

SECRET

FALKLAND ISLANDS: FCO SITREP: 0730 HOURS, 4 MAY

SECRETARY OF STATE'S MOVEMENTS

1. On morning of 3 May, Mr Pym called on the President of the Security Council. It was a singularly unproductive meeting. He also gave a press conference at the UN. Mr Pym arrived back in London at 8 p.m. London time. Our Embassy gave a Community briefing to EC Missions in Washington about Mr Pym's visit.

CEASEFIRE PLEA BY MR HAIG

2. Mr Haig told Sir Nicholas Henderson last night that further successful military action by Britain might cause US, and for that matter Western opinion in general, to swing against her. We might be accused of over-reacting and of being too bellicose.

3. Haig had spoken to President Belaunde of Peru, who believed that the Argentines would accept a seven-point peace plan. This would be adjusted to provide for an interim administration by the US and Peru only. Haig thought that it was desperately urgent for the Prime Minister to propose a ceasefire to come into effect within hours to be followed by the implementation of the peace plan.

4. Mr Haig was informed by Sir Nicholas that the Secretary of State would consider this with the Prime Minister and senior colleagues at 9 a.m. London time today.

5. In a subsequent telegram we asked our Ambassador in Washington to make clear to Mr Haig that the Prime Minister would discuss new developments, including the Peruvian proposals. Meanwhile, military developments in the area would continue to be governed by existing rules of engagement but nothing unprecedented was contemplated before coming back to him.

6. Washington telegram number 1584 (received 0630 hours) refers to a document from Haig transmitted in telegram number 1585 (received 0700 hours) expressing his worry today at focus on military action and his belief that it is the moment for us to make a magnanimous diplomatic move when we have given proof to the whole world that, if need be, we can dictate military terms. The document contains a seven-point proposal for peace and a suggested ceasefire statement, to be made by HMG, to come into effect at 1600 GMT on 5 May.

UNITED NATIONS

7. The Secretary-General has told Sir Anthony Parsons that if "escalation continued" and there was another major incident at sea the Security Council would have to meet.

/SINKING

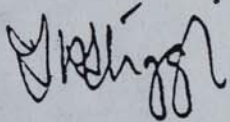
SECRET

SINKING OF GENERAL BELGRANO AND AN ARGENTINE PATROL VESSEL

8. In a communiqué reported by Buenos Aires radio, the Argentine Foreign Ministry has announced that the cruiser General Belgrano with 1042 men on board was sunk by a British submarine at 1700 hours (2000 GMT) on 2 May. The attack took place 36 miles outside the Total Exclusion Zone. A joint staff communiqué reported by Buenos Aires radio said that Argentine naval ships have so far picked up 123 survivors from the General Belgrano, and that rescue operations are continuing.

--- 9. The attached MOD press release refers to the sinking of an Argentine patrol vessel.

4 May, 1982

  
T H Steggle  
Emergency Unit

SECRET

ADDITIONAL MOD STATEMENT OF 3 MAY ON ENGAGEMENT WITH  
PATROL CRAFT

I am now able to give some additional information about the engagement (early this morning)(yesterday) in which British helicopters responded to attacks by two Argentine patrol craft on another helicopter. We described these vessels as Argentine patrol type naval auxiliaries. We are now able to confirm that the vessels were armed ocean-going tugs used by the Argentine Navy as patrol craft. One of these has provisionally been identified as Alferez Sobral (listed in Janes Fighting Ships as being armed with 40 mm and 20 mm guns). I am not able to say whether it was the Alferez Sobral or the other vessel which was sunk.