

FALKLAND ISLANDS : FCO SITREP : 0730 HOURS, 13 JUNE 1982

Military Action

1. The Secretary of State for Defence has announced that a night attack was carried out on 11 June on Argentine positions to the west of Port Stanley. Advances of up to 5 miles have been made. British casualties are believed to be light.

ICRC : Civilian Population

2. The ICRC have made further proposals about the establishment of a secure zone in Port Stanley. These are being considered by both the British and Argentine Governments.

13 June 1982

Emergency Unit

FALKLANDS : FCO SITREP (DETAILED VERSION) : 0700 HOURS, 13 JUNE

Civilian Population in Port Stanley

1. The Argentines have claimed that two civilians were killed and a further four injured during a British naval bombardment of Port Stanley. The Falkland Islands Office heard from a radio ham in the Islands that two women were killed and one injured. We have been unable to obtain any confirmation.

2. Early this morning, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delivered a Note to UKMIS Geneva in which they sought our immediate agreement to the establishment of a neutral zone in Port Stanley; the zone would consist of the Anglican Cathedral and surrounding area.

3. The Note points out that under the terms of Article 15 two types of persons are entitled to be protected within a secure zone:-

(a) wounded or sick combatants or non-combatants;

and,

(b) members of the civilian population.

However, the Note also included a third category which is not mentioned in Article 15. This would appear to include Argentine personnel who would assist the ICRC Representatives to set up and operate the secure zone. UKMIS Geneva assume that these Argentines would be medical personnel whose main purpose would be to tend the sick and wounded. The presence of Argentines would, however, go against our specific request that no Argentine military personnel should be present within the secure zone.

4. The ICRC have sent a similar request to the Argentine Government and have undertaken to transmit to us Argentine agreement as soon as this is received. They have given a similar undertaking to the Argentines. A copy of this Note has also been transmitted to the three ICRC personnel at present on board 'HMS Hydra'.

5. UKMIS Geneva will telegraph the full text of the Note later this morning. The Note emphasises, however, that the ICRC require an immediate response.

Alleged Attack on Argentine Hospital Ship

6. The Argentines have alleged, in a Note passed to us by the Brazilians, that the hospital ship 'Bahia Paraiso' was attacked in Port Stanley Harbour. An ICRC Representative who was on board the 'Bahia Paraiso' at the time of the alleged attack has now stated that the hospital ship was not attacked.

/ French Attitude

A: (Brasilia  
telno.272 to  
FCO)

B: (Hecla  
Signal No.  
121916Z)

C: (Hydra  
Signal No.  
122220Z)

French Attitude

D: (Paris tel.  
No.620 to FCO)

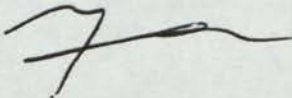
7. When Sir John Fretwell called on the Secretary-General at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 11 June, M. Gutmann reiterated French views on the need for us to show magnanimity after the recapture of Port Stanley. He said that a time would come when Britain might no longer find friendly understanding. He added that it might be possible for Britain to come to an arrangement with the Argentines without driving them off the last square metre of the Islands. The atmosphere between Europe and Latin America could be poisoned for years if Britain did not seize the right moment to begin working towards a solution. The Argentines would obtain more and more support. The UK would in the end be isolated. What Britain said and did after recovering Port Stanley would be crucial. Sir John Fretwell thinks that there is a feeling abroad, not limited to the Quai, that Britain should call a halt to the fighting after Port Stanley and begin negotiations which will include concessions on sovereignty. There is also a disposition to accept the Argentine case on sovereignty and to regard transfer as a matter of time. The French are likely to continue to argue for early face-saving concessions.

Comment

8. An early response is needed to the ICRC on their formal proposal for a neutral zone. It should be possible to find wording which gives enough flexibility for the organisers in Port Stanley, while ensuring that the Argentines do not gain military advantage from the zone.

9. Unless the ICRC Representative can get ashore again in Port Stanley, it seems unlikely that the ICRC channel will provide us with early information on the possible civilian deaths. There will be intense pressure for Government comment today. Any press release could perhaps make use of our good position on the ICRC and the neutral zone proposal, together with the refutation of the claim that we attacked the 'Bahia Paraiso'.

13 May 1982



R M Jackson  
Emergency Unit