

STATEMENT BY COMMANDING OFFICER

1. I have no doubt that during the journey south 40 Commando RM was very well prepared for any task that lay ahead of us in the Falklands. The Commando was fit, well trained, mentally prepared and in a very high state of morale, spirit and motivation. This has shown through in everything that has happened since.

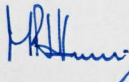
2. Having been the first Royal Marines Commando to land on the Falklands we were disappointed to find ourselves holding the beach head as other units in the formation began the move towards Stanley. Nevertheless every man continued to carry out his comparatively mundane task in a most efficient and well motivated manner largely because Brig Thompson had repeatedly told us that we would be relieved on the arrival of 5 Inf Bde. Sadly this was not to be as on his arrival CLFFI ordered us to remain where we were at San Carlos to defend the FMA.

3. I was most unhappy about this change of plan and went to see General Moore in FEARLESS on 1 June to try to obtain a reversion of this decision. I was concerned about the effect the decision would have on the excellent morale of a good and well motivated unit and on the long term disciplinary effects (vis-a-vis the effect our nonparticipation in the battles to come would have on inter unit relationships in Plymouth). In addition it was not my opinion that the units of 5 Inf Bde would be so well prepared for the task (later proved to be so in my view) and anyway I did not consider that this comparatively static task was making the best use of Commando troops. Having listened patiently to me, not surprisingly, Gen Moore did not change his plans.

4. There was considerable resentment in the Commando at this decision and it was to be reinforced later after 1 WG suffered appalling and sad casualties at Bluff Cove when rather than being relieved by 40 Cdo the unit, in fact, reinforced the battalion with two rifle companies.

5. Given the great disappointment and frustration which these events caused I have nothing but pride in, and admiration for, the way in which the junior leaders in the Commando did their job. Due to this the morale of the Commando stood up very well and every man, in spite of everything, remained cheerful and efficient.

6. Following the surrender of Stanley I drafted a letter to Gen Moore bringing his attention to the feelings in the Commando which were, at that time, running high and which continued for some time thereafter. However, following discussion with Brig Thompson it was decided that nothing would be gained by such action. But it was agreed that my feelings should be recorded in the Commander's Diary.



M P J HUNT
Lt Col RM
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30 June 1982