

SECRET

10B

PRIME MINISTER

cc: Sir Robert Armstrong

FALKLANDS:OD(SA), 26 APRIL

Following this afternoon's discussion at Chequers, business at OD(SA)'s meeting at 11.15 hrs tomorrow could conveniently be taken as follows:-

A. Diplomatic

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary should cover

- latest news on the Haig front;
- any decisions he requires;
- any further points he wishes to raise on the Islanders (the FCO are now pursuing the two points raised today - broadcasts and sea evacuation - and are unlikely to be ready to report on either tomorrow);
- implications of Sr Costa Mendes' statement that after the Santa Fe incident we are now "technically at war" (do we, in particular need Emergency Legislation?)

B. Military

After reporting on the latest situation, the Defence Secretary should cover the decisions needed from the Sub-Committee, as follows:-

- (i) Call-up of selected reservists (OD(SA)(82)22).
A comparatively small matter, which could be got out of the way at the start.
- (ii) Total Exclusion Zone (OD(SA)(82)24)
 - a. Can the proposed ROE be approved now (for implementation only when the TEZ comes into force)?
 - b. Are the terms of the proposed announcement approved? How long notice should it give? The paper suggests 48 hours, but FCO advice today was that 24 might be enough. If so, no announcement would be needed until 28 April, even if enforcement is to begin on 29 April.

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- c. When is enforcement to begin? 29 April is both the earliest date and the one MOD favour. Does the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary agree? No final decision is needed until 28 April. But the Government will be virtually committed once the date of the announcement is fixed; if this is to be 28 April (see above), a decision will be needed by 27 April.
- d. The Sub-Committee should carefully note three points:
- Any Argentine combat aircraft may be attacked if it comes within 40 miles of a British unit.
 - Non-Argentine merchant ships or aircraft may in certain circumstances be attacked (Mr Haig was told at one stage that Soviet blockade-runners might be used).
 - Stanley airfield is an authorised target; see below.

(iii) Stanley Airfield

- a. The decision to attack it is part of (ii) above.
- b. That leaves open
- When? 29 April? Decide on 28 April?
 - How? Vulcans or Harriers? If that too can be decided on 28 April, do we need to decide now whether to deploy Vulcans to Ascension (Mr Omand's letter of 23 April to Mr Whitmore)?
 - Should anything about the airfield attack be broadcast to the Islanders, either before or after it happens?

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- c. The Sub-Committee should note that, unless the airfield is destroyed on 29 April, Special Forces (see below) cannot be inserted on that date. If they aren't, they will not have collected the intelligence required if the invasion "window" is open promptly on 16 May.
- d. Repeated attacks on the airfield will be needed, to inhibit repair. How often? Every 3 days or so?

(iv) Special Forces

- a. Should they be inserted? Decision by 28 April?
- b. If so, when? 29 April?
- c. What operations will they be allowed to undertake, apart from intelligence-gathering?

(v) Amphibious Group

- a. Should it sail from Ascension on 29 April? Decide on 28 April? If it doesn't, the invasion window won't open promptly on 16 May.
- b. Politically, does sailing it commit us to an assault on the Falklands if there is no diplomatic settlement by the third week in May?

(vi) United States

- a. Should Mr Haig be warned of any of our military decisions?
- b. If so, which and when?

2. Tomorrow's meeting need not address the following:

- Attacking Argentina's aircraft carrier.

The MOD are preparing a paper, for a later meeting, on the ROE which would be required and on whether advance warning could be given that she should not cross a given line.

*Passage deleted and retained under
Section 3(u) (Wayland, 8 May 2012)*

- South Thule. The MOD have no proposal to make at present.

3. The Sub-Committee will no doubt wish to meet again on 27 April.



R L Wade-Gery
25 April, 1982