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FALKLAND ISLANDS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Note of an oral evidence session held in Room 1/99
Old Admiralty Building, London SW1
on Tuesday 28 September 1982

PRESENT

Lord Franks - Chairman
Lord Barber
Lord Lever of Manchester
Sir Patrick Nairne
Mr Merlyn Rees MP
Lord Watkinson

Mr A R Rawsthorne } - Secretariat
Mr P G Moulson }

Witness

Mr R M Hunt

Note taken by MPO Reporter

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CHAIRMAN: Thank you for coming to see us, and we are glad that it happened that for other reasons you were in the country and that you did not have to make a special journey.

- A. (MR HUNT): Thank you.

Q. If I may begin at once we would like to ask you some questions which we have thought about before, so I will begin at the beginning. The first question is could you tell us what broadly were your responsibilities as Governor of the Falkland Islands? You must remember that we are not, all of us, part of the world in which this is common knowledge so if you would just tell us we would be grateful.

- A. I wear two hats as Governor: I am Her Majesty's Government representative down in the Falkland Islands and so I represent the government and I am the spokesman for the HMG in the UK down in the Falkland Islands; I also wear the hat as head of the Falkland Islands Government and, as head of the Falkland Island Government, I represent the islanders and the government of the Falkland Islands here in Britain, and I report back to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on islanders' views and reactions to any of HMG policies.

Q. I think that leads me straight into a second question and then we could look at them together. The second question is what were the respective responsibilities of the Falkland Islands Government and HMG?

- A. The Falkland Islands Government is a largely elected legislative council, and the legislative council has powers to raise money and to spend money. The financial secretary presents the budget the same as the Chancellor of the Exchequer would here, and although the Falkland Islands Government need the formal approval of the Secretary of State this is a formality. They can pass legislation in the Falkland Islands and, as long as it is not repugnant to British legislation, that

is law in the Falkland Islands.

Q. It is triable law - law in a court?

- A. Oh yes. The ordinances have the full weight of the law and they have full say in how they raise their revenue and how they spend it. With the recurrent budget they have always been self-sufficient since about 1881 in the way they raise money and spend it in the recurrent budget. They have only looked to Britain for aid in the development budget.

The areas which are directly the British Government responsibility are defence and foreign affairs and internal security, but it is a colonial regime and I, as Governor, am answerable to the Secretary of State.

Q. Yes. When wearing your hat as the head of the government of the Falkland Islands, and you have your people round you, do you vote?

- A. Yes, we have an executive council which meets monthly and, rather like a Cabinet meeting, they do the normal day to day business of government. The legislative council is the legislative body which passes the laws and the budget, and we normally have two meetings a year of the legislative council.

Q. When laws are passed technically they are ad referendum to the Secretary of State?

- A. Yes, that is right.

Q. And you say that in practice this is not much or at all used.

- A. No, but of course if we tried to pass a law like bringing back hanging or something like that I suppose that would be resisted and overruled.

Q. Did you ever find any embarrassment in combining the two roles?

- A. No. I often wondered before whether I should, but I think that on the whole the British Government's policies were in the best interests of the Falkland Islanders and so I did not find any difficulty.

Q. Of course, we have all read your annual report for 1981. You know that as a committee we are concerned with the months immediately leading up to 2 April - 2 April and beyond are not our concern - and we have to look at earlier years so far as is relevant for our purposes.

- A. Yes.

Q. So that your annual report for 1981 came into our view and we have read it, and we have read the reply which I think Mr Ure of the Foreign Office sent to you.

- A. Yes.

Q. If we go back to the end of last year when you wrote your report how did you really see the future of the islands and the islanders at that time?

- A. I was rather gloomy. I saw things getting worse with Argentina, not to the state of an invasion but I saw Argentina getting more and more impatient with our talks because we were not getting anywhere, or they were not getting anywhere, and I thought they would start putting on the screws by turning off the air communications or making it difficult by stopping the fuel supplies. I thought the year ahead, 1982, was going to be a difficult year for the islanders.

Q. And you thought - am I interpreting your words rightly - that 1982 was going to be a difficult year and that you might well find the Argentine Government resorting to what I call economic measures?

- A. Yes.

Q. But that was about what you thought?

- A. Yes.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: Chairman, could I come in with a question to the Governor. I was very struck in your report with your sentence, if you do not mind my quoting a sentence to you:

"As for a settlement of the main issue, as long as the Argentines continue to insist upon sovereignty first and we continue to maintain that islander wishes are paramount, I see no way ahead in future talks."

Do you mind if I just press you a little **bit further**. **At the** conference which Mr Ridley held in June 1981 there was a general conclusion that it was worth pursuing lease-back somewhat further, though you were very gloomy yourself about lease-back then and, of course, in your annual report you made some rather striking comments about the way in which the islanders looked at it. When you said you saw no future, no way ahead for further talks, before one comes to what the chairman has just touched upon as the way in which Argentina might react towards the Falkland Islanders, what did you see were the possibilities of the diplomatic or negotiating or political way ahead?

- A. I could not see a way as long as by negotiations the Argentines meant the transfer of sovereignty, and it was clear to me by then that that is what they meant. When they talked about negotiations all they meant was the transfer of sovereignty, and they were assuming that the principle of the transfer had been agreed and what they were wanting in talks were the modalities of the transfer. I could not see the islanders ever willingly agreeing to a transfer of sovereignty so I could not see the talks getting anywhere, although they might have dragged on for a little bit longer.

Q. So perhaps sometime in 1982 they would in effect have come to an end for good and all, and something else loosely called confrontation or something of that kind would follow, after years and years when we had managed to keep the pot boiling in some way or other?

- A. Yes. My assessment was that in 1982 we would see perhaps two or three more rounds of talks after the February talks at

official level culminating possibly in the foreign secretary and their foreign minister meeting about now in the UN in the lobbies, and then the tightening of the economic screw coming after that after we had finally reached deadlock about now.

Q. Could one look beyond that at the time?

-A. I thought that perhaps if things went along in that predictable way, the way I predicted, we might be reaching an invasion about April next year not April this year.

MR REES: Could I pick up the point about invasion. There were other things they could have done as you pointed out a moment ago - the squeeze, the links between the islands - but you used the word invasion, that you saw an invasion at some pitch was on the cards.

- A. Unless we imposed a settlement on the islanders before that.

CHAIRMAN: But as you spoke you referred to it as being likely in 1983 in your mind rather than 1982. Is that correct?

- A. Yes.

LORD LEVER: And by invasion did you mean invasion of the main Falkland Islands necessarily or a whole build-up starting with the other islands?

- A. I thought they might probably start with South Georgia or more likely in South Sandwich.

LORD WATKINSON: I am naturally very interested in the islanders' attitude, and this must have presented you with very great difficulties. Are you really saying to us that nothing, meaning nothing even the threat of invasion, would ever have caused the islanders **to be willing to negotiate sovereignty with Argentina?**

- A. Yes.

Q. I am not trying to put words in your mouth but supposing they had thought the invasion would have come when it did, so to speak, you do not think they would have altered their view? Putting it crudely they would probably have preferred to fight it out?

- A. Yes. I think the only way they would have viewed it was, "If you are going to hand sovereignty over in any shape or form, even with 100-year lease-back or whatever, then you are imposing a settlement upon us and we wish you to repatriate us to the UK or to New Zealand or Australia and we want compensation".

Q. If I may just ask one question there, at times in the documents there has been talk of evacuation, and indeed I think there was almost a plan for evacuation, or it appears to have been mentioned, and then it suddenly all dies away again. From your end of the story was there ever thought of evacuating the islands?

- A. No.

SIR PATRICK WAIRNE: Chairman, perhaps I could just add one more thing because the Governor gave a very interesting answer about timescale. What importance did you attach to the 150th anniversary which would have come in January 1983? It did seem to have become quite a feature in Argentina itself at the beginning of the year, which would perhaps have provided a rather sharper time pressure than the one you were suggesting.

- A. Yes. I did not know enough about Argentine attitudes on that.

MR REES: May I ask one more question: **it is** a very stark view that you put about the views of the islanders, and extremely valuable to me and to the rest of us. In your time there was this stark view, which you would know more than anybody else living there all the time, can you recall, ever put to the House of Commons by a government minister? It is

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not a catch question because I realise it is difficult, but it is a most important view. I cannot recall it being put in such a stark way to the House of Commons.

LORD LEVER: It is a little unfair to the Governor. He must have read the Hansards **but without going over them again...**

MR REES: It is more than looking for it in Hansard. This report coming from the Governor would go to the Foreign Office. It is a firm view. It would be put to successive Secretaries of State. They would know that even if they did not put it to the House of Commons, your view? They did know that?

- A. My view was in the annual review.

MR REES: It is as firm as that in there, is it?

CHAIRMAN: I think what the Governor said in his annual report amounts to what he has been saying to us now, and this is why he said if you put together the intransigence of the Argentine position on sovereignty-~~what~~ negotiations are about is transfer of sovereignty - and the islanders views which are adamant that they do not want to go to the Argentine, then there is no way ahead.

- A. Yes.

Q. I am paraphrasing what you said but that is what you said, is it not?

- A. Yes, exactly.

LORD LEVER: But it did not necessarily follow, although it looked probable, that there would be an ultimate military confrontation because this had been the position for several years.

CHAIRMAN: Could I now come to Mr Ure's reply to your letter, at least the letter signed by Mr Ure which was the office's response to your annual report. I come back to a phrase in it which in a way re-echoes and perhaps points up what you had already said. He said to you, "We are now perilously near the inevitable move from dialogue to confrontation". When I read those words I interpret dialogue to mean the

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continuing process of negotiation, and confrontation must mean something else, not negotiation - measures - and the measures can range over a whole series of options. He said perilously close; when you read his reply did this make you wonder about the timescale at all and the character of possible measures, or did you simply feel that it reflected what you had already said?

- A. I thought that that might mean a breakdown in the talks in February but my hope was that the talks would carry on, and it **seemed** from what my councillors said that they were prepared to carry on talking, so I thought that perilously was a little over-strong at that time.

CHAIRMAN: I would like to put one last question to you which is perhaps more for the Foreign Office than you, and you say whether you want to answer it. When we talk about perilously near to confrontation or, in your language, the intransigence of the Argentines on sovereignty and the persistence of the islanders in their own view about not wanting any such transference, and you think that over the years various options which might square the circle had been tried, the last one of which was lease-back, did you think that the cupboard was bare ie there were no options left and that, therefore, if we went on talking it was talking about talking, that there was no substance there; or did you think there was a possibility of reality of negotiation in the future?

LORD LEVER: At what date did he have this review?

CHAIRMAN: I am asking this of the Governor of the time when he wrote his report, and I imagine that he wrote his report in early January 1982.

- A. Yes. I am sorry, I find that difficult to answer.

Q. It is.

- A. Could you just repeat it again for me, please.

Q. Yes. If I put it perhaps more simply, you had expressed the views you expressed in your report; Mr Ure had expressed his views in writing back to you.

- A. Yes.

Q. You had also said that you thought you could hope for two or three more rounds of negotiations. I was asking whether, given the past history culminating in the breakdown of lease-back, you felt that further talks with the Argentines could have substance in them or whether they were really talks about talks, talks for the sake of talking. How did you see that?

- A. I think talks for the sake of talking is the answer there. The councillors had a strict mandate from their own colleagues not to talk about sovereignty. When they went to the talks in New York they were specifically instructed by their colleagues that they were not to talk about sovereignty at all. The election which we had last September was on this point and the hard-liners got in, and they made it very clear to the two representatives they sent that they must not talk about sovereignty. They were simply to sit there and listen and report. They could talk about anything else - co-operation with fisheries, with oil, whatever - but they could not talk about sovereignty, so it seemed to me inevitable that after two or three more rounds of talks there would be nothing more to talk about.

LORD BARBER: Could I ask a question, chairman. Bearing in mind what you said, which I obviously accept, that it was part of your duty to put forward to the islanders the policy of Her Majesty's Government or successive governments, which in the circumstances seemed to be an almost impossible task because of the views of the Falkland Islanders, do you think your task was made more difficult by visits from time to time of members of parliament and by the debates in the House of Commons? It seems to me to be frank that the people who went out to the Falkland Islands who went out on delegations of one kind or another, all-party ones, inevitably by the very nature of things and the way these things work would come back enthusiastically representing the views of the islanders. One would have assumed that this must have made your task really

more difficult because one assumes that as the British Government was trying to negotiate, or hoping to negotiate sovereignty they would also have hoped that the islanders would have fallen into line and seen that this was a sensible policy to pursue. Yet it does seem, reading the Hansards, to most of us who have been in the House of Commons that your task and the task of the government were probably made more difficult by the way in which the debates took place in the House of Commons guided by a limited number of backbenchers who had visited the Falkland Islands, whose attitudes were probably predictable. I am just asking whether this was the sort of sense you had.

- A. **Yes it was and, with** the last two members of parliament who came out just before the election, I think perhaps they came out with more of an open mind about it, but they went back strong supporters of the islanders.

LORD LEVER: Who were the two open-minded members?

- A. Mr Shersby and Mr Ogden who came out in September, and they came back very staunch supporters of the islanders. This is one of the points. The islanders always thought, quite rightly I suppose, that they had **far more support for their point of view** in the House of Commons and the House of Lords than they had within the government and with the public in Britain.

Q. In effect you are saying that what had been the case for some **years was** that it was talks somewhere related to sovereignty or a confrontation, and the role of talks **presumably, since January 1982 and even before, has been to some extent to provide the Argentines with an alternative to confrontational movement rather than to raise in their minds any approximate hope that any real progress on sovereignty could be made?** Would you agree with that, Governor?

- A. Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Unless any member of the committee has any further points, or unless you, Mr Hunt, have anything further you would like to say on these general issues we have been talking about, we would like to move to one or two rather particular questions related to South Georgia.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE. Before we come to South Georgia I would really like to come back to this question of the expectations of what might happen when at some stage or other the talking ran out altogether. I was a little surprised to read your oral report of the June meeting of 1981, that colleagues in the Falkland Islands took the view that military action by Argentina was very unlikely. I think that is what you said.

- A. Yes.

Q. And, of course, in the event much turned in the whole affair on an assumption which you have rather indicated yourself, Governor, that it would begin rather slowly with other measures. I wonder whether you could say a **bit** more about that. After all, you acknowledge fairly enough that you would not have a detailed knowledge of the Argentina scene but they were getting more and more impatient. When one was coming to early 1982 you had the problems of the weather, the winter, and all the rest of it. Why, if I may put the question rather crudely, was there an assumption in the islands - and perhaps an assumption in your own mind as well as among the islanders - at the very beginning of this year that it was all bound to start rather slowly with a bit of a squeeze on the economic front?

- A. I think basically because we never thought that Galtieri or the Argentine junta would be silly enough to go straight for the military option. They could get so much of what they wanted by not going that far, and I think this was the islanders' view, certainly some of the more thinking councillors. Councillor Adrian Monk was the person whom I quoted in that 1981 meeting. He has always maintained, and several of the more experienced islanders have maintained, that the Argentines would not invade because they liked to keep the Falklands dispute simmering away for their own domestic politics. Obviously that was wrong but that was the firm belief **held** by a number of the senior councillors in the islands.

Q. If I could just pursue this a moment, I can quite see that by turning the commercial and economic screw they might do something which would be useful in itself domestically at home, but I do not quite follow why it should enable them to achieve other ends. The islanders, again as you reported quite clearly, were quite ready to put up with a commercial and economic squeeze. Argentina would so to speak be signalling to the whole world the way in which they were behaving in a form which would prepare everybody's mind for the possibility of something worse. They had great interests there themselves which seemed to me also thirdly to be an **element of cutting off nose** to spite face etc. I do not quite follow why in relation to the islands they could expect to get their way through a commercial and economic squeeze.

- A. I think that in time, although as I say the islanders had the Dunkirk spirit, without air communications, with a poor and irregular sea link, more of the youngsters would have become dissatisfied and they would have left. There would have been difficulties in getting the shearing gangs in. They travel the world nowadays and most of the farms require **contract** shearing gangs. There would have been difficulties in getting those in and, therefore, the economy would have deteriorated even more. I think over a period, unless there was an input from Britain, and that did not seem likely, then the economy would have deteriorated still further to an extent when really the population was not viable.

Q. Which would be, would it not, over quite a long period?

- A. Yes.

Q. A matter of years?

- A. Yes.

Q. I see, so the alternative would be to squeeze the islanders out?

- A. Yes.

Q. Rather than take it by a coup de main?

- A. Yes. I used to use the expression that all they had to do was to do that for a few years and the islands would drop into their lap like a rotten apple.

LORD LEVER: And any attempt by the British Government to put a substantial garrison there in the meantime would accelerate the process you have described of emigration, especially of the nubile females of the islands - hopefully matrimony?

- A. Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Could I now move on to South Georgia, and Lord Watkinson would like to ask you one or two questions of fact about that.

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Q. And you did not get what you might call assessments of the Argentine position up-dating their position as it went along?

- A. No.

Q. So that coming to South Georgia would it be fair to say that you really faced what was a very ugly situation from your point of view fairly unbriefed on the whole, or is that not a fair statement?

- A. Unbriefed on Argentine attitudes, yes.

Q. I do not want to spend a lot of time on this but it is obviously of great interest to us. For example, I think you were warned by the Foreign Office on 17 December 1981 that this man Davidoff had bought this salvage from Salvesens, that he had a legal contract to remove the scrap and that he was going to go there and make an initial survey. Did they just tell you that in a bald sort of way or did they give you any background?

- A. I knew all about the Davidoff contract. In fact I had tried to get Salvesens not to extend the option the previous year. I had a copy of the contract; I knew all about that. I knew that he had been trying to get down to South Georgia for a couple of years but I did not know he was going to go in December into Leith Harbour in the Almirante Irizar, and as soon as I heard about that I protested.

Q. So you do not think the FCO did warn you that he was going there to make a survey in December 1981?

- A. I have no recollection of that.

Q. So that when the base commander at Grytviken reported to you that Davidoff and his initial small party had arrived, this was a complete surprise to you?

- A. Yes. I knew that he had been trying to get there but the fact that he had sailed in in an Argentine naval vessel I immediately protested.

Q. We do not want to be difficult about this but obviously this is rather a crucial matter and may have been something which the junta used as a convenient excuse to turn their measures to military action, so it is very important to us to try to get this clear. I know that on 31 December you reported that an Argentine naval icebreaker had made an illegal landing at Leith, and that you proposed to authorise the base commander to tell them to get the hell out, so to speak.

- A. Yes.

Q. And you really had no warning of that?

- A. No, not that I remember.

Q. And you had no discussion either with our ambassador at Buenos Aires or with Mr Ure or anyone else on what might turn out, after all, to be a very hot potato? It must have appeared to you to have been quite a hot potato at this point?

- A. I think both I and my predecessor had expressed our disquiet about this salvage contract going to an Argentine, and pointed out the political troubles there could be.

LORD WATKINSON: Yes, I know you did that.

CHAIRMAN: Could I interrupt for one second. Disquiet expressed by you and your predecessor - what was the disquiet about? What sort of trouble did you foresee as possible?

- A. I thought that if Davidoff got there with a bunch of Argentines it would be very difficult to get them off, and if we let them stay it could become another Southern Thule.

Q. That is the point - you thought that?

- A. Yes.

LORD WATKINSON: But there was no discussion so to speak of what you might call all the ins and outs of what might be a very tricky situation? You made your views quite clear; they are on the record and there is no argument about it, but there does not ever seem to have been what I would call a discussion of how to handle what could turn out to be a very difficult situation. Bearing in mind that I think the Foreign Office, having taken legal advice, found they could not cancel the Davidoff contract, or Salvesens would not cancel it, this was something which was probably bound to happen anyway, and it does seem to me that perhaps you were left a bit in the dark really about it all.

- A. The attitude from the FCO seemed to be that this was a commercial contract and purely commercial and, therefore, it had no political significance.

Q. As you know, when you protested in your telegram of 31 December you got a reply from the FCO that your recommended action - which we need not go into at all on the record - would risk provoking a most serious incident, which I suppose was meant to be a sort of reprimand if you like.

- A. Yes. I rather expected that reply when I sent that telegram.

Q. You did? Why did you expect that kind of reply?

- A. Because I did not think that I would be authorised to arrest and prosecute Mr Davidoff or any of his men.

Q. All right, let us leave it at that. That seems perfectly clear to me. Anyway in the end Davidoff went off again, and my next question is were you really in the picture when in February this man called at the embassy in Buenos Aires and went through the motions of apologising for making trouble? Let me say at once that, of course, we have seen all the signals but I am now trying to get at whether there was any more informal consultation and whether you were kept pretty tightly in the picture. Davidoff went to the embassy and said that he apologised and specifically asked then, I think in a letter in writing, to be told about reporting procedures with the local authority in South Georgia when he went back again in March, and the embassy then asked you for your views.

- A. Yes. I remember receiving the copy of that interview from Michael Hickson, I believe.

Q. And your views as expressed to the embassy, I think, were merely that he must comply with the proper emigration formalities?

- A. Which he knew and had been told about many times before, to report to Grytviken.

Q. Not by you though.

- A. No.

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Q. By the embassy in Buenos Aires?

- A. Yes. Davidoff never set foot in Stanley.

Q.

Obviously

what he was doing must have been known to the Argentine navy at some level because he was going about in their ship, but there is no indication that he was the tool of, say, Admiral Anaya or anyone like that at this point. Therefore there is some interest to us in judging whether he was really a rather clueless commercial chap who did not want really to bother to go to Grytviken and tried to square his yardarm with our embassy - because that is what he said - and thought, "I am just going to go to Leith and get on with it", in a clueless sort of fashion; or whether this was some rather deep-laid plot which seemed to be implied in the telegram which I think you sent from Captain Barker's ship much later on at the end of March.

- A. Yes.

Q. Would you like to say anything about that?

- A. I must say I thought it was a deep-laid plot from December from the time that Davidoff went in.

CHAIRMAN: From December?

- A. December, when the Irizar went into Leith Harbour for the first visit, because I could not believe that he would have squared just the naval captain of that ship. I thought somebody at the top of the Argentine navy must have been behind it and was deliberately using him to assert their sovereignty right to South Georgia, and had we not reacted it would have become another Southern Thule.

LORD WATKINSON: I do not think there is a telegram from you saying that to the FCO at any point.

- A. I thought I had said that I was sure that the navy, if not the government, were behind this.

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Q. Yes.

- A. And the fact that it emerged later that the Davidoff workmen had white cards showed that the MFA were also party to the arrangements, and they must have issued those cards in January. I thought I did say in the telegram that I was convinced myself that the navy were using Davidoff.

Q. That was later on in March.

- A. Yes.

Q. I am now talking about the time immediately following December.

- A. I had no firm evidence at that time.

Q. I accept that you and Captain Barker were really towards the end of March saying that this was the prelude to an occupation of South Georgia, so probably it really was not until towards the end of March, anyway in writing, that anything was put down which might have alarmed or alerted ministers in London to the fact that this was going to be a very difficult political thing to handle?

- A. From the time of the landing in Leith on 20 March I think, yes.

Q. Just a couple of points on the men who were left - obviously the base commander told them to go away, the original landing party. I believe they told him they had got their authorisation from Buenos Aires from our embassy.

- A. Yes.

Q. Then Endurance. You asked for permission to sail Endurance and that was granted. Endurance was sailed and presumably proceeded. It was hoped to keep that secret but in the end it leaked. I suppose that could not be helped?

- A. It was very difficult because quite a number of the marines who were embarked from Stanley were known by the Stanley people.

Q. So it leaked in the normal course?

- A. Yes.

Q. Because that then really put on the political heat in London.

- A. Yes. We did try to keep that secret by sending her off towards Montivideo and she was sending off signals on the way down giving false positions, but...

Q. Then when the 10 or 11 men were left the then base commander, or the man on the spot, never seems to have gone along to see them and say "Why have you remained here?". I know you said in your telegram that this was because there were not enough people both to man the observation post and to provide a recce party.

- A. Yes.

Q. But would it not have been wise to have found out what these chaps thought they were doing there?

- A. I think we guessed what they were doing there: they were getting the things ready for another ship to come in and take some of the salvage away.

Q. In other words, they were performing their commercial contract?

- A. Yes.

Q. They were not a landing party.

- A. No, they were...

Q. I think it appears from reading the papers that the impression got back to London a bit that these boys were really occupying; they were not just there working, taking away bits of chain or copper or something, but that they were a kind of occupying force and that this was the

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reason why Endurance must be told to take them off.

- A. When the first lot went in they certainly behaved like that. They hoisted the flag and...

Q. They raised the Argentine flag...

- A. Yes, and put up their own notices. They did behave like that.

Q. Were you ever told that our embassy in Buenos Aires had been given a list by Mr Davidoff of all the men who went?

- A. Yes.

Q. You knew that?

- A. Mr Hickson wrote and told me that.

Q. And that they were ostensibly workmen, not...

- A. Yes.

LORD LEVER: You said that you thought that Davidoff's behaviour in not getting his clearance and all the rest of it, which presumably he could have got quite readily, was a deep laid plot, but a deep laid plot to do what? Presumably to slight British sovereignty on South Georgia in collaboration with the Argentine authorities and with their approval, no more than that.

- A. Yes, and to test the waters to see what our reaction would be.

LORD LEVER: Of such slighting, yes.

LORD WATKINSON: The vandalism of the Argentine airline office, presumably this was just done by one or two Falkland islanders who wanted to have a tit for tat?

- A. Or Royal Marines. I am not sure whether...

Q. Oh, you think it might have been...?

- A. The evidence suggested a flag that was more of a military nature than a civil nature. The clips that were on the halyard were military clips not civilian. It could have been civilian islanders who had taken the flag; it was a very tatty old Union Jack and it may have been given to them long ago. But we never found out who did that.

Q. No.

- A. But 'vandalisation' is a rather strong word to use because whoever did it had a key and opened the door and went in and removed things from the Vice-Comodoro's table carefully and put them to one side and then wrote on the table with the toothpaste and just draped the Union Jack over the Argentine flag behind the table.

Q. What was it? "Tit for tat, you buggers", or something.

- A. That is it, yes.

Q. It was no doubt great fun, but when it appeared in the Argentine press it did not look all that good.

- A. No.

Q. Did it ever occur to you that this whole incident - and I want to be absolutely clear about this - if it were so to speak taken away from the commercial sphere and put into a sphere of high politics, meaning test occupation or real occupation or anything like that, might have been just the pretext the junta were looking for to go beyond the measures which you were expecting to a military invasion?

- A. I must confess I did not see it in that light at the time in Stanley, although when I saw the way that it had been blown up in the Argentine press I saw that it could have been used as a pretext, yes.

Q. But to you at the time it did not appear that being a bit tough with Davidoff and co might be giving an excuse to Anaya to say, "Now we have no option but to take full military action"?

- A. I did not see that we had any option but to take a tough line with Davidoff because if we had not we would have lost South Georgia.

Q. And yet finally you were told by the FCO to ratify it on any basis possible. That was the FCO final instruction, was it not?

- A. Yes.

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Q. Perhaps they should have given that instruction much earlier on?

- A. I doubt whether, had we got that instruction earlier on, Davidoff and his men would have conformed.

Q. Well that we shall never know.

- A. No.

LORD BARBER: Could I ask one general question following from that. Lord Watkinson mentioned that would seem to indicate pretty strongly that in the early period of the Davidoff affair the junta were not involved, that they were not conniving and that senior members of the navy were not conniving, although it may have been done at a lower level.

If that were so, do you think that all this business of the immigration procedures might have been simply a muddle? Obviously you tend to think that Davidoff was doing this deliberately. It seemed to me to be somewhat strange that he should deliberately not conform with procedures when he appears on the face of it to have gone to some lengths, by calling at the embassy, by writing, by providing a list of the names. I just wonder whether you think it is likely or possible that in fact it all was a bit of a muddle as far as the immigration procedures were concerned, because that is what it tends to look like if one does accept the information that it was not a great high level plot.

- A. But I cannot see why, even if Davidoff was a feckless, muddle-headed man, he could not do the simple thing of going to Grytviken. He knew he had to do that. It was simple. It was not a complicated muddle. It was a simple thing to do and he had agreed that he would go to Grytviken first.

Q. He had?

- A. Yes, according to...

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LORD WATKINSON: In my understanding - and please tell me if I am wrong - it does not seem to me that because your reply to the Buenos Aires embassy signal did not arrive until I think the Davidoff party had left - I am now talking about the March affair - it does not seem to me that there was perhaps no risk of some misunderstanding from Davidoff's party's point of view that, providing they had white cards issued by the Argentine MFA and providing they told the embassy what they were doing - and they did - and listed the people who were going and everything, they could not, so to speak, jump the gun and just go straight to Leith and not bother with Grytviken?

- A. It seemed to me that they had deliberately given too short notice so that they could do that. That it was not a muddle; they must have been planning that for some time. They could have given us plenty of notice of when they were going to sail and they did not give us enough notice. I was late getting that signal back because I had to communicate with the base commander at Grytviken to find out from him what he wanted them to do. They must have realised that communications to South Georgia take a while.

LORD LEVER: Could it not have been that Davidoff simply wanted to comply and that, on the one hand, he was faced with our requirement and he wanted to get the approval of his own authorities and they said "No, we do not want you to make this acknowledgment of the sovereignty"?

- A. I think this is so.

Q. So he attempted to muddle through between these two things so as to make his scrap metal profit.

- A. He could not really have gone into Grytviken in an Argentine navy vessel.

LORD LEVER: That is right.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: Am I right that Davidoff never went to South Georgia himself?

- A. He went to South Georgia in December.

Q. In December, yes, but he did not go in March?

- A. He was not in the main party in March.

Q. He was not in the main party.

- A. No.

Q. I quite understand what you were saying when you mentioned that you had argued generally against the idea of an Argentine being given this contract, but could you just confirm: did you know anything about Davidoff as a person to suggest that there were objections to Davidoff as Davidoff, as distinct from simply being an Argentine citizen?

- A. No. I had seen a letter on the file - I think it came in my predecessor's time - from Salvesens. Elliott, I think, Mr Elliott of Salvesens, commending Davidoff to my predecessor, saying that he hoped Davidoff would call in at Stanley on the way down so that my predecessor could meet him and would find him a likeable man. That is all I remember seeing.

Q. There may not be much more to be said about it, but when I first read this story in detail I was taken aback that they had established the Argentine flag. Am I right that that is something that at the time did so to speak weigh very strongly with you, that they had had the impertinence - an outrageous thing really? What on earth were they doing? If they were just muddling it along, as we have been suggesting, why should they have gone, a largish party to begin with, and planted the Argentine flag? I do not want to put words in your mouth but am I making too much of that or did you think that a rather outrageous thing - I choose the word carefully - to do?

- A. I was not outraged myself but I knew the islanders would be. The islanders feel every bit as strongly about flag-waving as the Argentines.

Q. We would think it extraordinary if a country brought its own flag in here, if we gave them a contract to do something in Scotland for example.

- A. Yes.

Q. Equally so there.

- A. Yes.

LORD WATKINSON: They did in fact I think haul it down when asked to do so.

- A. When asked, yes, they certainly did that.

Q. They did not prevaricate or anything; they just did it.

- A. Yes, but they did go in with rifles and they shot reindeer and that was specifically against the contract. They were not to take firearms in and they were not to shoot anything. That was in the contract, in Davidoff's contract. So they blatantly committed various other offences apart from the immigration offence.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: I just wanted to be quite sure - and Lord Watkinson has really I think covered this ground and if so, forgive me - the sources that we have been able to see do not positively offer evidence of any link between Davidoff and Admiral Anaya - any part of a kind of deep laid plot. You have got nothing more to add on that? At the time, for reasons you have very fairly explained to us, you were pretty suspicious of the whole operation against a background of sudden...?

- A. Yes.

Q. But there is not anything more to add on that, on whether there was or was not any direct stoolpigeon role being given to Davidoff in relation to Argentina as a government's intention towards South Georgia?

- A. No, I thought that he was a stoolpigeon of the navy and then when we heard that the white cards had been issued I thought that he might well be also the stool pigeon of the junta.

Q. But it was governor's, if I may put it this way, speculation?

- A. It was indeed, entire speculation, yes.

Q. My last question is: looking on it now, would you say that the way in which it was in the event handled - and it was a difficult situation - did not offer

any grounds for provoking the invasion of the Falkland Islands? What would you say to that?

- A. I do not think that it offered grounds for provoking an invasion of the Falklands unless they wished to use that as an excuse. If it was a pure commercial contract then I am quite sure that they would have taken that last very generous offer of regularising the people who were there. We offered, as far as I remember, for the base commander to go across to Leith, not even for them to go to Grytviken, to regularise their position there. If they had wanted to cool the thing down they could have done it then perfectly easily and without losing face.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: Tell me if I am wrong, but it seems to me at the moment that the South Georgian incident with all its complications was really irrelevant to the decision to invade.

- A. I do not know. I just cannot...

LORD WATKINSON: Just to be absolutely clear on the record. They had shot a reindeer but I think when the Grytviken commander went they told him they had been authorised by our embassy in Buenos Aires and they treated him, I imagine, fairly kindly. Did they not offer him a drink or something?

- A. Yes, they offered him reindeer meat for dinner!

Q. They did not behave like an invading army, so to speak.

- A. No.

Q. And did he at that point say, "I will come over and authorise your visit if you want me to"?

- A. No.

Q. As Mr Davidoff was not there, who was in charge? Do we know? Did he see somebody in charge?

- A. They spoke to the captain of the ship.

Q. I see - who brought them there.

- A. Yes.

Q. There was not a foreman or something?

- A. There were two men, the base commander said, who spoke English. Whether they were the foreman or not, I do not know.

Q. So really all the base commander said was, "Haul down the flag and go away, you have made an illegal landing".

- A. Not 'Go away', but 'Come round to Grytviken to get proper clearance'.

Q. Yes - 'Sail round to Grytviken'.

- A. Yes.

Q. What did they say to that?

- A. They gave no answer to that and they sailed, but not round to Grytviken.

Q. You know that Mr Williams reported that when he first went to the Argentine authorities, perhaps rather naturally they said they knew nothing about it?

- A. Yes.

MR REES: About the vessel. I am not quite clear, so it is purely information. This was an Argentine naval vessel, fully commissioned?

- A. No. In March it was what is called an STN vessel, that is rather the equivalent of our Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

LORD WATKINSON: And one that went the rounds of the area, so to speak?

- A. Yes, it was a regular visitor to Stanley.

Q. Captain Barker knew the ship quite well, did he not, and I believe knew the commanding officer?

- A. Yes.

MR REES: For what purpose did he come to Stanley, I am not quite clear?

- A. He had brought fuel supplies under the fuel agreement.

Q. I see. That was for information. And just to pick up a point the chairman made just now, in terms of anybody's attitude to what was going to happen here at South Georgia, everybody had at the back of their minds what had happened at Thule, and nothing had been done there by

successive governments or by successive anybody else, because they got there, whatever the reasons are. So one did not want this to repeat itself. But Thule was very much at the back of people's minds?

- A. Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Can I ask one or two last questions on this. The first is a very simple-minded one. Could you say a word on the degree of importance attached to raising or lowering national flags because this seems to have been a point at Thule. There were other things too, but they raised the Argentine flag. In this case the Argentine flag was raised and lowered and the Argentine flag was removed in Stanley itself.

- A. Not removed. It was just covered by the Union Jack.

Q. You said these acts have a symbolic importance both from the Argentine and the islanders' point of view. Did you, so to speak, take them as it were as a political demonstration when they occurred?

- A. Yes.

Q. And you were sure that that was so? It meant something?

- A. Yes.

Q. It was not like running up any other flag?

- A. No, oh no, it certainly meant something. I think the background to this in the Falklands concerns the flying of the courtesy flag by ships. There has been a long long series of trouble about Argentine ships when they come into Stanley harbour: should they or should they not fly the courtesy flag?

Q. That is an old story. It goes back to the 17th century and the British and Dutch in the North Sea.

- A. I see.

Q. My second question is: I am now not thinking about the date late on in March when you and Captain Barker were taking a view, I am thinking of two other times: in December, when Davidoff came and went away, either then or

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just after; and then secondly 19/20 March when this party arrived. I would be grateful if you would tell me - I think most of this has already been said to Lord Watkinson, but simply for me to be clear - how far on the first occasion you felt that this in its nature was politically troublesome potentially and therefore something which went beyond the contractual nature of the thing: did you then or did you not? And then on the second occasion, did you have the same thoughts? Were they stronger, etc etc? And insofar as you thought - I am deliberately using vague language - that this was politically worrisome, what sort of evidence moved in your mind to lead you to that view? I realise that anybody having to take decisions in a position of responsibility has to look at the facts and sometimes go beyond them and see a trend. There was something there. What was it?

- A. In December I thought it was politically worrying, as you say, because Davidoff went down in a naval ship. The Almirante Irizar is a naval icebreaker, not just an STN; it is a full naval craft and the naval captain should have obtained diplomatic clearance in BA before he set sail into South Georgia waters. An Argentine naval ship steamed into British territorial waters in South Georgia without obtaining diplomatic clearance beforehand. I can see why they did not do that, because they held that those waters are Argentine waters, not British waters.

Q. That is the whole issue.

- A. That is the whole issue, yes. Davidoff also knew he had to go to Grytviken and he did not go. He did not go into Grytviken because the naval captain did not want to acknowledge British sovereignty there. So it was a politically worrying thing to do and the fact that it was a naval ship, one of their newest naval icebreakers, whose itinerary was...

Q. Antarctic patrol.

- A. Yes. It must have been cleared, I would have thought, by somebody higher up than the captain of the ship. So I was worried then and I did press for a protest to be made in BA and I think a formal protest was made to the MFA in January. But despite that, the 40 or 50 appeared on the Bahia Buen Suceso in March and, as you say, it was more politically worrying then because it showed to me that this was carefully worked out and a deep laid plot.

Q. I understand. These thoughts of yours, backed by the evidence you have described, how far were they actually put to the Foreign Office? How far did you tell them, "There is a politically worrisome event happening", in December? How far did you tell them, "There is a more worrisome political event beginning to happen", on 19 March?

- A. I cannot remember the telegram I sent, Lord Franks, after I got the information in December, but I thought that, by the very nature of my asking for a protest to be made in BA, that that showed that I considered it more politically worrying than just an ordinary commercial muddle.

Q. That I agree with, certainly.

- A. And then in March I think I said I was convinced myself that the navy - and perhaps not only the navy but also the MFA - were involved in this and were using Davidoff as a tool to assert by physical presence their sovereignty claim on South Georgia. I did not think I could have put that more strongly.

Q. Thank you very much. Now if we can go on. I have a question here but I am not sure how far it is particularly relevant to us with our interests because we came to 2 April, which is our deadline. What did the invading force look like? How many men? How much equipment? Did they appear to be acting in accordance with a carefully prepared plan?

- A. Oh yes, certainly. They sent the special forces into a previously reconnoitred and prepared ground south of Stanley. They went in by helicopter at night, which could not be done without careful planning and preparation. They went in with landing barges at night in this small creek. They knew how to get in; they knew how to move from there. They went straight from there, about 180 of them I think, across the ground behind Stanley at night to Moody Brook, which was the detachment headquarters of the Royal Marines. They did a systematic slaughter job in Moody Brook. Had we had any Royal Marines there they would have slaughtered them. They went straight for the CO's cabin and then the second i/c and then the senior ranks and then the other ranks. They knew exactly where and how to come down to Government House. This was obviously a prepared snatch squad to come in and get me, take me out, before the main force came in over the beaches.

This was all obviously planned for some time, I would say, and carefully planned. We had in Stanley a fifth column which came in. About 19 I think it was - 17 or 19 chaps - came in in the aircraft a week before, ostensibly to build a ramp for Gas del Estado, which was the Argentine gas company supplying gas cylinders. I thought at the time that this was rather a lot of young men just to build a ramp. They were obviously part of the task force.

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~~The main force came into the right beach~~ with their DUKWs, their amphibious craft. We had our heavy machine gun and our section on the wrong beach, expecting them to come in in infantry landing barges into a rather steeply shelving shore. They came into the next beach,

which was a shallow shelving shore, suitable for their DUKWs. So they had obviously done their homework very well. They knew exactly where to come and they had a list, a roll-call, of all our Royal Marines - they had the names of all of them. It all smacked of very careful planning.

Q. I think what you have said demonstrates that.

- A. Thank you.

LORD WATKINSON: When did the ramp party arrive - a week before or...?

- A. Yes. We had a weekly flight in on a Tuesday. The invasion was on the Friday morning. It was not the Tuesday of that week; it was the Tuesday of the previous week that these people came in.

Q. I see. And of course you could not stop them because they came in under the agreement with the air service and all that?

- A. Yes, they were building...

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: Could I just follow that too, chairman? It did later emerge that they were members of the Argentine force?

- A. Yes.

Q. And they had come in - this is quite important - 10 days before, you said.

- A. Ten days before, yes.

CHAIRMAN: Ten days before 2 April.

- A. Yes.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: So in that sense at that point in time the Argentine Government were in effect committing members of their own armed forces to Port Stanley, presumably with a view to...?

- A. Yes.

Q. Could I, chairman, just ask one other question. The reason why I put my question about irrelevancy of South Georgia was because I did want to ask, again what may be an unlikely scenario question but I would like to see what

your comment is. It has of course occurred to me that if it all had been rather carefully planned and was not, as has also been suggested, a rather last-minute decision to go for the invasion, to set up something like putting up the Argentine flag in South Georgia, to which the Governor and the British Government and the Endurance would react by scuttling the Endurance off to South Georgia, could well be a very sensible preliminary to get our eyes focussed there while in fact they were getting on the top line of what they had most carefully planned, which was the main invasion of the islands. Is that a nonsense scenario or may there be something in it?

- A. Oh no, I think there may be something in it. I thought, when I heard that the naval ships had left Argentine ports, that they were probably going to be somewhere between South Georgia and the Falklands to intercept the Endurance had the Endurance picked up the scrap metal merchants. But I thought afterwards that that certainly was a possible scenario, that we were looking down at South Georgia and not at ourselves in Stanley.

LORD WATKINSON: But allowing for the fact that you were not kept fully informed

what was the date which you thought an invasion was imminent?

- A. When I got the telegram at 3.30 pm on 1 April.

LORD WATKINSON: I see. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: May I go back for one moment. I think you have said it all already, but you say this party of people to repair the ramp, who were Argentines, landed 10 days before 2 April, ie about 23 March?

- A. Could I check in my diary? (After consultation)
23 March, yes.

Q. Yes. And that afterwards it appeared that they were members of the Argentine armed forces.

- A. Yes.

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Q. That was fact.

- A. Yes.

Q. And that you had reason to believe that they did things useful to the armed forces while they were there - sending signals etc?

- A. Yes.

Q. We know, and I expect you know, that round about 23/24 March the whole Argentine navy was putting to sea - exercises with the Uruguayans and so on - off the River Plate. Do you, for what it is worth, see what you have said about these chaps - the 18 or so of them - on 23 March, landing and doing what they did, as evidence that, whether or not the actual decision to invade was taken very late on, they were intending to - prepared to, ready to - invade as early as 10 days back?

- A. That is the only assumption I can draw from the fact that they arrived on that date.

Q. You do draw it?

- A. Yes.

Q. That is all I wanted to know. Thank you very much. I think we have covered most of the other questions we had in mind - I will ask the committee in a moment - but we had one, again reverting to a more general point. We shall be talking, perhaps in November, to the two councillors because they have to go to the UN and if they fit it all together it is easier for them. Are there any points which you would suggest we should bear in mind when we are talking to them?

- A. I do not think so, Lord Franks. They had a straight mandate from the other councillors to listen and report back.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, certainly. May I ask members of the committee whether there are any further points that they would like to raise with you. Lord Lever?

LORD LEVER: No thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Lord Watkinson?

LORD WATKINSON: I think you have said this, Governor, but it is terribly important. There is a record of it. Do I understand really two things: that, let us say, up to the middle of March this year you really had no idea, and nor had any of your colleagues on the Falkland Islands, that Argentina was likely to set in hand a military invasion of the Falkland Islands?

- A. Yes.

Q. That was your opinion and the general opinion, as far as you knew, of your colleagues in the executive council and everything else?

- A. Yes, I would say up till 1 April.

Q. Yes. And really nothing that you had been told, or nothing that had happened, gave you any reason to change that view?

- A. No.

Q. So that you really believed that the worst that you would face would be cutting off the air service, cutting off communications, and really the processes of attrition which you described so clearly earlier on?

- A. Yes.

Q. Thank you. Could I just ask one other thing, just for information. How many Argentines did you have around the place about this time? You had this Vice-Comodoro who was running the airline, but how many Argentines roughly did you have?

- A. Twenty-nine.

Q. Did you?

- A. In Stanley on that night, because we rounded them all up.

Q. All Argentine citizens?

- A. Yes. Most of them Argentine Air Force. Some of them...

Q. What - military officers?

- A. The Vice-Comodoro was the only officer; the others were NCOs and other ranks. They ran the LADE, the air service. This was part of the agreement.

CHAIRMAN: Lord Watkinson?

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Q. What - military officers?

- A. The Vice-Comodoro was the only officer; the others were NCOs and other ranks. They ran the LADE, the air service. This was part of the agreement.

Q. And you had to put up with this number?
I did not realise it was as many as that.

- A. Well, that is swollen by the 18 or 19 that I mentioned that came in just before.

Q. So these people could come and go on their own air force planes without any let or hindrance?

- A. Yes. They came through our immigration officer and our police officer at the airport so they could not have come in carrying arms.

Q. Oh no, but you really could not stop them coming and going all the time?

- A. No.

Q. So there was possibly a flow of communications between the Falkland Islands and the Argentine military staff which you could not control.

- A. Yes indeed. No, we could not control that.

Q. And nobody was telling you, from British ends, what might be construed from all this?

- A. No. And we have had Argentine Hercules in, too. The Vice-Comodoro's house was brought in by two Hercules. Obviously they were trying the airport.

LORD WATKINSON: Thank you. I was not clear that you were suffering so much.

MR REES: And that 29 included the chaps building the ramp.

- A. Yes, and that was an unnaturally large number at the time.

Q. Following up Lord Watkinson's point about information, you referred earlier to Argentine press reports. Were you dependent on the embassy in BA to give you summaries of the newspapers?

- A. Yes.

Q. The newspapers do not come over; you did not see them?

- A. No.

Q. But you did have the newspaper reports?

- A. From BA, yes.

Q. Lord Franks asked about the island councillors. It may be that we will have to put our minds to the question of allegations by journalists. There have been, as you know, lots of articles in the newspapers. One of them I think is that the islanders were not privy to everything that the British government was doing, that there were secrets kept from them. That we shall see later on. But I think that allegation has been made, in some of the BBC reports anyway. Is that a fair allegation?

- A. No. I believe I was told to keep the Irizar incident as confidential as possible for as long as possible.

Q. Which one is that?

- A. That is the December incident, when Davidoff went into Leith Harbour in December on the Almirante Irizar. I think that was my instruction then.

Q. But in terms of negotiations in your time there; negotiations in New York or in Geneva, wherever they may have been?

- A. No. We had some criticism because we had to keep the results of the talks in February confidential until all three governments had agreed, and Argentina never had before the invasion. That was causing some criticism in the Falklands at the time. And also we had that confidential telegram with a message from Lord Carrington to Costa Mendez, which I do not think ever got there.

Q. That is right.

- A. We were told naturally to keep that confidential within the council until it had been delivered, and it never was. That caused some criticism because one or two of the councillors, they did not leak the content but they mentioned outside that something like this was afoot.

Q. I see.

- A. But on the South Georgia incident we went on the air every night on the local radio to tell them what was going on. We had to do that because they are great ham radio enthusiasts down there and they were listening to our conversation on the radio anyway.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: Could I ask two things. First, is there any point you want to put to us, to the committee, about previous years, for example the decision not to extend the runway of the airfield or anything of that kind? I am not suggesting there is, but I just want to be sure that there is no point that would be relevant to what we have been discussing today arising from the previous years, when you were not of course Governor, that you would want to put to us?

- A. I think, looking back, a lot of islanders feel that the agreements made in 1971 were the start down the wrong road; that the communications agreement and the fuel agreement were opening the door towards transfer of sovereignty, and looking back they say that is when things went wrong, when we started the...

Q. Infiltration, really.

- A. Yes - the dialogue with the Argentines. And that they would have been much better off if they had still stuck to the complete ignoring of Argentina.

Q. Thank you very much. Lastly, I just wanted to job back because it is rather important in my mind: your expectation was that when confrontation measures of some kind had begun they would be economic measures. Were you, in March of this year, happy with the progress that as far as you know had been made with contingency planning for that purpose? You yourself had stressed in your own annual report, "It is time we started to think about this". Were you in touch with progress and were you happy with the progress?

- A. No, I was not in touch and I was not happy with the progress. I was pressing for alternate sea communications and air communications to be explored much more vigorously than I believe they were being at the time.

Q. Bearing in mind that if things had got on top of the islanders there would have been very strong political pressures from that aspect.

- A. Yes.

SIR PATRICK NAIRNE: Yes, I see. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN: Mr Hunt, we are very grateful to you. Thank you very much indeed.

- A. Thank you.

(The witness withdrew)



19 October 1982

A R Rawsthorne Esq
Secretary
Falkland Islands Review Committee
Old Admiralty Building
Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

Dear Rawsthorne,

Many thanks for your letter of 1 October enclosing a copy of the verbatim record of my discussion with the Committee on Tuesday 28 September.

I have made a few corrections to the record but the only one of substance is the substitution of "Grytviken" for "Great Britain".

The only points that I wish to amplify are as follows:

page 13: my answer to Lord Lever should have been "Yes, unless the presence of a substantial garrison was accompanied by economic development to provide more opportunities for Islanders."

pages 14 & 15: I do not think I made it sufficiently clear that I had no warning that Davidoff was going to South Georgia in the Almirante Irizar. I had warning that Davidoff was trying to get down to South Georgia, but I assumed that he would sail in a normal merchant vessel, as he had tried to do in previous seasons.

I return the transcript herewith and I am sending a copy of this letter to Sir Antony Acland.

Yours avv,

R M Hunt
Civil Commissioner

cc: Sir Antony Acland KVO CMG
Foreign & Commonwealth Office