

A victory parade, noisily enjoyed

By Rupert Morris

Every nation needs its heroes and yesterday was the occasion for Britain to honour the men who fought to win back the Falkland Islands from the Argentine invaders.

It is not every day that tanks rumble through London, and their presence may have caused a flutter or two in the socialist suburbs of Camden and Lambeth. They were noisily enjoyed, however, by about 300,000 people, according to police estimates, who lined the parade route from City Road to Guildhall.

The crowds began to gather at dawn, forcing the occasional top-hatted stock jobber on his way to work to vault the barriers, prompting cheers. By midday the streets were a mass of balloons and flags.

As the first spots of rain fell, the band of the Scots Guards launched into a medley of forces' favourites. There were sporadic cheers for the various dignitaries who appeared on the Mansion House platform to take the salute. Then, after a brief rendering of "We want Maggie", the Prime Minister appeared, to the loudest cheers so far, wearing a broad-brimmed white hat with navy ribbon, navy blue suit and white gloves. She clearly relished every moment.

After a flypast by helicopters the first troops rounded the corner of Threadneedle street to a crescendo of cheering and waving.

Plumed and leopard-skinned bandsmen were followed by Royal Marines with green berets and several bristling moustaches. The more flamboyant naval beards came next. Then the clatter of the armoured vehicles, the maroon berets of the Parachute Regiment, the bearskins of the Welsh Guards and the kilts and pipes of the Scots.

There was a special cheer for the fierce-featured Ghurkas, their kukris hanging from their belts; and then for the Harrier pilots, young men with the look of veterans.

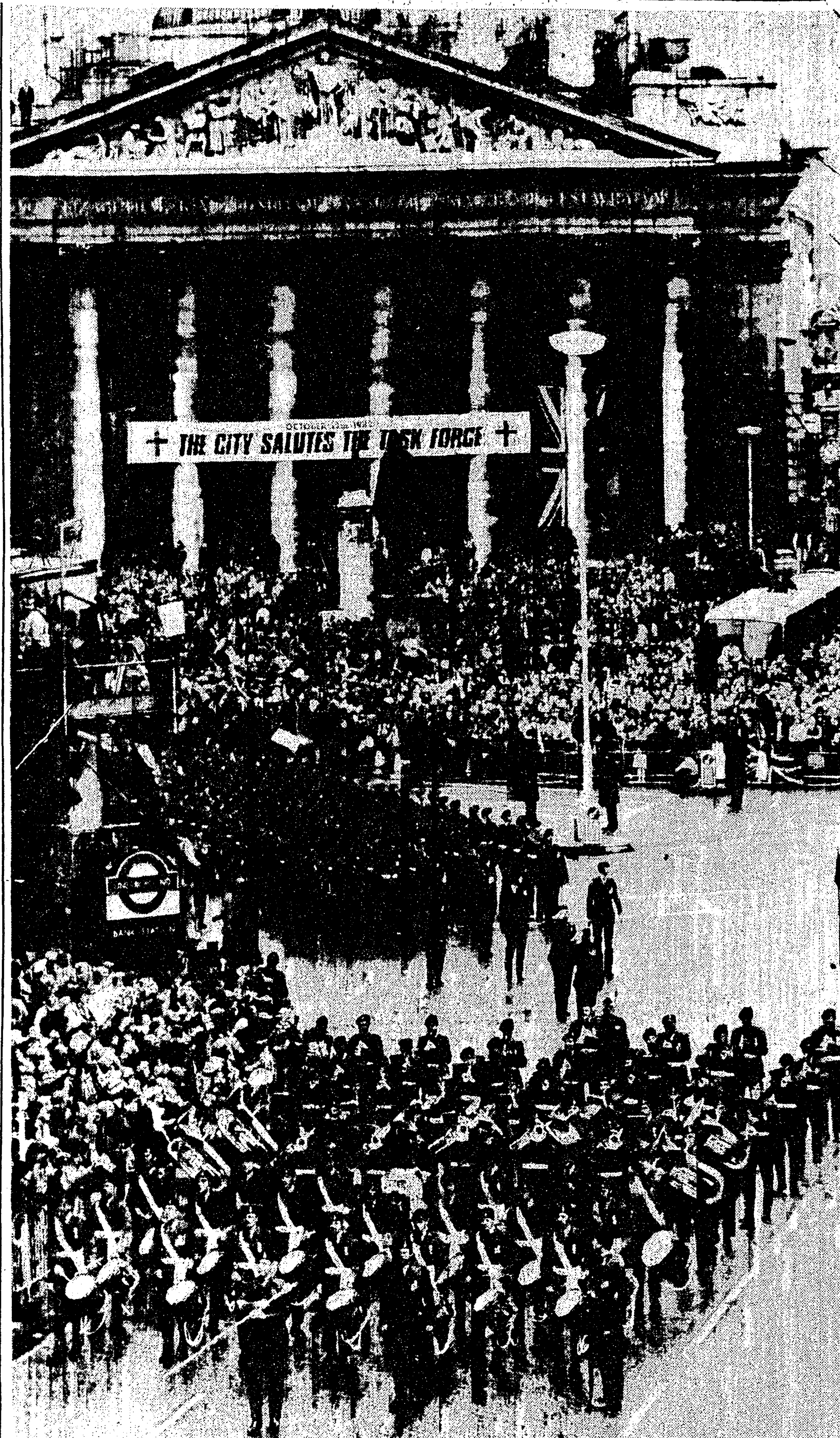
The crowd broke into a spontaneous rendering of "Rule Britannia", then the procession was gone and Harriers, Vulcans, Nimrods and Hercules troop carriers concluded events with a flypast.

Salmon mousse, beef, horseradish and champagne at Guildhall greeted the 1,250 representatives of the task force, courtesy of the City of London.

Sir Christopher Lever, the Lord Mayor, whose right arm must have been aching from doffing his hat to the saluting troops, told his luncheon guests that their endeavours had had an effect reaching far further than the recovery of the Falklands.

"You have given this country a newfound confidence; you have ensured an even stronger respect worldwide both for the

Continued on page 2, col 5



The band of Commando Forces Royal Marines leading detachments of 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines past the Mansion House, with the Royal Exchange in the background. (Photograph: Brian Harris).

'You have vindicated our youth', task force told

Continued from page 1

professionalism and quality of our armed services, and for the ability of our many support services; above all you have vindicated the youth of this country. You represent what is best in Britain."

As he presented swords to Admiral Sir John Woodward, commander of the task force, and to General Sir Jeremy Moore, the land force commander, everyone in the great hall stood and cheered.

The Prime Minister, too, received a standing ovation. "The Falklands campaign", she declared, "was one of the most brilliant achievements of modern times, a triumph of endeavour of skill. We owe that triumph to the best, the bravest and the most professional armed services in the world."

She paid tribute to the 777 wounded and the 255 dead, whose memory would be honoured for ever, and she mentioned many other individual sections of the task force.

Mrs Thatcher later met representatives of the task force, including six of the badly wounded.

Thirteen peace protesters were arrested after chaining themselves together and sitting

in the road at Moorgate. Three people who collapsed during the parade were taken to hospital. The security operation, which involved the cancellation of all City of London police leave, was the biggest since the royal wedding.

Relations between Mrs Margaret Thatcher and the media were further strained yesterday when moves by Downing Street to step up its reprisals over the widespread breach of the Falklands honours list embargo brought angry protests from journalists (Philip Webster writes).

It was learnt yesterday that government departments had been instructed on the Prime Minister's orders to delay the release to the press of advance copies of documents and reports.

Diary, page 10
Leading article, page 11

Overseas selling prices

Austria Sch 28. Bahrain BD 0.650. Belgium B frs 40. Canada \$2.50. Canarys Pes 125. Cyprus 560 mils. Denmark Dkr 7.50. Dubai Dir 7.00. Finland Mkk 7.00. France Frs 7.00. Germany DM 3.50. Greece Dr 80. Holland Gl 3.25. Iran IR 135. Iraq LD 0.500. Irish Republic 40p. Italy L 1800. Jordan LD 0.425. Kuwait KD 0.500. Lebanon Li 4.00. Luxembourg Lf 33. Madeira Esc 75. Malta 30c. Morocco Dir 7. Norway Kr 7.50. Oman OR 0.700. Pakistan Rps 12. Portugal Esc 100. Qatar QR 7.50. Saudi Arabia SR 4.50. Singapore \$5.00. Spain Pes 125. Sweden Skr 8.00. Switzerland S Frs 3.00. Syria LS 50. Tunisia Din 0.600. USA \$1.50. UAE Dir 7.00. Yugoslavia Din 60.

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