MOD PRESS STATEMENT ON 23RD MAY 7.15 BST

BRITISH FORCES ARE CONTINUING TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR POSITION ON THE FALKLANDS ISLANDS PRIOR TO ADVANCING INLAND. THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS OF ENGAGEMENTS OVER THE LAST 32 HOURS. ONLY ONE INCIDENT HAS BEEN REPORTED SINCE THE ATTACK YESTERDAY BY OUR SEA HARRIERS ON AN ARGENTINE PATROL BOAT SOUTH OF PORT STANLEY. TWO ARGENTINE SKYHAWK AIRCRAFT APPROACHED OUR BRIDGEHEAD ON THE EAST FALKLANDS ONE DITCHED ITS BOMBS OVER OPEN WATER BOTH THEN TURNED AWAY WITHOUT PRESSING HOME THEIR ATTACK. FOLLOWING THE ARGENTINE AIR ATTACK ON 21 MAY TWO UNEXPLODED BOMBS ON ONE WARSHIP HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY DEFUSED AND A FURTHER ONE DEALT WITH ON ANOTHER WARSHIP. REPAIRS ARE BEING CARRIED OUT ON THE OTHER WARSHIPS WHICH SUSTAINED MINOR DAMAGE IN THE RAID.

THE LATEST CASUALTY FIGURES FROM HMS ARDENT ARE THAT 22 OF THE CREW ARE MISSING PRESUMED DEAD. OVER 30 WERE INJURED IN THE AIR ATTACK ON 21 MAY. IN TOTAL 178 MEMBERS OF THE CREW HAVE BEEN RECOVERED. IN ADDITION TWO ARE MISSING PRESUMED DEAD AND 25 INJURED FROM OTHER WARSHIPS. ON 21 MAY THREE MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL MARINES DIED WHEN TWO GAZELLE HELICOPTERS WERE SHOT DOWN AND ONE HARRIER PILOT IS MISSING FOLLOWING THE LOSS OF HIS AIRCRAFT. IN ALL CASES NEXT OF KIN HAVE BEEN INFORMED.

ENDS MOD1/23

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