

PRESENTATION TO THE PRIME MINISTERINTRODUCTION

Prime Minister, Gentlemen,

1. This presentation, which will last for forty five minutes, will give the outline plan for Operation SUTTON.
2. Captain READ will start with the situation at this moment, and cover the last part of the passage south by the troop-carrying ships, until their rendezvous with the carrier battle group.
3. Captain WALWYN will then cover operations up to the point from which the landing will be launched. And then Colonel STEVENSON will cover landing force operations. Finally, I shall make a few points in summary.

PRESENTATION ON OPERATION SUTTON - PHASE ONE

1. The overall classification of this presentation is SECRET UK EYES B.
2. In this first part of the presentation, my task is to set the scene, and to describe the actions that are necessary during the last part of the transit of the amphibious ships and troop carriers towards the Falkland Islands.
3. I will start by reminding you of the situation in outline. First, the Argentine surface forces. The main group, with the carrier 25 DE MAYO and supporting destroyers and corvettes, is in or near Puerto Belgrano. In the south are two destroyers and a number of patrol craft. Three submarines may be at sea; at least one is assessed as operating in the area of the Falkland Islands.
4. The threat from land-based air is set out on these vugraphs, which show the main operating bases, with the radii of action of the aircraft deployed there. I must emphasise that, with the exception of the limited number of Super Etendards with Exocet, the Argentines are virtually without air attack capability at night.
5. Now to our own forces. The main groups of ships are shown here, with their composition on the other screen - the carrier Battle Group, the LSL Group, mainly compounded of logistic landing ships, and the main amphibious group. We have two SSNs operating in the area at present, and it is intended to increase the numbers to four by 18 May. Their dispositions will be covered shortly.
6. The numbers of land-based aircraft that we have at Ascension are shown on the next vugraph.
7. The main limiting factor as far as the numbers of long range aircraft that can support this operation is concerned, is the base loading at Wideawake airfield. The maximum number of large aircraft that can be permanently positioned at and operated from Ascension Island, is 22. This means that we have to juggle our assets to meet the priorities afforded the various roles and tasks.
8. The Victor tankers are the key to our very long range operations. Nimrod surveillance sorties and Vulcan bombing attacks in the Falkland Islands area are totally dependent on air to air refuelling. The significant point is that only one type of operation, either surveillance or bombing, can be executed at any one time, around the Falklands.
9. So much for the situation. We have assessed that the most

likely course of action by the Argentines, as far as their surface forces are concerned, is to hold their ships in the safety of shallow water within territorial limits. We think that they are unlikely to sail to attack the carrier group, because of the threat posed by our nuclear submarines, and because of the risk of attrition of their forces in combat (remembering always that the Chilean Navy remains at their back) unless a landing is thought to be so imminent that national and naval honour will drive them to sea to try to thwart it. That is the most likely course - however, the most dangerous course for us, against which we have already been planning and shall continue to plan, would be an Argentine move against the troop ships. Such a thrust could obviously be made by submarines as well as by the Argentine carrier group, and in the later stages of the transit the amphibious ships will also come within range of shore based air attack. So far, there has been no sign of a move by the "25 DE MAYO" - and her chance of catching the amphibious ships with their current light escort en route, lessens as each day passes.

10. In ensuring the safe passage of the amphibious group, and in preparing for the next phases of Operation SUTTON, we have two principal tasks. We have to reduce the threat to the group, and we have to be prepared to counter what we cannot reduce.

11. The way to reduce the shore based air threat, other than by attacking it at source, is to inflict attrition on the enemy's aircraft. We assess that he is likely to wish to do the same thing against our carrier-based air capability; he is likely to try to stretch our aircraft resources by probing attacks, hoping at the same to get in to inflict some damage. The way to deal with this - and it has been part of Admiral WOODWARD's general scheme of action in the last few days, is to launch forays by destroyers and frigates, under the protection of combat air patrols, into water within Argentine shore-based air range, towards the western part of the TEZ. With these, we can take the initiative and provoke an Argentine response at a time and place of our own choosing.

12. Although we have limited experience of air-to-air combat to date, it does justify our assumption of being able to effect a worthwhile level of deterrence or destruction of enemy aircraft during these forays. Coupled with action against shipping around the Falkland Islands, and with the bombardment of shore targets, this intermittent pattern of operations allows the blockade to be enforced, and the garrison to be harassed, while controlling the risk to our own forces, particularly the carriers. These can remain at arm's length from Argentine air attack while themselves providing air cover to our ships to the westward. Harassment of the forces ashore, and deception of the enemy as to our plans, will proceed with the use of our own special forces, put in by helicopter or by boat.

13. Should the 25 DE MAYO venture out, the main threat that

her group poses is that of her own aircraft and of the Exocet armed destroyers and corvettes. Our prime counter to these is the SSN.

14. SPARTAN's task is to patrol off Puerto Belgrano to attack once these vessels leave the 12 mile limit. Because the wide, gently sloping continental shelf prevents the SSN from operating close to shore especially as the water is crystal clear enabling patrolling aircraft to spot submerged submarines, CONQUEROR provides a second line of attack. At present she is placed in a position to cover the HERMES Group by corner flagging to the south west and the amphibious group by moving east. The route of the amphibious group as it approaches the TEZ is shown on the vugraph. The red dotted line shows the 350 mile range from which fully laden carrier based A4 aircraft could hit the amphibious group, and hence CONQUEROR must attack before 25 DE MAYO can reach this line. CONQUEROR who has a towed array is the best equipped submarine to make long range sonar detections. SPLENDID and VALIANT, as I have said, are both due to be in the operational area by 18 May - their integration with SPARTAN and CONQUEROR will be covered shortly.

15. The third threat to the amphibious group is that posed by Argentine submarines. Here we have less chance of taking the initiative, unless intelligence of enemy movements allows us the opportunity to mount a directed attack. Escorts from the battle group have already carried out some sweeps of this type - they are yet another example of the type of foray in which the Task Group Commander can choose to employ some of his forces. The alternative to this offensive ASW action is the provision to the amphibious group of direct support by ships and helicopters, coupled with standard evasive tactics by the group and by individual ships.

16. The protection that we afford to the ships of the amphibious group must match the level of threat that we perceive. Every escort detached from the carrier group to strengthen air defence and anti-submarine capability of the amphibious group's escort reduces the number of ships available to continue the forward operations, and to apply pressure to the Argentines. In particular, to drop the carriers back to escort the amphibious ships would be to remove the air capability in the TEZ just at the time when it is needed. The aim then, is to keep our protective forces between the amphibious group and the threat, as it is assessed day by day.

17. In order to balance our limited numbers of warships to the best advantage, we are routing the amphibious group in a dog-leg to keep them out of or at the extremity of air attack range as long as possible, with the carrier lying up-threat. We must continue to do our best to determine the level and position of that threat in order to use our forces to best advantage. Besides making use of intelligence, we must therefore provide surveillance.

18. Priority for tanker effort is currently allocated to Nimrod

surveillance operations and this is planned to continue for some while. We have already assessed that the Argentine Navy will react aggressively when they think that our landing is imminent, and it will therefore be imperative to have the best possible knowledge of the enemy ship dispositions and movements during our relatively slow approach to the landing phase. Although the Task Force has a limited range organic surveillance capability in the Sea Kings and Harriers (at the expense of other tasks) we see the Nimrod radar range and target classification capability as essential during this phase. Nimrod patrols are already being flown as illustrated on the vugraph; their radius of action will be further extended to give up to 5 hours on task in the Falkland Island area by using up to 18 tanker sorties per operation. The Nimrods can operate outside the enemy shore based radar cover, under the protection of the Task Force air defences, to provide essential surface surveillance at critical periods. This is illustrated on this vugraph.

19. Alternatively Vulcan operations using 21 x 1000 lb bombs and Martel anti radar missiles may be necessary against targets in the Falkland Islands and, in extremis as a last ditch effort, against enemy mainland air bases. The latter option is one of high risk but the 2 Vulcans positioned at Ascension will allow for such a contingency plan.

20. Finally, we need to deny the Argentines information on our own force movements for as long as possible. The amphibious ships are operating in silence, and we must deal with any Argentine surface or air surveillance before the shadower can compromise their position.

21. So much for the southward transit of the amphibious group. I will now hand over to Captain WALWYN, who will cover the choice of the landing area, the approach to the Falkland Islands and the naval operations immediately before the landing.

SCRIPT FOR OPERATION SUTTON PRESENTATION - PHASE 2

INTRODUCTION

1. I am now going to present the operations and planning considerations involved in the choice of landing area and the transit through the TEZ to the point from where the landing will be mounted. These are the outline plans: the actual plans will be formulated by the on scene commander, but this will give you an accurate idea of what is involved.

OPTIONS FOR LANDING

2. Operation SUTTON is being carried out with a view to the eventual repossession of the Falkland Islands and here is our assessment of where the landing should take place. So that operations can be developed and to bring early pressure to bear on the enemy, we conclude that the landing must be made on East Falkland. To make our landing on West Falkland would be rather like doing so in Anglesey if your objective were Cardiff. A landing on East Falkland also gives the major advantage that it is substantially further from the enemy's mainland air bases.

3. Next, we considered the suitability of beaches for use by landing craft, for development into a beachhead and for the development of operations to defeat the enemy.

4. Criteria affecting the choice of beach were:

- a. Good approaches for landing craft and helicopters.
- b. An easterly position to minimise the air threat.
- c. An area in which ships are least vulnerable to submarine attack.
- d. An area unlikely to be mined.
- e. An area suitable to be developed into a landing ship.

As a result, beaches were grouped into 5 areas which seemed to be likely starters and these were:

San Carlos  
San Salvador  
Cow Bay  
Berkeley Sound  
Mare Harbour

Mare Harbour offers a good, sheltered landing but is surrounded by low ground offering little cover. It has been chosen as the

ideal area upon which to base a deception plan.

5. A bold move into Berkeley Sound as a shock tactic thrust at the heart of the enemy is an attractive option. However, because the enemy is deployed in strength on both the north and south and a minefield has been laid off the Sound, this option has been dismissed. It will be considered further only if the enemy dispositions and other factors change radically between now and D Day.

6. This leaves 3 possible areas from which the commanders of the Task Groups could select their landing beach. Those to the east have obvious military advantages ashore. Clearly, from this area, pressure could be quickly brought to bear on the enemy in Port Stanley. However, ships operating in the open waters off the north east coast would be more vulnerable to the enemy air and submarine threat. The more westerly landing has the disadvantage that it is 50 miles from the objective, however, the greater benefit is that it is much more suitable for the protection of the amphibious shipping. The eventual choice of the landing area must be left to the commanders on the spot, but because it is militarily practicable, and from the naval point of view, greatly preferable, this presentation is based upon a landing in the San Carlos area.

#### THE TRANSIT

7. Once the separate elements of the amphibious group have joined up, the force will alter course towards the Falkland Islands. To confuse enemy submarines and reconnaissance aircraft the amphibious group will use evasive routeing with a super-imposed zig zag. Bad weather has been allowed for. As the amphibious group moves west so the threat from mainland based aircraft increases. This is countered by the battle group being up threat. As mentioned by Captain READ the amphibious group will by then have been reinforced by both missile and ASW capable units.

8. The amphibious group will close the battle group. They will be within 50 miles of each other on the edge of the Total Exclusion Zone by D-3; at this stage essential helicopter transfers of personnel, stores and equipment will take place within the Task Force. More of this later. This is the time when the final decision on the time and place of the landing will be made; this decision will be based mainly on weather and intelligence.

9. From D-3 the battle group will shift emphasis from operations enforcing the Total Exclusion Zone to protecting the amphibious group and making preparations for the landing. To do this the battle group will remain close to the amphibious group and this will be the opportunity for final top up of fuel and essential stores.

10. While the battle group is protecting the amphibious group, advanced units will carry out operations in preparation for the landing. Typically, this will involve small groups of destroyers

and frigates closing the Falkland Islands carrying out bombardment and anti submarine sweeps. These sorties will aim to tie down the Port Stanley garrison, unbalance and destroy outlying units, and start to reduce the threat in the amphibious objective area. They will be co-ordinated with deceptive operations designed to draw attention to the south east of East Falkland. As you are aware, sorties of this nature have already been successfully carried out and remain an essential part of the Task Group Commanders plan.

11. Whilst all these tasks are going on, up to date reconnaissance will remain critical for the success of the landing, so photo reconnaissance and Special Forces operations will continue and these will include covert surveillance of beaches and their approaches. I cannot overstress the importance of the Special Forces operations. They are vital to success. Just prior to the landing these forces will move on to the offensive. The detail of these operations will be given by Colonel STEPHENSON.

### THE THREAT

12. Although we regard a massed air attack by day as the prime, and most likely, threat to the landing, the difficulties in countering it should not be overstated. The enemy, operating from mainland bases, will only be able to operate over the Falkland Islands for relatively short periods. He will certainly be most concerned about fuel conservation which will further limit his fighting ability. Our Sea Harriers operating close to their parent units and with good radar control will have a decisive advantage. Our missile ships have a good capability against the enemy in transit to the Falkland Islands and all our warships, and some of our auxiliaries, have weapon systems specifically designed to deal with manned aircraft.

13. If the Argentine fleet breaks out without being successfully attacked, our forward deployed nuclear submarines will fall back to strengthen direct support for the landing. It is possible that 1 or 2 Exocet fitted units may slip out and, if well handled, and taking full advantage of the weather, they could be in a position to threaten us. Nimrods will provide long range warning of any such deployment and, nearer the force, radar fitted threat will be dealt with by missile armed helicopters or Exocet armed ships.

14. While we remain in deep water to the east of the Falkland Islands the submarine threat is low but it must be guarded against. Individual units will be carrying out a long legged zig zag. Sonar fitted helicopters from the carriers and additional escorts will provide the ASW protection of the force.

15. It is during the approach to a landing that the forces become most vulnerable. Deceptive routing and remaining outside the coverage of shore based radars will reduce their vulnerability. The final run in will be made from 30 miles off shore and to further reduce risk this run-in will be made in darkness. Those ships which are not essential to the landing will be held to the east awaiting resupply requirements.



16. The air threat is low by night. Pickets will be redeployed to the west overnight where by staying close to some of the many islets they can greatly reduce the threat to themselves from radar homing missiles, while continuing to provide long range warning to the force. The priority tasking for our limited numbers of Sea Harriers must now be air defence under the control of pickets. Given this warning, local air control can still be achieved to ensure an adequate defence of the landing.

17. The logical position for the Argentine submarines is in the close vicinity of the Falkland Islands where shallow water makes them difficult to find. This threat will be countered by an active sonar search from the maximum number of helicopters and ships in the approaches and in the entrance to N Falkland Sound.

18. Our own submarines will be drawn in to the vicinity of the Falkland Isles to provide defence in depth against the surface threat.

19. Initially escorts with sonar fitted helicopters will be deployed to carry out an active sweep off the entrance 4 hours before the arrival of the amphibious group. They will be released to conduct bombardment in support of the landings on the arrival of the amphibious group.

20. Because of the submarine threat and the numbers of units required to counter it, the area over which surface surveillance can be carried out by organic assets, will by this stage be much reduced. It is now that the presence of a Nimrod will be particularly valuable to provide long range warning.

21. As far as ground support operations are concerned RAF Harrier GR3 aircraft have an excellent recce and close air support capability. Because of the overriding priority of Sea Harrier air defence operations lack of carrier deck space may limit the use of this aircraft until we are well established ashore and an airstrip has been constructed.

22. Other events during the final approaches in addition to special forces moving to the offensive will involve a surface decoy group simulating an assault force.

23. As the landing begins the amphibious group will be inside the Falkland Sound which will be a haven free of enemy submarines and surface units. Special forces will have played a vital part in ensuring the integrity of the haven and its approaches. The haven will be maintained by keeping the entrances closed with out ships and helicopters. Local air defence and gunfire support will continue to be provided by units underway in the Sound.

24. Although the forces are most vulnerable to a massed attack during the approach, because the approach is at night, and because it will take Argentine forces time to react, any major enemy effort is most likely to occur during the daylight following the landing. The Argentines would need to have sailed at least a day earlier to attack with surface ships and we could certainly expect

to have detected them. Submarines will have difficulty penetrating our defence and to deal with an air attack we will have assumed an air defence disposition of which this is typical.

25. As the operation continues Admiral WOODWARD will wish to withdraw his carriers to seaward where he can use speed and searoom to best advantage whilst carrying out further offensive operations.

26. Naval operations will continue to support landing forces but the emphasis will gradually shift to a resumption of wider battle group operations once the situation ashore permits. Colonel STEVENSON will now give details of the actual landing.

2. The force consists of 3 Commandos and 7 Battalions of The Parachute Regiment, which are supported by 4 batteries of direct support artillery, a Royal Engineer Squadron, one battery of Napier and two troops of Blimpie and Wombat plus logistic elements.

3. Troop lift is provided by 12 Sea King and 20 Wessex helicopters, plus 8 Landing Craft Utility and 12 LCVPs. Heavy lift will be provided later by 4 Chinook helicopters, which will be available in the logistic build up ashore.

#### AMPHIBIOUS AND STAFF SHIPPING

4. The landing force is carried in ships of the amphibious group and broadly speaking is embarked with:

- a. PEARL - Brigade HQ and the COMV Staff.
- b. INTERMID - Logistic Regiment vehicles and engineer plant.
- c. CANNARA } carrying the 3 Commandos and 3 Parachute  
STONWELL } Battalions  
NEWLAND }
- d. 3 ISLE, ILK, EUMOPIC FERRY and ATLANTIC CONVEYOR with vehicles, stores, follow up helicopters and Harriers.

#### INTELLIGENCE

5. Latest intelligence indicates that the total enemy strength ashore in the Falkland Islands is in the region of 10,000 troops, broadly speaking these are organized into two brigades. One brigade at reduced strength is believed to be on West Falkland with the Brigade HQ, one battalion and an at Port Howard and one battalion - at Fox Bay.

6. The second brigade is based in Port Stanley, where some 3-4 battalions supported by at least a battalion of artillery and air defence are deployed around the town and airport. He believes that these dispositions extend to the area north of Berkeley Sound, and so it is clear he sees that the eastern area holds the main

SCRIPT FOR OPERATION SUTTON PRESENTATION - PHASE 3LAND FORCES BRIEFLAND/FORCES AVAILABLE

1. At the start of this brief on land forces operations I will first outline the shape of the landing force at present embarked and en route, south of Ascension.
2. The force consists of 3 RM Commandos and 2 Battalions of The Parachute Regiment: which are supported by 4 batteries of close support artillery, a Royal Engineer Squadron, one battery of Rapier and two troops of Blowpipe and weapons plus logistic elements.
3. Troop lift is provided by 12 Sea King and 20 Wessex helicopters, plus 8 Landing Craft utility and 12 LCVPs. Heavy lift will be provided later by 4 Chinook helicopters, which will be invaluable in the logistic build up ashore.

AMPHIBIOUS AND STUFT SHIPPING

4. The landing force is carried in ships of the amphibious group and broadly speaking is embarked with:
  - a. FEARLESS - Brigade HQ and the COMAW Staff.
  - b. INTREPID - Logistic Regiment vehicles and engineer plant.
  - c. CANBERRA )  
STROMNESS ) carrying the 3 Commandos and 2 Parachute  
NORLAND ) Battalions
  - d. 5 LSLs, ELK, EUROPIC FERRY and ATLANTIC CONVEYOR with vehicles, stores, follow up helicopters and Harriers.

INTELLIGENCE

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6. The second brigade is based in Port Stanley, where some 5-6 battalions supported by at least a battalion of artillery and air defence are deployed around the town and airport. We believe that these dispositions extend to the area north of Berkeley Sound, and so it is clear to see that this eastern area holds the main

enemy strength and it is here that he intends to defend in strength.

7. Although small pockets of enemy may be deployed around the Island, it is believed that away from Port Stanley the main area where the enemy are deployed is Darwin/Goose Green with considerable air defence assets. We have intelligence that the enemy "strategic reserve" has been deployed about 10 km north of here in battalion strength.

8. For close air support latest assessments indicate that 9 Pucararas may still be operational; and for air defence total enemy strength may be up to 4 battalions operating Tigercat, SAM, 20 mm and 30 mm guns and Blowpipe, deployed to the main areas.

#### ENEMY COURSES OF ACTION

9. The enemy has had nearly 6 weeks to establish himself ashore and prepare defended positions, together with minefields, ammunition and supply dumps. He has a reserve, at battalion strength, unsupported by artillery, but with helicopter lift for up to 2 companies. This means that unless we destroy more of his helicopters his reaction to our landing could be reasonably speedy, although only at light scales. We therefore assess that his plan will be to hold firm in the defended areas, deploying his reserve to react to an anticipated landing by us, or to the actual landing.

#### ADVANCED FORCE OPERATIONS

10. I would like now to talk about advanced force operations, which cover both reconnaissance and offensive tasks, the latter being known as direct action operations.

11. Advanced forces presently deployed in the Task Force comprise 14 patrols from the SB Sqn and 23 patrols from 22 SAS. Of these, 13 patrols have so far been committed to covert reconnaissance and intelligence gathering tasks, and they have been operating in the Falkland Islands since 2 May, all have been inserted by helicopter from the battle group, and all, we believe have remained undetected, several have been withdrawn and others infiltrated and as a result a more reliable tactical intelligence picture of the enemy's disposition is being compiled. Reconnaissance operations will continue until the landing. The remaining patrols provide a reserve and reliefs for those exfiltrated from ashore, and for direct action.

12. Direct Action. It is planned that direct action operations by Special Forces should take place before, during and indeed after the main landing. Specific tasks will be allocated, as a result of intelligence gained by reconnaissance patrols, by the Commander Task Group. They will be designed:

- a. To destroy key enemy assets: radars, the Pucara ground attack aircraft, helicopters, air defence systems, fuel and ammunition.
- b. To harass the enemy, cause dispersion of forces and

reduce his morale.

- c. To deceive him as to the location of the main landing.

#### OUTLINE LANDING PLAN

13. We now come to the outline landing plan which is based, as I have explained, upon the San Carlos option.

14. One of the early considerations is that of timing - basically night or day for the initial assault. Clearly the critical dictating factor is the enemy threat and the prime threat to the amphibious group must be from Argentine air forces which are only really operational during daylight, for this overriding reason we envisage an approach to the AOA after last light and a night landing.

15. A night approach into north Falkland Sound and San Carlos Bay will not be easy, but once inside landing craft operations should be possible whatever the weather.

#### PLAN FOR THE LANDING ITSELF

16. In the scenario of the illustrative landing the amphibious group will enter north Falkland Sound after last light with the key ships of the assault wave consisting of:

FEARLESS  
INTREPID  
CANBERRA  
NORLAND  
STROMNESS  
The 5 LSLs  
EUROPIC FERRY

Some of these will move right into San Carlos Bay and the landing itself will then be carried out both by landing craft and helicopters.

17. It is planned that the distance to run from ship to shore will not exceed 10 miles, and with 8 hours of darkness remaining after the approach to the AOA up to 4 Commandos/Battalions with limited combat support will be ashore by first light. Provided that the landing continues at full pace the landing force would be well balanced before the day was out, and it would be thoroughly established ashore with 7 days logistic support by D+3.

18. Operations inshore after first light will however depend on the threat at the time, bearing in mind that the presence of the amphibious group and landing force must be expected to act as a magnet to the full weight of the enemy's air capability, albeit his time on task will be as little as 10 minutes per sortie.

19. Whatever the threat the safest place for ships will be inside San Carlos Water. Here the land will provide good protection from Exocet missiles. Land based air defence assets will provide a sound shield against attack by aircraft firing guns or rockets,

furthermore if the ships remain close inshore the landing force will have the benefit of the point defence missile systems as well as being under the Sea Harrier umbrella. In addition the close confines of the Bay will allow good protection against attack by enemy submarines.

#### LANDING SEQUENCE

20. This will be in 3 tactical steps.
21. Step 1. Simultaneous beach assault by 2 Cdos at night to secure San Carlos Settlement and Ajax Bay.
22. Step 2. Land 2 further Battalions concurrently at night by landing craft to secure Port San Carlos and establish a defended position on Sussex Mountain.
23. Step 3. At first light use helicopters to move the AD Rapier battery and artillery to cover the beachhead.
24. Reserve. One Cdo will remain in reserve afloat to be lifted by helicopter and/or LCU.

#### BUILD UP ASHORE

25. Once the initial lodgement ashore has been achieved and the perimeter of the beachhead is secure the build up of combat supplies - ammunition, food and water - will continue into the beachhead. As soon as is practicable the support helicopters will move ashore to operate from a FAB. Here they will have full fuelling, maintenance and operating facilities, plus ammunition for armed helicopters.
26. It is also intended to land a basic operating strip for the Harriers at an early stage. This will provide a spare deck ashore for the aircraft, providing a very limited operating capability, but it cannot by any measure be considered as an operational site, until the arrival of the second wave of shipping in early June.
27. One point I would like to emphasise about the landing is the fact that although the landing of the Commandos in the early waves will be swift the subsequent build up of logistic supplies, vehicles and ammunition will take some considerable time because almost everything which goes ashore must be lifted into its operational position by helicopter - movement by vehicles will be almost impossible except around the settlement areas.

#### LFFI

28. You will be aware that HQ LFFI has been established to control land forces in the Falkland Islands once the second brigade arrives. The core of this HQ is presently at Northwood acting as the HQ for Major General MOORE. Once the initial landing on the Falkland Islands by 3 Cdo Bde has become established, on say D+2, Lieutenant General TRANT with a staff from SE Dist will assume the appointment

of military adviser to CINCFLEET and General MOORE with his staff will fly to Ascension, there to join QE2 for swift passage to the Falklands.

29. On arrival there HQ LFFI will cross deck to FEARLESS and establish itself in the LPD.

5 INF BDE

30. 5 Inf Bde is due to arrive in the Falklands in the period approximately 29 May - 1 June. The Bde will land into the secure beachhead held by 3 Cdo Bde from where further operations will be developed to achieve the ultimate aim.

31. 5 Bde is supported by 10 Sea King and 24 Wessex helicopters, it is planned that these will operate from ATLANTIC CAUSEWAY and HMS ENGADINE, together with a number based in a FOB ashore, probably in conjunction with those of 3 Cdo Bde.

FURTHER OPERATIONS ASHORE

HARRIER OPERATIONS ASHORE

32. Also moving south in the same time scale but slightly later than 5 Bde will be 6 further Harrier GR3, plus an augmentation pack to improve the small Harrier strip which I mentioned earlier. Once this is established ashore by 10 June, the 12 Harrier GR3, will have a full operating capability ashore on an improvised air field, including fuel, weapons, maintenance and tasking facility. These aircraft will be used primarily in the close air support and armed reconnaissance roles but they would of course be available in their secondary role of air defence should the Task Force Commander so wish.

SUBSEQUENT OPERATIONS

33. The composition of this build up will provide the commander ashore with the balanced forces required for the repossession of the Islands.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. In summary therefore the team has presented a plan which we believe to be entirely feasible in that it contains sufficient flexibility to cope with the unexpected and can contain the various threats to our force.
2. Part of the flexibility is in timing of D-Day which, for weather factors alone, cannot be precise at this stage. However, we now see a final approach on the evening of the 20th with the landing in the early hours of the 21st as being our first opportunity which will require a decision to proceed during the forenoon of Tuesday 18th. That decision could be delayed up to a week. The landing window is now therefore between Friday 21st and 28th May.
3. In recognition that you will want to know the possible price of a landing operation, I have given a great deal of thought to this aspect, and it is of course, impossible to quantify. However, the combined air, submarine and surface threats with their various strengths and limitations, confirmed by experience, lead me to the conclusion that although we could suffer serious damage to ships of the landing force including perhaps the loss of a major unit, the plan we have conceived will nevertheless result in success at the least price. That is, in a viable landing force being put ashore. Furthermore, I am confident that in the face of today's opposition, under tight blockade, we can select a landing place where early opposition from shore will be negligible and thus allow the establishment of a sound and secure base from which further operations can be undertaken, should they in the event prove to be necessary. Neither is there any doubt in my mind that significant delay in landing will increase the possible cost in human life, not reduce it.