

PS to Soys

NO Soys might like to show this to Mr Weindgen.

5.5.82

# Pentagon: British torpedo attack that went wrong

A BRITISH submarine tried and failed to sink a fourth Argentine ship near the 200-mile exclusion zone around the Falkland Islands, Pentagon intelligence officials said.

The attack went wrong because the submarine's torpedoes either missed the target or failed to detonate.

The American officials said the attack was in addition to a helicopter raid on an Argentine patrol boat and damage inflicted on another.

They asserted that the failed attack was withheld from the British public by Defence Ministry spokesmen in London. ABC news reported today that U.S. intelligence is advising reporters to take Britain's version of what is happening in the Falkland Islands area "with a high measure of scepticism," although conceding that London's version is more accurate than that of Buenos Aires.

ABC's Pentagon correspondent John McWethy, said the highly sophisticated Pentagon intelligence gathering system has persuaded American offi-

from Jeremy Campbell in Washington

cial that the British are putting out "disinformation."

"The British leaked a story to the Press that several of their nuclear submarines were enforcing the blockade around the Falklands until the rest of the fleet arrived," McWethy said. "The British now admit there were no submarines around the Falklands."

## 'Fabrication'

[The Ministry of Defence never commented on the whereabouts of British submarines. Although reports had been leaked suggesting that nuclear powered submarines had been in the South Atlantic to enforce the 200-mile blockade London has always refused to confirm or deny them. The Ministry of Defence line since the crisis began has been: "We do not say anything about the whereabouts of British submarines." The Ministry has never varied from that line.]

The Pentagon describes

most of the information coming out of Buenos Aires as "wishful thinking and fabrication."

A Ministry of Defence official said today: "We do not comment on other people's reports. In your case I would check with the Pentagon and find out who is making the allegations. What we give here are authenticated facts. This was emphasised by the Secretary of State for Defence, Mr John Nott."

Mr Nott said last night: "Information given to you here (the MoD) by our spokesman is based on facts, not propaganda."

U.S. intelligence analysts also said today that Argentina may decide to avenge the sinking of the General Belgrano with a submarine attack on one of the ships of the British Task Force.

The analysts also said the destruction of the Port Stanley airfield by British bombers was "not complete" and that the Argentine Air Force may now attempt to make limited use of the runway.

Buenos Aires has rejected a peace proposal initiated by Peru with U.S. collaboration, but in Washington there is some hope that the plan is

still alive and may evolve into a basis for a settlement. In the original version, the U.S.-Peruvian proposal called for the future of the Falklands to be decided in accordance with the "interests and aspirations" of the islanders.

But the U.S. later changed the wording to read "the wishes" of the islanders. To the Argentinian junta this implied a plebiscite by the Falklanders and they turned the whole proposal down.

## Aides

But Secretary of State Alexander Haig said he was encouraged when Argentina's President Galtieri sent two of his highest ranking military aides, General Hector Iglesias and Rear-Admiral Benito Moyato Lima to discuss the plan with Peru's President, Fernando Belaunde Terry. The two were understood to be bringing some counter-proposals to Lima that could keep the initiative alive.

U.S. officials made clear that they will continue to explore ways of reopening negotiations. Mr Haig has been on the telephone to President Belaunde constantly since Saturday.