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SITUATION REPORT FOR OPERATION SUTTON AS AT 221900A MAY 82

1. HMS ARDENT sank in the Falkland Sound whilst anchored off the North West Islands during the night 21/22 May. She had lost both weapons systems when hit by bombs and rockets in the first air attack. Two or three direct hits by bombs in the second attack on her caused major fires and uncontrollable flooding. Survivors were taken off before she sank and most were taken aboard CANBERRA although some were taken to other ships. Casualty figures so far are 22 dead and over 30 wounded.
2. The unexploded bomb lodged in ANTRIM was successfully removed and she sailed together with the merchant transports from the Falkland Sound at 0200Z to the east so as to be out of range of shore-based air attack by dawn. It is hoped to repair the damage to her missile systems in the next few days.
3. The two unexploded bombs in the main machinery compartments of ARGONAUT have been successfully defused. She remains at anchor close inshore south of Fanning Head. The damage to her is substantial although her short range air defence missile system and Lynx helicopter are still operational.
4. BROADSWORD and BRILLIANT, both of which suffered damage, remain with the force in the Falkland Sound together with PLYMOUTH and YARMOUTH. COVENTRY and GLAMORGAN are outside the Sound to the west to give additional warning of air attack.
5. Ashore, the three Commandos and two Parachute battalions have been consolidating their positions. Air Defence weapons including Rapier have been set up ashore to create a safe haven for the Amphibious vessels which are continuing to unload weapons, ammunition, stores and equipment. There are no reports of any engagements ashore in the past 22 hours.
6. An Argentinian Boeing 707 reconnaissance aircraft made contact with the BRISTOL group of ships some 1300 miles NE of the Total Exclusion Zone. The aircraft was first detected on the ships radars at 1205Z. The aircraft remained in contact but out of missile range until 1504Z when CARDIFF, who had been detached towards the threat fired at the target at distant range. The Sea Dart missiles are believed to have missed as the Boeing turned away.
7. Sea Harriers on combat air patrol over the Falklands are reported to have engaged and damaged an Argentinian patrol boat in Choiseul Sound, the main inlet south of Port Stanley which leads to Goose Green and Darwin. We await confirmation from the Commander of the Task Force of this incident.

Embarked Press