

OPERATION CORPORATE: Daily Summary No 29 - 5 May 1982

Political and Background

- ENCL NO
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- File #
2100
1. Previous Proposals. HMG has proposed three amendments to the text of the Peruvian initiative and these have been passed to Mr Haig by HMBA Washington. The President of Peru will be invited to accept the amended text by noon 6 May, so that it can be formally presented to the UK and Argentine Governments at noon 6th. Mr Haig hopes that the UK will immediately declare its readiness for a ceasefire, thus gaining a political advantage (05074). The intended period between the presentation of the proposals and the deadline for reply is 48 hours, but the US State Department believes that this time could be reduced to 24 hours to enable the ceasefire to come into effect earlier: as the Argentine Government will have been shown the Peruvian proposals at an earlier stage and will not be sent a formal proposal unless the Junta has accepted them the deadline could be reduced to 24 hours and the ceasefire could be implemented earlier (05067).
 2. The Argentine Government has again requested Land Sat photographic coverage (vide Summary No 18, para 6) - of open sea areas on 7-8th, the Falklands area on 9-11th and South Georgia on 10-12th. The US State Department was somewhat embarrassed but pointed out that the LandSat is part of a civilian programme and that rejection of the request could put at risk the co-operative civilian space programme. The UK Minister understood the US position but "could not underline strongly enough the incomprehension and resentment on our part if the Argentinians were given this intelligence in the present crisis". 'Technical problems' had prevented earlier photography (on the eve of the South Georgia operation) and if it was impossible to refuse the request "then 'technical problems' should recur without fail" (05079).
 3. The Senegalese Ministry of Information, at a routine briefing, responded to a query that British aircraft are using facilities at Dakar granted under a long-standing arrangements. Subsequently, Agence France Presse asked HMBA if there were any special arrangements between HMG and the Senegalese Governments (implying material inducements) and was told that the movements were conducted on a normal commercial basis (05061).
 4. The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs is investigating the allegation into the supply of Italian arms to Argentina via Switzerland. There is no indication of the consignment of weapons and no Transporte Aerea Rioplatense aircraft have landed in Switzerland for over a year. Investigations continue, but the Swiss wish to point out that Basle airport is under French jurisdiction (05041).
 5. South American States - Assistance to Argentina. Embassies and Defence Attachés have been asked to provide details of the preparedness and capability of national forces, their capacity for deployment and the likelihood (and extent) of assistance to the Argentine.
 - a. Brazil: Brazil appears to be offering two maritime Bandeirantes and possibly some weapons, ex-Brazilian Air Force Xavante (Macchi 336) armed trainers are on offer but it is not clear if they have been accepted. The Brazilian aero industry has been trying to interest the Argentinians for years and is now seizing the opportunity, which has obvious political advantages (05045); "in view of the intensive and often critical Press interest in the sale of the Bandeirante aircraft, it seems unlikely that the Brazilian Services will make any further deliveries of major equipments to Argentina" (05073). The Brazilian Air Force has a modest war capability, limited by restriction on training imposed by fuel economies. It would be loth to take action against British Forces. (05045).

The Brazilian Navy possesses a range of British equipment which could be of considerable use to Argentina. HMBA recommends the continued supply to Brazil as nothing in the pipeline that can be identified as of use to Argentina is awaited in the expected time frame of hostilities (05073).

b. Venezuela: The Venezuela Air Force has been asked informally to supply a variety of equipment, particularly ordnance such as rocket projectiles and Sidewinder, drop tanks for C130s and Canberras and spares for Mirages and Canberras. There is unconfirmed evidence that Argentine transport aircraft have already taken Mirage and Canberra spares, possibly without official approval of the President or the Ministry of Defence. The Venezuela Government is likely to supply military equipment and ammunition if requested formally. The Hawk contract is stalled but not dead as the Venezuelan Air Force is anxious to have the aircraft: "delay in the provision of Canberra spares could hazard the deal and it is suggested that supply should continue, with an assurance that they should not be passed to Argentina (05063).

There are no indications of Venezuelan naval preparations for deployment. The Air Force is at a high state of alertness and readiness has been improved - there are, however, indications of order for deployment (05077).

c. Columbia. There is no risk of Columbia making any military equipment available to Argentina (05075).

LOSS OF HMS SHEFFIELD

6. The SHEFFIELD was still afloat and was being employed as a lure, in the hopes of attracting the Argentine Type 209s.
7. The official list of casualties will be released to the Press as soon as possible. Twenty officers and men (including a Chinese No 1 Laundryman) are missing, 24 injured (two of whom are seriously ill and one very seriously ill) and 244 other survivors are aboard ships of TG 317.8. The next of kin of the missing and injured have been informed (05081). The survivors will be redistributed between FORT AUSTIN and RESOURCE (05056).
8. ASWE is to conduct a technical evaluation of the attack on the SHEFFIELD, including the performance of radar type 992 against the Super Etendard and the AM 39 Exocet, the estimated range of UAA 1 against the 'Agave' radar and the implications of interference between UAA 1 and SCOT. The weather at the time of the attack was good - 10 knots wind, a smooth sea and 10 ft swell and 2,000 ft cloud base (05064).
9. HMS ARROW has sustained extensive denting forward, with three minor holes and ten severe dents just above 1 Deck level: numerous frames have buckled and a deck is split forward, though there is no sign of vertical splits (05047). The Fleet Constructor, in the CANBERRA, has advised the ship's staff to shore the frames and to treat any indication of the cracks spreading with great respect. The damage was incurred in the course of firefighting and personnel transfer from the SHEFFIELD (05051).
10. Signals expressing sympathy have been received from the British Community in Abu Dhabi and the "Sheffield Star".

Operations

11. No Argentine incursions were reported during the day. The Battle Group operated some 70 m South east of Port Stanley and the SSNs had no contacts in their designated patrol areas. The search for the Type 209 submarines continues as a priority objective but the only possible contact was by YARMOUTH, while searching for SHEFFIELD's survivors (05066, Duty Cdr).
12. Weather is interfering with ENDURANCE's operations at Leith Harbour, South Georgia, but divers have found munitions. ENDURANCE will move to Grytviken later in the week to airlift stores to M Coy and provide facilities for an area reconnaissance by the Land Force Commander (05066). The PLYMOUTH will not return immediately as she has been diverted to reinforce the escort of the LSL Group (05066).
13. Sea Harriers have been involved in five air combats to date, three against Mirages, in which seven missiles were fired by the enemy, the nearest missing by only 30 yards, one against a low-level Canberra strike and one, using cannon only against

Pucara COIN aircraft close inshore. No further details of the strikes on East Falkland on 4 May have been received (05049).

14. Argentine Forces. The PLEBIA BUENA and BOUCHARD (both of which have defects) continued to search for survivors of the BELGRANO and are to be joined by the BAHIA PARAIISO, which may now be an undeclared hospital ship. Press reports during the day stated that nearly 800 survivors had been rescued (Duty Cdr).
15. Task Groups 79.1 and 79.4 were ordered to meet at Bahia Engano at 050100Z and to operate closer in shore, 240 nm north of the previous areas. The CVS is thought to have been operating inshore recently and her aircraft will thus have had a restricted capability (Duty Cdr).
16. Bloc Appearances. The ARDENT is shadowing the AGI PRIMONYE, which was off Ascension at 1530Z (05055). The AMBUSCADE, en route for Ascension was chased by the East German merchant ship SONNEBERG, which took an "inordinate" interest while overtaking the frigate south of the Canaries at 1600Z (05052). INTREPID and BRITISH TAMAR were overflowed by a Bear D while re-plenishing during the forenoon (05024A).

Movements

17. Routing information has been passed on a Brazilian, a Panamanian and two Chilean merchant ships passing close to the TEZ (05006 and 05060). The Chilean authorities say that many merchant ships of various nationalities are holding at Punta Arenas (05060).
18. The LSI Group is due at the Loiter Position on 7 May, when it will be joined by ANTRIM, which is to transfer the Argentine prisoners and BAS party to ANTELOPE for passage to Ascension. PLUMLEAF will join on 8th, as will PLYMOUTH (05066).
19. Three out of the four RAF Harriers, with five Victor tankers, arrived at Ascension: the fourth Harrier diverted to Banjul where a defect was to be repaired to permit the aircraft to continue. SAR support was provided by Nimrods from St Mawgan, Freetown (where one Nimrod was based) and Ascension (05066).
20. UGANDA, with a fully operational burns team, could be at the TEZ perimeter by 110600Z (05033).

Opdefs

21. In addition to her structural damage (vide para 9), ARROW has reported that her machinery defect (Olympus fuel system) has worsened and that she is capable of only 22 knots, with 25 knots available in emergency with risk of fire in the module - there have been four so far - and exacerbating cracks (05005).
22. The only other significant changes from the list in Summary No 26 are:
- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| BROADSWORD | : | No 182 |
| LEEDS CASTLE | : | One main engine u/s |
| YARMOUTH | : | Boiler leaks; boiler room turbo-alternator u/s. |

STUFT and New Construction

23. Board confirmation has been received of authority to proceed with the programme for accelerated completion of new ships and those in refit or DED. A decision on the programme for ships on the disposal list has been deferred indefinitely (NSAG).
24. CED has been authorised to flash one of BULWARK's boilers: he will require permission to cannabalise FORTH for necessary items for the trial. DN Plans is to lead a study to identify alternative options to BULWARK (VCNS 4/5 and BSC 37).

25. The ATLANTIC CAUSEWAY (10 Sea Kings, 12 Wessex 5) is to act as a garage ship in the area, supported by the ENGADINE (4 Wessex 5 and maintenance facilities). A third Aircraft Ferry is needed to transport the six Harrier GR 3s in support of 5 Inf Bde: there is no available space in ATLANTIC CAUSEWAY and ATLANTIC CONVEYOR cannot be turned around in sufficient time after disembarking the first Flight (05029). ATLANTIC CAUSEWAY is to be fitted to carry 500 tons of explosives (BSC 37).
26. QE 2 burns heavy oil which is too viscous for RAS(L)-50/50 FFO mixture trial is to be conducted at Southampton. RAS(S) may be difficult in view of the height of the weather decks. Additional liferafts are to be provided to replace the lifeboats displaced to allow RAS(L) fittings and to cater for up to 430 additional personnel (BSC 37).
27. The 5 Inf Bde follow-up involves a significant quantity of men and equipment and may necessitate the requirement for more shipping (NSAG 0700).

Ascension

28. The Administrator, Ascension, has requested the reconnection of telecommunication links, the US Base Commander taking responsibility for monitoring telephone calls by US citizens and the local C&W Manager monitoring British calls authorised by the Administrator in CBSFU (05020).
29. CBSFU has asked for £2,000 for community relations projects - the Administrator has requested the Sappers to undertake various projects, mainly improvements to recreational facilities, to repay the generosity and assistance from local residents and US Personnel (05042).
30. Three Harrier GR 3 are to be retained at Ascension for local air defence. There are at present eight Sea Harriers and eight RAF Harriers on the Island, as well as three Nimrods, 14 Victors and a Chinook (Duty Cdr).

Material

31. The helicopter-borne Thermal Imaging equipment appears to have additional tactical possibilities beyond those envisaged when the kit was first proposed (05069).
32. RNAD Milford is to provide 16 dummy Air MK 12 mines and AUWE will assist in the preparations for the JATE Hercules minelaying trials (05018).
33. Limited Stingray safety certificates have been granted to ARDENT and ARGONAUT Flights - the reliability of the safety ceiling function is not yet proven (05035). MINERVA and ANDROMEDA Flights are to be Stingray-capable before departure. (05009).

Prisoners

34. The ICRC has been invited to go to Ascension to satisfy themselves as to the Prisoners' health and welfare. A doctor will examine them and an interrogation team will question them at sea; the prisoners will be landed in darkness for immediate air evacuation (05019, 05034).
35. CinCFleet has requested confirmation that current operations have been deemed to be Active Service since 1 May 1982 and that NAAFI and Chinese personnel are subject to the Naval Discipline Act from that date (05036). A fresh submission is to be made to S of S on 5th or 6th (NSAG 1800).

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Checked by Lt Cdr C R K CAMERON Royal Navy
Navy Ops DSC

6 May 1982

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