

Falkland details withheld

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, has accepted the advice of senior civil servants by withholding crucial information from MPs about changes in the rules of engagement during the Falklands conflict.

In a two-page memorandum sent to the Commons foreign affairs committee, he says the rules were changed very frequently. He avoids any reference to the change on April 30 1982 which enabled British ships to attack the Argentine aircraft carrier, the *Veinticinco de Mayo*, outside the total exclusion zone.

That decision by the war cabinet was the subject of a note of dissent by Mr Francis Pym, then foreign Secretary, and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General, on the grounds that it could contravene international law. The memo — published in tomorrow's edition of the *New Statesman* magazine — also avoids any reference to the fact that the change on May 2 applied to all Argentine warships, and was not restricted to the cruiser, the *Belgrano*.

In his memo, sent at the end of July this year, Mr Stanley tells the Commons committee: "It is important to remember that the legal basis for (the attack on the *Belgrano*) was our right to take measures in exercise of our inherent right of self-defence, as recognised

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Stanley memo withheld Falkland details

The Guardian 30/8/84

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in Article 51 of the UN
Charter."

The other legal basis, he says, was Britain's warning to Argentina on April 23 that "any approach on the part of Argentine warships, including submarines, naval auxiliaries, or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of the British forces in the South Atlantic, will encounter the appropriate response."

Yet it is now known from leaked ministry documents that the April 23 warning did not include the specific changes directed at the aircraft carrier on April 30, and at the *Belgrano* and other Argentine ships on May 2. These two changes—the latter not announced until May 7—were significant extensions of the general April 23 statement.

In a document leaked to Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, who passed it to the Commons committee — Mr Michael Legge, head of the Ministry's DS11 section, warned Mr Stanley in July that "a full list of changes (in the rules of engagement) would provide more information than ministers have been prepared to reveal about the *Belgrano* affair."

Mr Stanley says in his memo that "the rules of engagement and their evolution in response to these factors was kept under close political control by the War Cabinet." Lord Lewin, then chief of the defence staff, told the BBC *Panorama* programme on April 16, that the May 2 change, was decided in 20 minutes, with members of the war cabinet "standing up in a side ante-room" at Chequers.

Though Mr Stanley refers to the UN charter relating to self-defence, one of the documents sent anonymously to Mr Dalyell gives detailed information stating that the *Belgrano* was reversing course to her home base 11 hours before it was sunk by the submarine, *Conqueror*.

Referring to Mr Stanley's memo yesterday, Mr Dalyell said: "It is one thing for civil servants to proffer advice to Ministers which is designed to deceive the House of Commons. It is another for ministers to embrace such advice with enthusiasm."

ARGENTINA 'TWISTING THE FACTS'

By Our United Nations
Correspondent

BBRITISH diplomats have expressed concern at what they see as inaccurate spread in capitals throughout the world by Argentina as to what happened at the recent Berne talks on the Falkland Islands dispute.

They complain that this stance has been adopted by Argentina in the run-up to the opening of next month's United Nations General Assembly, where the issue will be hotly debated once again.

The reason the Berne talks collapsed, according to British sources, was because the Argentine side refused to adhere to the agreed formula that they would ask that the sovereignty issue be discussed, and then the British side would simply say the matter was not up for discussion.

However, Argentine's negotiators at the time apparently failed to heed the formula and insisted the sovereignty question be put on the agenda immediately.

The Berne talks were the first direct meeting between London and Buenos Aires since the two broke off diplomatic relations as a result of the 1982 Falklands War.

View ignored

Britain has informally complained that Argentine diplomats, in their renewed lobbying efforts, have put the blame squarely on the shoulders of the British side.

Britain's view is that the talks might have ended successfully if Argentina had not been so obstinate in pressing the sovereignty question.

The United Nations decolonisation committee last week passed a resolution, with only four countries not going along with it, calling on Britain and Argentina to resume negotiations on the sovereignty of the islands.

However, the resolution ignored Britain's view and failed to take into account British objections that it would prejudice the outcome of any future negotiations.

Belgrano: 'No truth' in war cabinet rift

INSIGHT

by Simon Freeman and Barrie Penrose

MINISTERS and service chiefs last night launched a counter-attack in the new row over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, during the Falklands war. Senior ministers told The Sunday Times that there was "absolutely no truth" in the claim that the war cabinet had ever ignored the advice of the then foreign secretary, Francis Pym, and the attorney-general, Sir Michael Havers, when it authorised action against the Argentine fleet.

Ministers insisted that no minute of protest existed in anything like the form suggested by last week's New Statesman magazine, which claimed that a minute had been signed by Pym and Havers, protesting against the war cabinet decision to attack the Argentine fleet. The New Statesman also claimed that Britain was considering the use of nuclear weapons against

Argentina. This is dismissed as "absolute nonsense" by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach.

Last week's leaks and allegations have infuriated ministers and service chiefs because of the suggestion that the war cabinet lied about its conduct and that the attack on the Belgrano flouted international law.

Sir Michael Havers last night said he felt "personally affronted" by the claim that the war cabinet had overruled his legal advice during the war. He said that he could not comment in detail on "these very serious allegations" without first consulting Downing Street. He added: "My personal integrity has been attacked."

Sir Michael's political col-

leagues say that he is furious at the latest claims, which are based on secret government documents leaked to the New Statesman. Senior ministers say that Sir Michael would have resigned from government if the war cabinet had authorised any action that he would have broken international law.

But those who were in the war cabinet, and the service chiefs who advised it, are also angry about the failure of the government to defend itself

The General Belgrano was sunk by a British submarine outside the Total Exclusion Zone on May 2, 1982, with the loss of 368 lives. The government's most persistent critic has been Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow in Scotland.

Dalyell has forced a series of contradictory statements from ministers, which has added credibility to his claims that the Belgrano was sunk against international law and to prevent an emerging peace plan from succeeding. Dalyell's campaign was given new life last week by the New Statesman.

The magazine claimed that a minute, signed by Havers and Francis Pym, and dated May 1, 1982, recorded the two men's dissent from the war cabinet's

has been searched. It does not exist in anything like the form claimed by the New Statesman and others." Another source, who was aware of war cabinet discussions, including the key ones between April 30 and May 2, insists that there was no dissent about possible attacks on the Argentine fleet.

A third source provided a possible explanation for the Pym/Havers memo quoted by the New Statesman. The source said that the Foreign Office frequently provided detailed briefings for the war cabinet in which the advice of Havers on points of law was quoted. These memoranda, we have established from a senior defence civil servant, have been widely circulated in Whitehall -

especially to provide civil servants with the necessary information to brief ministers questioned in the House of Commons about the Falklands. The civil servant said: "I have seen a minute which is like the one quoted by the Statesman. But I recall that it did not go as far as the magazine claims."

Duncan Campbell, author of the New Statesman article, said last night that he was sure of his facts. He said: "The minute exists precisely as we described it." The magazine is thought to be planning to publish this week further details of the minute, and other Falklands documents.

The New Statesman also published a copy of a memorandum from a defence ministry civil servant to Michael Hesel-

tine, the defence secretary. This was dated July this year and advised Heseltine on how to avoid answering difficult questions from MPs on the Belgrano affair. The authenticity of this document has not been contested. But ministers and service chiefs who were involved in the Falklands war insist that this memorandum does not prove that the government acted illegally or irresponsibly during the war.

The Sunday Times has spoken at length to senior Tories and service chiefs in an effort to discover what happened between April 30 and May 2. The service chiefs emphasise that the position then was more complex and dangerous than government critics now imagine.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, who was Chief of

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decision to authorise an attack on the Argentine aircraft carrier, the Veinticinco de Mayo. The magazine said that Havers and Pym warned that such an attack would be illegal under international law. The same objections applied, the magazine claimed, to the decision to attack the Belgrano on May 2.

Ministers and service chiefs insist, however, that no such minute of protest exists. One source told The Sunday Times: "Every file on the Falklands war

Belgrano

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Naval Staff and First Sea Lord in 1982, said that the war cabinet had been anxious to stick firmly to Sir Michael's advice.

Leach said that he could not understand why the government had been unable to answer its critics: "We have nothing to hide. All these allegations are nonsense." He said that Havers had been "fair and practical" throughout the war, weighing up the need to ensure the safety of the British task force while at the same time having to balance this against the need for Britain to be seen, to be respecting international law.

"It was Sir Michael's task to put the legal case to the war cabinet. It was open to the cabinet to go beyond the law but I am not aware that they ever found it necessary to do so. My impression was that they were anxious to play to the rule of the law as outlined by the attorney general."

Leach, who said that he was speaking from memory, without the help of notes or diaries, recalled one occasion when the war cabinet refused a request from the navy for permission to launch an attack. "One of our submarines, a nuclear one but not a Polaris, made contact with the aircraft carrier Veinticinco de Mayo. Permission to attack was not granted. It was felt that diplomacy still had a chance. The Haig shuttle was still happening. The rules of engagement did not allow an attack. My impression is that this happened before April 30, when the rules of engagement were changed. Leach emphasised that the navy did not have a second chance to hit the carrier.

He said that he had a second, firm recollection. The change in the rules of engagement on April 30 which would have allowed the navy to attack

the Argentine carrier occurred after the final contact with it. Leach insisted that by April 30 diplomacy appeared to have failed. The threat to the British task force was more serious than critics now appreciate and the decision to attack the Belgrano was based on close surveillance of its movements and top secret intelligence reports.

The ship was sunk, he said, simply because it was considered a threat. "We are a law-abiding nation. I hope it doesn't sound smug but it usually pays to stick to the law."

Leach added that there was no truth in allegations that Britain had considered a nuclear strike against the Argentine mainland if the war went badly. "That is absolute nonsense," he said.

Another senior source has described how Havers cross-examined service chiefs on May 1 and 2, when they requested permission from the war cabinet to attack the Belgrano. Havers, said our source, had to be satisfied that the Belgrano posed a real threat to the task force. The source insists that Havers was convinced, and that he went along with the decision to attack the Belgrano.

Sir John Nott, then defence secretary, said yesterday: "We discussed everything, including the legal ramifications. The fact

of the matter was that we were at war."

Another senior source said that Mrs Thatcher did not want to be forced into explanations about the crucial events of April 30 - May 2, 1982 for two reasons. First, because decisions then had been partly based on secret intelligence, especially from the Americans. Second, because she did not want to have to reply to allegations that were based on leaked documents.

One source said that by May 2, the day the Belgrano was sunk, the war cabinet did not consider the Peruvian peace plan was "a runner." Subsequent information on the mood in Buenos Aires at the time confirms that the junta did not want a negotiated settlement. Indeed, its navy was out to sink major ships in the British task force.

The source said: "We were suddenly faced with an old cruiser, and its two modern destroyers, both thought to be armed with Exocets. The idea that we sank the Belgrano to scupper the peace plan is nonsense." Another source said that the war cabinet had later vetoed a navy proposal a week after troops landed on the islands to attack the Veinticinco de Mayo when it was just within the 12-mile limit from the Argentine coast.

Belgrano: Questions that stay unanswered

by DAVID LEIGH

LORD LEWIN, a member of Mrs Thatcher's war cabinet during the Falkland's crisis, yesterday confirmed that Navy submarines were authorised on 2 May, 1982, to attack all Argentine ships at will, and not just the cruiser Belgrano.

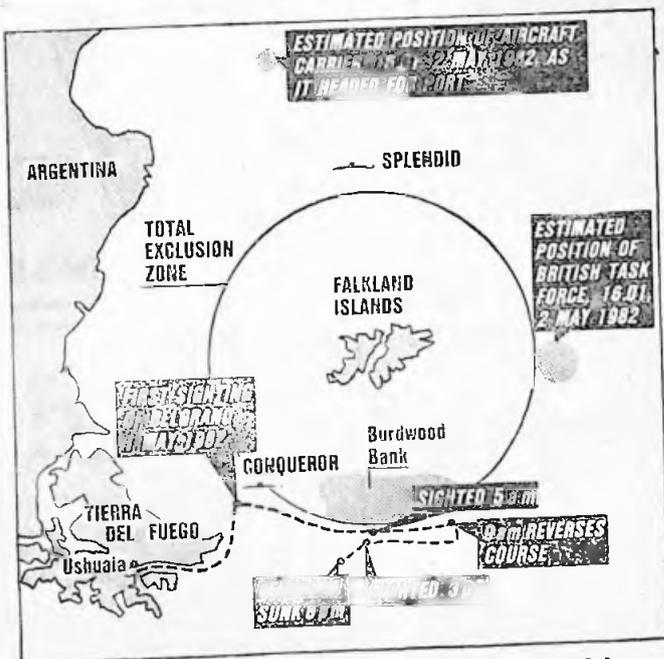
Mrs Thatcher and her Ministers have always claimed that the Belgrano was sunk for defensive purposes. It was, in fact, steaming away from the task force.

Disclosures during the past week appear to vindicate the claims by Labour MP Tam Dalyell of a Government 'cover-up.' However, they do not support his theory that Mrs Thatcher had a deliberate policy of wanting to sabotage peace negotiations.

On 30 April, 1982, the British Task Force was steaming into position and the first peace negotiations orchestrated by the US had failed. Britain went onto the attack with bombing raids, but our nuclear-powered submarines had orders not to sink Argentine warships outside the Total Exclusion Zone, except in self-defence.

Nevertheless, the Navy was searching the seas both for the Belgrano and the Argentine aircraft carrier, '25th of May.'

Some evidence suggests that the war cabinet decided to sink the carrier on 30 April. The author of the recently leaked Ministry of Defence memorandum wrote: 'the engagement of the "25th of May" outside the exclusion zone was permitted from 30 April.' And the *New Statesman* has published details of a minute dated the next day from the then Foreign Secretary, Mr Francis Pym, and the Attorney General, Sir



Course of the Belgrano from home port to point of sinking.

Michael Havers, expressing their unease about our legal position should the Navy find and sink the carrier.

A diary kept by an officer on the submarine Conqueror also refers to an order of 30 April to destroy the carrier.

Lord Lewin, former Chief of the Defence Staff, however, says 'no.' The Navy was trying to find the carrier but did not have authority to sink it at will.

Lewin wanted to achieve maximum military freedom as soon as he could, but the decision had not come up. 'Perhaps Pym was off to Washington for renewed talks with Haig (then the US Secretary of State) and was worried we would find the carrier and it would go off on auto, without the war cabinet being able to

weigh up the pros and cons.'

Lewin was adamant that other versions—including one from the then Navy chief, Admiral Leach, and details from a leaked MoD memorandum — were wrong. 'Everyone who knew what really happened is gone now — myself, Sir John Nott (then Defence Minister), Sir Frank Cooper (the permanent secretary) and Pym.'

In Lewin's words, we did however 'turn the military screw' on 1 May. The Argentines counter-attacked.

By the morning of 2 May, Lewin heard that the Belgrano was confirmed sighted by the Conqueror. Trailed by the submarine, it had been moving on the attack towards the task force.

Lewin got rapid agreement

from the war cabinet for complete military freedom on the basis of this information. All ships could be attacked at will, inside or outside the exclusion zone. The order was broadcast to his ships.

At that moment in Washington, Pym was about to sit down with Haig. Argentina's attempt to find the task force had failed. The counter-attack was called off. New peace talks were being mooted through Peru. And the Belgrano had already reversed course, unbeknown to Mrs Thatcher and the small group at Chequers, and was steaming home.

But Lewin had his free hand. Throughout that day, the Belgrano was trailed home-wards, and at 8 p.m., en route for its home port, it was sunk with the loss of 368 lives.

Lewin was pleased and relieved at the military results. He had 'knocked off a major unit of the Argentine fleet' and an arduous full-scale invasion could proceed a little more safely. But the sinking turned confrontation into all-out war.

Sir John Nott told the House the Belgrano was closing on elements of the task force, and the sinking was therefore in self-defence. Ministers also implied that the change in the Rules of Engagement was solely an authorisation to attack the Belgrano. Mrs Thatcher gave this impression to Labour defence spokesman Denzil Davies.

She wrote that there had been a request for 'a change in the rules of engagement to permit the Belgrano to be attacked . . . because of the indications that the Belgrano posed a threat to the task force.' The Belgrano's precise position and course when sunk 'were irrelevant.'

Belgrano case man revealed

The Observer 26/8/84

by DAVID LEIGH

MR CLIVE PONTING, the senior civil servant in the Ministry of Defence who was charged last weekend under the Official Secrets Act, revealed to *The Observer* yesterday that he is accused of leaking documents about the sinking of the Belgrano to the Labour MP Mr Tam Dalyell.

Mr Ponting, 38, said at his home in Islington, North London: 'I have been advised that I should not comment freely on this matter while it is before the courts. But I can say this: My conscience is entirely clear. In my view, a civil servant must ultimately place his loyalty to Parliament and the public interest above his obligation to the interests of the government of the day.'

In a statement to be issued today, Mr Ponting's solicitor, Mr Brian Raymond, of Bindman and Partners, says: 'We are authorised to disclose that this charge relates to the alleged passing of two documents concerning events in the South Atlantic in April and May 1982 to Mr Tam Dalyell, MP. We also wish to indicate that Mr Ponting denies any criminal culpability in this matter and that the prosecution will be defended fully at trial.'

Mr Ponting is an Assistant Secretary. He heads a division known as Defence Secretariat 5, which deals with work arising out of naval dispositions and current operations.

The two documents sent anonymously to Mr Dalyell were an internal memorandum concerning a change in the rules of engagement for the British Task Force in the South Atlantic, and a letter drafted for the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, which was never sent.

The internal memo recommended how sensitive information about the circumstances surrounding the decision to sink the Belgrano should be withheld from the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr Ponting's rank means he has authority to decide whether documents should carry classifications up to 'Top Secret.' Until earlier this year, he headed the Defence Ministry's legal division, which deals with Official Secrets Act cases.

A preliminary investigation was carried out by MoD police after the documents had been passed by Mr Dalyell to the select committee, which decided to return them to the ministry.

In the absence of Mr Heseltine on holiday, one of the duty ministers who would have been informed of its findings was Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces.

On 16 August, eight days after the MoD investigation, it was decided to send a preliminary report to the Director of Public Prosecutions for him to consider whether a criminal charge should be brought.

Within 24 hours, the Solicitor-General, Sir Patrick Mayhew, deputising for the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, decided to bring a prosecution. Sir Michael, who was in France, agreed with the decision.

Under normal circumstances, the Attorney-General and the DPP consider at some length whether it would be in the public interest to bring a prosecution under the Official Secrets Act if spying is not involved.

Mr Ponting, however, was immediately taken to a police station. The Ministry of Defence made no announcement of his arrest and refused to say when he appeared in court last Saturday what the alleged offence related to. As soon as Mr Dalyell heard of the arrest, he released to *The Observer* texts of the documents he had received.

Mr Ponting is known personally to Lord Lewin, the former Chief of Defence Staff, and Mrs Thatcher. In October 1979, he made a personal presentation to the Cabinet on his work for the Rayner efficiency study at the MoD.

He explained his proposals for saving £5 million in stock costs and £500,000 a year in food supply costs to the Armed Services. He was awarded an OBE in the subsequent honours list.

Mr Ponting's wife, Sally, who has no connection with the pending court case, is also a senior official at the Ministry of Defence.

Mr Ponting is not a member or a supporter of the Labour Party.

The unanswered questions, page 2

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It is a mistake, however, to associate personal eccentricity with his unconventional but

highly purposeful campaigning technique.

This is founded on intensive fact-gathering. (Almost any plane trip with Tam is enlivened by the mounting pile of sheared newsprint on the floor.) He has built up an impressive network of active and retired specialist advisers. It currently includes the former Foreign Office chief, Thomas Brimelow.

The next stage is saturation questioning of Ministers. The power of the Executive depends heavily on its screen concealing official information. Dalyell's fragmentation bombs — 50 or 100 questions at a time — are designed to blow holes in the screen.

'Most MPs are worried about going over the top,' says Norman Buchan, MP. 'Once you lose the respect of the House, you lose its attention. But Tam is unembarrassable. Although Members sometimes groan when he gets up to speak, they understand perfectly what he is trying to do and most of them respect him.'

Dalyell's fondness for neat, rational, behaviourist solutions — random drug-checks on children, doctor's right to remove deceased patients' kidneys for transplant unless there has been a specific opt-out — sometimes outruns good judgement.

More damagingly, he is a loner. Political action requires coalition and compromise. This, rather than his occasional excitability, is what may debar him from office if Labour ever regains power, although Tony Benn thinks he would be good at controlling civil servants.

Dalyell himself yearns for office. Certainly, he wouldn't be the first poacher who made an excellent gamekeeper. As it is, he is one of the most valuable backbenchers we possess.

The Observer (contd) 26/8/84

How our man in B.A. went to the Falklands . . .

HAVE YOU ever thought of going from London to Edinburgh via Calcutta, or flying to Kuala Lumpur before getting to Paris? Quite an adventure, you would probably think, but hardly the most efficient way to travel.

I was thinking along these lines as I boarded a train at Paddington on a recent summer evening. Behind me lay 6,915 miles—the distance between London and my home in Buenos Aires. In front lay more than 7,000 miles—the distance between London and the Falkland Islands. I remembered last summer when, standing in an airport in Patagonia, I had looked on a road sign indicating that "Las Islas Malvinas" were 350 miles away.

The train headed towards Swindon and I re-read the Ministry of Defence's five pages of typed "Instructions for Civilian Passengers" travelling by air to the Falklands by the long—and, for the moment—the only way. The worst stage would come after an 11 hour flight to Ascension via Dakar in an RAF VC-10. The next 13 hours would be in a Hercules transport which, according to the instructions, seemed designed for everything but civilian travel.

The aircraft "is not well insulated"; "the floors are cold so thick footwear is recommended"; "the seats . . . are canvas in construction"; the "plane is noisy so ear defenders are an advantage"; "no hot drinks are supplied . . . passengers are provided with two lunch boxes containing biscuits, tinned food and a tin of orange juice"; "no smoking . . ."; "toilets have very little privacy . . ."; "female passengers are advised to wear trousers . . ." etc.

Inflight entertainment, I noticed, was promised in the form of the potentially hazardous inflight refuelling.

We eventually flew out the next morning, Ascension-bound, from the nearby RAF base of Brize Norton after a night in the Gateway House, billed as a hotel but built like a hospital.

In the VC-10 we were all facing backwards. It is apparently a much safe way of crashing and recognised as such by the Civil Aviation Authority, though no commercial airline is willing to do the same because of the risk of sacrificing its market share in explaining to its clients

the danger of facing forwards. It was a comfortable flight washed down with gallons of orange juice and laced with the first of many horror stories about the Islands.

"If you're enjoying a reasonable standard of living in the UK, what is the point of going to live in an isolated tin shack and freezing to death," said my travelling companion, a contract labourer on his way back to help build more tin shacks. He was full of tales of alcoholism and adultery in Stanley. "I know of one woman who has had seven husbands in less than a year."

Ascension is the calm before the storm. A volcanic island with tropical vegetation and sandy beaches, it has an RAF base which looks like a holiday camp. Bronzed WAAF's drive you around, all smiles and pretty looks, and help you enjoy what you fear may be your last contact with civilisation.

In the officers' mess that night a young marine insisted that the only way I would survive the Hercules journey would be by getting on rolling drunk. As if to prove the point, he plied me with whisky between more tales of alcoholism and adultery.

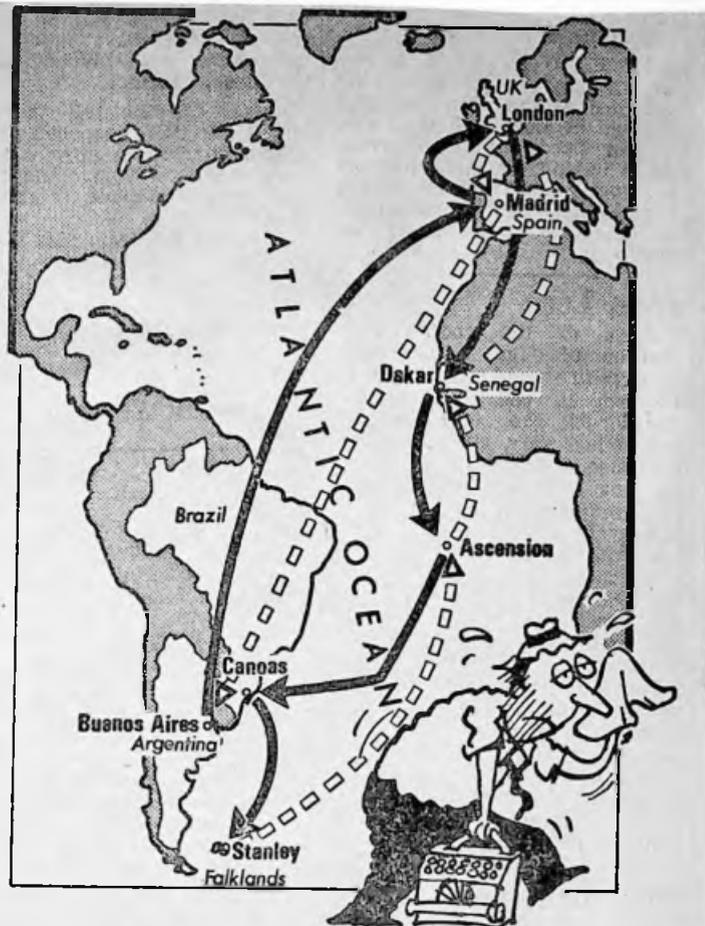
Had he lived Dante would have nominated flying by Hercules as his idea of a modern hell. I had the ear plugs and some head phones and still felt as if I had been squeezed into an engine room and then thrown onto a conveyor belt. Instruments and passengers alike shook and rattled like loose bottles and as we jerked up into the sky the wind blasted through as if someone had forgotten to close the door.

"You have to remember that most of these Hercs are nearly 17 years old," was the reassuring comment screamed at me from an inch away. Around me sat some 50 men in uniform, looking rather sheepish as they peeped across the gangway from behind huge boxes of freight filled with spare parts, letters and fresh vegetables—key elements of survival for the 4,000-odd troops posted to the islands.

Take-off had been at around 08.30 local time—half an hour delay because of some problem with the navigational equipment. Within two hours our plane and the other two tankers involved in the airbridge were approaching their rendezvous 20,000 ft above the South Atlantic.

In theory the refuelling should go ahead as smoothly as the coupling of birds. One tanker refuels the other which in turn fills up the passenger plane by means of a long hose.

To do all this in mid-flight involves a great deal of skilful manoeuvring usually timed to take 20 tense minutes. One veteran of the airbridge explained, "At one point the



planes are not more than about 80 ft apart. When there's turbulence it can get a bit terrifying."

Our operation went wrong from the start. First, one tanker turned back to Ascension earlier than scheduled because of an engine overheat. Then the hose from the other broke its mechanism and proceeded to push forwards and backwards like an unruly yo-yo. The refuelling was aborted, leaving us potentially between the devil and the deep blue sea.

Our pilot was then confronted with the choice of turning back to Ascension or heading for the next nearest landmark—Brazil. To go on towards the Falklands ran the risk of encountering bad weather and being unable to land on the small local airstrip, which would necessitate a sea ditch. (It is assumed by the RAF that although Argentina would probably honour international laws on emergency landings, it would follow up any reception party by turning the hapless Hercules into a collector's item.)

"Brazil, here we come," screamed the load master. We were approximately 500 miles south of Ascension and about 2,800 miles north of the Falklands.

We landed at the Brazilian Air Force base of Canoas, having invoked a standing arrangement with the country's authorities whereby RAF planes on their way to the Falklands can use local facilities "in an emergency." Brazilian servicemen saluted our pilot as he came off the plane and, in striking

contrast to the Senagalese, provided us with washing facilities, mineral water and gallons of coffee. As we waited to be refuelled and for clearance, an airman commented: "This isn't flying. It's ten hours of boredom. I wish I was back in Europe."

Few of us had the strength to utter a word when we finally bumped and shook into Stanley airport some five hours later. It was nighttime and local winter and you could feel the cold Antarctic wind turning the old Hercules into an icebox. When the engines had been turned off the buzzing went on in our ears and some of us lost our balance as we walked out into the snow.

The transit lounge was a steaming mass of soldiers anxious to leave after a four-month tour, cigarettes slowly burning out in ashtrays made of empty shells. We were handed another typed piece of paper. It warned that the islands were still littered with unexploded mines and ammunition from the days of the conflict and that areas marked by "red signs" were strictly out of bounds. Two evenings and 27 flying hours lay between me and Paddington station. And to add insult to injury, the story soon went round the island that I was an Argentine spy.

Our Buenos Aires correspondent, JIMMY BURNS, flew back to London this week (25 hours). Next week he has to go back to Argentina (13 hours). So his assignment will have required a grand total of about 31,000 miles and 80 hours in the air.

McMillan-Scott Associates Public Affairs

Bluidy Tam back-bench Quixote

'ALWAYS glad to meet the awkward squad, Mr Dalyell,' the Prime Minister remarked crisply at the first strange and fatal interview in her room at the House of Commons on 21 April 1982 to discuss the Falklands.

'It got hotter and hotter,' the obstreperous Labour back-bencher recalls. 'I don't think she'd ever been spoken to like that. I was aghast. I gradually realised that this woman really wanted a battle.'

This was the origin of Tam Dalyell's campaign to reveal the secret history of the Falklands War which last week threw up evidence of a Whitehall cover-up.

It has been a single-handed assault. The Labour front benches have stayed in their foxholes and given covering fire. But independent opinion — most significantly, in the defence studies community — is attentive and increasingly uneasy.

Dalyell is still some way from proving that Mrs Thatcher — whom he equates with Richard Nixon as a wrong-doer — sank the Belgrano to scupper the Peruvian peace plan.

But in forcing the Government to confess to a dismal sequence of untruths about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, he has raised serious doubts over command and control. The wider argument is now not just about the political morality of the Falklands expedition, but about the control of major weapons systems in a very, very dangerous world.

Dalyell is not on the pacifist Left. He is a sentimental traditionalist, tremendously proud of his military antecedents, who is being driven by disgust at what he sees as a betrayal of public trust by the governing class, sacrificing responsibility to expediency. It is, of course, essentially a Tory reflex.

His father, Lt-Col Gordon Loch, was British Resident at Bahrein in the 1930s. His father and grandfather had been Governors of Nepal. Tam's mother was descended from Bluidy Tam Dalyell, first baronet, cantankerous seventeenth-century Royalist and soldier of fortune. Dalyell, who changed his name as a boy, is the tenth baronet.

'You can't really understand Tam unless you met his mother,' says a friend. 'She used to stride around West Lothian in yellow stockings, referring to Cromwell as "that man!"'

His hilltop family seat, The Binns, stands in 260 acres overlooking his mining constituency. It is now owned by the National Trust for Scotland. The Dalys live in a flat in the house.

The Labour MP Eric Heffer was once woken at 2 a.m. by blood-freezing screeches coming from the upper regions of the house. It sounded like the first Mrs Rochester having one of her turns.

Heffer: 'I think this house is haunted, Tam. I heard a ghost last night. Dalyell: 'No, Eric, you did not hear a ghost. Those were our peacocks.'

Dalyell (pronounced 'Dee-ell') was a late and cherished only child. At Eton, he was a terrific arguer, unresponsive to authority. In the Royal Scots Greys, the family regiment founded by Bluidy Tam, he failed the officer cadet course. A Cambridge friend recalls arguing with him about his ancestry and having a glass of water dashed in his face.

Four years at King's, where he read history and economics, left him with a touching faith in academic wisdom. Not long ago, a reporter entered the press gallery at the Commons to witness Dalyell, pale as a candle, shouting at an astounded William Waldegrave, junior Minister and a fellow of All Souls.

'What on earth did Tam say?' the reporter inquired. 'He said,' a colleague gravely replied, "'You are a disgrace to All Souls!'"

Dalyell's code of loyalty to institutions is what made his censure in 1968 by the Committee of Privileges, for leaking an embargoed document to *The Observer* (the result of muddle, not calculation), so hurtful. He would never himself betray a trust, though he cheerfully blows other people's secrets.

This antique sense of personal obligation strikes some MPs as about as useful in political life as a duelling pistol. In the 1981 election for Labour's deputy leader, he voted for Tony Benn, with whom he has no ideological affinities.

'For God's sake, Tam!' grumbled John Smith, campaign manager for Benn's opponent, Denis Healey. 'Don't you understand? Benn may get elected.' Dalyell: 'Well you see, John, last year Tony supported my resolution on Northern Ireland. . . .'

At Cambridge, he was chairman of the Conservative Association. Suez and Scottish unemployment turned him to Labour. After some years of local schoolmastering, he was elected for West Lothian in 1962. He married Kathleen Wheatley, daughter and granddaughter of prominent Scottish Catholic Labour MPs. (They have a son and daughter.) This has diminished his social disabilities in a strongly working-class party.

In the leadership election, he voted for Harold Wilson, who placed him on the Public Accounts Committee in his first year. In 1964, Richard Crossman, who had managed the Wilson campaign, made Dalyell his PPS. They shared a London house for 11 years.

Idiosyncrasies

Crossman loved him. 'He is a tremendously faithful Sancho Panza,' he recorded in his diary, 'a person of real qualities, although he is sometimes funny, ingenuous, a blunter-outer.' Most people would have cast Dalyell as Quixote, but Crossman recognised the tough common sense beneath the idiosyncrasies.

From Crossman, he received an incomparable political education, learning how to spot tell-tale verbal obfuscation and hidden ellipses in ministerial statements. Dalyell is nowadays the most brilliant exegetist in the House, swiftly identifying papered-over cracks in Whitehall arguments and probing them relentlessly.

He fell out with Wilson over the use of troops in Borneo, and devoted himself to one-man crusades. He forced Healey, then Defence Secretary, to drop plans to use the ecologically unique Indian Ocean atoll of Aldabra as a staging-post. He denounced the Anglo-French swing-wing aircraft (also abandoned). He has campaigned for the withdrawal of the Army from Ulster. He became the most tenacious Scottish Labour opponent of devolution.

The defeat of devolution made him profoundly unpopular in the Scottish Labour Party. He was saved by his record with his constituents. His Falklands crusade has now earned him absolution. He was briefly Michael Foot's science spokesman, but resigned over Labour's ambiguous Falklands policy.

A gangling, physically disorganised man with tufted hair and a slightly sepulchral voice, his foibles delight dedicated Tam-watchers.

In an Aberfoyle hotel, he got into a heated debate about disarmament with a Young Socialist. Several minutes after it had ended, he suddenly lunged at the girl with fork, stabbing her in the arm. She spun round, grabbed it and hurled it across the room. 'Aha!' cried the empiricist, 'so you do believe in defence!'

Then there is his passion for eggs, which he carries around with him. In the BBC's Glasgow canteen, he was offered a cup of tea. 'Thank you,' said Tam, producing two fresh eggs from his pocket, 'and I'll have these lightly boiled, please.'

The former MP Bob Mitchell once came across him in the Commons late at night tucking into one of British Airways famous embalmed cold-meat platters on a plastic tray. 'The stewardesses gave them to me,' Dalyell explained. 'They had a couple left over.'

The Observer 26/8/84

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ARGENTINA

Falklands boost

WHILE the British Government has been getting into ever deeper water with the Belgrano, Argentina has more than replaced its war losses.

According to Dr Paul Rogers of Bradford University's School of Peace Studies, the air force now has 30 more planes, and the naval air service four times as many Exocets.

Four of the MEKO 360 destroyers built in West Germany have entered service with the Argentine Navy, and the

first of six Type TR-1700 submarines will be delivered shortly.

The carrier Twenty-fifth of May can now operate Exocet-firing Super Etendard strike aircraft. During the war, these had to fly from shore bases.

The Guardian 25/8/84

A Tam knitted of tough stuff

ON TUESDAY evening Black Tam slipped at periscope depth (by Tube) into Chelsea and took up station a few hundred yards from the Prime Minister's Flood Street moorings. He may have intercepted coded signals, for one of his pre-emptive salvos that night contained fissile material that was to surface in slightly different form two days later in the New Statesman.

This was his allegation that during the Falkland's conflict Mrs Thatcher, warned by senior naval officers that the loss of a major Task Force ship would be disastrous, had replied "In which case you must teach them a lesson." By which she meant dropping a nuclear bomb on the Argentinian city of Cordoba, he claimed.

Chelsea Labour Party had mustered a good turn-out to hear Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow who hopes to add the Belgrano affair to his other kills — Scottish devolution, the Anglo-French swing-wing plane, and the Aldabra base. There was a lot of affection for him in the hall. The Chelsea party, after all, will be pressing next month's Labour Conference to demand a tribunal into the sinking of the Argentinian warship.

Dalyell is not quite the rumped, remote eccentric he is sometimes painted. He is a skilful orator, mixing brusqueness with compassion, who knows how to press the right buttons and when to insert a joke at his own expense. He denies that he sees the world through the Belgrano's portholes, but his preoccupation with his own agenda led him to repeatedly misconstrue questions from the floor.

He immediately assumed a firing position. "She who ordered the sinking of the Belgrano is she who has a finger on the nuclear trigger," he told the audience. "The British Prime Minister is guilty of gross deceit, of lying to the House of Commons and—I am choosing my words"—he said Mrs Thatcher had done something unprintably bad for political ends.

"Disgraceful!" roared a man behind me. "You haven't changed a bit!" The objection turned out to be Alan Williams, the thriller writer and Mail on Sunday columnist, who had known Dalyell at Cambridge. (Dalyell was president of the university's Conservative Association, to which he was introduced by John Biffen.)

Dalyell, who failed to recognise him, looked perplexed and continued. The truthfulness of the Prime Minister was a matter of paramount concern, he said. Those who

occupied supreme positions of power in a democracy should not be allowed to get away with lying. (This allegation had earned him five days' suspension from the Commons.) He then dropped his bombshell about the threat to nuke Cordoba. Mrs Thatcher and Galtieri were two of a kind, he said. She was surrounded by gangsters and gutless placemen.

But his torpedoes were pointing both ways. During the Falklands campaign, he claimed, "Certain members of the Shadow Cabinet" were informed in Privy Council discussions that the Task Force was carrying nuclear weapons. Neil Kinnock's hands were completely clean, he added. "They were damned fools to do it. They were Mrs Thatcher's prisoners."

He had carved a dum-dum round for Denis Healey: "It would have been a matter of legitimate argument if Denis Healey stupidly, thoughtlessly, had not gone on television and, having done nothing all those months, suddenly spouted out about Mrs Thatcher glorying in slaughter. If the argument had been conducted properly things might have been different."

This seemed to be a case of "Black Tam" calling Healey a pot. After the meeting I asked him which Labour members had been told about nuclear weapons on the Task Force. "Not necessarily Michael Foot. There were other people," he replied guardedly. Why were they Mrs Thatcher's prisoners? "I understand the Tories have said 'If you back an inquiry we will reveal what you knew during the (Falklands) war.'"

He now regards the return this week by

the foreign affairs select committee of the leaked documents, which he supplied, to be a matter for Parliament. It was not for the party alone to judge. He had agonised for hours before making the documents available, haunted by the Sarah Tisdall case. "I did not go to Neil Kinnock, I did not go to the front bench, I didn't leak it."

But what of the select committee's four Labour members: would he be investigating their action? He replied that he did not believe in pestering colleagues on select committees. He revealed that he had previously been asked to join the foreign affairs select committee. "My reply was 'No fear,' because then I would have been really inhibited."

He denies that Labour had tried to fob him off. He said Neil Kinnock had behaved honourably, raising the Belgrano during the election. So did Healey — "after which rational discussion was impossible." But after years in the wilderness, hadn't he now attracted fair-weather friends? "Not at all," he replied. "They didn't have the proof before. I can't ask the front bench to accuse the Prime Minister of lying unless they are bloody sure."

What had he meant by his remarks about Mrs Thatcher's finger on the nuclear trigger? "It is how people react in emergency situations. All of us can be sensible when things are on an even keel."

Dalyell says that until recently lobby correspondents had laughed at him and that despite encouragement and information from such unlikely quarters as the Task Force servicemen and their relatives he has received an enormous amount of abuse. "I've had fish, excrement, the lot."

That doesn't worry him? "I take the E. M. Forster view of life. One of the things I learned from him was to be concerned about the opinions of others who really know."

Why had he been a Tory at Cambridge? "God knows," he said. "That was out of character."

He does not see himself as a loner: that implies friendlessness, he points out. "I like to think I get on jolly well with my colleagues. I am an extremely clubbable person. I suppose the truth of the matter is that when I came into Parliament I learned a great deal about pursuing causes. I am extremely tough minded. In my case you either survive or go under."

Bluidy Tam and the Belgrano battler

PROFILE

George Rosie reports on TAM DALYELL, the MP obsessed by the Belgrano affair

IN A PROPERLY ordered universe, Tam Dalyell, MP for Linlithgow, would be one of Margaret Thatcher's most dedicated supporters instead of being the scourge of her South Atlantic policy. Not only can he lay claim to the title of Sir Thomas Dalyell, tenth baronet of the Binns, but he was educated at Eton and Cambridge, and continues to live in a 17th-century castle through which thousands of visitors troop every year (at £1.05 a head).

On top of this, Dalyell is a direct descendant of General "Bluidy Tam" Dalyell, a hard-line 17th-century royalist, who plied his trade for the Tsar of Russia during Cromwell's interregnum, and then returned to persecute the radical Presbyterians of Scotland (where he was widely believed to be in league with the devil). On the other branch of Dalyell's family tree skulks John Loch, infamous as the Duke of Sutherland's factor, a man who did more than most to "clear" the Scottish Highlands of people and replace them with sheep.

All this makes it hardly surprising that the now-famous Labour backbencher began his political career as a young Tory. "In fact, I became chairman of the Conservative Association at Cambridge," Dalyell says, "partly because the social life was better, but mainly because of the British class system." He prides himself on being brutally honest on such matters as class.

In 1956, Dalyell left the Tories for the Labour party, became a teacher in a state school, and found his way into parliament after a by-election at West Lothian in 1962. A year later, Dalyell joined Scotland's socialist aristocracy by marrying Kathleen Wheatley, daughter of Baron Wheatley, a Labour lord advocate who is now the lord justice clerk of Scotland, the second-ranking high court judge north of the border.

Although it is Tam Dalyell's two-year-long campaign of unceasing parliamentary questions to ferret out the facts behind the sinking of the Belgrano that has brought him to the fore, in fact he has been demanding answers of successive governments with badger-like persistence ever since he became an MP. "It's a parliamentary technique," he says. "I'm a great believer in hard facts, and not generalisations." With the help of a bank of friendly experts, Dalyell has run campaigns on, among other things, the future of Diego Garcia (the Indian Ocean naval base) and the promotion of kidney transplants.

None of this has done his career much good. Just as the 17th-century Bluidy Tam was "excommunicated" by the Scottish covenanters, the 20th-century Tam has suffered the "withdrawal of grace" - or, at least, political favour - for his zealotry. As early as 1965, after a parliamentary delegation to south-east Asia, Dalyell concluded that the British war in Borneo was a "totally unnecessary conflict", and that the Labour government's east-of-Suez policy was in tatters.

The fledgling MP (who was PPS to the then housing minister, Richard Crossman) lost no time in telling Harold Wilson what he thought, and then rubbed salt in the wound by suggesting to the prime minister that he had been "taken for a ride" over Borneo by Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, "which is not the way to speak to prime ministers." Dalyell says ruefully, "at least not if you want to get ahead."

Not that Dalyell's talents have been completely overlooked. He was delegated from the British parliament to the European assembly as an MEP from 1975 to 1979. In the Commons, he has served at various times on the public accounts committee and the select committee on science and technology, as well as the Labour party's parliamentary groups on sports, foreign affairs and education. In 1980, he was elevated to Labour's front bench as spokesman on science matters, a job he relished enormously until he was dropped by Michael Foot for flouting the party line and voting against the government at the outbreak of the Falklands conflict. He says he would love to serve in a Labour government under Neil Kinnock. "Whether he'd have me is another matter..."

ACCORDING to the clerk of the Court of the Lord Lyon King of Arms, Dalyell's aristocratic credentials are impeccable, if complex. The baronetcy of the Binns is a "Nova Scotia baronetcy", a system devised by James VI of

Scotland, whereby strips of Nova Scotia and titles to them were sold to favourites for around £50,000. The Dalyell family coughed up in 1685 when Sir Thomas Dalyell (son of Bluidy Tam) became the first baronet of the Binns.

The present Tam acquired his right to the baronetcy - which he has not exercised - from his mother's side of the family (which is possible with Nova Scotia baronetcies). His father, Lt Col Gordon Loch, changed his name to Dalyell in 1938 so that son Tam, born in 1933, could inherit. In 1944 Dalyell's mother handed the castle, the Binns, to the National Trust of Scotland, but retained the right to live in the house, fly the armorial flag and to keep the "hidden treasure of the Binns", should it ever be found.

With this background, Dalyell is keen to emphasise that he is not hostile to the British military. His campaigns are against politicians, not soldiers. He served as a trooper in the Royal Scots Greys (the regiment raised in the 1660s by Bluidy Tam).

But he sees the naval attack on the Belgrano, with the loss of 368 Argentinian lives, and the political direction of the Falklands war as another matter. He firmly believes that the war was "totally futile", that Thatcher needed it for political reasons, and that now the government has been withholding information and lying to parliament. He picked up on the issue, he says, when the captain of the submarine Conqueror was reported in *The Scotsman* as saying he had attacked the Belgrano under instructions from Northwood, the military command centre just outside London. "When I saw the word Northwood, I knew that the decision to sink the Belgrano had been taken at the very highest level." After that, there was no letting go.

FOR ALL the furore Dalyell has created over the Belgrano sinking (he was dubbed the "Belgrano bore" by the Sun last week) it may be he will be remembered most for his implacable opposition between 1976 and 1979 to his own Labour government's plans to set up a directly-elected Scottish assembly in Edinburgh. Although the Scots voted "Yes" to the idea by a clear majority, it was not big enough to satisfy parliament. It was Tam Dalyell who had led the "No" forces, to the huge delight of the Tories. But Dalyell has no regrets; he maintains that the Scotland Bill was shot through with constitutional anomalies and would have put the country on the slippery slope to a fully separate Scotland and, possibly, years of Ulster-type violence.

Many Scottish politicians remain bitter about Dalyell's anti-devolution success. "There is more than a touch of ruthlessness about Tam," says one Scottish front-bencher. "The Scotland Bill was central to the Labour government's strategy - and there was Tam doing deals with rightwing Tories like George Gardiner and Julian Amery. Tam may have been opposing the bill for his own, thought-out, reasons but Tory opposition was purely political. I think we let Tam off very lightly after that."

The former Labour MP Jim Sillars, who was one of the leaders of the "Yes" campaign, thinks that Dalyell might yet pay the price for helping to torpedo the Scottish assembly. "I don't think the people of Scotland have forgotten Tam's role," Sillars says. "Tam did every thing he could in parliament to gut the assembly of economic powers, then turned round and told people it would be of no economic use to Scotland. The fact is that the working people of Scotland would be in a much much stronger political position than they are now if they had that assembly. I think Tam has a lot to answer for."

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Not that last year's voting figures revealed any upswell of resentment against the "Abominable No-man", as Dalyell was tagged during the referendum campaign. In the 1983 general election Dalyell's majority in Linlithgow was a cast-iron 11,361; his 19,694 votes were more than his Conservative and nationalist opponents combined could muster.

For all his aristocratic background and airs Dalyell has a reputation as a hard-grafting constituency MP. His constituency is fraught with problems, with closures looming at BL Bathgate, the North British foundry, the whisky plant at South Queensferry, and the threat hanging over Polkennet pit, which employs 1,400 miners. Dalyell's political enemies - and particularly the Scottish National party - grumble that if Tam spent a tenth of the time supporting BL Bathgate and Polkennet as he does pursuing the minutiae of the Belgrano incident, the constituency would be a lot better off.

Dalyell resents such criticism. "I can claim to be a very assiduous constituency MP," he says. "Otherwise people here would not put up with my campaigns. People have been tremendously supportive to me over the Belgrano. I have had only four letters of complaint from my constituency, and two of them were from members of the task force." All his hate mail, he says, comes from jingoistic reaches of southern England.

"There are a lot of people around who would prefer to see me safely locked up in the Tower of London," he says - and it is clear he is only half joking. But he points out that Cromwell tried that on his 17th-century ancestor, Bluidy Tam. "And he was one of the very few people who ever escaped..."

THE
WEEK IN
QUESTION



Alan Williams

Play it again Tam!

Turning the tables on man who
dared to heckle Billy Graham

SO my old friend Tam Dalyell has been at it again.

Not content with having put down well over 1,000 Commons questions about the Falklands War, he has long been leading an obsessive one-man crusade about the sinking of the Belgrano.

At the end of the last session of Parliament he was suspended by the Speaker for five days for refusing to withdraw a remark accusing the Prime Minister of lying over the incident.

Preached

And last week he claimed to have new 'evidence', based on leaks from the Ministry of Defence, which he says proves that Mrs Thatcher has been misleading Parliament.

The thrust of his case seems to depend on what course the Belgrano was steering when she was attacked — away from the Task Force, and

therefore no threat to it, or zig-zagging.

Now I have always known that Tam was rather odd. We were up at King's College, Cambridge, nearly 30 years ago, and I remember the time when Billy Graham preached to a packed Cambridge church.

He had just spoken of having 'lunched with my dear, trusted friend, President Eisenhower . . . when, from the back of the hushed church, came a loud, vacuous bray: 'Oh, Billy, it's really the last straw! You can't get away with it!'

It was the unmistakable voice of the then very Right-wing president of the Cambridge University Conservative Association — Tam Dalyell. The congregation was outraged, and Tam was ejected.

Last week he addressed a meeting of the Chelsea Labour Party. Although he arrived nearly half an hour late, he got off to a flying start. 'I'm saying categorically,' he began, 'that in ordering the sinking of the Belgrano, Mrs Margaret Hilda Thatcher was guilty of calculated, cold-blooded murder.'

This was too much for me. From the back of the hall I shouted: 'Oh Tam, it's the last straw — you can't get away with it!'

Like Billy Graham, Tam was addressing the faithful, and they, too, were outraged. But Tam and I are old Kingsmen, and some bonds are thicker than blood. I was not thrown out — though I came close to it when I asked him what he thought the Belgrano was doing in the South Atlantic?

Lynching

Did he think it was on a pleasure cruise? 'No,' he answered solemnly, 'obviously it was not.'

Here I sensed the lynching posse of Labour activists about to go in, so I refrained from asking what course the Bismarck was steering when she was sunk by the British in 1941.

Apart from getting out of the meeting in one piece, I didn't want to start Tam off on yet another crusade.

Poison

FOR some people, Britain is a country which is always and everywhere in the wrong.

Take the revival of the row over the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser General Belgrano during the Falklands War.

Papers leaked to the eccentric Labour MP Tam Dalyell and breathlessly exploited by some silly newspapers and magazines are being used to promote the lie that the Belgrano was deliberately sunk by Britain in order to wreck a Peruvian peace plan.

But was not the Task-Force attacked by Argentina's warplanes before the Belgrano was sunk? And did not the cruiser's destruction ensure that throughout the hostilities the rest of the Argentinian Navy skulked safely in port?

It is an absolute certainty that many British lives were saved because of that fact. Yet still the critics whine on.

Can they really believe that the vicious dictatorship of General Galtieri was interested in a negotiated settlement?

Can they really believe that the Peruvian peace plan could have led to an Argentinian withdrawal?

Or are they merely intent on spreading poison in order to embarrass the Government?

If so, they insult the memory of better men than they, who fought and died in order that the Falklands could be free.

No need to hide Belgrano truth

ISABEL HILTON, who covered the Falklands war from Buenos Aires, argues that the row over the Belgrano sinking is obscuring the real issue

TAM DALYELL's two-year battle with the Thatcher government over the sinking of the Belgrano celebrated one of its periodic skirmishes last week — in the credit of neither side. Dalzell, ironically scored an apparent triumph, in a moment of his own goal: by revealing that the war cabinet's bloodlust dated from an April 30 order to sink the Argentinian aircraft carrier, the *Venturino de Mayo*, and not from the May 2 decision to sink the Belgrano, he simultaneously torpedoed the flagship of his own campaign: the allegation that Mrs Thatcher sank the Belgrano to wreck the Peruvian peace initiative.

Not that Dalzell's discomfiture should give any satisfaction to a government which, with each evasive answer, reinforces the conviction that a dark secret lies behind a perfectly defensible decision. Admirable though Dalzell's persistence may be, the issue is drowning in a sea of minor details. Such is the determination to prove bad faith on the British side that the scene in Buenos Aires in April, 1982 has faded from memory.

It was not the decision to sink the Belgrano, or the decision to sink the *Venturino de Mayo*, which made war inevitable. It was the much earlier and much more widely-applauded decision in London to recover the Falkland Islands from Argentina.

As the task force set sail, the message was clear: Britain wanted the islands back. Diplomacy would be pursued but, should it fail, the task force would enforce Britain's will. What chance was there, in April, that diplomacy would succeed? While it may have been the misperception in London that those bullets in Buenos Aires would soon come to their senses, it was equally clear in Argentina that the prospects of the junta voluntarily relinquishing one crumb of the sacred island soil were less than zero.

The flagging military dictatorship, led by a particularly stupid junta and catastrophically badly advised by its civilian foreign affairs specialists, had bought a temporary reprieve from public odium through a military adventure. The Argentine military leaders, as Alexander Haig, the former US secretary of state, has eloquently testified, simply would not be convinced that the British reaction was other than empty rhetoric and show.

To the junta, the real danger was from within: any retreat from possession of the islands would destroy the slender political base on which it stood. In that context, even Britain's relaxing of South Georgia did little to bring a sense of reality to Buenos Aires. Instead, a flood of mendacious propaganda was released, claiming that the islands' defenders had not surrendered and that an elite commando corps had melted into the hills to conduct a prolonged war of resistance.

The more the junta lied, the louder it proclaimed to a gullible public that its position was unassailable, the less margin it left itself in which to negotiate with the British. To the junta, the British threat seemed remote. The crowds outside the Casa Rosada were real.

Even had the political possibility of peace existed, as Haig was to discover, the practical difficulties of reaching a deal in Buenos Aires were daunting. In spite of the trappings of dictatorship, no one man or even one junta could take a decision. As Haig recalled, up to 40 people had to be consulted and agreement sought from men who had taken no part in the negotiations.

Haig's doubts were confirmed after the war by an Argentine official who was foreign secretary. Costa Mendez's closest aide, "The Peruvian plan was the most acceptable to Costa Mendez", he said wearily. "But, from the beginning, the military had ignored the advice of the foreign ministry. There was no possibility that we would have accepted it really. Belgrano or no Belgrano." Nothing which has emerged in Dalzell's campaign or in any of the millions of words written since has changed the fact that if Britain wanted the islands back, she was going to have to take them by force.

Back in London, a different set of pressures applied. The task force so confidently launched was, as the navy lost no opportunity of pointing out, extremely vulnerable. The enterprise was by no means assured

of success. Any opportunity of shortening the odds, the navy argued, should be taken. The political judgment was a more delicate matter: to take such action as was necessary to pursue the military option without being seen to abandon the possibility of negotiation. The sinking of the Belgrano was the most shocking to public opinion. But it was not, the evidence now suggests, such a turning point. Indeed, the critics of the sinking of the Belgrano do not include the Argentine navy, to whom the decision seemed a logical one.

There are conflicting accounts, still, of the Argentine military operations over that crucial few days leading up to the Belgrano. But through the conflict of evidence one fact emerges unchallenged: throughout the Peruvian peace initiative, the Argentine military were making strenuous efforts to find and sink as large and important a British ship as they could. That they failed was due to a run of military bad luck, or perhaps lack of skills.

On April 27, as the British fleet approached the islands, the Argentine fleet deployed to counter an anticipated landing. Their orders were to find and destroy the British fleet if the British attacked either the

islands or the mainland. On the morning of May 1, the first British raids on the islands took place. The airfield at Port Stanley was bombed and Glamorgan shelled the islands.

Over the next 24 hours, the carrier group of the Argentine fleet struggled to close the gap with a group of one large and six medium-sized British ships spotted by air reconnaissance north east of the islands. As dawn broke on May 2, there was insufficient wind to launch from the *Venturino de Mayo* any of her eight Skyhawk aircraft with enough fuel to reach the British target. Anxious about her own vulnerability, the carrier group turned back to safer waters. She was not, as senior Argentine officials have acknowledged, doing anything more peaceful than returning to seek a better opportunity.

If fresh evidence of Argentina's military determination were needed, it can be found in the activities of the Super Etendard squadron based in Rio Grande. After hasty but intense preparations, the squadron, part of Argentina's highly sophisticated naval air arm, was ready to attack. On the morning of May 2 two Super Etendards took off to launch an attack on the fleet, but problems with mid-air refuelling forced them back to base. Had those refuelling problems been resolved, it is highly likely that the first naval casualty would have been a British ship.

If President Galtieri was keen on the Peruvian peace plan, he was not keen enough to call off his military operations. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that the junta was, at any time, seriously prepared to negotiate. That the myth of "Galtieri the peacemaker" could have survived so long is the most eloquent indictment of the British government's two years of lies and evasion over the sinking of the Belgrano. Whatever the motive for the evasion, it is time it stopped and myths were finally allowed to die.

'The need for a Belgrano probe

Sir, — Watergate was an unnecessary political burglary. It was a purely American affair, involving neither loss of life nor serious loss or damage to property.

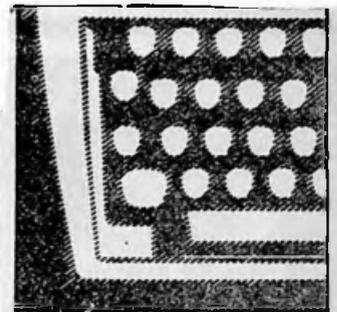
Richard Nixon lost his job because he became involved with the cover-up, even though he wasn't involved with the burglary itself. And it took a full-scale judicial inquiry (however indirect) and the threat of impeachment to force his resignation.

The accumulating evidence seems to suggest that the Belgrano affair was a far more serious (but equally unnecessary) political act. And it is also becoming clear that the Government is involved in a cover-up, thanks

to the persistence of Tom Dalyell and the courage of the British version of "Deep Throat."

Of course there has got to be a full-scale judicial inquiry, and it is in the national interest now to have one. It would be as facile now to refuse it on the grounds of national security as it was for Richard Nixon to obstruct the Watergate investigations on similar grounds.

Belatedly the Opposition Front Bench has started to attack. They should persist until once and for all the facts become known and the air is cleared. — Yours
Russell Gilderson.
Chingford.
London E4.



DIARY

IF THE Government's reaction to some of the latest Belgrano outseepings has seemed a touch highly strung this would be no more than a fair reflection of the nervousness felt within ministerial circles. This began to make itself felt last March when, under cross-questioning from both Tam Dalyell and Denzil Davies, Mr Michael Heseltine suddenly thundered at friends: "I want to be clear that there isn't a Watergate in this somewhere." Time will tell, Michael; time will tell.

Foot's Belgrano silence blamed on Tory leak

By Anthony Bevins, Political Correspondent

Mr Michael Foot's Shadow Cabinet failed to demand an inquiry into the sinking of the General Belgrano during the Falklands because three Labour frontbenchers had been compromised by Conservative ministers, Mr Tam Dalyell said last night.

The Labour MP for Linlithgow, who has sustained a campaign for an official inquiry, told *The Times*: "There was a troika of shadow ministers who were told, early in April, 1982, that the task force was carrying nuclear weapons."

They were informed under Privy Councillor terms, which required total secrecy in the interests of national security.

Mr Dalyell said: "They were thereby imprisoned, incarcerated, because they knew. Subsequently, Conservative ministers told the Labour front bench: 'If you back an inquiry, we will

reveal just how much you knew.'

Although Mr Dalyell refused to identify the three shadow ministers, it is understood that neither Mr Foot nor Mr Denis Healey, his deputy, was involved.

Mr Dalyell's charge is certain to anger Labour MPs and party members and his campaign has undoubtedly been given added credibility by recent Whitehall leaks.

He said that some Shadow Cabinet members had been "livid" when they had discovered the nature of the Government-Opposition briefings given after the Falklands invasion.

Mr Dalyell also said that the carrying of nuclear weapons by the task force was in direct breach of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, ratified by Britain, setting up a nuclear weapon-free zone in Latin America.



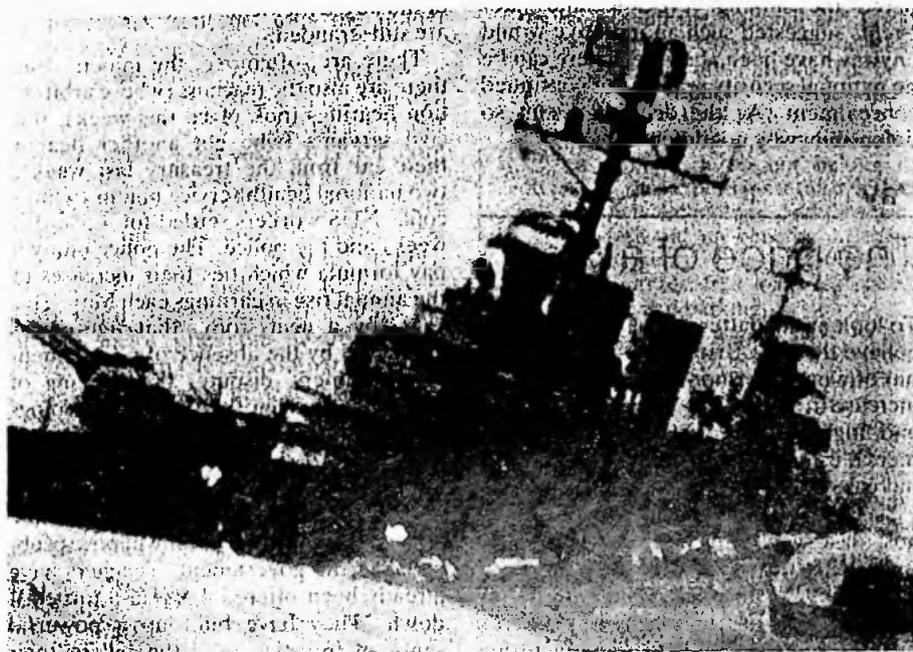
Not so loony Binns

The enormous mansion of The Binns looks out across the Firth of Forth, a monument to the fortunes Scots lawyers could make when they came south in the court of their King James VI. The house is now a popular attraction of the National Trust for Scotland. But its owner still lives in a flat there, and has for 22 years represented the miners, engineers and many unemployed folk of the surrounding Lothians.

Mr Tam Dalyell—he has dropped the territorial addition “of the Binns”—is a Labour toff, who bellows like the old Etonian he is, but whose commitment to humane and sometimes loopy socialist notions is doubted by none. He used to plague ministers to pay for children to go to school on cruise ships. Then he made a huge fuss about the booby birds of Diego Garcia.

Now his thing is the Falklands war, how wrong it was, and how Mrs Thatcher and her ministers lied about it. Last month documents appeared in his mail letting one civil service cat, if it is a cat, out of the bag, if it was a bag. Even if they weren't, Mr Dalyell is certain to persist.

His reasoning—set out, before the latest revelations, in an extremely bad book—is hopeless. But his motives are unquestioned. If there has to be a house of commons with backbenchers in it, then some of those backbenchers should have no ambition of ministerial office, insatiable curiosity, and a total lack of fear of being thought ridiculous. The government thinks Mr Dalyell a confounded nuisance. A necessary one.



The Belgrano: why not come clean?

The two-year-long efforts of the ministry of defence to suppress details of the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the *General Belgrano*, during the Falklands war produced this week the predictable result: leaks, further embarrassing publicity and another stir to the controversy. The ministry's inept handling of the affair has achieved the near unthinkable. It has turned the eccentric Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell, into a parliamentary hero and it has bolstered his claim that the cruiser was deliberately sunk to sabotage peace talks.

Behind the new fracas are three documents leaked by a ministry official to Mr Dalyell, suggesting ways in which the defence secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, should respond to questioning on the affair. In effect, they urge him to adopt a favourite government tactic with uncomfortable issues: say as little as possible. Mr Dalyell sent the documents to the house of commons foreign affairs committee—one of the bodies Mr Heseltine was advised to fob off. The documents come under the Official Secrets Act, so

the committee virtuously sent them back to the ministry. The resulting search for the source of the leak forced the issue into the open: lucky timing for the government. Parliament does not come back until the end of October.

The documents say more about the passion for concealment and secrecy in Mrs Thatcher's government than about the *General Belgrano* affair itself. The government has never maintained the sinking of the ship outside the declared total exclusion zone was anything other than an extraordinary act, occasioned by the extreme danger the task force commander, Rear-Admiral Sandy Woodward, felt he was in as he approached the Falklands. Throughout April 1982, an argument had been raging between the navy and the war cabinet—and within the cabinet, between the foreign office, the lawyers and the rest—over the status of the total exclusion zone (TEZ), with the task force demanding greater freedom to attack the big Argentine ships known to be cruising outside the zone. It was revealed this week that the cabinet author-

ised another submarine, *HMS Splendid*, to attack the aircraft carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo*, on April 30th—if it could find it. This was two days before the *General Belgrano* authorisation, but two days after the Argentine junta had rejected the peace proposals of Mr Alexander Haig. *HMS Splendid* never found the aircraft carrier. *HMS Conqueror* asked for its authorisation with the *General Belgrano* in its sights.

Under pressure from the task force, the government declared on April 26th that enemy ships might be attacked wherever they were considered a threat. Hence Mr Dalyell's constant question: was the *General Belgrano* really a threat? And if so, why did the submarine need new rules of engagement to attack it? (The answer is that submarines were operating to different rules from the surface ships: they required specific authorisation to attack a target outside the TEZ.)

Mr Dalyell has made great play of the thesis that, since the *General Belgrano* was sailing away from the task force at the time it was sunk, it cannot have constituted a threat at all. Besides, if the cabinet was going to change the rules for the submarines, why not tell the Argentines first and give them the chance to retreat? The government has tied itself into knots because it is unwilling to admit that the strategic balance confronting Admiral Woodward at this stage was appalling: any opportunity to eliminate the two major ships facing him, the cruiser and the aircraft carrier, could not be missed. The day before the *General Belgrano* was attacked, Argentine Seahawks had already attacked *HMS Glamorgan* and almost sunk her. The decision to sink the *General Belgrano* was hardly a unilateral escalation of the war.

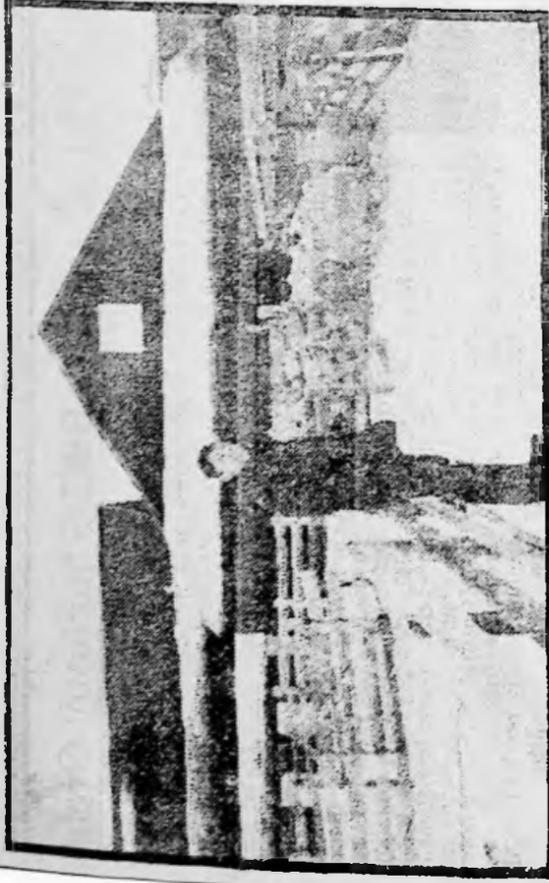
Argentine sources have since admitted that they planned precisely the encircling manoeuvre which the British commanders feared and which the attack on the *General Belgrano* managed to forestall. By stunning the Argentine navy into flight, the sinking was probably the turning point in the war—a view confirmed by the Argentine navy commander in a recent BBC Panorama documentary. Above all, it permitted an unopposed landing at San Carlos.

What has mystified Mrs Thatcher's apologists, including many Falklands veterans, is what she thinks she gains by not publishing a full statement on the affair. The attack on the *General Belgrano* killed 368 men, far more than anticipated. Concern remains understandable.

Yet, given the state of the war at the time, the sinking was a justifiable decision. No evidence has been produced to prove ministers had knowledge of any revived peace initiative when they ordered the sinking. Previous and later events suggested such an initiative would anyway have been abortive. There can be no national security reasons for continued concealment. As the decision seems so defensible, why not defend it?

THE ECONOMIST AUGUST 25, 1984

FORTRESS FALKLANDS



The two faces of the Falklands: Shep farmer Bill Luxton, and British troops, examining a piece of Argentine artillery on Mount Longdon



A LONG THE waterfront in Port Stanley, the Falkland Islands' only two major monuments in remembrance of the two World Wars have been joined by a third. The Liberation statue, paid for by the islanders as tribute to the sacrifices of the British Task Force is the most immediately visible reminder of what occurred during three traumatic months in 1982.

For the lasting impression of Stanley today is of a small backward community not so different from an isolated township in the wilds of Scotland with inadequate housing and an indigenous population of less than 1,500. Their only refuge from the bitter Antarctic winds are their peat fires or the local pubs in which they can drown their boredom.

Finding a viable future for the islanders appears as intractable a problem as it did before the war. Most are resolutely against any accommodation with the Argentine mainland that might even hint at some future transfer of sovereignty. "When you've been forced to look down the barrel of a gun you are in no hurry to shake hands," says one local, echoing many more. This Buenos Aires correspondent has never felt as far away from Argentina—with all its surface sophistication—as during a 10-day stay among a people who dress badly, rarely

Photographs of dead Argentines are prohibited

worry about inflation, and who can hardly put two words of Spanish together.

Periodically British fighter jets screech along the estuary and the drone of transport aircraft echoes across the barren hills. You can scarcely walk along a street at daytime without bumping into a soldier. At least two of the pubs have been turned into virtual mess rooms at night by the troops.

The new "military" force of the Falklands is at its most striking on the road that leads to the airport and the airport itself. There is also the Command headquarters built above the old Government House in a position which neatly symbolises the pre-eminence of the Armed Forces. From here the island's new military Commissioner General, Major-General Peter de la Billiere, co-ordinates the defence of the islands from the perceived threat from Argentina. His last job was

director of the Special Air Service (SAS). The troops are no longer billeted in Stanley—as they were for at least a year after the war. But the islands' jagged coastline is protected by isolated detachments of Coldstream Guards, some half a dozen frigates, a nuclear submarine, and two converted tugboats used as patrol boats by the Royal Marines. The term 'Fortress Falklands' is an exaggeration. Nevertheless the military presence and the effect it has had on the islands as a whole should not be underestimated.

Arriving by air, it seems at first as if the island is actually under military occupation. Stanley airport, badly damaged during the war, has been rebuilt and reinforced as the Royal Air Force's current main base. The transit lounge is usually packed with soldiers, occasionally screamed into a semblance of order by the sergeant on duty. Incoming passengers — civilian and military — are presented with a typed sheet of paper, warning that many of the fields in the area are out of bounds because of mines. Those leaving must read a list of prohibited items, which includes empty artillery shells and photographs of dead Argentines.

Outside the main building the airport's single runway is flanked by hangars filled with Phantom fighter jets and Harriers. They are protected by Rapier anti-aircraft guns and an array of additional equipment shrouded in camouflage nets. The Phantoms combined with three new early warning radar systems are the islands' first line of defence. They virtually guarantee that any fully fledged military invasion similar to that conducted on April 2 1982 could not be carried off without a great deal of bloodshed.

Supporting the airport, its surrounding buildings and the rest of the estimated 4,000 troops on the islands is the military's new floating dock built at a cost of £22m by ITM offshore of Middlesbrough. With monthly imports of over 5,000 tonnes and exports of 2,500 tonnes, the flexiport's current annual trade flow is about £30m. Some 9,000 square metres of warehouse facilities ensure that the troops on the islands are permanently supplied with ammunition, petrol and almost every product imaginable, ranging from bars of soap to souvenir stuffed penguins. The floating dock is proudly held up by the military as a symbol of efficiency and cost-consciousness. It is said that it

'When you have looked down the barrel of a gun, there's no hurry to shake hands'

By Jimmy Burns, recently in Port Stanley

will pay for itself within a year because fewer ships will be needed to supply the garrison and their turn-round time will be far faster.

Even more ambitious than the floating dock is the islands' projected new airport currently being constructed by Leving Mowlem and ARC under Ministry of Defence auspices. The airport will enable rapid deployment of troops to the islands in an emergency—the present runway at Port Stanley is unable to take any wide-bodied jets and thus involves a costly airbridge link with Britain using Hercules transports which have to be refuelled in flight between Ascension Island and the Falklands.

Once the airport is built, so the argument goes, the garrison will be able to be run down, thus reducing the cost to the British taxpayer of the current defence commitment in the islands.

Most islanders see the new airport at Mount Pleasant as the most visible proof of Mrs Thatcher's determination to retain sovereignty. Yet there has been surprisingly little local discussion about the impact the new airfield could have on the islands.

Lord Shackleton was only the most recent advocate of the idea that a modern airport capable of linking the Falklands to the outside world on a regular basis would be a key part of any plan to put the fragile local economy on a more stable footing.

The £215m new airport is and farm subdivision is

expected to continue in the future at a rate of about two farms a year. For the moment, however, officials appear reluctant to implement the more far-reaching agricultural reforms recommended by Lord Shackleton, preferring to operate along lines already established in the past.

Thus, two and a half years after the war, the position of the Falklands Island Company in the island economy remains virtually untouched. The FIC produces over 40 per cent of the islands' wool, operates the main civilian internal and external cargo services, and owns Stanley's main supplies store, the West Store.

In the past the FIC was the whipping boy for the islands' underdevelopment, but since the war its officials have gone out of their way to underline their commitment to the islands' future and their adaptability in the changing circumstances.

"You could say that change has been forced upon us," says Mr David Brittan, the FIC's recently appointed general manager.

FIC officials point to new machinery, horses, sheep and a new school at the main settlement in Goose Green as evidence of their commitment. But most of this simply replaces material destroyed in the war and is financed by a £15m government compensation scheme. There is not much sign of new investment by the company's parent Coalfire.

The FIC's most significant new move so far has been in fisheries. It has signed a contract with the Japanese company Taiyo jointly to investigate the potential of the islands' fishing grounds. The British Government has been coming under increasing pressure from Falkland islanders to declare a 200-mile fishing zone so as to conserve stocks and at the same time to ensure a steady income by the issue of licences.

Many Foreign Office officials would agree with the second Shackleton report issued after the war. It argued that the best guarantee of an effective management and conservation of fisheries in the area is joint exploration in collaboration with Argentina. To declare the fishing zone would create a new source of tension and incur additional surveillance costs.

Political considerations also overshadow the prospects of oil exploration in the area. The British Government takes it for granted that no major oil company will be willing to look for

oil inside the British exclusion zone as long as the present state of hostilities is maintained — although Oil and Gas recently won a licence to explore onshore. Similar factors also gravely inhibit some of the more ambitious proposals of the Falkland Island Development Corporation.

The projects include a £900,000 contract with the Grimshy-based trawler company Fortloser for the re-search into the processing of king crabs and a £170,000 wool mill capable of producing high value quality garments.

Since the war there have been isolated examples of expatriates — as opposed to islanders — investing in the islands. A young Englishman called Simon Powell sells "multon burgers" and bread, and the Midlands brewery Everards is producing a local version of its traditional ale.

But so far, such businesses have survived because of purchases by soldiers rather than because of an increase in the local population.

One of the few signs of real progress is a new £3m satellite station set up by Cable and Wireless which now provides direct dialling between the islands and the outside world and the island's first commercial bank, a branch of Standard Chartered.

But it is not so much what has been done by the British as what was destroyed by the Argentines that stirs the islanders' population.

The wishes of the islanders

The inescapable fact of geography

are rooted firmly in pro-British sentiment and the majority tends to view the non-belligerent and democratic government of Sr Raul Alfonsín as just another Argentine civilian government which will eventually be overturned by a military coup.

Yet at least some of the islanders are uncomfortably aware that the British Government is still apparently unable to commit itself fully to the economic development of the islands.

The Liberation Statue may partly be intended as a symbol of the island's continuing alliance with the British armed forces. But it cannot make up for one inescapable fact of geography—Argentina is just a 45-minute flight away.

Falklands LOA is phased out

THE LOCAL OVERSEAS ALLOWANCE (LOA) paid to single and married unaccompanied Servicemen undertaking a tour of duty in the Falklands is to be phased out by October.

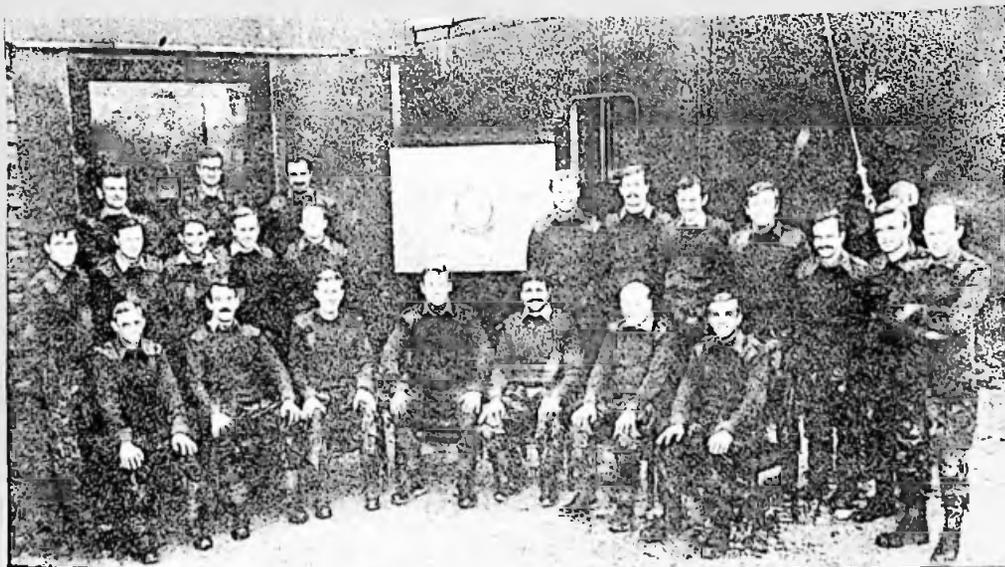
The allowance of £1 a day was halved to 50p with effect from 1 August and will totally disappear from 1 October. Servicemen accompanied by families in the Falklands are to have their LOA reduced from £2 per day to £1.16 per day.

There is good news, however, for those serving a second tour in the Falklands. It has been agreed that from 1 April this year Falkland Islands pay of £2.15 a day (taxable) is to be paid for the duration of a repeat tour undertaken

within 18 months of a previous tour, provided that the repeat tour is a continuous period of not less than 80 days.

Falkland Islands pay will not be paid to personnel undertaking their first tour since the "X" factor, which compensates for the overall disadvantages of Service life, is already considered to provide adequately for this initial period.

An MoD spokesman pointed out that Service personnel in the Falklands also receive other forms of compensation such as free food and accommodation; separation allowance at £1.95 a day for married personnel; hard-lying money for seagoing personnel in certain circumstances; and special leave allowances.



The Officers of Engineering and Supply Wing (above) at Stanley opened their new Headquarters complex last month. The improvement from tented to cabin accommodation is now complete, allowing all personnel to enjoy better working conditions, although there is still the occasional spot of rain, sleet or snow, as witnessed by the odd white spot on the photograph. Moments after the shutter clicked, it was a race to duck back inside as a sudden snow squall swept across the site.

Belgrano challenge

THE Prime Minister was challenged by Labour yesterday to set up an independent judicial inquiry into the sinking of the General Belgrano. Back page and how Heseltine was guided, page 4.

The Guardian 24/8/84

Judicial inquiry call to Thatcher over Belgrano

By Ian Aitken,
Political Editor

The Prime Minister was challenged yesterday to set up an independent judicial inquiry if she disputes the latest allegations about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, and the alleged orders to the Royal Navy to sink an Argentine aircraft carrier outside the Falklands exclusion zone two years ago.

The challenge, which came from Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Mr George Foulkes, followed the publication of another set of documentary revelations about the Belgrano affair, and the way in which Mrs Thatcher's war cabinet decided to go for all-out war against the Argentine navy while peace talks were continuing in New York, Washington, and Lima.

Mr Foulkes's questions to the Prime Minister were echoed in questions put to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, by the Opposition foreign affairs spokesman, Mr Donald Anderson, who told Sir Geoffrey: "a clear picture is emerging through the official smokescreen of a Government ignoring the prospects of an honourable peace in the South Atlantic and pursuing a military victory at all costs with maximum military force."

Mr Anderson told the Foreign Secretary that a similar intransigence had led to the present "fortress Falklands" policy, and was preventing Britain from winning the peace by recognising our own interests as well as those of the Falkland islanders.

The New Statesman alleges that documents in its possession show that the then Foreign Secretary, Mr Francis Pym, and the Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers,



George Foulkes: followed up revelations

jointly put their names to a war cabinet minute asserting that an attack on the Argentine vessels outside the declared exclusion zone around the Falklands might be contrary to international law.

There was no denial in Whitehall yesterday that this was an accurate statement of the position at the end of April and the beginning of May 1982, just before Britain re-invaded the Falklands.

Mr Foulkes was quick to publish a letter to the Prime Minister about the New Statesman's allegations. They included questions about whether the war cabinet agreed to order an attack on the Argentine aircraft carrier Veinticinco de Mayo, and whether such an order had been opposed by Mr Pym and Sir Michael.

Mr Foulkes went on to ask whether the New Statesman had been right to allege that a Polaris submarine had been deployed in the South Atlantic, and whether the purpose of

the deployment had been to use the submarine's armaments in certain circumstances.

Mr Foulkes acknowledged that in normal circumstances a prime minister would refuse to answer such questions on grounds of national security. But he added that the publication of detailed allegations, together with supporting evidence, meant that it was in the national interest for the Government to give the fullest possible answers.

"If the information contained in the New Statesman is correct—and I have no reason to believe otherwise—then it is imperative that a statement be made to explain why the advice of the Foreign Secretary and the Government's chief law officer was ignored.

"If you contest the accuracy of the information, then surely it is now incumbent on you to set up an independent judicial inquiry to determine the facts relating to the incidents involved, in view of the clear implication that your only objective was a total military victory, and that any possibility of a negotiated end to the conflict was never given serious consideration by you."

Mr Folkes has been a consistent critic of the Government's decision to go to war over the Falklands—a view which he expressed in one of only two dissenting speeches delivered during the euphoric House of Commons debate on the Saturday before the British Task Force set sail for the South Atlantic.

He has backed Mr Tam Dalyell throughout his campaign to establish that the Belgrano was sunk in order to scupper the prospects of a negotiated settlement.

Advice to Heseltine; Meeting on attack, page 4

Gareth Parry on guidance to minister on changes in the rules of engagement, and John Ezard on the latest attack disclosures

Guidance to Heseltine on replies over Belgrano

THE CONFIDENTIAL minute advising the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, and other ministers how to respond to a request from the Commons select committee on foreign affairs for information about changes in the rules of engagement which led to the sinking of the General Belgrano was published yesterday in the New Statesman.

Copies of the minute were first sent to Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, last month. He sent them to the select committee, which decided to return them to the Ministry of Defence.

The document was signed by J. M. Leggc, Head of DS11, who is listed as a member of the defence secretariat staff.

It says: "We have discussed the form of our response with the Defence Commitments Staff, DS5, and DNW, who had particular responsibility for ROEs (Rules of Engagement) during Operation Corporate.

"We have also borne in mind the statements made to date by ministers on the subject of the Belgrano. Our advice is that we should not provide the committee with a note listing all the changes. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly the

ROE themselves are classified, and are drawn from the Fleet Operating and Tactical Instructions which is a classified document. The committee have indicated that they would prefer the note to be unclassified."

Although a number of words in the following sentence are illegible, the second reason for withholding information would seem to be that the detailed disclosure of ROE to the committee would be to negate their effectiveness.

"Thirdly, the production of a full list of all changes would be an extremely time-consuming exercise, not only because of the difficulty in assembling this information from departmental records, but also because the ROE would have to be paraphrased at some length since their format would be almost incomprehensible to the layman," the document says.

"In addition a full list of changes would provide more information than ministers have been prepared to reveal so far about the Belgrano affair.

"For instance, the list of changes in the period April 2 to May 7 would show that the engagement of the Argentine aircraft carrier 25 Demayo (sic) outside the Total Exclusion Zone was permitted from April 30, and

that the change on May 2 was not restricted to Belgrano but included all Argentine warships over a larger area.

"It would also reveal that whilst the public warnings and ROE changes for the MEZ (Maritime Exclusion Zone) and TEZ (Total Exclusion Zone) — (this broadened the exclusion to aircraft as well as ships) — were simultaneous, there was a delay until May 7 before the appropriate warning was issued for the May 2 change."

The writer goes on to recommend that these "difficulties" could be avoided by providing the committee with a more general narrative, explaining broadly when changes were made to ROE, but emphasising that changes were a continual and routine process, thus confirming the thrust of Mr Pym's evidence. (This was to the foreign affairs committee. I attach a draft on these lines."

The document notes that Mr Pym's evidence did not specify any ROEs, and "would pose no problems from a security point of view."

The evidence was also consistent with previous public statements by ministers and others "about the change of ROE which led to the sinking of the Belgrano."

Wharfe Valley Times
24th August 1984

Dennis and Dawson in Stanley



Lt. Dennis and an Otley-built printing machine - both a long way from home.

A printing machine made in Otley in 1953 is still being used in Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands.

A Royal Naval Reserve officer from Menston noticed the name plate of Otley firm Dawson Payne and Elliott on the machine.

And Lieutenant David Dennis, of Croft Rise, discovered the island's Master Printer had two such machines in use.

The other was a second-hand machine bought from a company in Harrow, and the only clue to its age was the 1939 date scratched on, probably by an apprentice alongside the name of his girlfriend.

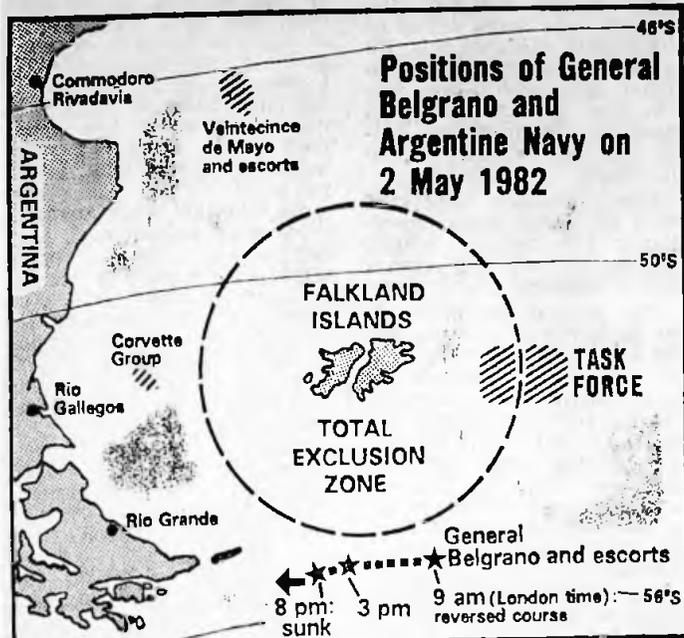
Lt. Dennis said the

printer, Joe King, was proud of his machines and his link with Otley and Dawson Payne and Elliott, and had visited the town 31 years ago to learn how to use them.

During his time in the Falklands Lt. Dennis was made welcome by the islanders and although it was the height of winter he was delighted at the wildlife and amazed at the lack of fear they showed towards people.

In civilian life he is Public Relations Officer for British Telecom's Bradford Area.

Two meetings on carrier raid



The position of the Belgrano and other forces, as seen by the *New Statesman*

THE LATEST claims and disclosures over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, and the Falkland's war cabinet's orders to attack the flagship Veinticinco de Mayo, an aircraft carrier with 1,500 crew, indicate that at least two separate cabinet discussions took place.

The attack on the carrier was authorised on April 30 by a meeting of Mrs Thatcher's cabinet, according to a detailed report in yesterday's *New Statesman* which claims to draw on official cabinet, Defence Ministry and Foreign Office documents.

Last night the magazine said it could not discuss whether it had seen cabinet committee papers, because it had been warned by lawyers of possible action similar to that mounted against *The Guardian* in the Sarah Tisdall affair.

But according to its report, the April 30 meeting authorised an attack on the aircraft carrier outside the Falklands Total Exclusion Zone, "and on all Argentine warships over a large area."

The then Foreign Secretary, Mr Francis Pym, and the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, warned the war cabinet of the danger that this would flout the United Nations charter and be contrary to international law.

The next day, May 1, both ministers signed a minute of dissent from the order. Mr Pym signed it shortly before flying to Washington to join the Haig peace initiatives. But the attack never took place.

The British nuclear submarine, HMS *Conqueror*, on patrol south of the Falkland Islands had on April 30 sonically detected an Argentine oil auxiliary which was accompanying the Belgrano.

The submarine made its first sighting of the cruiser on May 1. The Belgrano was accompanied by two destroyers armed with Exocet missiles which could pose an extreme threat to the task force carriers *Hermes* and *Invincible* — upon which the success of Operation Corporate and the retaking of the islands depended.

Commander Christopher Wreford-Brown, commander of HMS *Conqueror*, said in an interview published later in a book: "We located her on our passive sonar and sighted her visually early on the afternoon of May 1. We took up a position astern and followed the General Belgrano for over 30 hours.

"We reported that we were in contact with her. We remained several miles astern and deep below her. We had instructions to attack if she went inside the Total Exclusion Zone. She was 20 to

30 miles outside the TEZ and, in everyone's eyes, posed a threat to the task group.

"The scenario changed from one of following, to one of going in for an attack."

Lord Lewin, who had been in charge of Operation Corporate headquarters at Northwood, said in an interview with BBC Radio in January 1983, later elaborated in a BBC Panorama interview that the sinking of the Belgrano "was a necessary thing to do."

The Guardian 24/8/84

He said that on May 1 1982 there had been an attack on Task Force ships, which had been assessed from intelligence reports as part of a coordinated attack plan.

This was believed to include attack from aircraft from the carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo*. Intelligence reports also warned that the carrier's two elderly destroyer escorts were equipped with Exocets, surface-to-surface missiles. There was also the threat of a submarine attack. Lord Lewin said: "And then we had this report from one of our submarines *Conqueror*, that she was in touch with the Belgrano...."

Lord Lewin received the information on his way to Chequers for a war cabinet meeting on May 2.

He went on to Chequers, reported the situation, and requested approval to change the rules of engagement to allow the Belgrano to be attacked.

"She was without doubt a threat to our task force and had hostile intent. I got approval for the change in the rules of engagement. I telephoned it through to Northwood, it was immediately passed to the submarine, and a few hours later the Belgrano was sunk."

Lord Lewin said that War Cabinet approval, which was "immediately forthcoming," was taken after legal reference to the terms of international law. The attack was justified under Article 51 of the UN Charter which permitted action in self-defence.

The time taken between the *Conqueror* first sighting the Belgrano to sinking the cruiser was, said Lord Lewin, a matter of hours. Communications with nuclear submarines were not continuous nor 100 per cent, because this would restrict the submarine's operations, "but on this occasion the communications worked very quickly. What I would say is the effect of the *Conqueror* sinking the Belgrano was that the Argentinian navy never again came outside its 12-mile limit.

Mr Pym told *Panorama* that he did not think the War Cabinet ought to have contacted him in Washington before ordering the Belgrano's sinking.

Belgrano demand

The Labour Party demanded a statement from Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe to clear up allegations made in yesterday's issue of the New Statesman magazine about sinking the General Belgrano, and other naval incidents during the Falklands war. Page 5

Labour challenges Howe on Belgrano

By John Hunt

THE LABOUR PARTY last night demanded a statement from Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, to clear up allegations in today's issue of the New Statesman about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano, and other naval incidents during the Falklands conflict.

Mr Donald Anderson, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman, has written to Sir Geoffrey, calling on him to confirm or deny the accuracy of the reports. He accused the Government of putting up "an official smokescreen" over the affair.

Mr George Foulkes, a Labour MP who has followed the investigations closely, has written to Mrs Thatcher demanding an independent judicial inquiry into the latest allegations.

The New Statesman article claims that Mrs Thatcher's "war cabinet" ordered an attack on the Argentine flagship, the aircraft carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo*, while it was more than 150 miles outside the Falklands exclusion zone and while the U.S. peace initiative was still being discussed.

The allegations are a further embarrassment to Mrs Thatcher, after the weekend disclosures by Mr Tim Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, who was sent documents, anonymously, dealing with naval strategy during the conflict. The article is based on those documents and others received by journalists.

The Prime Minister will face demands for a full statement on the allegations when Parliament reassembles and the matter is likely to be investigated by the Commons foreign affairs select committee. But it seems unlikely that the Government will suffer any serious damage.

The article alleges that a nuclear-powered submarine, HMS *Splendid*, was ordered to sink the flagship on May 30, two days before the Belgrano was sunk. But the submarine failed to locate the vessel.

The report claims that Mr Francis Pym, Foreign Secretary at the time, and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney General, warned Mrs Thatcher that an attack on the flagship would be illegal under international law. But their advice was disregarded.

Yet, it says, the day after the decision was taken Mr Pym flew to Washington to continue peace discussions with Mr Alexander Haig, the U.S. Secretary of State.

The Financial Times 24/8/84

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Nuclear option in Falklands denied

By Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent

Britain's two top admirals at the time of the Falklands war yesterday denied in the strongest terms that Britain had ever contemplated using nuclear weapons against Argentina during the conflict, or that there had been any change in the normal patrol pattern of Britain's Polaris submarines during the period.

They did so in response to allegations carried in this week's issue of the *New Statesman* that a Polaris submarine had been deployed in the vicinity of Ascension Island shortly after the sinking of the Sheffield on May 4, 1982, and that if things had gone very badly in the conflict Britain would have contemplated a nuclear attack on a specific target in Argentina, probably the town of Cordoba.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin, who was Chief of the Defence Staff and a member of the War Cabinet during the fighting, said that no Polaris submarine was sent to the South Atlantic because of the conflict, and that "there was never any thought whatever of giving advice to the War Cabinet that nuclear weapons should be used. It never entered our remotest thoughts."

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, who was Chief of Naval Staff and First Sea Lord at the time said: "We did not contemplate a nuclear attack and did not make any even potentially preparatory moves for such action... No variation whatever was applied to the normal patrols of the Polaris submarines. It is absolute nonsense."

Both admirals are now retired and were speaking from their homes in response to questions.

Lord Lewin, who emphasized that he was speaking from memory, without access to papers, also challenged the suggestion that there had been a change in the rules of engagement to make possible an attack (though it never actually took place) on April 30, 1982, on the Argentine aircraft carrier, Veinticinco de Mayo, two days before the cruiser General Belgrano was sunk.

This suggestion had emerged
Continued on back page, col 1

Continued from page 1

in an internal Ministry of Defence document, written by a senior civil servant, advising Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, how he might respond to a request for information from the House of Commons foreign affairs committee.

This document has since been leaked, and the text is published in the *New Statesman*. It says that a list of changes in the rules of engagement in the period April 2 to May 7, 1982, "would show that the engagement of the Argentine aircraft carrier Veinticinco de Mayo outside the Total Exclusion Zone was permitted from April 30, and that the change on May 2 was not restricted to the Belgrano but included all Argentine warships over a large area.

Lord Lewin said that Britain had already, several days before, issued a public warning. This said that "Her Majesty's Government wishes to make clear that any approach on the part of Argentine warships, including submarines, naval auxiliaries or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of British forces in the South Atlantic will encounter the appropriate response."

He added that surface ships and their aircraft were issued with rules of engagement in keeping with that public warning, but that the rules of engagement for submarines had remained more restricted.

Sir Henry Leach said his recollection was that there was only one point at which a British submarine was in contact with the Argentine aircraft carrier, and it was refused a change in the rules of engagement to permit an attack because of hopes of a negotiated settlement.

● Ministers reluctantly accepted yesterday that renewed controversy over the Government's conduct of the Falklands war will continue when the Commons returns from the summer recess and into next year (Philip Webster writes).

Although the Government is certain to resist the Opposition demands for an independent judicial inquiry into new disclosures about the sinking of the Belgrano and the changes of the task force's rules of engagement, it is now accepted that those issues will be given far greater attention by the Commons foreign affairs committee in its Falklands inquiry.

Labour makes capital out of Falklands leaks

By GRAHAM PATERSON Political Staff

LABOUR MPs moved last night to make political capital out of leaked Government documents about the naval strategy in the Falklands war which had been obtained by the *NEW STATESMAN* magazine.

Without giving documentary evidence the magazine claimed in yesterday's issue that an attack was planned on the Argentine aircraft carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo* (25th of May).

It said that two ministers, Mr Pym, then Foreign Secretary, and Sir Michael Havers, Attorney General, signed a dissenting minute that such action could be against international law.

The magazine also asserted that a *Polaris* submarine was deployed as far south as Ascension Island, out of range of targets in the Soviet Union, so that its missiles could be used against targets on the Argentine mainland.

'Series of lies'

Mr Donald Anderson, Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, and Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick Cumnock and Doon Valley who has visited Argentina and the Falklands since the hostilities, both raised the question of the leaked documents with the Government yesterday.

Mr Anderson said: "The emerging facts about the Falklands campaign reveal a series of lies by the Government as part of a continuing cover-up campaign."

Mr Foulkes wrote to the Prime Minister asking:

Did the Overseas Defence Committee order an attack on the Argentine carrier on 30 April, 1982?

Was such an order opposed by the Foreign Secretary and the Attorney General?

Was a *Polaris* submarine deployed as far south as Ascension; and

Under what circumstances was it envisaged the armaments of the submarine might be used?

There was a cool reaction from Whitehall sources yesterday to the leaks.

The disclosures are seen as part and parcel of the documents that were sent anonymously to Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, last month.

Tory MPs said privately last night that the documents will do little lasting damage

Frigate failed in the Falklands, editor says

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

A strong attack on the lack of a coherent maritime policy in Britain and other western nations is delivered by the editor of *Jane's Fighting Ships* in its edition published today.

Captain John Moore says there is an apparent rejection in Britain, for the first time in the country's history, "of the need for adequate numbers in all departments of her sea-going fleets".

He criticizes the performance of the Type 22 frigate in the Falklands conflict two years ago.

These ships were conceived for anti-submarine warfare, with an anti-surface ship capability and some surface-to-air missiles. "When these ships operated in the 1982 Falklands campaign, previous criticism that they not only lacked a close-in weapons defence but also a shore bombardment capability were proved correct. This was a failure in the formulation of the staff requirements."

"The fact that the same ships needed refuelling at least every three days was a design fault, as were a number of deficiencies shown up in six weeks of action."

"The remark in the current statement on the defence estimates, 1984, that 'our ships have been proved in action' has a ring of self-satisfaction which is certainly not reflected in the comments of those who had to fight in them."

Captain Moore says that if the Government persists in its

policy of maintaining the British nuclear deterrent through buying the Trident missile system, conventional shipbuilding "may well sustain serious setbacks".

"There are few enough ships, even with the new decision to increase the active destroyer-frigate numbers to 50. Further reductions would result in an imbalance in the fleet and the necessary abandonment of some of the current tasks.

"The Royal Navy is the sole major Nato fleet with bases within two days steaming of the North Cape area, where conventional deterrence could be most effective; the alternative may rest before long between mounting such an operation and the use of ballistic missile submarine patrols.

"On a lower rung of the escalatory ladder it could mean that British merchant ships suffering attack in conflicts such as the Gulf war might look in vain for protection by their own navy."

Captain Moore says the only nation which has a coherent maritime policy is the Soviet Union, which has accepted that if it is to achieve its aims, the use of the seas is necessary for political, financial and strategic reasons.

"Thus their navy, merchant fleet and fishing fleets are meshed into an operational whole providing maximum flexibility for the leaders of the Kremlin," he writes.

All that becomes self-evident when a country is at war, but is rapidly forgotten when peaceful years ease the difficulties, the editor says. "The two major Nato maritime powers have no sort of policy for integrating their national requirements."

He says that if the rundown in the British merchant fleet were projected at the same rate as had been seen over the past 10 years it would reach zero within the next decade.

Jane's Fighting Ships 1984/85
(Jane's Publishing Company, 238 City Road, London EC1V 2PU; £57.50).

The Times 23/8/84

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Thatcher 'ordered sinking of carrier during peace talks'

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

The Government last night faced a new series of alleged disclosures about its conduct of the Falklands war which go far wider than the two-year controversy over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano.

Ministers face severe embarrassment over allegations that the Prime Minister ordered the sinking of an Argentine aircraft carrier, the Veinticinco de Mayo (the May 25), while Mr Alexander Haig, the then United States' Secretary of State, was conducting peace negotiations in Washington; and that Mrs Margaret Thatcher did so against the opposition of two members of the Falklands war Cabinet, Mr Francis Pym, then Foreign Secretary, and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General.

Downing Street said last night that it was unable to

comment on the allegations, which are to appear in today's *New Statesman* magazine and which were reported in advance last night by the Press Association.

The alleged revelations are said to be based on the full text of those documents involved in the disclosures last weekend that officials at the Ministry of Defence advised ministers to withhold information about the Belgrano affair from the Commons Foreign Affairs committee.

They were sent anonymously to Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow.

The *New Statesman* claims that the documents show that Mr Pym and Sir Michael advised their colleagues in the war Cabinet that to sink the Veinticinco de Mayo, which had 1500 men on board, was likely to be contrary to international

law and that their dissent was recorded.

The attack was ordered two days before the General Belgrano was sunk but was unsuccessful because the submarine HMS *Splendid* failed to find it in time, it is alleged.

The magazine also alleges that a *Polaris* submarine travelled as far south as Ascension Island during the conflict and speculates that the use of nuclear missiles might have been threatened, had any of the British task force's capital ships been sunk.

Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, last night called on the Commons Foreign Affairs committee to conduct an inquiry into the sinking of the General Belgrano, including the suggestion in leaked documents that ministers were being advised to withhold information from the committee.

Jane's attacks Nato's lack of naval unity

BY ANDREW TAYLOR

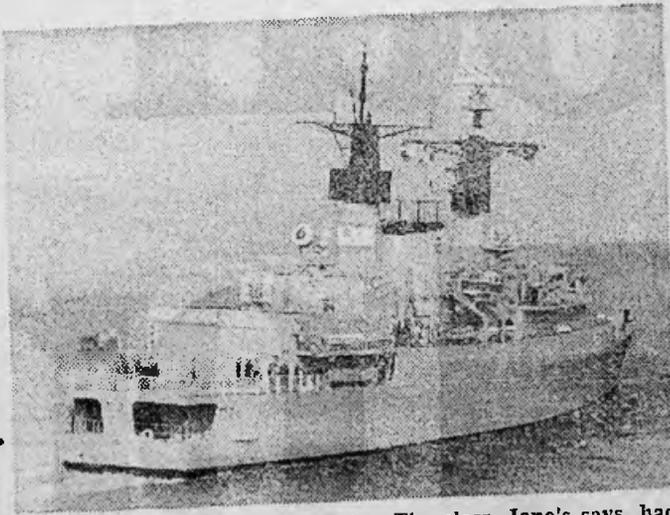
THE FAILURE of Nato countries to develop integrated maritime policies to combat the naval power of the Soviet Union is strongly criticised in the 1984-85 edition of Jane's *Fighting Ships*.

Captain John Moore, its editor and former deputy director of naval intelligence, says Britain compares unfavourably with the Soviet Union which treats its naval, merchant and fishing fleets as a single operational unit "providing maximum flexibility for the leaders in the Kremlin."

Jane's recommends the establishment of national maritime committees, "as far removed from political manipulation as possible," to develop broad-based policies to satisfy the strategic, financial and political requirements of Nato members.

It criticises the run-down of Britain's merchant fleet which it says could disappear over the next 10 years. It also expresses concern that the mounting costs of the Trident nuclear programme is at the expense of maintaining an adequate fleet of conventional warships.

"Britain's maritime policy



HMS Brilliant, a Type 22 frigate. The class, Jane's says, had weapons and fuelling deficiencies shown up in the Falklands campaign

appears to be, for the first time in the country's history, a rejection of the need for adequate numbers in all departments of her sea-going fleets," Jane's says.

It accuses the Defence Ministry of smugness and failure to acknowledge deficiencies in the British Type 22 frigate.

"When these ships operated in the 1982 Falklands campaign previous criticisms that they not only lacked a close-in-weapons defence but also a shore bombardment capability were proved correct.

"The fact that the same ships needed refuelling at least every three days was a design fault, as were a number of deficiencies

shown up in six weeks of action."

Jane's says that remarks by the Defence Ministry in the 1984 defence estimates that "our ships have been proved in action" smacked of self-satisfaction which was not reflected in the comments of those who had to fight in them.

It says too many defence decisions in Nato countries are taken by politicians for the wrong kind of reasons.

"The recent decision of U.S. Congress to include an extremely expensive and unwanted radar in the FFG frigate is typical of the part which politics and vote-catching can play," writes Capt Moore.

He argues that the administration of maritime and naval policies should be left to professionals who would operate within broad objectives established by politicians. These professionals should ensure that decisions are not taken in isolation but involve various branches of marine policy, from ship-building, coast guards and rescue services through to the main naval, merchant and fishing fleets.

Jane's *Fighting Ships 1984/85*. Jane's Publishing Co. £57.50.

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Argentines give warm welcome to Suárez

Buenos Aires (Reuter) - Argentina has given a warm welcome to the former Spanish Prime Minister, Señor Suárez, who was expelled by the military government of neighbouring Uruguay for defending a jailed opposition leader.

Señor Suárez, who arrived here on Tuesday from Montevideo, was greeted at the airport by the Foreign Minister, Señor Dante Caputo. He then met President Alfonsín for an hour.

Señor Suárez told reporters they discussed Latin America and world affairs as well as his expulsion from Uruguay, where he had arrived on Sunday to join lawyers defending the Blanco party leader, Señor Wilson Ferreira Aldunate.

Señor Suárez, who headed Spain's first democratic government after the death of Franco in 1975, was praised by Señor Caputo for his "impeccable personality in defence of democracy".

Señor Ferreira Aldunate was jailed, as he returned home in June from 11 years in exile, on charges of having links with the defunct Tupamaro guerrilla movement.

● **MADRID:** Spain expressed disgust at the expulsion in an official note of protest made public here (Richard Wigg writes).

The note came after Señor Fernando Morán, the Spanish Foreign Minister, had personally appealed to the Montevideo regime to reconsider the 24-hour expulsion order.



Close encounter: Señor Suárez being greeted on arrival in Buenos Aires by an unidentified Spanish resident. He went on to a one-hour meeting with President Alfonsín.

Target 'was 150 miles outside the Falklands exclusion zone'

NEWS IN BRIEF

Falklands Cabinet 'ordered Argentine ship attack' despite US peace talks

MRS Thatcher's Falklands War Cabinet ordered an attack on the Argentine flagship aircraft carrier well outside the exclusion zone while US peace moves were still running, it is claimed. Back page.

by John Ezard

Mrs Thatcher's War Cabinet ordered an attack on the Argentine naval flagship *Veinticinco de Mayo* when the vessel was over 150 miles outside the Falklands exclusion zone and while the United States peace initiative was still running, the *New Statesman* says today.

The magazine says it has documentary proof that on April 30, 1982, a meeting of the War Cabinet authorised an attack on the Argentine aircraft carrier despite a minute of dissent signed by the Foreign Secretary, Mr Francis Pym, and the Cabinet's legal adviser, the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers.

Mr Pym and Sir Michael warned the Prime Minister that to attack the aircraft carrier without warning was likely to be contrary to the United Nations charter and illegal under international law, according to a report said to draw on "official Cabinet, Defence Ministry and Foreign Office documents."

Their advice was disre-

garded. But the scheme failed because the submarine given the order — HMS *Splendid* — was unable to find the carrier in time, according to the report by the *New Statesman's* defence specialist, Mr Duncan Campbell.

The shadow foreign office minister, Mr George Foulkes, described the allegations as "quite momentous" and said the case for an independent judicial review was overwhelming.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "We have nothing to add to what has already been said."

The magazine refused last night on legal advice to show, in advance of publication, any of the papers it said it has. But it added that it was also publishing for the first time the full text of Ministry of Defence papers leaked to the Labour MP Mr Tam Dalyell and passed to the Commons foreign affairs committee.

As already reported in the

Guardian, the papers quote a senior Ministry of Defence official as advising that details of changes in naval rules of engagement for the Falklands prior to the British sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano should not be made available by ministers to the committee.

Mr Dalyell has persistently alleged that the *Belgrano* was sunk, with the loss of 368 lives, on May 2 — two days after the War Cabinet decision which the *New Statesman* reports — in order to prevent a peace initiative succeeding.

But the magazine now says the truth is that "the War Cabinet, largely dominated by military advice, had days before opted for an all-out attack against Argentine forces," despite being warned that the plan was probably illegal.

The decision was taken the day before Mr Pym flew to Washington and also before the collapse of the peace shuttle mounted by the US Secretary of State Mr Alexander Haig.

The *Veinticinco de Mayo* returned to port after the sinking of the *Belgrano*. According to recent studies of the conflict, it never came as close to the exclusion zone as the *Belgrano*.

Ian Aitken writes: Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, yesterday stepped into the controversy over the documents passed to Mr Dalyell by challenging the Foreign Affairs Committee to carry out its duty to examine and check ministers' actions in spite of the leak's illegality.

Mr Steel yesterday wrote to the committee chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw, pointing out that while the committee had decided to return the papers to the Ministry of Defence, it was far from clear whether the committee intended to deal with "the matter of substance contained in those papers — namely, the wish of ministers to give less than frank and full information to you".

He went on: "It cannot be right that your committee should make no observation on suggestions that ministers should 'avoid difficulties' by providing you with 'more general narrative'." Although civil servants had a duty to help ministers to avoid embarrassment, their overriding loyalty was to the Crown and to parliament, wrote Mr Steel.

Mr Steel recalls that neither the Liberals nor Social Democrats secured a foreign affairs committee place, adding to his determination to draw Sir Anthony's attention to the matter.

He concluded his letter to Sir Anthony: "The whole house will expect your committee to discharge that task fully on our behalf, and I am confident that you will do so."



Mr Pym — "minuted his dissent to attack decision"

Our correspondents in Buenos Aires and Jerusalem see what it's like to live under hyper-inflation

Putting up with a pulverised peso

BORED DISBELIEF has greeted a pledge by President Raúl Alfonsín that September will see a new economic strategy sweeping in to curb Argentina's rampaging inflation rate.

It is not that the President's good intentions are suddenly discredited after eight months after he took office, although with prices doubling more or less every two months inflation does little for the Government's credibility and only adds to the ever bigger questions about how long the economy minister will last.

But the hopes vested in President Alfonsín, whose personal popularity stands today as high if not higher than when he donned the ceremonial sash amid democratic euphoria last December, do not stretch to confidence that he can tame the inflationary ogre that has brought disaster on several Governments over the years.

Inured by more than a decade in which inflation, only sporadically dipped below triple digits and more normally chafed up monthly figures that would be considered disastrous over a full year in the industrial nations, the Argentines have yet to be convinced.

The man in the street has

seen it all before, and sees no reason why this latest promised onslaught on price rises should succeed when so many others have failed.

Rocketing price rises have bludgeoned several economic theories into defeat, defied the efforts of an otherwise all-powerful military regime and blithely ignored a famous decree from the three-times elected autocratic populist, General Juan Domingo Perón.

In a country where so little remains as predictable today as it was yesterday and where there is little certainty over that next week let alone next month or year will bring, inflation's ever-present spectre seems to be one of the few constants in most Argentines' lives.

Even today's annual rate of 615.5 per cent following a jump in shop prices of 18.35 per cent in July alone prompts little more than a shrug from housewives and off-duty office workers trying to spot the next shortages in the supermarket.

Argentine memories are notoriously short, which may spell trouble for President Alfonsín unless he reins in the inflation monster during coming months, but nobody has yet forgotten what happened when the government banned beef sales for a week

after a sudden price surge a few months ago.

Within hours, butchers were under siege for all and every alternative as Argentina switched from the national dish, steak, and as one local economist put it, "bought enough chicken to feed Brasil as well." The inflation figure ended the month worse than ever, in what the economist said was a case of "classic supply and demand which everyone except the government experts understood, down to the poorest housewife."

Price controls have repeatedly been imposed, rarely enforced, and then withdrawn over the years. Every abnormal failure adds to the pessimism that greets each new attempt to batten down the hatches.

Complaints to bureaucracy over price-gouging by unscrupulous vendors, of which there is no shortage amid all the confusion, usually end up bogged down in official bureaucracy and the salesmen know it.

Prices are now rising at a rate equivalent to over 1 per cent every two days although that does not mean prices are actually lifted that regularly, at least yet. But the changes come so quickly that few citizens have much idea of what more than a few

basic items actually cost and a sullen resignation that further increases are inevitable grips the consumer's mind. The once-prosperous but as yet not poverty-stricken middle class is still prepared to pay over the odds and has yet to even start talking about anything like a consumer movement.

Matters are only made worse by the legacy of two redenominations of the peso which chopped off first two and then a further four zeroes from the currency in barely a dozen years.

The measure, a direct product of the impact of inflation on the constantly falling value of the peso, was intended to make the currency more comprehensible for consumers and manageable for business machines. But instead, at street level, it has left not just old ladies hopelessly flummoxed.

Much of the population stopped counting the numbers on the notes some time ago, and a street argot based on the colours of the notes has increasingly become the custom, particularly but not solely among the old.

Years on the inflationary rack and the bamboozling effect of the redenominations have all but destroyed public faith in the currency. In the scramble to protect

the purchasing power of constantly eroding monthly and even fortnightly pay packets, virtually everyone knows the last thing they want for any length of time is a wallet full of cash.

The centrepiece of the public's hedge is the dollar, and even the humblest taxi driver or shoe shine boy will be able to give you a more or less correct quotation for the day.

But in the wake of free-wheeling reforms introduced under the military, Argentina's erratic financial markets — more often than not a law to themselves — have also answered the need by sprouting an almost incomprehensible variety of saving schemes.

Much of the system is barely disguised speculation as middle class Argentines become skilled self-taught experts in the technicalities of fixed or floating rates and the merits of 48-hour, three-day, one-week, one-month money in what elsewhere would be the preserve of institutional portfolio operators.

The shift in attitudes in a middle-class that not so many years ago often sniffed at money grubbers may yet prove the most lasting monument to the military's last period in power.

Jeremy Morgan

Leaked 'memo' shows Falklands war split

By GRAHAM PATERSON, Political Staff

DETAILS of a purported Cabinet document said to show that Britain planned to sink an Argentine aircraft carrier during the Falklands war and that two Ministers dissociated themselves from the decision, have been obtained by the **NEW STATESMAN** magazine.

The magazine in today's issue, claims to have obtained details of a confidential minute, signed by Mr Pym, then Foreign Secretary, and by Sir Michael Havers, Attorney General, and dated May 1, 1982, stating that it could be illegal under international law to sink the 15,892 ton carrier, 25th of May, which carries a crew of 1,500.

The attack on the carrier never took place because the nuclear submarine, *Splendid*, 4,000 tons, was said to be unable to find her prey in time.

The document is believed to be one of a series sent anonymously to Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, last month.

He subsequently passed on a series of documents to the Foreign Affairs Committee, which is investigating the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, *Belgrano*, two days after the order to sink the 25th of May

apparently went out from the War Cabinet in London.

The documents, revealing a Cabinet split as the British task force sailed to the Falklands, are particularly embarrassing to Mrs Thatcher and her Government if they prove to be genuine.

It is exceptionally rare for a Cabinet minute, one of the most secret of Whitehall documents, particularly one formally noting dissent, to be made public before the 30-year rule permits their publication.

The **NEW STATESMAN** was said last night to be withholding copies of the detailed text for fear that a last-minute legal move would be taken to block publication of such sensitive documents.

Belgrano documents

From Mr Norman St John-Stevas, MP for Chelmsford (Conservative)

Sir, I was dismayed to see on the front page of early editions of *The Times* (August 21) a heading, in inverted commas, "Let MPs see leaked papers" and beneath it a reference to myself that I had "asked" that information about the sinking of the General Belgrano should be considered by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee. This presentation seriously distorts the facts.

The words in inverted commas were never uttered by me nor have I "asked" for anything. In the course of an interview on this matter requested by the BBC on Monday I did say that the decision of the committee with regard to the leaked documents submitted to us by Mr Dalyell was that the Secretary of

State for Defence should be informed and the documents submitted to him.

The committee was unanimous and members of both principal parties concurred. At the end of the interview I was asked what the present position was and I replied that we should "look into the matter". That is the merest common sense, but how that should be done is a matter for the committee.

Members of a select committee are under a duty to find out the facts on which Government decisions are based, but they are equally under an obligation not to encourage the purloining of Government documents or to condone possible breaches of the Official Secrets Act.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
NORMAN ST JOHN-STEVAS,
House of Commons.
August 21.

The Guardian 23/8/84

NEWS IN BRIEF

Call for Falkland damages

PERONIST opposition politicians have put forward a bill in Argentina's Congress calling on the Government to claim war damages from Britain, *Jeremy Morgan reports from Buenos Aires.*

The bill still to be debated, obliges the Government to evaluate Argentina's debt to Britain, which local bankers estimated at between \$4 billion and \$5 billion. British banks are Argentina's second largest group of commercial creditors after United States institutions.

Congress sources say the bill implies that "war indemnities" would be offset against the debts. Claims would also be brought against Britain to compensate for the economic impact of the 150-mile exclusion zone enforced around the Falkland Islands.

Pulverised peso, page 19

The Guardian 23/8/84

'Attack' foiled

GENERAL Luciano Menendez of Argentina, pulled a knife and tried to attack demonstrators who called him a murderer, witnesses said in Buenos Aires. A photograph showed General Menendez being restrained by two companions on a Buenos Aires street. — AP.

The Financial Times 23/8/84

Thatcher revelation plan

The New Statesman magazine plans to publish today documents said to indicate that Premier Margaret Thatcher ordered the sinking of the Argentine aircraft carrier 25th of May two days before the cruiser General Belgrano was sunk in the Falklands War.

Dalyell defends Whitehall leaks on the Belgrano

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, said last night that a number of civil servant and armed forces personnel had contacted him to help in his search for information about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the Belgrano.

They had contacted him, he said, because they were being asked by ministers willfully to mislead elected representatives in Parliament. That, he added, was no part of a civil servant's job.

Documents which showed how the Government planned to withhold information from MPs about changes in the rules of engagement during the Falklands war and which showed that the Government knew that the cruiser was heading home 11 hours before it was sunk were passed by Mr Dalyell to the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee.

The papers were sent to Mr Dalyell anonymously but the committee, with most — but not all — of its four Labour members present, agreed to pass them back to the Ministry of Defence.

The MPs returned the papers soon after Mr Dalyell sent them to the committee about five weeks ago. Whitehall sources readily acknowledged that this would have greatly

helped the ministry to find the source of the leak.

"The reason I was contacted was of the same kind that prompted Sarah Tisdall to act as she did — a gut feeling that civil servants are being asked by ministers to do something that is not proper in a healthy democracy," Mr Dalyell told a meeting of the Chelsea Labour Party in London last night.

He argued that civil servants had a higher loyalty than that to their ephemeral political chiefs. "Senior civil servants are professionally outraged by having to sweat their guts out answering questions about the Belgrano which, if answered truthfully, would take no time at all," Mr Dalyell added.

"Referring to a log book of a submarine would not involve more than half hour's work," but it was time-consuming when they had to satisfy the armed Forces Minister, Mr John Stanley — "The PM's man in the ministry" — that their answers did their best to synchronise with what Mrs Thatcher had said.

He referred to remarks by Mr Justice Mars-Jones during the ABC secrets trial in 1978. "When you are dealing with matters of national security it is open to people to go to their MP," the judge said.

Dalyell's helpers

LABOUR MP Tam Dalyell says that a number of civil servants and forces personnel have helped his inquiries into the sinking of the Belgrano. Page 4.

The Telegraph 22/8/84

Island in exile

From Canon JAMES N. JOHNSON

SIR—All those who saw the television programme "St Helena: Island in Exile" could only have been saddened by the disgraceful attitude of the British Government towards these loyal subjects of the Crown. The Government's lack of understanding of the island is shown by the fact that its affairs are now dealt with as part of the "West Indian and Atlantic Department." West Indian and Atlantic Islands have nothing in common, other than their being islands.

The people of St Helena do not want charity, they would like work as no doubt many of the unemployed would wish in this country. Far too much stress is laid on the Falkland Islands at the expense of the forgotten island of St Helena. Surely, it is time the Government acted assist St Helena and provide some incentive for the people.

These islanders are British and have been for the last 150 years.

JAMES N. JOHNSON
Thorpe Bay, Essex.

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The Times 22/8/84

UN body urges Falklands talks

New York - The UN decolonization committee again urged Britain and Argentina to resume negotiations on Falkland Islands sovereignty.

It ignored Britain's view that the resolution was prejudiced in favour of Argentina's claim and prejudged the outcome of negotiations. Buoyed the move, Argentina will take its campaign for increased support to the General Assembly later this year.

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cont../



Evening Post reporter RAY STOKES concludes his two-part look at life in the Falklands two years after the Argentinian invasion. The islanders live with the debris of violence — a constant reminder of the threat which still hangs over their future.



Flight Sergeant Tony Hibbens (left) from Bedminster, Bristol, and Sergeant Ivor Baines from Winterbourne examine a crippled Pucara aircraft on the edge of the airfield at Stanley.

Living with the relics of war

Cont..2

Bristol Evening Post
22.8.84

THE rusting relics of war still litter the Falklands.

The broken remains of bullet-riddled Pucara aircraft stand forlornly on the edge of the windswept Stanley airfield.

Burned-out trucks and helicopters are dotted about the slopes on the outskirts of the town.

And across the rolling, snow-dusted hills one can still find boots, rusty cans and even toothpaste tubes discarded by the fleeing Argentine troops.

They are constant reminders of the threat still facing Britain's smallest and most southerly dependency.

British troops recaptured the islands, at a cost of 255 lives, more than two years ago.

But Argentina has still not officially called off hostilities—and continue to voice a claim to the territory.

Military experts believe the chances of another full-scale invasion are now extremely remote.

It is more likely that Argentina could stage an SAS-style raid on one of the outer islands, to score political points and deflect attention from its own growing economic problems.

So Fortress Falklands watches, around the clock, for any sign of renewed aggression from the South

American mainland—just 300 miles away.

From snow-capped mountain tops, powerful, long-range, computer-aided radar stations scan the sea and skies.

Just off the main runway at RAF Stanley stand fully-armed Phantom jets, their engines kept warm, ready to take off at a moment's notice to investigate any suspicious blips on the radar screens.

From sandbagged pillboxes around the rocky coast, soldiers, able to call up Rapier and Blowpipe ground-

cont../

to-air missiles, keep watch across the cold, wind-whipped South Atlantic.

There are now more than 3,000 troops in the Falklands — almost all of them on a four-month tour of duty.

In the months after liberation most of the troops were billeted in varied make-shift accommodation around Stanley.

Now they have been moved a few miles out of town, to three "coastels" moored at the eastern end of Stanley Harbour.

The coastels are multi-storey steel structures built on barges which are moored in shallow water.

Other troops are deployed in isolated settlements around the islands, places such as Fox Bay, Goose Green and San Carlos, which became such familiar names during the conflict.

Employed

They live in ingeniously-adapted cargo containers. Among them are Flight Lieutenant Colin Hallett, 28, from Larkhill, Yeovil, and Pilot Officer Chris Knapman, 24, from Bruton in Somerset, who help man the mist-shrouded mountain-top radar stations.

Although the defence of the islands is the over-riding priority, a number of servicemen are still employed clearing the often dangerous debris of war.

Army teams have so far cleared 43,000 acres of land, dealing with two and half million explosive devices — from bullets to 1,000 lb bombs.

One of the most perplexing and alarming problems has been the large number of mines laid indiscriminately by the Argentinians.

Half a dozen men have been seriously injured because present-day equipment cannot detect these all-plastic mines.

So minefield clearances have been halted while technology catches up.

In the meantime Royal Engineers, like

Sapper Kevin Bool, 22, from Pucklechurch, carry out regular checks on the fences and signs around the 140 remaining minefields to make sure they are secure.

One of the servicemen working most closely with the islanders is Captain Roy Smart, an environmental health officer, whose mother lives in Redcliff, Bristol.

Captain Smart, a member of the Royal Army Medical Corps, on his second tour in the Falklands, has supervised improvements to health standards in local slaughterhouses.

Islanders and servicemen emphatically deny stories of friction between them.

Locals have learned to live with being called "Bennys" (after the character in TV's Crossroads) and have countered by nick-naming the servicement "Whenys" — because they invariably open conversations by saying "When I was in Germany..." or "When I was in Northern Ireland..."

But islanders will tell

you they welcome the servicemen — and not just because without them the Argentinians could march back in.

Military Commissioner Major-General Peter de la Billiere said: "The islanders are super people and get on very well with the servicemen. There is an outstandingly good relationship, one of the best I have seen anywhere."

He is swift to counter criticism that the Falklands, with its unparalleled opportunities for live firing and low flying, is being turned into a South Atlantic Salisbury Plain.

Best

"We are here for the benefit of the islanders and not for the land. We are here to retain the freedom and integrity of the people living here and if they tell us to go, my bet is, we would up sticks and go."

Perhaps the islanders' attitude to the military was best expressed by a local councillor after a low-flying RAF jet brought a meeting to a momentary halt.

As it passed he remarked: "There goes the noise of freedom."

Still stunned by tragedy

A NEW hospital, costing around £8 million, is being planned for the Falklands to replace the one destroyed in a tragic fire.

Sketch plans for the new 40-bed hospital are expected to be shown to the island's council in the next month.

Eight people, including 35-year-old Bristol nurse Barbara Chick, died in the blaze which swept through the old hospital in Port Stanley last April. The townspeople are still stunned by the tragedy.

A four-man investigation team came to the conclusion that the fire was probably started by an off-duty soldier leaving a cigarette burning in a storeroom full of mattresses.

Their report revealed:

● Fire doors, which could have saved lives, had not been fitted at the hospital, despite repeated appeals from medical staff.

● Emergency fire hoses were not connected to the town water supply. And, even if they had been, the pressure would not have been adequate to fight the blaze.

But the team concluded that, even if all fire safety measures had been taken, the blaze which swept through the wooden building in minutes, still could not have been controlled.

Hostel

Much of the charred debris of the old hospital, erected in 1914 to take the casualties of a naval battle off the Falklands, remains uncleared.

The new hospital is likely to be built on the same site and incorporate the brick-built section, undamaged by the fire, and which is still being used by the X-ray and, out-patient departments.

The remainder of the civilian hospital facilities are temporarily housed in a large prefabricated building erected as a hostel for schoolchildren travelling in from the country districts.

Serious cases, which cannot be treated at the civilian or military hospitals, have to be flown to Britain for treatment. Islanders hope their new hospital will have a wider range of facilities.

Mrs Valerie Bennett, matron of the hospital at the time of the Argentinian invasion, said of the fire: "We all knew it would happen one day. Now it has, we still cannot believe it."

Barbara Chick, whose parents John and Marian Chick live in Burford Road, Shirehampton, had flown to the Falklands last June.

Barbara, who was posthumously awarded the Silver Cross of St George for her heroism in

the fire, was highly regarded by her hospital colleagues.

Barbara's parents, who have been deeply touched by the messages of sympathy and good wishes they have received from people in the Falklands, are resentful about the lack of fire precautions at the hospital revealed by the investigation.

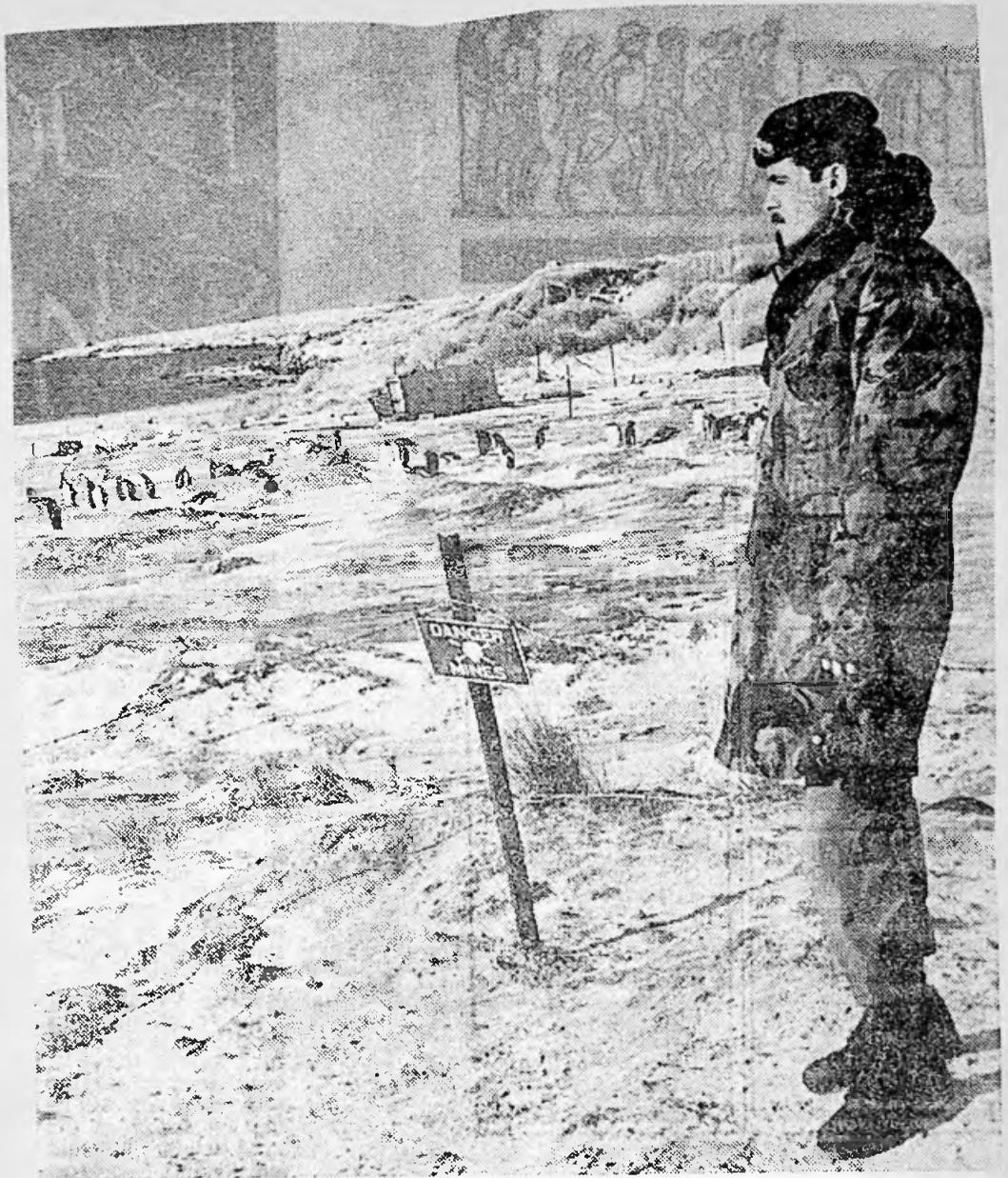
Fitted

Her mother, herself a former nurse, said: "It should never have happened. If only they had listened to the staff and fitted fire doors."

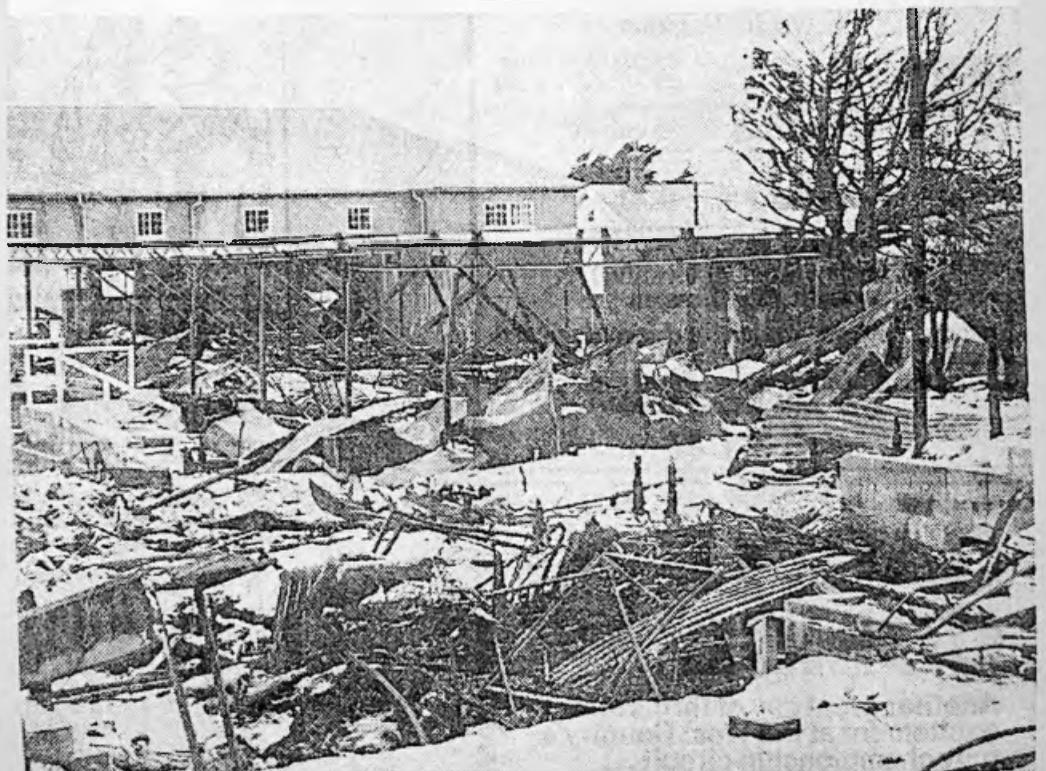
"If it had been in this country that hospital would have been shut down. I only hope now they will get a fine new hospital with all the things this one didn't have."

The Falklanders are expressing the same hope.

Cont..5
Bristol Evening Post
22.8.84



A soldier keeps watch as a colony of penguins wander through a minefield. Amazingly none of the lightfooted birds has so far come to any harm.



Ghastly reminder of a peace-time tragedy . . . the charred debris of the old hospital in Stanley which was destroyed by fire. Now it could be the site of a new hospital.

The Falklands bonanza

FALKLANDS FILE 84
starts on page 10

MAJOR developments in the Falklands could mean a lucrative spin-off for Bristol's troubled docks.

Avonmouth is already shipping all the materials being used to build the island's new airport.

Now it is hoped the loss-making port can win the contracts to supply other major building projects in the South Atlantic colony.

Harbour

The new £200 million airport is being built by the Laing Mowlem ARC consortium on farmland at Mount Pleasant — 30 miles from Port Stanley.

Its 9,000-ft long runway will enable it to take the latest wide-bodied jets, which cannot land on the much shorter strip at Stanley.

The first phase is expected to be completed in April next year, then the 1,200 construction workers will begin

By Ray Stokes

building accommodation blocks at Mount Pleasant which will, by 1986, become the main military garrison on the islands.

Everything needed for the building, from heavy plant to bags of cement, has to be sent from Britain by sea.

The first ship to leave Avonmouth for the Falklands, the Merchant Providence, sailed last September.

She is now moored on the coast, just a couple of miles from the airfield site, and is being used as a temporary harbour so other ships can tie up and unload.

Major

Three ships, the Oroya, Oropesa and Romney, are running a shuttle service between Avonmouth and the Falklands with building supplies.

The ships pick up return cargoes in South America which are discharged at Liverpool

before returning to Bristol. The Port of Bristol authority will not reveal how much this contract is worth — but it is believed to run in hundreds of thousands of pounds a year.

The contract will last for three years. But the authority is hoping it will lead to others, with more major building projects planned in the Falklands.

Avonmouth is already the supply point for two other tiny Atlantic colonies — Ascension and St Helena.

"You don't offer to marry someone who has just tried to rape you."

The island folk who fear a cold wind of change



Evening Post reporter RAY STOKES has just returned from the Falklands and today he begins a two-part report on life there two years after the Argentinian invasion. Inevitably changed by war, the islands have a new appeal to the pioneering spirit but there is also an underlying feeling of insecurity.

Cont..2

Bristol Evening Post

21.8.84



The face — and the flag — of British authority in the Falklands... chief executive David Taylor outside Government House where the Civil Commissioner has his office. People are suspicious of attempts to improve relations with Argentina, he says.

THE Falkland Islands are in the icy grip of the southern winter.

But political moves more than 8,000 miles away have caused more shudders than the scything Antarctic winds.

Britain's smallest and most southerly dependency fears it could be sacrificed in a renewed bid to restore diplomatic and trade links with Argentina.

The breakdown of the recent talks in Berne, which was caused by the sovereignty issue, has heartened islanders but not allayed their underlying suspicions.

"Britain and Argentina can talk all they like. But I wish to God they would leave us out of it," one islander told me with obvious feeling.

"There is no one here who would entertain any form of Argentinian involvement in the Falklands. We have already had a taste of how they would run the place."

Broke

In the Civil Commissioner's comfortable office, occupied by General Mario Menendez for ten weeks in 1982, the island's chief executive, David Taylor, a former Clifton College pupil who lived in Stoke Bishop, Bristol, for many years, neatly summed up the general feeling.

"People here believe you don't offer to marry someone who has just tried to rape you."

The Falklands, which became a British colony in 1833, are the islands which time forgot, a little world with the unhurried, self-reliant lifestyle which existed long before the advent of the microchip.

"It is as if these

islands broke off from Scotland 50 years ago, drifted south and remained untainted by the problems and ills of modern society," said one surprised visitor.

There is virtually no crime and unemployment is unknown, and many people have two jobs.

But many of the local services, including the power and water supplies, fall far short of the standard expected in this country. However the outdated manual telephone exchange can prove a blessing: if you don't know the number you can just ask for the person by name.

Just occasionally the operator will be able to tell you they are out — and will put you through to the house they are visiting.

Wooden

East Falkland and West Falkland, together with the dozens of small islands which surround them, cover 4,700 square miles — almost two thirds the size of Wales.

The islands have a resident population of only 1,800 people — known as Kelpers after the seaweed which covers their rocky shoreline.

The largest centre is Port Stanley where more than 800 people live in brightly-painted wooden and corrugated-tin houses.

The remainder live in small, self-sufficient settlements dotted around the islands.

Life is hardy without many of the comforts taken for granted by most of us.

There are only 12 miles of surfaced road — all in the Stanley area — few shops, no dry cleaners, no cinema and no television service.

Cont..3 .

Bristol Evening Post
21.8.84

Despite their isolation, the intensely patriotic Kelpers are extremely well-informed about current events, particularly in Britain.

In sitting rooms, heated by peat burning stoves and decorated by pictures of the Royal

Family cut from magazines, they gather around short-wave radios to listen to World Service broadcasts and programmes put out by a local station.

They are proud that their island, financed almost entirely by the

export of wool, stumbled along for years without any subsidy from the British taxpayer, forgotten and ignored.

But all that changed with the uninvited arrival of Argentinian troops on their doorsteps two years ago.

Now the liberated Falklands are trying to catch up on lost time —and it is proving a traumatic process.

Neville Bennett, general secretary of the 350-member General Employees Union, the only trade union in the islands, said: "I must admit we were living in the Dark Ages. But we have been brought into the 20th century with a very large bang."

Neville and his family are soon moving to Britain where they feel prospects will be better.

While many

islanders regret that life can never quite be the same again, they are pleased about the development that has followed in the wake of the conflict.

Fifty-four Swedish designed prefabricated houses, costing £130,000 each, have been built in Stanley, with money from the £15 million rehabilitation fund.

These were put up to help solve the acute accommodation problems which have been a stumbling block to attracting skilled tradesmen to the islands.

Work is going ahead on a new water supply system and there are plans to modernise the power and telephone networks.

At Mount Pleasant, 30 miles from Stanley, construction of the new £200 million airport,

capable of taking the most modern wide-bodied jets should be completed by next April.

But the island's most urgent need is a profitable secondary industry.

Claims that the new airport might bring a tourist boom are wildly over-optimistic.

Apart from avid wildlife enthusiasts —and even they might be put off by the high cost of the air fare — the Falklands has no appeal and no facilities for the mass market.

Return

Around £1 million from the £31 million development fund is being spent on an in-shore fisheries survey in the hope of exploiting the rich supply of shellfish.

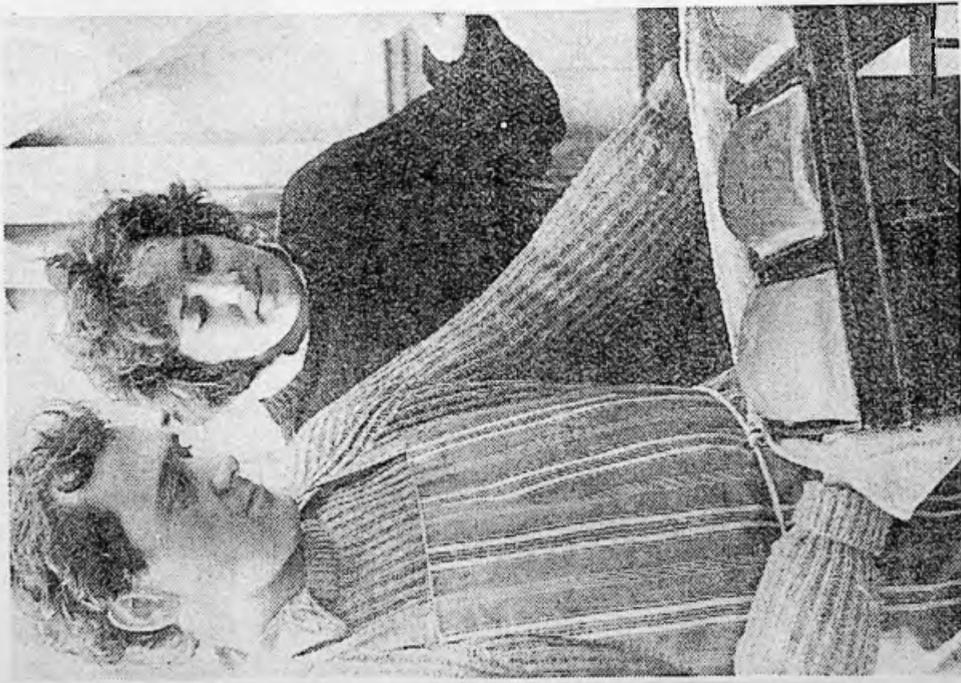
Salmon ranching is also being given a trial.

But it will be many years before these projects, assuming they prove worthwhile, start bringing a cash return.

Until then the islanders realise they are vulnerable to any switch in Government policy.

They accept there is bound to be growing criticism in a Britain beset by economic cuts, of the money being spent on maintaining the Falklands — currently running at around £2 million a day.

A brave new life . . .



SIMON Powell is one of the shining successes of the drive to attract new blood and new initiative to the Falklands.

The former public schoolboy from Tytherton Lucas near Chippenham arrived in the islands last September, with a bright idea and a bank loan.

In the past 11 months he has launched three profitable ventures — and also married.

"I came down here for the adventure," said Simon who was previously working in London as an interior decorator.

"It hasn't been easy but I have certainly enjoyed it."

Simon, 30, has set up a takeaway food shop — specialising in muttonburgers — in the centre of Stanley.

For a time he was also renting motorcycles to soldiers making off-duty excursions

into the hills behind the town.

But the takings from this sideline, which was bringing in £500 a week at one stage, slumped with the troops being moved out of Stanley and the onslaught of the southern winter.

He has now sold off the motorcycles. But he is still selling his muttonburgers and, with the help of a £7,000 loan from the Falklands development fund, has opened the only bakery in the islands.

Short

In addition to bread and rolls, he is turning out pasties, pizzas and doughnuts, some of which are supplied to the local NAAFI.

His business provides jobs for seven islanders.

Simon himself works from 4 am until after 11 pm each day — with

only a short break in the afternoon.

He said it had been exciting setting up the businesses, unfettered by the red tape one would encounter in more developed communities.

"There is a certain amount of pioneering spirit down here. I have found people welcome you if you have something to offer."

But Simon, who has sunk around £100,000 into the venture, says the Falklands is not the place for the get-rich-quick merchants.

"If anyone is thinking of coming here they should come down here for a week, as I did, to have a look around and see some of the problems."

Setting up a business in the Falklands takes a great deal of courage and planning. All Simon's equipment, machinery and most of his ingredients, have

had to be shipped out from Britain.

Freelance cook Sarah Railton, 20, and Nicky Burgess, both from the Chippenham area, went out to the Falklands to help Simon set up his fast food business.

Nicky has now returned home. But Sarah stayed on — and in March married Simon.

Their top hat and tails wedding in Stanley cathedral was the highlight of the Falklands social year.

The couple live in the house adjoining the shop and bakery.

How long do the couple plan to stay in the Falklands?

"Certainly for another two years," said Simon. "After that I don't know. Possibly we might go back to Britain and set up a business of some kind, but definitely not in the fast food trade."



Selling up and leaving the Falklands . . . Neville and Valerie Bennett with their daughters Rachel (left) and Isobel.

All ready to quit . . .

THE Bennett family are packing up ready to leave the Falklands.

They have sold their pink and yellow house overlooking Port Stanley and will sail for Britain at the end of this month.

Neville Bennett, 46, is a seventh generation Kelper, his family have lived in the islands since the middle of the last century.

His wife, Valerie, who comes from Taunton went out to the Falklands as a nurse in 1967 and they married just four months after her arrival.

The couple say their main reason for coming to Britain is to give their two daughters, Isobel, 15, and Rachel, 13, better career opportunities.

Valerie, who was acting matron of the hospital in

Stanley at the time of the invasion, said: "I think we always had it in our minds to leave when the girls were grown up."

But their decision to quit has been hastened by the changes in the Falklands after the conflict.

Some of the beaches on which the family enjoyed summer picnics and favourite walks, are now out of bounds because of the danger of mines.

"In many ways I feel a prisoner in Stanley," said Valerie. "Life here is certainly not as good as it was and I think the time has come to go."

The family were last in Britain in 1973 — they spent four years living in the Forest of Dean — although Valerie did come

back briefly for a nursing course three years ago.

Their daughters cannot remember this country and are thrilled about the coming move.

The girls say life in Stanley, with no television service, no cinema and no youth club, is boring.

Isobel, known to everyone as Whizz, works as a clerk and spends most of her spare time helping run the island's radio station.

Back

Whizz, brought up in a country where there are very few trees and where fresh fruit is in short supply, has one simple ambition — to eat an apple she has picked herself.

The family will stay with relatives in Taunton —

Valerie's brother, Hedley, is a Taunton Deane councillor — while they find their feet.

Neville Bennett is a trained dental technician but for many years he has been general secretary of the Falkland's only trade union.

Do the family fear they might miss the wide-open spaces and unhurried, close-knit style of life back in the Falklands? Many island families have moved to Britain only to return disillusioned.

In fact, the Bennetts have sold their house to their former next-door neighbours who are getting back to the Falklands after a year in this country.

"We shall just have to wait and see," said Valerie.

Stevas defends return of Belgrano papers

By Ian Ailken,
Political Editor

Mr Norman St John-Stevas, the creator of the system of Commons select committees as an instrument for unearthing Whitehall's secrets, yesterday defended the decision of the foreign affairs committee to hand back leaked documents about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano, to the Ministry of Defence.

Mr St John-Stevas a former leader of the Commons is now a member of the foreign affairs committee.

Interviewed on BBC radio yesterday, he confirmed that Ministry of Defence documents received anonymously by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, had been passed

Raising of the Belgrano, page 17; Leader comment, page 8

to the committee. They had been seen by its members, but had been immediately returned to the Government.

"We decided unanimously that we were not in the business of trafficking in leaked documents, and that therefore they should be returned to the Ministry of Defence and that the Secretary of State should be informed," Mr St John-Stevas said.

He insisted that the decision had been taken by the entire committee. As a parliamentary committee it had a responsibility not to break the law.

There was doubt last night about whether Mr St John-Stevas was correct in asserting that the decision had been taken unanimously by the entire committee.

It was not certain that all members were present, and there is some evidence that at least one leftwing Labour member, Mr Dennis Canavan, had raised strong objection.

There is no dispute that the overwhelming majority were in favour of handing back the three separate sets of papers which had originally been sent to Mr Dalyell under plain cover.

But the striking similarity between the Belgrano case and the affair of the cruise missiles, which resulted in the imprisonment of Miss Sarah Tisdall, a Foreign Office clerk, makes it certain that there will be considerable controversy among MPs about the propriety of handing back the papers.

It was after the return of documents sent to the Guardian by Miss Tisdall, on the order of a High Court judge, that Miss Tisdall was charged and later imprisoned under the Official Secrets Act. Returning the Belgrano documents clearly raises the possibility of identifying and prosecuting whoever was responsible for sending them to Mr Dalyell.

But Mr St John-Stevas seems likely to run into some personal criticism for defending the decision so unequivocally, in spite of his role as creator of the select committee system.

He insisted that members of the committee had been struck by the fact that Mr Dalyell's documents contained nothing either new or important about the sinking of the Belgrano. The leak was being used as a party political stick with which to beat the Government.

Mr St John-Stevas defended Mr Dalyell's role. It was the duty of backbench MPs to make a nuisance of themselves, and Mr Dalyell was exceptionally good at that, he said.

On the other hand, although it was the role of a select committee to uncover information, it was not entitled to do it by illegitimate means.

Mr St John-Stevas acknowledged that a new situation had been created with the publication of the documents. He forecast that the committee, which is chaired by a Conservative MP, Sir Anthony Kershaw, should look again at the whole matter.

He insisted that the committee had reserved its right to investigate further the ground covered by the documents at the time when it returned them, and he pointed out that the committee would be interrogating Mr Michael Heseltine soon after Parliament resumed in the autumn.

The Guardian 21/8/84

Belgrano : far too much smoke

The government's acute sensitivity on the subject of the Argentinian warship *Belgrano* has been apparent since the day it was sunk with the loss of 368 lives. Questions are parried and contradictory explanations offered. The Labour front bench has not regarded the subject as one worth hot pursuit, and it is easy to understand why. We were in a war which, whatever its origins, exposed ships of the British task force to attack by the Argentinian navy (at that time the most hawkish of the three services). On April 23, 1982, ten days before the *Belgrano* went down, the general warning was given that all aircraft and warships which presented a threat were liable to attack; and even if it could be shown conclusively that the *Belgrano* was speeding away from the exclusion zone there could be no certainty that it would not adopt the zig-zag course which Mrs Thatcher (wrongly, it seems) later attributed to it and return to harass British vessels.

It would have been open to the Prime Minister to say simply that the Argentinian losses were much higher than expected, given that the *Belgrano* had an escort of frigates, but that the imperatives of war required the vessel to be sunk because it was a major unit of the attacker's fleet and the first such to be found. Such an explanation would not have removed the argument but it would have narrowed its scope. Instead conflicting versions of the episode have been authoritatively put forward, the cumulative effect of which is to suggest that there is something to hide. Perhaps there is: taken by itself the torpedo attack was an act of escalation which caused some horror in Britain, not to say elsewhere, before it was overtaken by the destruction of HMS *Sheffield*. Mr Tam

Dalyell thinks there is something to hide and his exchanges with the Ministry of Defence do nothing to discourage that view. But what? The documents leaked to him by an official of the department, in which Mr Heseltine was specifically advised to be evasive in answer to questions by MPs, do not of themselves convict the government of any premature or wanton act against the *Belgrano*.

What emerges more clearly is another example of excessive secrecy verging on paranoia, coupled with the difficult job of squaring a new statement with a statement made before. Mr J. M. Legge, the putative author of one of the advisory documents, is quoted for a list of things that had and had not been disclosed, and concluded: "I therefore recommend that we should avoid these difficulties by providing the committee with a more general narrative." There can be no security grounds now for a failure to tell MPs everything that is relevant to their inquiry. Not to do so is a contempt of their proper role which they should stamp on without hesitation. The committee's voluntary decision to return Mr Dalyell's documents to the ministry, so that the dissatisfied official who leaked them might be traced, may fall within the purview of their oath to the Crown, and that is another matter. What should exercise them now is the prevarication which goes on inside Whitehall to save embarrassment and maintain an appearance of consistency—that, and the restlessness of honest public servants to see the prevarication ended.

BELGRANO 'SECRETS' RETURNED

By GRAHAM PATERSON
Political Staff

CONFIDENTIAL documents on the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser General Belgrano have been returned to the Ministry of Defence by the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee who decided they were "not in the business of trafficking in leaked documents," it was revealed yesterday.

Mr Norman St John Stevas, a former Leader of the House and a member of the committee, said the documents were returned because of questions about the way they had been obtained.

"We as a Parliamentary committee have a responsibility to observe the law and not to break it," he said on BBC radio.

He added that the documents "did not contain any information that was particularly new or of great importance."

The documents were given to the committee last month by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, who received them anonymously.

Heseltine's role

They purport to show that senior Ministry of Defence officials suggested that the Government should withhold detailed information on the sinking from the committee, because details could prove embarrassing, and should give a general summary instead.

But Mr Stevas pointed out that there was no evidence that Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, had accepted his civil servants' advice. Now that the documents had been made public the committee, which reconvenes in the autumn, would "look into the matter."

Mr Dalyell yesterday described Mr Stevas's comments as "outrageous." He said: "The select committee system will be greatly damaged by this because they have become the creatures of Government."

The Daily Telegraph 21/8/84

Falklands advice

STR—Your leader (Aug. 20) completely misrepresents the OBSERVER's position on the Falklands. As a matter of fact, we supported the sending of the Task Force. What we revealed on Sunday was Civil Service advice to the Defence Secretary on how to mislead a select committee of the House of Commons about the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano; in particular, that he should withhold from MPs the changes in the rules of naval engagement introduced shortly before the sinking.

That was a news story which you, along with the rest of the Press, were glad enough to follow on Monday. You may be right about the Belgrano; you may be right about Mr Tam Dalyell's "obsession"; history will judge when all the facts are known.

All the OBSERVER has done is put some more of those facts into the public arena. I'm sorry if that strains your patience when your mind is already made up.

DONALD TRELFOED
Editor, the OBSERVER
London, E.C.4.

RICHARD NORTON-TAYLOR on
Parliament and rules of engagement

The raising of the Belgrano

TAM DALYELL, the one-man pressure group seeking the truth behind the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, was exasperated yesterday.

A senior Ministry of Defence official leaked information to Mr Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow. He passed it to the House of Commons foreign affairs committee which is conducting an investigation into the Falklands war. The information confirmed what he alleged for many months, namely, that the Government had deceived Parliament and the public about the Belgrano's movements and the Cabinet's decision to change the rules of engagement.

But instead of expressing outrage about the way they had been treated, Labour and Tory members of the

committee unanimously agreed to return the papers to the Ministry of Defence. The Labour members of the committee include such left-wingers as Dennis Canavan, Ian Mikardo, and Nigel Spearing.

Mr Dalyell said yesterday that the issue raised serious questions about the role of Parliament and its select committees and whether they should merely be creatures of the executive.

Though Labour MPs, including the shadow Cabinet, appear to be revelling in the fact that the Government is embarrassed by these latest leaks, the revelations might also embarrass the Opposition. It has perhaps unwittingly contributed to what amounts to the shopping of a civil servant who put the need for honesty and openness above his conventional

duty to go along with the Government's deception.

Labour leaders have persistently refused to support Mr Dalyell's campaign, despite the fact that in answer to his questions, the Government has repeatedly contradicted itself over the events surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano.

When they have seized on the issue—as both Neil Kinnock and Denis Healey did during the election campaign last year—they have done so in such an off-the-cuff and aggressive way that they have been their own worst enemies. The temptation for a quick party political point has overcome the demands for a more thorough and patient investigation of what actually happened. That has been left in Parliament to Tam Dalyell.

The papers leaked to him

and passed on to the Commons committee show that there were several changes in the rules of engagement. The information "would also reveal that while the public warnings and ROE changes for the Maritime Exclusion Zone and Total Exclusion Zone were simultaneous, there was a delay until May 7 when the appropriate warning was issued for the May 2 change."

We were first told by John Nott, then Defence Secretary, that the decision to attack the cruiser was taken by the captain of the submarine Conqueror, Cdr Christopher Wreford-Brown. Several months later, the Government admitted that Rear Admiral Sandy Woodward had asked the War Cabinet for a change in the ROE so that the Conqueror could attack. He did so because the

Belgrano was outside the total exclusion zone. Admiral Woodward later said that he asked for a change in the ROE only once. We now know that he asked for another change when the Conqueror was inside Argentina's 12-mile coastal limit, but this request was refused.

The issue is crucial in that it is widely recognised in war that the enemy should clearly be informed of official rules of engagement and changes in them. Equally important, the MoD documents also include a draft letter from the Defence Secretary, Michael Heseltine, prepared for Mr Dalyell but never in fact sent to him. The draft gives clear information about the Belgrano's position at different times and states, "The cruiser reversed course towards her home base at 9am London time on May 2,

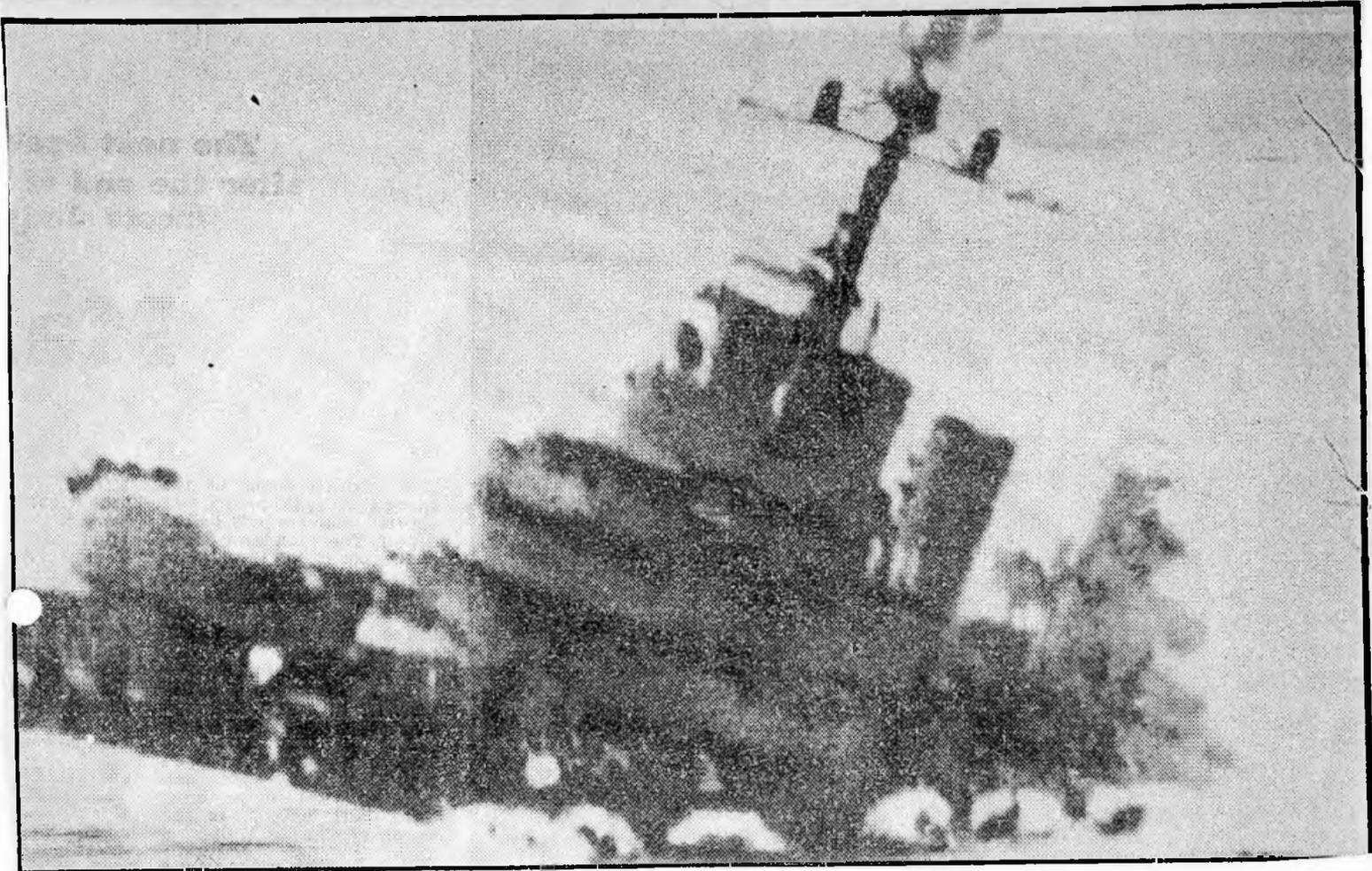
1982, eleven hours before the Conqueror torpedoed her."

Parliament has also been told consistently that the Conqueror first sighted the Belgrano on May 2, the day it was attacked. But Cdr Wreford-Brown has himself said that he had been following the cruiser for more than 30 hours before the attack. It was not until April 4 this year that Mrs Thatcher, in a letter to Denzil Davies, Labour's shadow defence spokesman, acknowledged that the Argentine cruiser group was detected on April 30. She said she only then felt able to say this since "with the passage of time, those events have lost some of their original operational significance."

The leaked documents raise the question of why the Belgrano was not sunk earlier. The Government has

told Parliament that the Belgrano was an immediate threat, though Lord Lewin, chief of the Defence Staff during the war, has since said it was not a threat simply because it was not allowed to be. (Lord Lewin has also said the Belgrano was directing air attacks on the British Task Force, although this has been unofficially denied).

Knowing how persistent Mr Dalyell is, it is difficult to understand why the Government continued to refuse to release the information he has asked for. It may be because Mr Dalyell resolutely sticks to his conclusion that torpedoing the Belgrano, with the loss of 368 lives, was unnecessary. He also believes that it was designed to scupper peace proposals being drawn up by the Peruvians



Right : Death-throes of the Belgrano. Above : a survivor is greeted by wife and daughter

THE BELGRANO PAPERS

Mr Tam Dalyell, whose tenacity in pursuit of the Belgrano is one of the enduring consequences of the Falklands campaign, has met with some reward at last. He has a leak: that is to say copies of official papers, which he sent to the Commons select committee on foreign affairs, which sent them back to their place of origin.

The disclosures, as summarized in the *Observer* on Sunday, relate to second order events: how to deal with persistent questioning about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano on May 2, 1982. They throw no new light on the quality of the deed whose warranty is the circumstances in which it occurred.

The British task force was at sea in the South Atlantic. Main hostilities had begun - British aircraft had attacked Stanley airport, Argentine aircraft had attacked British warships. The Argentine navy was at sea. Whatever its precise manoeuvres, it constituted a threat to the safety of the task force. Submarine contact was made with its two capital ships the carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo* and the *Belgrano*. Contact with the first was lost. The second was sunk with very heavy loss of life, a disaster of war that must be accepted however deeply regretted. The engagement achieved the strategic objective of confining the enemy fleet to port from then on.

The thrust of the questioning has been the implication that the attack on the *Belgrano* was ordered by the war cabinet in order to wreck a Peruvian peace initiative then in motion. Neither what is now known of

the context in which the war cabinet made that decision, nor what is known of the progress of the Peruvian initiative, nor what is known of the timing and communications linking those separate developments, lend a lot of weight to the imputation. Nor do the leaks as summarized give it any greater substance. The chief new fact - that the May 2 change in the rules of engagement was not specific to HMS *Conqueror* and the *Belgrano* but included all Argentine warships over a large area - rather confirms the explanation that concern for the safety of the task force was the ruling motive.

What these disclosures do is to relieve the eyes from gazing towards the south Atlantic and bend them towards Westminster, which is where the political milage is anyway. Have we a case of ministers deceiving, or preparing to deceive, the Commons?

Not quite. On June 20 Baroness Young, minister of state at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, was asked by a member of the Commons select committee to supply a note of all changes in the rules of engagement made in the course of the campaign, their dates, the reasons, and the outcome. She said she would see what could be done, and the committee's minutes have a footnote saying that the information will be printed as an appendix.

The leaked paper purports to contain the advice of a senior civil servant in the defence ministry as to how his minister should respond to the request. Having consulted his colleagues "our advice is that we should not

provide the committee with a note listing all the changes", first because the source is a classified document and the committee had said it would prefer an unclassified note, and second because a full list of changes would give more information about the *Belgrano* affair than ministers had been prepared to reveal so far. The recommendation was to provide a more general narrative.

There is nothing improper about that advice. One of the subsidiary functions of senior civil servants is to spare their ministers embarrassment. A minister's relationship with the Commons and its committees and his preparedness to answer are his own affair. The minister who fielded this one is Mr John Stanley at the defence ministry. He has replied to the select committee's question about rules of engagement - how, remains to be seen. He will have been unwise to withhold the information sought, and even more unwise to persist now, unless there are altogether better reasons for concealment than appear in the summary of the leak.

Obsessive secrecy about the controversial past is liable to give the government machine trouble, not spare it. Information, which ought to be public, about the destruction of the *Belgrano* and simultaneous events has been doled out in fragments not all of which even fit together. Reluctance to come clean for no apparent good reason merely feeds the suspicion that there is something really worth hiding. Thus do governments and Mr Tam Dalyell deserve each other.

Committee 'should see papers on Belgrano'

By Philip Webster
Political Reporter

Information contained in the confidential documents leaked to Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP, about the sinking of the General Belgrano should be considered by the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, a senior Conservative member of the committee said yesterday.

Mr Norman St John Stevas, the former Cabinet Minister, said that the role of the committee was to uncover information but not by illegitimate means.

He confirmed that, as reported in *The Times* yesterday, the committee had decided that the three leaked documents, handed to it by Mr Dalyell, should be returned to the Ministry of Defence. The committee had decided it was not in the business of trafficking in leaked documents, he said.

But Mr St John-Stevas said that now that the documents had been made public a new situation had come about. "I think it would now be right for the Foreign Affairs Committee to look into the matter".

His remarks will be welcomed by the four Labour member of the 11-man committee, Mr Ian Mikerdo, Mr Michael Welsh, Mr Nigel Spearing, and Mr Dennis Canavan.

They made clear their view, when agreeing at a private meeting shortly before the recess that the documents should be sent back to the ministry and that the matter contained in them should be examined by the committee at a later stage.

Those members of the committee who attended that meeting decided unanimously that they had no alternative but to send that documents to the ministry and inform Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, even if the consequence were to be the discovery of the leaker. One Conservative member said yesterday that to have done otherwise would have "compounded the offence".

Mr St John-Stevas, asked on BBC radio whether it presented any difficulty for the committee to give up the documents in the light of the Sarah Tisdall case, said that it did not.

He added that in his opinion the documents did not contain anything particularly new or of great importance. The leak was being used as a party political stick with which to beat the Government.

The Times 21/8/84

Mr Canavan told *The Times* from Hongkong, where he is on a parliamentary visit, that the documents showed that a "monumental cover-up" was going on.

One of the documents, signed by a senior ministry official, advised Mr Heseltine and his staff not to give the committee details of the changes made in the rules of engagement during the Falklands operations.

Leading article, page 11

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'Leaks' revive doubts on Belgrano

BY MARGARET VAN HATTEM, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DETAILS OF alleged Ministry of Defence documents urging Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, to withhold information about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, threaten to bring the Government under new pressure. The details were published at the weekend. The confidential documents were sent anonymously to Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP who has turned his strong doubts about the sinking of the Belgrano into a personal crusade. Amid growing speculation yesterday that Mr Dalyell's informant might be an official at the Ministry of Defence, the Government yesterday refused to comment on the issue.

However the matter is almost certain to be taken up by the

all-party Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs when Parliament resumes sittings in November.

Mr Dalyell said at the weekend that he had given the documents to the committee. Its failure, so far, to act on the information suggests committee members may not share Mr Dalyell's assessment of its importance. However, the publication of extracts could force them to take up the matter.

Extracts from the documents, published at the weekend, suggest senior advisers at the MoD urged their ministers not to give the committee full details of changes to the rules of engagement made early on in the Falklands conflict.

In particular, they apparently felt the decision to declare all

Argentine warships, not just the Belgrano, to be legitimate targets from May 2 should be kept secret.

In a memorandum advising Mr Heseltine on how—or how not—to answer the committee's questions, the Defence Secretary is also urged not to mention that the Argentines were not warned until May 7 of changes in the exclusion zones which took effect on May 2—the day the Belgrano was sunk.

The memorandum was one of three papers sent to Mr Dalyell. The others included an alleged draft ministerial reply, never sent, to his questions to Mr Heseltine about the movements of the Belgrano. The draft apparently reveals that the Belgrano had turned for home

11 hours before it was torpedoed.

The third paper was an anonymous letter from someone claiming to have full access to the facts about the Belgrano and urging Mr Dalyell: "You are on the right track—keep going."

Mr Dalyell said yesterday the documents cast strong doubts on statements made to the Commons by Ministers, including the Prime Minister.

In particular, the documents made nonsense of the Government's claim that the Belgrano was sunk because it was an immediate threat to the safety of the task force, he said. This was not a matter of national security but a matter of political embarrassment.

Belgrano: No comment

Government officials refused to comment yesterday on the revelation of alleged Ministry of Defence documents urging Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine to withhold information about the sinking of Argentine cruiser General Belgrano. The issue is almost certain to come before the all-party Foreign Affairs select committee in November. Back Page

MPs return leaked documents on Belgrano

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

The House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee has returned to the Ministry of Defence the confidential documents leaked to the Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell, about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, it was disclosed yesterday. He had handed the documents to the committee for investigation.

But the committee has reserved the right to consider the information, highly embarrassing for the Government because it shows that ministers were being advised to withhold from the committee unrevealed details of the Belgrano affair, when it resumes its Falklands inquiry after the parliamentary recess.

Labour members gave notice yesterday of their intention to ensure that that right is exercised.

The committee decided in private just before the recess that it had a duty to inform the ministry about the three documents which Mr Dalyell had received anonymously.

Mr Dalyell decided not to make them public, although they were relevant to his relentless campaign over the Belgrano, but to hand them, in mid July, to Sir Anthony Kershaw, chairman of the committee, because he felt the rights of the Commons were being infringed.

But members of the committee felt that there had been a serious and improper breach of security and that as a responsible body it had to return the documents to the ministry. Labour members secured the agreement that their contents could be considered later.

It was being accepted yesterday



Mr Dalyell: Handed documents to select committee

prosecuted after *The Guardian* was ordered by the High Court to return a document about cruise missiles which she had leaked.

The disclosure yesterday of the documents has caused considerable embarrassment in Whitehall, because of the contents and because it provides another example of its seeming inability to prevent leaks. Neither Downing Street nor the ministry would comment.

According to *The Observer*, one of the documents, signed by Mr J M Legge, a member of the Defence Secretariat, advised Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, and his staff not to give the committee details of changes made in the rules of engagement during the Falklands operation.

It stated that they would reveal that all Argentine warships, not just the General

day that if the source of the leaks is, or has been, discovered, the committee could be responsible. MPs are drawing a clear parallel with the case of Miss Sarah Tisdall, the former Foreign Office clerk who was

MPs return documents on Belgrano

Continued from page 1

Mr Dalyell said yesterday that the documents' contents showed that Mrs Margaret Thatcher's explanation why she ordered the sinking of the Belgrano was not true.

"I suspect the reason why so many people have been giving me information is that they are heartily sick and tired of doing endless work with the object of not answering my questions, which could very easily be answered if it was a matter of simply giving the truth. Why do we have a document talking about the withholding of information if there is nothing to hide?"

Information now available showed that the Belgrano had been heading straight for home for at least 11 hours and the people who gave the orders to sink her must have known that, Mr Dalyell said.

Belgrano, had been made legitimate target of attack from May 2, and that there had been a five-day delay in the issue of the appropriate warning to the Argentines on the extension of the exclusion zone.

The document stated that "the full list of changes would provide more information than ministers have been prepared to reveal so far about the Belgrano

ir. It said: "I therefore recommend that we should avoid these difficulties by providing the committee with a more general narrative."

A second document received by Mr Dalyell was the draft of a reply by Mr Heseltine to his questions in March about movements of the Belgrano. It was never sent but apparently states clearly that on May 2 the cruiser reversed course towards her home base 11 hours before the Conqueror torpedoed her.

Continued on back page, col 1

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BELGRANO ROW RE-OPENED BY DEFENCE LEAK

By **GRAHAM PATERSON** Political Staff

THE Government has been embarrassed by the disclosure of confidential Defence Ministry documents which suggest that it considered withholding sensitive information from a Commons Select Committee on the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the General B. grano.

Downing Street and the Ministry refused to comment, but full details of the leak, to Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, have been sent to Mrs Thatcher, on holiday in Austria.

The disclosure comes as a blow to Ministers who have been determined to clamp down on Whitehall "moles."

It also re-opens the debate on whether the Commons has bene lied to over the exact circumstances of the sinking, which cost the lives of 312 Argentines.

Three documents were sent under plain cover to Mr Dalyell's office at the House of Commons between April and July which suggest that the Government was planning to conceal information for the Foreign Affairs Committee, which is currently investigating the matter.

One of the documents revealed that the rules of engagement for the Navy were changed as the Task Force steamed towards the Falklands, but the Argentines were not informed for five days of the new rules which extended the exclusion zone within which their ships would be destroyed.

Legge memo

The memorandum, signed by Mr J. M. Legge of the Defence Ministry's secretariat, advises Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, not to give the Committee a note listing all the changes in the rules.

It states: "The full list of changes would provide more information than Ministers have been prepared to reveal so far about the Belgrano affair."

It adds: "It would also reveal that while the public warnings and Rules of Engagement changes for the Maritime Exclusion Zone and the Total Exclusion Zone were simultaneous, there was a delay until 7 May before the appropriate warning was issued for the 2 May changes.

"I therefore recommend that we should avoid these difficulties by providing the committee with a more general narrative."

Government 'cover-up'

Mr Dalyell, who has waged a one-man war against the Government over the Belgrano sinking, said yesterday that the documents showed that there was a Government "cover-up."

But until Parliament returns in the autumn and the Foreign Affairs committee resumes its investigation it will be impossible to tell whether Mr Legge's proposals were followed by his political masters.

Mr Dalyell passed the documents on to the Select Committee after receiving them and an investigation was begun by the Defence Ministry after it

learned the Committee had obtained them.

The leak will mean that Labour calls for a full-scale public inquiry into the sinking will be stepped up.

Mr George Robertson, an Opposition Foreign Affairs spokesman, said yesterday: "This blows wide open the story of the Belgrano and sours the Government's relations with the House of Commons."

Mr Dalyell, who was suspended from the Commons in May after he persistently refused to withdraw a claim that the Prime Minister had lied over the sinking of the Belgrano, said yesterday: "I repeat absolutely categorically the charge for which I was suspended from the House of Commons: that the Government was lying to the House.

"These documents show that there was a cover-up."

He said he had no idea of the identity of the "mole" who sent him the documents.

"This information could only have come from someone generally in the know. I suspect he was an extremely serious man who was concerned about the good name of Britain and indeed the proper operation and honest operation of the British Civil Service which is suffering suborning pressures from Ministers who are using untruths to protect themselves."

Accusations denied

Since the Belgrano was sunk, on May 2, 1982 by the British submarine Conqueror, the Government has denied accusations that she was heading back to port, away from the British fleet, and that the sinking was ordered to scupper Peruvian peace proposals.

In a television interview during the election campaign, Mrs Thatcher said: "My duty, and I'm very proud we put it this way and adhered to it, was to protect the lives of the people in our ships and the enormous number of troops we had down there waiting for the landings."

But Government statements on the Belgrano's movements have not always been consistent and these differences have fuelled campaigners' calls for an inquiry.

Among the documents leaked to Mr Dalyell was a draft of a letter which was to have been sent to him explaining the movements of the Belgrano before the sinking. But it was never sent.

Mr Dalyell said yesterday that the disclosure was now a matter for Parliament. "If people lie to the House of Commons and are allowed to get away with it democracy is injured," he said.

Editorial Comment—P12

The Daily Telegraph 20/8/84

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Leaked Falklands documents

shift argument over sinking

Labour seizes on Belgrano papers

By Ian Aitken,
Political Editor

The Prime Minister is to be pressed by Labour shadow ministers for a detailed clarification of the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano after revelations contained in documents leaked to the Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell.

Shadow ministers were jubilant last night that the persistence of Mr Dalyell appeared to have exposed Mrs Thatcher and her senior ministerial colleagues to charges of misleading the Commons and of seeking to block the work of a key Commons select committee.

What has particularly needed the Labour front bench is the fact that Mr Denzil Davies, a senior opposition defence spokesman, wrote more than once to Mrs Thatcher about the puzzling



Mr Tam Dalyell:
victory for persistence

features of the sinking. Although he did so with the full authority of the shadow cabinet, he is said to have been persistently fobbed off with evasions.

Shadow ministers believe they have a powerful case against the Prime Minister and her Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine. Some of them were claiming last night that it raised serious questions about the effectiveness of parliamentary institutions like the select committees under Mrs Thatcher's premiership.

Front and backbench MPs were united in their praise for Mr Dalyell, the MP for Linlithgow, whose persistent probing of the Government on every aspect of the sinking had hitherto made him almost a figure of fun at Westminster.

Mr Kevin McNamara, an opposition defence spokesman, said last night: "It shows the true effectiveness of a really tenacious backbencher. Thanks to Tam, the Government now has a lot of explaining to do, from Mrs Thatcher all the way down the line. We must now wait to see what action the select committee on defence decides to take."

However, Conservative MPs and Government spokesmen were quick to argue yesterday that the publication of Mr Dalyell's documents had radically changed the nature of the case against the Government.

If it was true, as the documents suggested, that there had been an unacknowledged extension of the rules of engagement for British warships before the sinking of the Belgrano, then Mr Dalyell's basic claim that the ship was sunk in order to preempt the Peruvian peace plan became less rather than more plausible.

Instead, the Government is now faced with a much more straightforward and workaday political accusation — namely, that ministers concealed the truth from MPs, deliberately misinformed them in order to maintain that concealment, and sought to block the efforts of a select committee of the Commons to get at the facts.

The switch of emphasis clearly pleases some shadow ministers. Many always harboured doubts about the allegations that Mrs Thatcher and her war cabinet ordered the sinking so as to ensure that the war continued. They feel happier with an argument which they believe can be made to stick, especially in the light of the Sarah Tisdall case.

They insist that Mr Dalyell's latest revelations provide further proof of the Opposition's allegation that Mrs Thatcher's style of government is fundamentally antipathetic to parliamentary institutions, and even threatens basic liberties. They point to the persistent use of discredited legislation like the Official Secrets Act against Miss Tisdall, and now against a Defence Ministry official, when it is admitted that matters of state security are not involved.

The odds now are that Opposition members of the defence select committee will now seek to force the Government to answer some of the questions which on Mr Dalyell's document show ministers and civil servants to be evasive. They may also press their Conservative colleagues to seek powers to force witnesses to attend and to answer.

But select committees have no direct power to exercise parliamentary privilege in their own right. They must seek the authority of the whole House if they are to enforce attendance of witnesses or the production of papers. If the Government chose to use its overwhelming majority in the Commons in such a case, it would have little chance of success.

Whatever else happens, the outcome is yet another vindication for Mr Dalyell, Labour's only Old Etonian and a man with many parliamentary scalps under his belt already. He has a reputation for persistence and successful personal campaigns, which have included undermining the last Labour Government's devolution plans for Scotland, rubbishing a highly expensive

Turn to back page, col. 1

Continued from page one and sophisticated military aeroplane and rescuing the threatened giant tortoise.

His efforts earned him a title once born by a notorious anti-Covenanting ancestor, who was known as Black Tam of the Binns.

His persistence, sometimes verging on the obsessive, has landed him in more than one scrape. Earlier in the present session he was suspended from the Commons for five days for accusing the Prime Minister of

lying about the Belgrano affair. Some years ago he was summoned to the bar of the Commons to be formally rebuked by the Speaker for leaking a select committee's findings to a newspaper.

David Pallister writes: The leaked documents confirm earlier Whitehall reports of a serious breakdown in confidence between Mr Heseltine and at least one of his senior officials.

Mr Dalyell intimated three months ago that MoD officials

were encouraging him in his persistent questioning about the Belgrano. It is now clear that this was a reference to an anonymous letter he received in April from a person who told him: "I can tell you that I have full access to exactly what happened to the Belgrano."

The letter recommended a line of questioning about whether the change in the rules of engagement, which authorised the submarine attack on May 2 included other vessels. The

MoD, document, a memorandum of advice signed by L. M. Legge, the head of Defence Secretariat 11, shows that the change in the rules included all Argentinian ships.

This is new information, but it must be set against the fact that on April 23 the Argentinians were warned that all aircraft and warships which presented a threat to the task force might be attacked.

Mr Legge also says that the full list of changes would reveal that there was a five day delay, until May 7, before the Argentinians were warned of them. This has already been published in the book, *The Sinking of the Belgrano* by Desmond Rice and Arthur Gavshan.

Another change, unknown until now, was that permission was granted on April 30 to engage the aircraft carrier 25 de Mayo, which was north east of the Falklands.

In every important respect Government ministers, including Mrs Thatcher, have been shown to be wrong about the Belgrano's movements, and its monitoring by the task force.

Mr John Nott, the then defence secretary, told the Commons on May 4 that it was closing on the task force when it was actually sailing away from it. The Defence white paper of December 1982 says it was detected on the same day as the attack, when it was in fact sighted on the previous day and shadowed for 30 hours by the submarine Conqueror.

The Prime Minister has claimed that it was zigzagging and unpredictable in its intentions. This has been challenged by the Belgrano's commander, Captain Hector Bonzo, and a third leaked document, a draft of a letter to Mr Dalyell from Mr Heseltine supports him.

The letter, which was never sent says the Belgrano was not under continuous surveillance but that it was travelling on a westerly course, that is towards the mainland

The Guardian 20/8/84

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TAM SOUTHCOTT'S BOX

Mr TAM DALYELL, MP, believes that Britain should not have gone to war over the Falklands, and should give the islands to the Argentines. So does the OBSERVER. But they cannot rest their case there. They produce alleged disclosures with clockwork regularity proving that the Belgrano was gratuitously sunk when on the way back from the vicinity of the war zone, that the British Government deliberately sank the Belgrano in order to wreck the Peruvian peace proposals, and that there are documents which are suppressed by the Thatcher Government to prove these assertions.

The known facts are as follows. First, the Argentine fleet had been sent out by Adml ANAYA with the express intention of baulking the British armada, and whichever way the cruiser was manoeuvring at any given moment, this was the only possible reason for its being in the vicinity. An Argentine admiral recently admitted on "Panorama" that he would have taken a similar decision in our shoes. Secondly, the decision to sink the Belgrano, right or wrong, was taken on military grounds, on the basis of available knowledge, "in the fog of war," to use CLAUSEWITZ's evocative phrase. Therefore no documents can tell us what was passing through the minds of the deeply worried inner Cabinet and its Service advisers.

Third, the Peruvian proposal was irrelevant. The two parties' positions were irreconcilable: the Argentine Junta was determined to hold on to its conquest; the British to regain territories seized by force. No formula devised then or subsequently could bridge such a gap. The British Government had no need to sink the Belgrano to make that point. However, Mr DALYELL and the OBSERVER are by now compelled by their obsession to go on finding new putative disclosures, to prove them right. However often their newest assertions are disproved, this demand for an inquiry, like the demand for the opening of JOANNA SOUTHCOTT's box, will continue for so long as the state of mind exists to create the clamour.

Daily Mail
20th August 1984

Belgrano leak angers Whitehall

LABOUR MP Tam Dalyell said yesterday that the 'mole' who leaked new evidence on the Belgrano sinking could only be 'someone genuinely in the know.'

The leaked documents, which Mr Dalyell has sent to the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, reveal that the Government declared all Argentine warships legitimate targets from May 2, 1982, not just the Belgrano.

They also show that senior Civil Servants advised Mr Heseltine not to give this information to the committee.

Mr Dalyell said: 'If there is nothing to hide, why go to this length in official documents to withhold information from the committee? The issue is deception.'

The leak has caused new Government anger and embarrassment, and behind the scenes a big new clampdown has been ordered in an attempt to curb Civil Service leaks.

'Once upon a time'... but this picture book is no fairy-tale

Storm over 'sick', Falklands story

By CATHERINE BENNETT

TWO YEARS AFTER 255 British soldiers were killed in the Falklands war, a savage new book is suggesting that they died only to satisfy the bloodthirsty vengeance of Margaret Thatcher.

Politicians have already slammed it but the real outrage will erupt when parents see that this venomous political tract is disguised as a children's book.

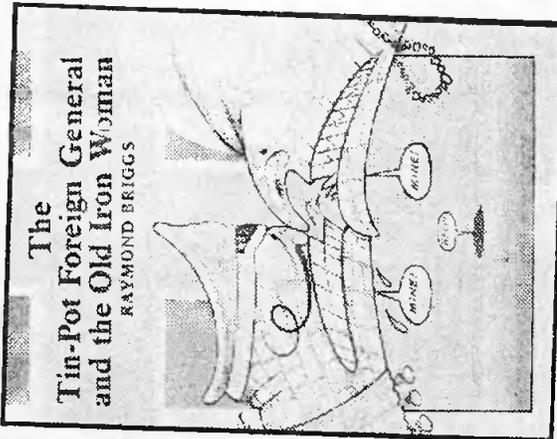
Hamish Hamilton, who are publishing *The Tin-Pot General and the Old Iron Woman*, by Raymond Briggs, insist that the book was written for adults.

But it begins 'Once upon a time... is written in large child-size print and has precisely the same large, glossy format as *Father Christmas Goes on Holiday*, *Fungus the Bogeyman* and the other best selling titles which have made Briggs one of the country's top children's writers.

Many children will want to read Briggs's latest bedtime story. But the book's obsession with death and destruction is more likely to induce nightmares than sweet dreams.

General Gaitieri and Mrs Thatcher are depicted as crazed, power-hungry villains. Gaitieri waves a dagger dripping with blood while Mrs Thatcher — a fetishistic fantasy in stockings and suspenders — is drawn with a pair of giant breasts which double as exploding cannons.

It is all done in lurid colour until the war in the Falklands — 'the sad little island' — begins in earnest. Then 'brash caricature gives way to a set of

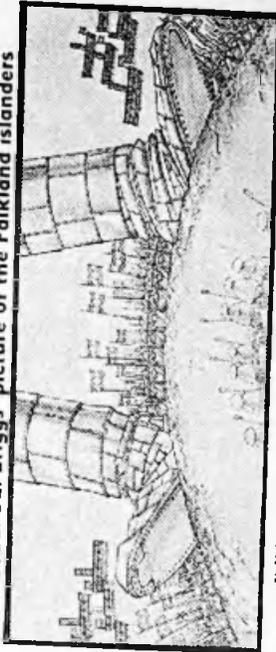


The Tin-Pot Foreign General and the Old Iron Woman
RAYMOND BRIGGS

FACE-TO-FACE: The cover



PEACEFUL: Briggs' picture of the Falkland islanders



INVASION: The Tin-Pot General and his army

the Falklands dead or wounded should pick up the book they should be left in no doubt of Briggs's view: that their fathers were the victims of mindless slaughter.

Offended

'I don't see why anyone should be offended by this book,' said Christopher Sinclair-Stevenson, managing director at publishers Hamish Hamilton. 'But it may shock some people.'

One of those people re-

volted by the book is Tory MP Robert Hicks, a father of two. He said: 'This is just about the worst piece of bad taste I've come across. Aiming such a book at the children's market is positively sick.'

Briggs is no stranger to such controversy. His illustrated anti-nuclear book *When The Wind Blows*, caused a storm and earned him a fortune. The Tin-Pot General has already brought what Sinclair-Stevenson describes as an 'excellent reaction' from the book trade.

The publisher adds that he has no doubts whatever about the worth of the book — not even the quotation from Dr Johnson on the flyleaf: 'Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.'

The Royal Family may feel a little different. The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles and Prince Edward are all published by Hamish Hamilton.

Falklands: Dalyell tells of MoD leaks

The Sunday Telegraph
19/8/84

By Our Political Staff

A CONFIDENTIAL Defence Ministry document apparently showing that the Government intended to withhold information about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano has been leaked to Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow.

The document is one of three Defence Ministry leaks to Mr Dalyell over the past few months about the Belgrano, an issue which he has pursued relentlessly, and which is being investigated by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee.

The latest document, signed by J. M. Legge of the Ministry of Defence, argues that the Department should not provide information to the committee about changes made in the rules of engagement during the approach of the British task-force to the Falklands in May, 1982.

One of the other leaks, which all arrived in plain envelopes at the House of Commons with no indication of who was sending them, was the draft of a letter from Mr Heseltine to Mr Dalyell replying to his inquiries about the detailed movements of the Belgrano and Conqueror, the submarine that sank her. The letter was never sent.

Mr Dalyell said last night: "I repeat absolutely categorically the charge for which I was suspended from the House of Commons: that the Government was lying to the House. These documents show that there was a cover-up."

He added: "It is true that I have been getting information from all sorts of sources and a great deal of it is inside information. It is also true that the Ministry of Defence are greatly upset and angry at a number of questions that I have been putting down."

Last month, before Parliament rose for the recess, he tabled a large number of questions on a new Argentine weapon, the Condor missile, which he claims would have a range of 800 miles and could seriously endanger British servicemen on the Falklands.

The news of the leaks will come as an embarrassment to the Government, which has been determined to clamp down on Whitehall "moles" since a Cabinet memorandum from Mr

Dalyell

(Continued from P1)

Heseltine was leaked to the *Guardian* newspaper last year.

Miss Sarah Tisdall, a Foreign Office clerk, was jailed under the Official Secrets Act for leaking the memo.

The latest leak, received by Mr Dalyell last month and which he passed on to the Foreign Affairs Committee, concerns details of changes made in the Rules of Engagement for British ships during May, 1982.

It is stated that if the committee was given full details of the changes in the Rules the Ministry would have to make clear that there was a delay of five days between May 2, when they were changed, and May 7, when the appropriate warning was issued to the Argentines.

The document adds: "I therefore recommend that we should avoid these difficulties by providing the committee with a more general narrative."

Mr Dalyell, who has been a thorn in the Government's side over the Belgrano issue, said: "The documents do not put at risk the nation's security, or any information involving the Fleet or the Navy today."

"But what they do show is that there is a systematic cover-up under way, including information that is sought by a Select Committee of the House of Commons."

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Continued on Back Page, Col 5

Whitehall crackdown after Belgrano leak

The Sunday Times
19/8/84

MINISTERS have ordered tough disciplinary measures against civil servants who leak politically sensitive information to MPs. The measures follow the unauthorised disclosure to Tam Dalyell, the Scottish Labour MP, of three confidential Ministry of Defence documents relating to the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser, the Belgrano, during the Falklands war.

The government has decided to make it clear that the Official Secrets Act prohibits any unauthorised disclosures and that embarrassing leaks to MPs will not be tolerated.

Dalyell told The Sunday Times last night that the documents he had received had been sent anonymously but they did not involve national security. They raised a wider issue than the Belgrano sinking - "the House of Commons asking the right questions and not receiving a truthful answer."

Dalyell has put the documents before the House of Commons defence committee, which is examining the Falklands campaign. His statement last night confirms public

by Michael Jones
Political Editor

comments he made in May that defence officials were privately encouraging him to continue his Commons questions about the decision to sink the Belgrano.

The documents sent to Dalyell relate to the decision by Mrs Thatcher's war cabinet to change the rules of engagement as the British fleet approached the Falklands and to sink the Belgrano while it was outside the exclusion zone.

One document urged Dalyell to keep up his questions to ministers, saying that he was "on the right track". Another was an internal paper recommending ministers to withhold full information from the Commons defence committee. Dalyell claimed in May that the questions he was raising were not covered by the Official Secrets Act, but the act is so widely drawn that it is held by legal authorities to apply to information that bears no relation to the security of the state.

Dalyell's Belgrano campaign

became politically sharp when he accused the prime minister of lying over the circumstances leading to the decision to sink the Belgrano, with the loss of 368 lives. This led to his Commons suspension for five days. He claims the decision was taken to destroy peace initiatives before the British task force invaded the Falklands, an allegation strongly denied by Mrs Thatcher and her war cabinet colleagues.

Dalyell's latest statement and the government's response are likely to revive controversy over official secrets and the right of MPs to question the government. The Labour party has already decided in favour of a formal inquiry by any future Labour government into the Belgrano sinking.

Mrs Thatcher has been concerned about Whitehall leaks for some time. The prosecution and imprisonment last March of Sarah Tisdall, the defence ministry official who sent the Guardian a document about plans for the arrival of cruise missiles, was intended as a clear warning of the government's determination.

The Sunday Times 19/8/84

'Falklands' scrap man in £20m suit

Sunday Times Reporter

CONSTANTINO DAVIDOFF, the Argentine scrap metal merchant whose workmen planted the flag that sparked off the Falklands war, last week claimed \$26.8m (£20.4m) in damages from the British government in a court in Buenos Aires. Davidoff bought from a Scottish firm, Christian Salvesen, the salvage rights to an extensive whaling station on South Georgia, but the conflict provoked by the actions of his workmen and of the Argentine naval intelligence officers who infiltrated into their party prevented him from completing his salvage.

When British forces took back the islands, Davidoff's men were deported to Ascension

Island, before being returned to a heroes' welcome in Argentina.

Since 1982, Davidoff told the court, the British government has unreasonably denied him the right to pursue his legitimate activities on South Georgia. His lawyers claimed that the real value of the whaling station has been underplayed by the British government - a claim denied by Christian Salvesen. "If it had been worth that much", the company told The Sunday Times. "we would have exploited it ourselves." The company says \$26.8m "bears no relation to the price he paid for the salvage rights. Perhaps it represents his estimate of his potential profit."

Davidoff presented a similar claim for damages to the Argentine foreign ministry last year, but the ministry did not reply.

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A CONFIDENTIAL document, signed by a senior Ministry of Defence official, recommends withholding from the House of Commons sensitive information about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano.

It was sent anonymously last month to Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow. *The Observer* has obtained the text.

The document was signed by J. M. Legge, Head of DS11, and carried the code number MB9326 3276ME. Mr Legge is listed as a member of the Defence Secretariat staff.

The document advises the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, and his staff not to give the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee details of changes made in the rules of engagement during the approach of the British task force to the Falklands in May 1982.

It says they would reveal that all Argentine warships had been declared legitimate targets for attack from 2 May—and not just the Belgrano, whose sinking with the loss of 368 lives was subsequently justified on the ground that it threatened the safety of the fleet.

They would also disclose that there had been a five-day delay in the issue of the appropriate warning to the Argentines of the extension of the exclusion zone.

The Foreign Affairs Committee will resume hearing evidence on aspects of the Falklands campaign after the summer recess.

Mr Dalyell told *The Observer* last night: 'The document purported to reveal that the writer wished to keep the Select Committee in ignorance of crucial information.'

'I therefore, having consulted the Clerk of the House of Commons, put the documents at the disposal of the Foreign Affairs Committee. You will have to ask Sir Anthony Kershaw, the chairman, about his subsequent action.'

Sir Anthony, who is abroad, was not available last night.

Mr Dalyell said he received three documents. The first was postmarked 24 April and sent to him at the House of Commons in a plain envelope similar to

Exclusive

by ANDREW WILSON

that containing the other papers, said: 'Dear Mr Dalyell, I cannot give you my name but I can tell you that I have full access to exactly what happened to the Belgrano.'

It suggested that Mr Dalyell should put a number of parliamentary questions to the Defence Secretary, who had failed to answer questions put to him by the MP in a letter in March.

Among the questions recommended by the anonymous writer was: 'Did the change in the rules of engagement [for the Falklands task force] on 2 May [1982] refer only to the Belgrano? Or did they go wider?



MICHAEL HESELTINE :
Secret advice

When were the rules of engagement changed . . . ?'

The anonymous letter ended: 'You are on the right track—keep going.'

The second, and more important, document reached Mr Dalyell in mid-July. It was on three sheets of paper, from which the top of the first and the bottom of the last had been cut. The subject matter carried the heading: 'House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee: South Atlantic ROE.' (ROE stands for Rules of Engagement).

In it the head of DS11, Mr Legge, advised his Minister how to respond to questions put by the Foreign Affairs Committee about changes to the rules during the Falklands operation.

The memorandum says: 'We have discussed the form of our response with the defence commitments staff, DS5 and DNW, who had particular responsibility for ROEs. . . . Our advice is that we should not provide the committee with a note listing all the changes.'

For one thing, says the document, ROEs are drawn from the Fleet Operating the Tactical Instructions, which is a classified document; and the committee had indicated that it would prefer such a note to be unclassified.

'In addition, the full list of changes would provide more information than Ministers have been prepared to reveal so far about the Belgrano affair.'

For instance, it would show that the engagement of the Argentine aircraft carrier 25 de Mayo was permitted from 30 April, and that the change of 2 May was not restricted to the Belgrano but included all Argentine warships over a large area.

'It would also reveal that while the public warnings and ROE changes for the Maritime Exclusion Zone and Total Exclusion Zone were simultaneous, there was a delay until 7 May before the appropriate warning was issued for the 2 May change.'

'I therefore recommend (the writer goes on) that we should avoid these difficulties by providing the committee with a more general narrative.'

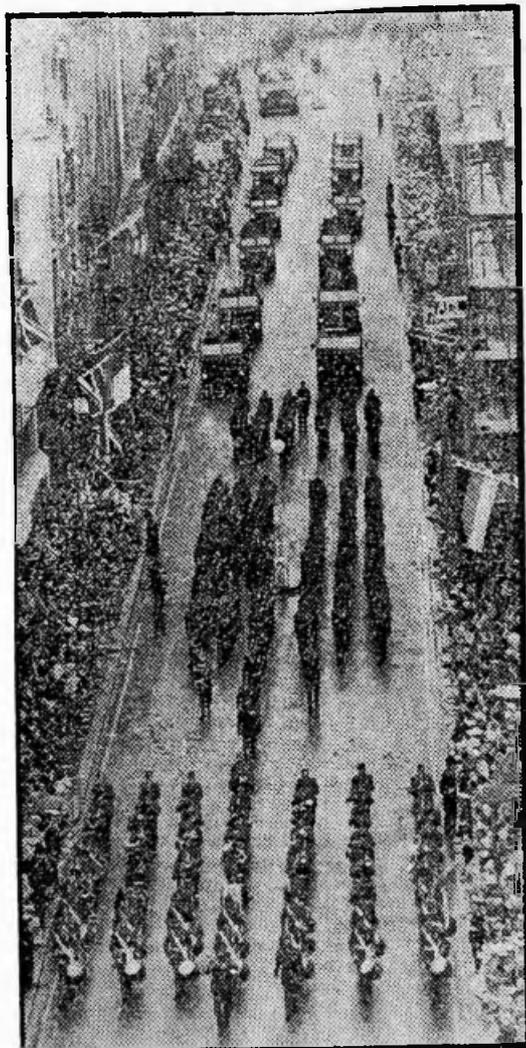
The third document received by Mr Dalyell is the draft of a reply by Mr Heseltine to his questions in March about the movements of the Belgrano and the submarine Conqueror.

Mr Heseltine's letter was never sent.

The draft gives precise information about the Belgrano's position at various times and states clearly that the cruiser reversed course towards her home base at 9 a.m. London time on 2 May, 11 hours before the Conqueror torpedoed her.

Mr Dalyell said last night: 'In my opinion the document does not put at risk the nation's security, or any information involving the Fleet and the Navy. What it does put at risk is the exposure of the truth about the action of politicians, particularly Mrs Thatcher.'

Falklands victims the army tried to forget



Members of the armed forces parade down Moorgate, London, in 1982

Seumas Milne meets an officer who was shot in the head in the South Atlantic. He says the sniper who hit him was doing his job but believes the military establishment and Civil Service have not done theirs. He was kept out of the way at the St Paul's service of remembrance, had to pay for a 'free' car and told nothing about how to start a new life



Lt Robert Lawrence (above). Picture by Roger Tooth. And (below), less seriously injured men return to a welcome at Brize Norton, Oxfordshire



Dead sailor cleared of blame

By a Correspondent

A SAILOR has been cleared of blame for the firing of a missile which killed him in the Falklands.

The Ministry of Defence has confirmed to the parents of Jonathan Mills, aged 18, that disciplinary action is being taken against four other navy personnel involved in the incident which led to his death.

Jonathan, an apprentice weapons artificer, died in Port Stanley hospital in February, three days after receiving 60 per cent burns when a Seacat missile launcher exploded aboard the guided missile destroyer HMS Fife.

At an inquest in Oxford a verdict of misadventure was recorded and the coroner said it was not clear why Jonathan was in the way as the maintenance checks were carried out.

Since then his parents, Robin and Carol Mills, of Felpham, near Bognor Regis, West Sussex, have been fighting to clear their son's name.

Mrs Mills said: "It was distressing because the inquest verdict made it appear as though it was Jonathan's fault."

They have received a letter from Lord Trefgarne, Under Secretary of State for the Armed Forces, which clears him of blame.

Soldier's plight

A FALKLANDS war victim who survived a sniper's bullet which destroyed nearly half of his brain has since suffered indignities or neglect at the hands of officialdom. Page 3.

LIEUTENANT Robert Lawrence was a 21-year-old Scots Guards officer with five years' army service when he was sent to the Falklands on the QE2 in April 1982.

A few days before his 22nd birthday, and 1½ hours before the Argentinian surrender, he was shot in the back of the head by a sniper during the assault on Tumbledown Mountain. For his part in that action, he was awarded the Military Cross.

The high-velocity bullet tore through his brain and shattered his skull. He was the only soldier, British or Argentinian, to survive such an injury. Now he is paralysed down the left side of his body, is occasionally incontinent and regularly gripped by searing pains from fused vertebrae in his neck. He has lost 45 per cent of his brain and part of his skull is now made of acrylic.

But Robert Lawrence feels little bitterness about his injury. "That's war. The guy who shot me was doing his job, and so was I."

"I could tell you stories about the cock-ups during the Falklands war that you would hardly believe. But I wouldn't want to. The public would get the wrong idea. They would blame the Government and it would have been the same with any government."

He is, however, bitter about the way he and other war victims were treated once they were back in Britain. His prosperous public school background had not prepared him for the insensitivity and bureaucratic niggling that would greet the returning Falklands war heroes.

The first thing that angered him was the embarrassed secrecy surrounding the arrival in Britain of the most seriously injured survivors.

"A few days before I was flown into Brize Norton on Montevideo there had been a press reception for the guys with the slings and head bandages with blobs of tomato ketchup. When we came back, the press was kept away."

"They put a tent round the plane and drove the ambulances inside to pick us up, so that no one would see the burn disfigurements or the blokes with half a head. Then they cleaned us up as best they could and gave us 10 minutes with our families."

Similar efforts were made on later occasions to avoid spoiling a good show with unpleasant spectacles. "The worst casualties were kept out of the St Paul's remembrance service."

"We had to turn up out of uniform more than an hour early and leave from the back after everyone else had gone. We weren't even invited to the victory parade. But people should be shown what war really means."

Other indignities were to dog his slow and partial recovery. He was confined for three weeks in a ward with 15 mentally disturbed patients in the Maudsley Hospital while recovering from neurosurgery.

Weeks later, he managed to drag himself away from Woolwich army hospital and took a taxi to his old haunts in Chelsea, where he was eventually found by police, still carrying his drip-feed.

When Lt Lawrence arrived at the army rehabilitation centre at Headley Court, no one knew anything about him. "They didn't seem to know whether I could speak or move. The army just couldn't cope with us. They're used to dealing with accidents on the sports field and guys in their fifties with heart problems."

It was a difficult period in other ways. He split up with his girlfriend. "She couldn't handle it." And after leaving the centre he was mugged and kicked repeatedly in the head in Guildford. The boot of his assailant whom he suspects was a soldier, missed

the exposed part of his brain.

Even while still too ill to move, Lt Lawrence was buoyed up by the idea that, although he would never be able to walk properly again, he might at least be able to drive. He asked the army to help him take a disabled driving test.

"They knew nothing about it. They didn't want to know. Eventually my mother found out the details and drove me to the Queen Elizabeth mobility centre, Banstead. The trials cost me £60, but I passed."

The Swansea Licensing Centre, nevertheless, refused to issue him with a licence. "They told me there was no way I'd be allowed to drive if I'd had a bullet in my head."

His parents helped him to secure an interview with the junior transport minister, Mrs Lynda Chalker. "She told me she would authorise the licence if three Harley Street specialists said I was fit enough. The first two said no, the third yes. Then I went back to the first two and they changed their minds."

The battle to be allowed to drive seemed worthwhile when the Scots Guards told Lt Lawrence that, along with a group of other Falklands casualties, he was to be given a free car as a mark of the nation's gratitude and to help him move around more easily.

The regiment said it would have to be a British car and arranged for them to try some models at a BL dealer in Barnes, south-west London.

The four veterans were invited to a celebration to mark the launch of the Macstro in March 1983, at which the actor Derek Nimmo presented them with symbolic keys to their new cars for the benefit of the press. Lawrence's car was a Rover 2300.

A few weeks later he was sent a bill. Most of the cost of the converted car (£10,500 minus BL's 17 per cent disability discount) was deducted from advances on his South Atlantic Fund settlement, to which no strings were supposed to be attached. In disgust, he traded the BL car for one of his choice.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said he was surprised Lt Lawrence was bringing up the matter after all this time.

Lt Lawrence's fund settlement was relatively generous but using cash from the £15 million fund for free telephone calls home for garrison troops on the island ranks with him.

Since November, he has received a war disablement pension of £8,000 a year. But only a few days ago, he received a letter from the Department of Health and Social Security advising him that his pension is being reviewed. "They're worried I'm getting better."

"When I was in the Falklands I was sure that if we were wounded we would be looked after once we got back to Britain. Others thought the same."

"But even though we were just a handful compared with the World War casualties, the army wasn't prepared for us and the civil servants were even worse."

"No one told us we could claim a mobility allowance, or what sort of money we would get from our pension or the South Atlantic Fund. No one gave us any advice on how to start a new life."

When Lt Lawrence was discharged from the army, he received a letter assuring him he would be useful in the reserve. "They hadn't bothered to find out I was disabled."

"But if you complain, the reaction is: 'Who the hell does this guy think he is?' Disabled people are supposed to sit quietly and be grateful. I did complain and fight back. The guys who didn't got a very raw deal."

Dead sailor is cleared of blame

Jonathan Mills, a naval apprentice weapons artificer, has been cleared of any blame for the accidental firing of the missile which hit and killed him on board the destroyer *Fife* on patrol in the Falklands in February.

The Ministry of Defence has said that disciplinary action is being taken against four Navy personnel involved in the incident which led to his death.

Waldemar Januszczak defends art against its philistine critics

Clear case of tub-thumping

THE LESSER Media Philistine is a nasty little creature. Its chief distinguishing mark is a huge and colourful ignorance which it likes to flaunt on the front pages of newspapers. The creature is a summer visitor which makes its appearance when Parliament has gone into recess and there isn't much news about. Then it puffs out its chest, waddles out of its kennel and goes to visit an art gallery. What it finds there usually makes it go blue in the face and start up an unholy screech of "taxpayers' money." Others join in. Soon the din becomes unbearable.

Two years ago it was a Polaris submarine made out of used tyres by David Mach, which inspired the annual creochony. This year it is a piece of sculpture by Richard Wentworth which can be found in the middle of a survey of the Arts Council and British Council collections.

The sculpture is called Toy and it consists of a galvanised steel wash-tub which has been filled in with metal. Cleverly embedded into the middle of this metal sea is an opened sardine can. The sculptor has said that his sculpture can be seen as a comment on the naval war fought around the Falklands and in particular on the wasteful and ridiculous sinking of the Belgrano.

But it is not this information which has caused the LMP to begin screeching. It is the thought that something made out of a steel tub and a sardine can could ever qualify as art.

"I can hardly believe that even those who sit in judgment on these matters can

believe that an old sardine can floating in a tub is art," pronounces the Tory MP, Anthony Beaumont-Dark. Mr Beaumont-Dark once attended Birmingham College of Art — albeit a long time ago — and ought therefore to know better.

For his benefit and the benefit of Lesser Media Philistines everywhere I will state a simple truth: it is not the materials which make a work of art but what you do with them.

Mr Beaumont-Dark, as a former art student, is no doubt familiar with the name of Titian. Perhaps he has even visited the National Gallery and seen Titian's masterpiece, Bacchus and Ariadne. Well, if he looks into the deep reds of the picture he may find areas of a lake pigment which is made out of an ugly bug called the scale insect, or shield-louse. In fact the colour is obtained from lumps of dead females and unhatched eggs which are found on fig trees and which the National Gallery describes as looking like "solid lumpy excrescence."

Perhaps Mr Beaumont-Dark has heard of the artist Modigliani? The first sculptures he made were carved out of blocks of rubble and old stones he found scattered around the wasteland of Livorno. Does the name Picasso ring a bell? One of his best-known and best-loved sculptures is a witty and dashing likeness of a bull achieved with a simple bicycle seat and handle-bars.

Richard Wentworth is not a revolutionary and anarchistic artist. On the contrary, he is working in a sculptural tradition of ready-made and re-used objects which can be

traced back to the first world war Dadaists and beyond. It was the Dadaists who initially pointed out that in the hands of our society war is a game and human life has become as disposable as old tin cans. The original Dada question, first asked 70 years ago: — If you think what we're doing is absurd, when was the last time you took a look at yourself? — is still being asked here.

I don't expect Mr Beaumont-Dark to agree with that view. I do expect him to know enough about the subject he has chosen to comment upon not to be surprised when art, like history, repeats itself.

The Arts Council collection is a Jaws-like creature which spends most of the year prowling beneath the surface of the art world, in hospitals and libraries, scattered around distant museums or just resting in its underground lair at the Hayward. So huge is the creature that every time it surfaces you seem to see a different bit of it. This time it is the bit containing acquisitions made between 1979 and today, and the creature has been joined at the Serpentine by its close relation, the British Council collection.

The result is a lively and adventurous survey of recent developments in British art, indeed one of the best such surveys I've seen. The last time a large part of the Arts Council collection surfaced — in a Hayward show in 1980 — it was difficult not to be affected by its dull, Seventies greyness. This time it is just as difficult not to notice the furious change in tempo of modern art.

Bruce McLean's Bingo,

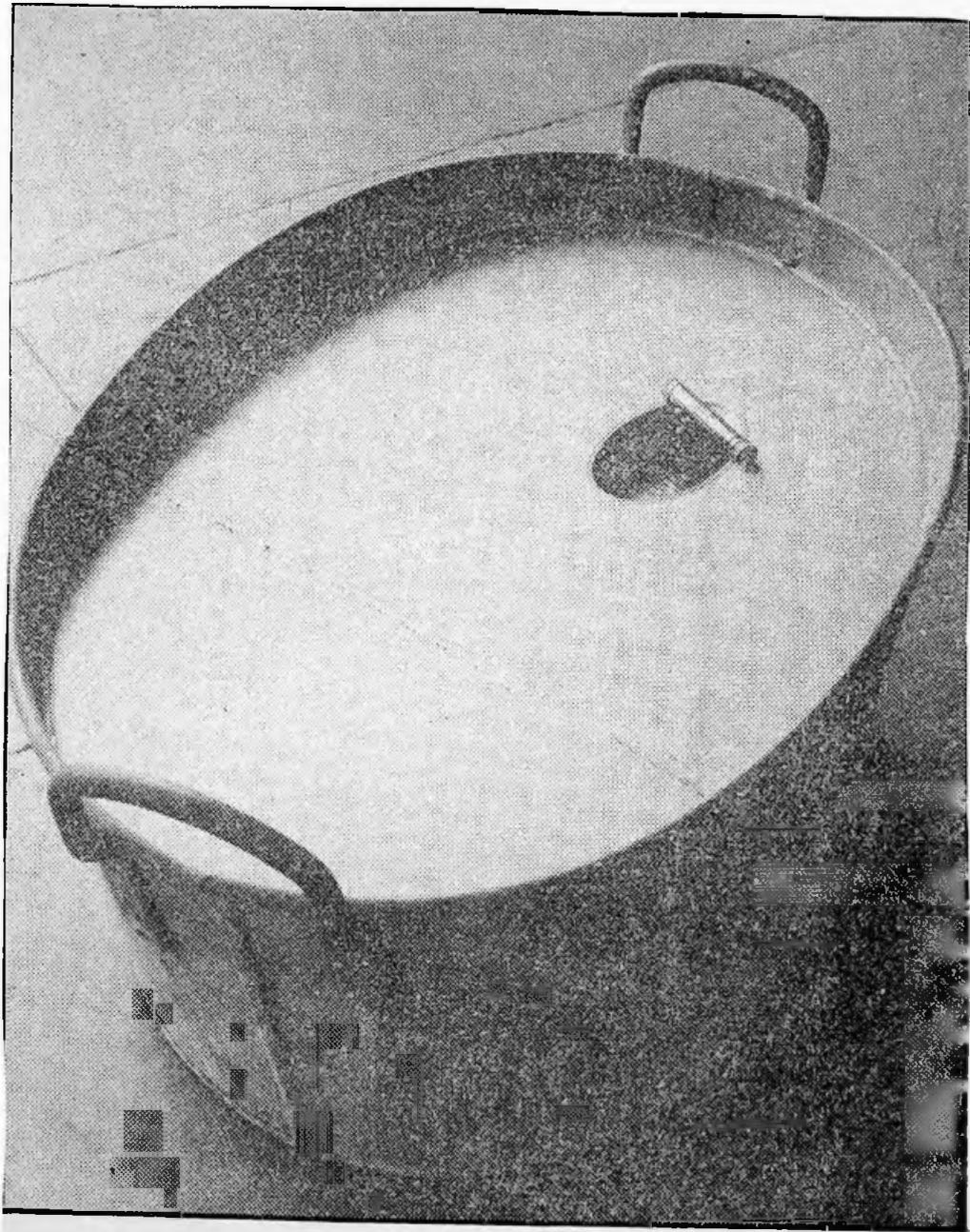
Bingo, Bango, Bongo is a lurid painting as full of movement as a sequence of Muybridge photos. A four-part self-portrait, one for each bongo beat, the painting careers from left to right. The painter waves his hands around and conducts his audience like the caller at a barn dance.

Two areas of recent artistic activity have been strongly emphasised. The most dramatic gallery is the one filled with dark, pessimistic views of our cities and their dwellers. Gilbert and George's SMASH consists of photographs of the piece of graffiti named in the title and the disaffected youths who scrawled it, the whole lot blown up to billboard size. Stuart Brisley's sculpture is a cage filled with old gloves. Brisley's symbolism is almost too obvious: every pair of empty gloves represents another pair of unemployed hands on the register.

The other significant development to be highlighted is the art of the New Romantics, painters and sculptors of large operatic mythologies discovered in the past. Just as Brisley and Gilbert and George wish to confront the grim present, so these New Romantics clearly wish to escape it.

Therese Oulton has painted a swirling landscape filled with mysterious whirlpools and mist-shrouded mountains. It's as if the background of the Mona Lisa had pushed past the figure at the front and demanded a picture to itself.

Home and Abroad at the Serpentine Gallery until August 27.



Richard Wentworth's £600 tin sculpture, said to represent the sinking of the Belgrano

ART OF THE PEOPLE

OSCAR WILDE, WITH BOUNDLESS faith in culture, harangued the miners of Leadville, Colorado, in 1883 on the early Florentine poets, then prefaced an evening's hard drinking with readings from the autobiography of BENVENUTO CELLINI. His audience rioted with enthusiasm. An artistic love affair which, *prima facie*, is no less surprising is sealed today between the burghers of Manchester and the early Siense gold-ground master Duccio di BUONINSEGNA, whose marvellous "Crucifixion" has been saved from the jaws of the Getty Museum for the local art gallery. But Manchester, unlike Leadville, is a declining industrial city with an outstanding record of care for the arts. Most credit for the raising of £1.8 million goes to the ardent director, Mr TIMOTHY CLIFFORD, but no less to the astonishing 45 per cent. of the citizens who supported through an opinion poll the city spending money to acquire the Duccio. The Labour council did not oblige, but the common enthusiasm has been rewarded—an episode which may confound Left-wing theorising about what constitutes "people's art."

No credit reflects, however, on the National Heritage Fund, whose trustees wretchedly refused a £1 million grant to Mr CLIFFORD on the day that they found £500,000 to restore Clevedon Pier. Its dangerous thinking was revealed by Mr CLIVE JENKINS, who owes his seat to the spreading of union grandees like treacle through the quangos. "A very nice picture," Mr JENKINS allowed, but not one to compete in popularity with the pier. If the Heritage Fund was swayed by nonsense of this order, Lord CHARTERIS, its chairman, should tell us and open a debate. Nothing could further stimulate losses from Britain of great art than the opening of a conceptual divide between fine and popular art, with money denied to the former but available for the latter (to save, perhaps, such masterpieces of GLC sculpture as Mr RICHARD WENTWORTH's bathtub and sardine tin, "The Sinking of the Belgrano").

A miraculous consensus to preserve fine art has held between Right and Left in politics since Mr HUGH DALTON's foundation in 1944 of the National Land Fund, to save pre-eminent houses and works of art. Its child, the Heritage Fund, was not born to destroy that consensus or to frustrate its purposes.

The last time that Anglia Television sent their roving cameras to an out-of-the-way Atlantic island—South Georgia—all hell broke loose. One can only hope that it was not an omen for the company's more recent expedition to St Helena: *An Island In Exile* (ITV).

Graham Creelman's hour-long documentary concentrated almost entirely on the preoccupation of the 5,500 islanders with their lack of job prospects. About 90 per cent. of them work for the colonial government; they are barred from settling in Britain, though technically they enjoy British citizenship. Unlike the Falklanders—according to Mr Creelman's narrative—most of them would rather be somewhere else.

Back in Britain: Sir Bernard Braine argued their case: "We have made use of all these places, and we have an obligation to them." His concern and that of the programme was admirable; but it hardly filled a full-length documentary space. There must be more to this picturesque mid-Atlantic island than discontent, but apart from a brief glimpse of Napoleon's bed the programme was not interested.

St Helena islanders feel deserted by UK

By Henry Stanhope, Diplomatic Correspondent

The islanders of St Helena, where Napoleon died in exile, feel themselves abandoned by Britain, according to a television programme to be screened tonight.

One of their complaints is that a series of nationality acts have deprived them of British citizenship and the right of abode in Britain.

Another concerns their financial circumstances, given the basic wage of £30 a week and food prices which are 60 per cent higher than those in the mother country.

In both respects the "Saints" as they are sometimes known, feel themselves hard done by when compared with their South Atlantic "neighbours" on the Falkland Islands. This emerges in the programme "St Helena - Island in Exile" by Anglia Television, and being shown on ITV.

St Helena reentered the

headlines earlier this year when Prince Andrew visited the island for celebrations to mark its 150 years as a British colony.

But behind the ceremonies lay an island beset by grave economic problems and in urgent need of investment, where nine out of 10 people are employed by the Government just to keep the administration "ticking over."

Mr John Massingham, who was Governor at the time of the royal visit, says of the islanders: "They feel cast off by Britain. They feel they ought to have the right of entry. There's a mood of despondency."

The island's difficulties, which are only partly allayed by £7m annual support from Britain, have awakened the interest of a number of MPs, some of whom have been shown an advance of tonight's programme.

WRAF HAS 22 ON DUTY IN ASCENSION

By Our Defence Correspondent

The Women's Royal Air Force has 22 women stationed in Ascension, undertaking air traffic control, telecommunications, supply, driving, clerical and stewardess work. There is also a nurse from the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service.

The Defence Ministry is spending £70 million over three years on capital improvements to the garrison's facilities. The Services' accommodation complex at Travellers' Hill, near Georgetown has been completed.

At Wideawake airfield there is a project under way to enlarge the apron and extend the aircraft taxiways. These improvements are designed to ease the problem of handling the wide-bodied aircraft due to stage through Ascension, en route to the Falklands, once the new airfield opens at Mount Pleasant next April.

DIVERS FLY OUT

Falklands veterans

The Royal Navy's specialist team of mine clearance divers flew to Egypt yesterday to join the hunt for Red Sea mines.

The 15 men of the "World Wide Fly Away Team," based at Portsmouth, are led by Lt Stephen Field, 35. Each has seen service in the Falklands and is trained to dive to a depth of 300 metres.

The team flew from RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire, in two Hercules transport aircraft. Their equipment included a lorry, two Land-Rovers and trailers packed with specialist equipment and explosives.

MP joins tin-can rumpus

By Michael Imeson

The controversy about the Arts Council's £600 purchase of a sardine tin in a steel bath tub took a further turn yesterday when Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark, Conservative MP for Selly Oak, said he would demand an explanation from Lord Gowrie, Minister for the Arts.

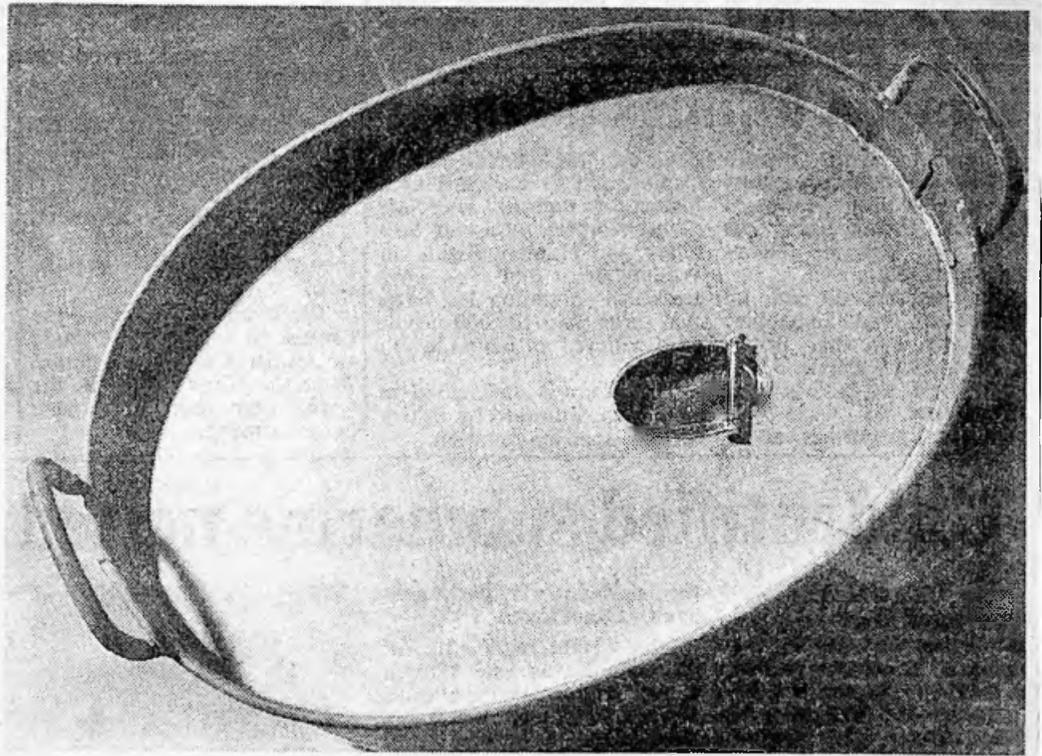
The items form a sculpture which is supposed to represent the sinking of the Argentine warship *Belgrano* in the Falklands conflict. It is on display at the Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, London. The sardine tin "floats" on steel sheeting soldered into the tub.

Mr Beaumont-Dark said he wished he had known that the Arts Council was interested in such works. "I would have let them have an old sardine tin for no more than £100 - and saved the taxpayer a bit of money," he said.

"I am thinking of buying a wrecked car, calling it 'New Technology', and seeing if I can get £5,000 for it."

On a more serious note, he said: "I can hardly believe that even those who sit in judgment on these matters can believe that an old sardine tin floating in a tin tub is art."

He will see Lord Gowrie soon to ask for his intervention to "ensure that this kind of



the toy in the bath-tub is a battleship in the South Atlantic. Even seen as ordinary objects the combination of elements is arresting and mysterious.

Object and subject: The controversial bathtub sculpture and the gallery's explanation.

sense of humour at public expense is not allowed to continue".

Lord Gowrie was unavailable for comment yesterday but a spokesman said the Minister for the Arts operates on an

arm's length principle and would not interfere with artistic choice.

The organizer of the Serpentine Gallery, Mr Alister Warman, said that the sculpture, made by Mr Richard Wen-

tworth, had received a positive reaction from the public.

"Mr Wentworth has brought together two very ordinary things to create a new image," he said.

New modern art, page 12

BBC launches £150m autumn offensive with soap opera surprises

By David Hewson, Arts Correspondent

Dr Henry Kissinger, the former Secretary of State of the United States and Mr Gerald Ford, the former US president, and his wife, Betty, are among some of the American soap opera surprises in the BBC's autumn schedule. All three make guest appearances in the BBC's *Dynasty* series, the American soap sidekick to *Dallas*, both part of its continuing reliance on transatlantic drama.

The BBC announced its autumn schedule yesterday and disclosed that, in spite of the criticism of its purchase of *Thorn Birds* earlier this year, it had bought a new US mini-series, *The Master of the Game*, which lasts nine hours.

The independent television companies announce their pro-

gramme strategy on Sunday for the crucial autumn viewing period. But it is known that it will include two US mini-series, *Princess Daisy* and *Lace*.

The £150m autumn season is the first indication since the recent changes in the BBC's management, that its broadcasting philosophy has switched towards light entertainment.

The bulk of the BBC's programmes is, however, home produced and ranges from a new Ronnie Barker comedy series, a late night chat show for Terry Wogan, and a play about the fate of four Welsh Guardsmen involved in the Falklands conflict.

The autumn schedule was largely inherited by Mr Bill Cotton when he became the managing director of BBC

Television earlier this year.

The independent television companies were hardly surprised to see Mr Cotton, whose affection for light entertainment is well known, put comedy, quiz shows, and variety into the vanguard of the battle for ratings against them.

The BBC has been criticized for failing to win 50 per cent of the broadcasting audience for most of this year. Mr Cotton did nothing to dispel the idea that yesterday's schedules launch was anything but a counter offensive.

He added that so long as the corporation continued to make high quality programmes that attracted the viewing public, its licence fee, due for renegotiation later this year, would not be under threat.

Main features in BBC schedule

Main features of the BBC autumn schedule:

New comedy series: Ronnie Barker in *The Magnificent Evans*, about a Welsh photographer and antique dealer written by Roy Clarke, author of *Open All Hours* and *Last of the Summer Wine*.

'Allo 'Allo!, a new comedy set in a small town in Normandy during the German occupation. *Hi-de-Hi!* returns, as does *Are You Being Served*, for its last series. These three are all written by David Croft and Jeremy Lloyd.

Variety: Les Dawson takes over from Terry Wogan for a new series of *Blankety Blank*, Bob Monkhouse launches a quiz show, *Bob's Full House*, and Lenny Henry is given his own series. Terry Wogan starts a late night chat show, and *The Two Ronnies* return.

BBC 2 features a run of one-off comedy programmes and Victoria Wood writes and stars in her own series.

Drama: *Bird of Prey 2*, a sequel to the popular computer fraud thriller featuring Richard Griffiths. *Cold Warrior*, a series of six original half-hour spy stories, and a new thriller, *The Secret Servant*.

HG Wells' *The Invisible Man* and Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda* are featured in six-part



BBC stars: Dr Kissinger (left) and Gerald Ford

dramatizations. Returning are *Tenko*, *The District Nurse*, and *Juliet Bravo*. Single plays include *Terra Nova*, about Scott of the Antarctic; *The Mimosa Boys*, the story of four Welsh Guardsmen in the Falklands campaign; Graham Greene's *Doctor Fischer of Geneva*, in which James Mason makes his last leading appearance; and seven plays by Frederic Raphael under the title *Oxbridge Blues*.

A nine-hour, three-part American mini-series, *Master of the Game*, based on a Sidney Sheldon novel, is the main new imported series. *Dallas* and *Dynasty* return, the latter including guest appearances by

Henry Kissinger and Gerald and Betty Ford.

Feature films: British television debuts for *The Elephant Man*, Bo Derek's *Tarzan the Apeman*, Steve McQueen's last film, *The Hunter*, Peter Ustinov in *Charlie Chan* and the *Curse of the Dragon Queen*, Sean Connery in *Cuba*, and *Honky Tonk Freeway*.

Mel Brooks' *High Anxiety*, *Silent Movie* and *Young Frankenstein* will be shown in a short season on BBC2, which will also present a longer run of science fiction and fantasy films including Nicolas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell to Earth* and Bertrand Tavernier's *Death-watch*.

Current Affairs: Esther Rantzen's new series *Family Life* looks at issues affecting the family. Lord Grimond is featured in a three-part series, *The 20th Century Remembered*, and a documentary series tells the story of The Special Operations Executive.

The BBC's science output includes a six-part serial about the life and work of Sigmund Freud.

Arts: Two new productions from Glyndebourne, *The Coronation of Poppea* and *Arabella*, and four one-hour films about dance are the chief additions to its existing arts coverage.

Row brews over £600 sardine tin sculpture

THE Arts Minister, Lord Gowrie, was asked yesterday to demand an explanation from the Arts Council for "unbelievably" spending £600 on a sculpture comprising an empty sardine tin, a piece of sheet steel and a galvanised steel wash tub.

The items are fitted together to represent the sinking of the Argentine battleship, the General Belgrano, in the Falklands war and the piece is on display at the Serpentine Gallery in Kensington Gardens, London.

Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark, Conservative MP for Birmingham Selly Oak, said yesterday: "I would have let them have an old sardine tin for no more than £100 — and saved the taxpayer a bit of money. I can hardly believe that even those who sit in judgment on these matters can believe that an old sardine tin floating in a tin tub is art.

"At the very least, Lord Gowrie must step in to ensure that this kind of sense of humour at public expense is not allowed to continue. No one in their right mind, however artistic, can look upon a sardine tin in a bath as worth £600. Has no one told them that there are scores of sardine tins littered around Britain's rubbish dumps?"

The gallery organiser Alister Warman, said that about 20 other would-be buyers had been chasing the work, which shows the sardine tin "floating" on a steel "sea" inside the tub.

"The Arts Council got there first — and in my mind got a very good sculpture for a very modest price," he said. "Obviously, people will disagree about the merits — but this is the way with every individual work of art."

The sculptor, Richard Wentworth, said of his critics: "It could be described as pomposity meets sensitivity. If one made things to be liked the world would be very anaemic."

The idea for the piece, entitled "Toy," came to him when his children were younger "and at the time the debate surrounding the Belgrano was raging . . . But it could easily be the Coventry or the Sheffield."

Daily Mail
16.8.84 (TV Review)

ANTHONY ANDREWS' exquisite voice seemed just a mite too plummy for a commentary accusing the British Government of serious political and social neglect of **St. Helena: An Island in Exile** (ITV). His gorgeous delivery seemed at odds with the

carping tone of Graham Creelman's script.

Prince Andrew's recent visit to this southern Atlantic hideaway—deathplace of the Emperor Napoleon, neighbour of the strategically important Ascension Island—has brought it some much-needed attention.

St Helena has a population of 6,000 and absolutely nothing else. Its only industry—the harvesting of flax—was destroyed by the intro-

duction of synthetic cord fibres to the world market in the 1960's.

St Helenians, who are of white, Indian-looking, African and Polynesian ancestry, hold British passports but do not have the right of residence in the U.K.

The film pleaded for more Government aid and interest; what it seems to me to need is investment.

In sketching the character of the people, the programme should have told us precisely what their religion is. If the British way of life is entrenched, they ought to be Anglicans, surely?

Daily Mail
17th August 1984

£13m radar order

THE Spanish Navy has placed a £13 million order for a highly-successful British airborne early warning radar system originally used in the Falklands.

Falklands airport is now taking shape

By Maj.-Gen. EDWARD FURSDON
Defence Correspondent

THE "taking shape" of the new airfield at Mount Pleasant and the construction of a jetty by Port Stanley are two of the most noticeable changes which have taken place in the Falklands over the past months.

All the basic foundations for the main airfield runway have been completed and considerable progress has been made with the associated accommodation.

Part of the indoor recreational area is functioning and a visiting Combined Services entertainment party was recently able to perform there under cover.

The alongside jetty at Mare Harbour, to the south of the airfield, is performing well and the haul road connecting the two is well established. Both the Government's Property Services Agency and the contracting consortium of Laing-Mowlem-Amey Hoadstone Construction are said to be very confident that an airfield "with an initial operating capability" will open on target in April 1985.

Ascension flights

This means that wide-bodied aircraft from Ascension can land, refuel and be turned round for the flight back. Development to a fully operational airfield will follow later.

The Falklands Interim Port and Storage System a prefabricated floating jetty with accompanying storage warehouses is now installed in Stanley Harbour, giving the Falklands Garrison an excellent alongside ship offloading facility for the first time.

The Royal Navy continues with its challenging task, often in appalling weather, of maritime surveillance and patrol, although Argentine attempts at incursions into the Protection Zone have become rare.



Picture: ANTHONY MARSHALL

Miss Maya Tus studying the controversial "Sinking of the Belgrano" exhibit at the Serpentine Gallery.

£600 FOR TIN-IN-TUB ARTWORK

By R. BARRY O'BRIEN

THE Arts Council has aroused controversy by paying £600 for a "sculpture" consisting of an open sardine tin, a piece of steel sheeting and a galvanised steel washtub.

The sardine tin is said to represent the Argentine battleship Belgrano, sunk in the Falklands War, floating like a toy boat in a bath on the piece of steel sheeting cut and soldered into the washtub.

A descriptive note says the work by Richard Wentworth at the Arts Council's Serpentine Gallery was made when the artists two small sons were very young and shortly after the sinking of the Belgrano:

"The oval sardine tin which 'floats' in the tub is a kind that is mostly found in Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries—the toy in the bathtub is a battleship in the South Atlantic."

The sculpture was among £90,000 of art purchases by the Arts Council last year. It is one of 50 items in the "Home and Abroad" exhibition of recent acquisitions for the Arts Council and British Council collections at the Serpentine Gallery in Kensington Gardens.

St Helena is a little chip of the Empire. Its people are British but they can't settle here. JOHN CUNNINGHAM reports

Britain's island of insecurity in an ocean of doubt

ST HELENA is a dormant dot—in the South Atlantic where The Big Event — it occurs every three years—is the departure of Her Majesty's Governor and the arrival of his successor. From time to time, Westminster MPs breeze in, and huff about this post-colonial anomaly; rarer still is a royal visit. And rarest of all, a television crew calls.

By the end of summer, St Helena unusually will have had all four within a few months. Prince Andrew discovered the night away in the tiny capital, Jamestown. But neither he, nor the couple of back-bench MPs due next month will have as much impact as the team from Anglia television.

Their documentary on the island (ITV, tomorrow, at 10.30 pm) might do more than a file of governors to persuade the British Government to reconsider the fate of a community which sees itself as much a prisoner on the island as was Napoleon, who died there in exile, in 1821.

St Helena is a jigsaw of post-empire history, whose problems are disproportionate in relation to its size, its

costs, and its strategic importance. After 150 years, it is one bit of empire that Britain cannot shake off. Its people are British and, though not allowed to settle here, there is no demand for independence; there is no Argentina to grab it from us. And there is no easy way to end its almost total financial dependence.

It would be difficult to construct a tiny society of greater pointlessness than exists on St Helena. Once it was prosperous, when islanders vicariously sailed ships on the run homeward from India, up to 25 years ago, it profitably cultivated flax to make strings for British post offices, but that was cut when the GPO went synthetic.

Now, most of those in the population of 5,500 who work are doing time-filling projects for the government. It is virtually an island on the dole, to the tune of about £7 millions a year from Britain.

The islanders, a racial mix of European, Asian and African, are cravenly loyal subjects. They dole on the Queen, are mostly Protestants; their culture is a quaintly time-stopped British one. Their only language is English, though their songs and their slang is dated. They play cricket, sing Anglican hymns, and are so law-abiding that there have only been two murders this century. And they are proud of their dark blue British passports.

The passports symbolise the muddle which the British government has got itself into in deciding the fate of its remaining mid-ocean possessions: the Falklands, Diego Garcia. In the case of St Helena, for all its isolation, there are links with two landfalls which need definition. First, Britain. Islanders are not eligible for full British citizenship. Residence here was disallowed under the 1979 Nationality Act.

The Minister for Overseas Development, Timothy Raison, says on the programme that there can be no automatic right to settle in Britain for people from dependent territories. In spite of its tiny population (but nobody is suggesting that all St Helenians want to evacuate to London) there can be no special treatment.

The second unclear link is with Ascension. This is smaller and more barren than St Helena; its 700 miles north-west of it; and both islands share the same governor. But while St Helena is farmed off by the Foreign Office to the Overseas Development Administration, the ruling voice in Ascension belongs to the Ministry of Defence, because the rock is a British and US missile testing base and listening post. There could be better integrated policies to link the economies of the two islands, one with a labour surplus; the other needing to import all its manpower.

The islanders, for their part, lack a collective anger, which might bring change through pressure. A new generation is having to come to accept that the escape routes so recently available — there are 7,000 St Helenians in Britain, and several thousand in South Africa — are no longer available.

You can see what this means to one family: Mrs Doris Leo is over here on a visit to her daughter in Camberley. "Having a British passport isn't worth anything," she told me. "It takes years to save for a passage, our wages are so small. And when we come here, we can stay for only three or six months." Mrs Leo believes that it is the nationality issue which most engages the islanders. But it is intimately linked with job possibilities at home.

The Leo family shows the limited range of employment. Mrs Leo runs a cafe; her husband is in the police. A son of 19 earns £12.50 a week in a supermarket; another daughter works in the philatelic bureau (stamps are valuable currency-earners); two other sons, of 17 and 20 "just manage to get along," hoping that they will be able to leave home and go to work on Ascension.

One Leo son is already there, among an elite of some 400 St Helenians employed on the British installations, earning over £100 — more than three times the basic wage at home. Ascension could become a sort of boom town for the islanders. One June day two years ago, during the Falklands conflict, its airfield became the busiest in the world, with

500 helicopter flights and a further 100 fixed-wing flights handled during a 24-hour period.

NASA and the US Military presence continue there, but since that, the RAF is developing Ascension as a permanent, major staging post between Britain and the Falklands. There could be two possibilities of tilting St Helena's economy towards self-sufficiency, using Ascension. Simon Gillett, island treasurer and development secretary for three years till 1981, told the Guardian, "Ascension is costing Britain £150 million a year. As defence interests are there, they should spend some of the money to benefit St Helena."

Eric Benjamin, a senior member of the island council says on the Anglia programme that there is a danger of foreign influence if Britain fails to give proper support. Bernard Braine echoes this view.

If St Helena is "driven into delinquency," as he puts it, it could become attractive in strategic terms to the Russian navy, and threaten Western interests. That may be a long shot, but the

thought might just be enough to get heads together in the Defence and Foreign ministries to map in a future for St Helena.



UNFORGETTABLE TOUR ENDS FOR ROYAL SCOTS

South Georgia has been called the "Island at the edge of the World", but has been safe in the hands of the Jocks from The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment).

The men from the First Battalion have been on South Georgia for several months and fell in love with the place.

So much so that they even played lullabies on their pipes to the elephant seals and penguins. The detachment from The Royal Scots was

stationed on South Georgia as part of the First Battalion's tour of duty in the Falklands. They were ably supported by Royal Engineers and the Royal Signals kept them in touch with the outside world.

The objective in the minds of all the Jocks was to prevent desecration of this beautiful ice-bound nature reserve. This involved long, arduous and hazardous patrols across mountains and glaciers which take the breath away with their rugged beauty.

Hours of toiling up snow covered slopes were rewarded by views which can only be equalled in the Alps or the Himalayas.

However, these views were rarely seen and savoured; for the majority of the time the island is shrouded in cloud.

High winds are a feature of all mountainous areas, but few surpass the ferocity of the South Georgia winds. The Jocks have even had to disregard their traditional Tam O'Shanter because of its aerodynamic properties. They

Privates Stewart and Burnett enjoy the breathtaking views...

were happy to keep their ears warm with the extreme cold weather hat. One patrol was caught in a 90 mph blizzard.

Even with full bergens on their backs, the soldiers were being blown over and swept some 15 yards by the force of the wind. When they sought shelter in their bivouac bags behind a hastily built snow wall, they found that the lower part of their bodies was being uplifted by the force of the wind.

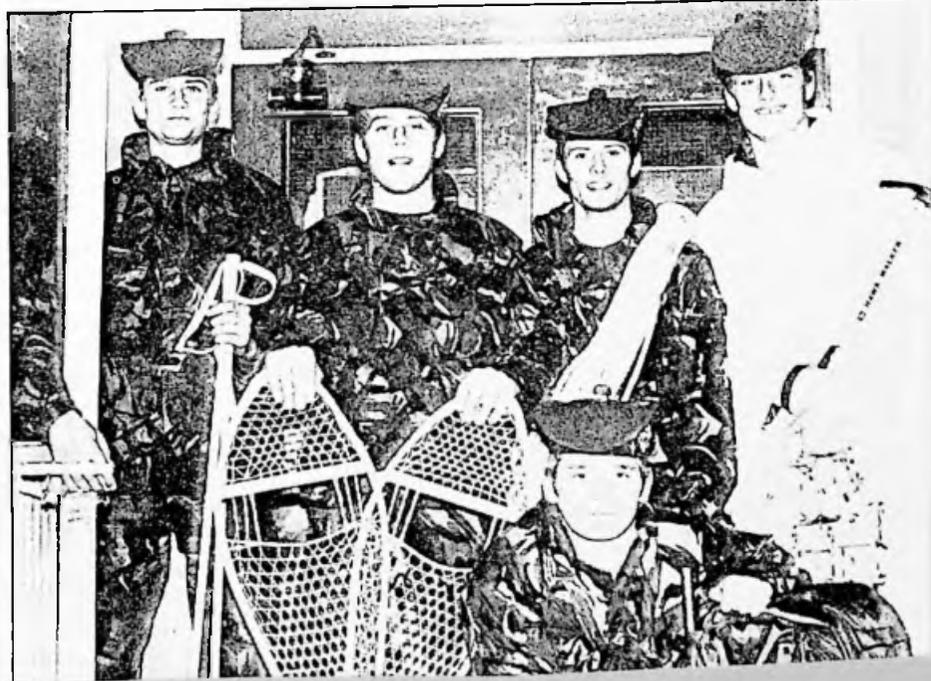
The highlight of most weeks for the detachment was when the mail was airdropped into the bay beside their base at King Edward Point. The frequent visits by Royal Naval Ships also allowed helicopter borne patrols to be inserted into further parts of the island.

The days of footslogging became numbered when the snow level was lowered and all the lads issued with brand new winter warfare kit.

The Jocks should now be back in Kirknewton, near Edinburgh, after a tour the 1st Battalion The Royal Scots will never forget.

Soldier Magazine
13 August 1984

Privates Laughland, Rose, Fallon, Crawford and Cunningham welcome the new winter warfare kit.



Daily Mail
13th August 1984

Peter Scott

RECOVERING from a heart attack, naturalist Sir Peter Scott is not being cheered by the prospect of his explorer father, Captain Scott of the Antarctic, being rubbished on British TV screens.

Despite protests, Central TV is putting the finishing touches to its mini-series, which depicts Scott as a bungling fool who should never have been let loose in the Antarctic. It also claims that while he was snowbound, his wife Kathleen was having an affair with the Norwegian explorer Nansen.

The series will be screened in February although Lord Kennet—Kathleen's son by her second husband—says he does not believe his mother had an affair; and Sir Peter has told friends he is 'astonished and disgusted' this film is being made.

Standard
13.8.84

Blast victim marches 25 miles

AN ARMY major who lost his left leg below the knee clearing a minefield in the Falklands has completed a 25-mile march in the Royal Military Police and City of Chichester international march over the South Downs.

He is Major Stephen Hambrook, 51, of the Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal Regiment, who won the George Medal for dealing with an unexploded bomb in London in 1971.

Major Hambrook, based at Chatham, Kent, completed yesterday's march with nine RE Bomb Disposal team mates in 4½ hours. More than 600 people took part in the annual march.

Time to adopt our orphans

I WAS recently on Mauritius, a pretty speck of land in the western Indian Ocean, a place I recall from my stamp-collecting days as once a steadfast British colony. It was one of the spoils of Waterloo, and until independence 16 years ago was run by London - traffic on the left, policemen in khaki shorts and so on. Today, you would hardly know the British had even passed through.

All the good hotels are French. There are straw baskets of baguettes in the market. There is wine - *mise en bouteille en Maurice* - on every café table. The tricolour seems to fly from every boat and adorn every Renault and Peugeot bumper. While British Airways limps into Plaisance airport just once a week, via Khartoum and Lilongwe, there are five Air France jumbos and dozens of charter flights from Orly every week. France, it seems, just about owns the place again.



COUNTERPOINT

by Simon Winchester

The air connection appears to be the key. One reason there is French capital and French interest in Mauritius is that it is so easy to get from Paris to Port Louis, its capital. This has nothing to do with Mauritius itself, however, and everything to do with the different ways France and Britain manage their post-colonial responsibilities.

It is because of an island 90 miles west of Mauritius, a small morsel of basalt called Réunion that France was allowed to keep after Waterloo. Réunion -

beaches, palm trees and a 10,000ft volcano - was a French colony, but since 1946 has been an "overseas département" of France. It is as French a piece of real estate as the Dordogne; Saint-Denis, its capital, as French a city as Annecy; and the Réunioniste as much a citizen as a Parisian.

Being a French département, Réunion gets highly subsidised flights from Paris. It is entitled to the same privileges from Air France and Air Inter as Marseilles or Besançon. It prospers while Mauritius, largely ignored by us, shares in its good fortune because it is an ideal place for the French planes to stop over.

There are many French overseas départements. Guadeloupe, in the Caribbean, is one, as is the nearby island of Martinique. Guiana, from where the Ariane rocket is periodically fired (and whence comes Cayenne pepper), is a part of France in South America. Then

there is Mayotte, north of Madagascar; and the tiny islands of St Pierre and Miquelon in the mouth of the St Lawrence river, all freezing cod fishermen and gendarme cadets.

All these places have their subsidised flights, and thus feel they are part of the faraway mainland. More important, all send representatives to the National Assembly in Paris. And, perhaps most important of all, their native citizens are natives of France too, no questions asked.

So, if the French can do it - why not the British? Indeed, what policy does Britain have for her small array of colonial responsibilities?

This old question will be raised again next Wednesday, when ITV screens a poignant portrait of the half-forgotten British colony of St Helena in the south Atlantic. There, 5,000 people - all of them black - exist in idyllic penury, subjects of the Queen who are none the less forbidden from settling in Britain. They are instead condemned for ever to their tiny rock, administered by a resentful mother country with no idea of what to do with this burdensome relic of imperial history.

St Helena is not alone. The question of what to do with empire is being raised this year in discussions over the fate of Gibraltar. Hong Kong's destiny seems to have been settled by the simple fact of threatened *force majeure*: history will judge whether Britain extricated itself with anything more than expediency from this largest of its post-colonial problems. But there are other places still.

What do we do, for example, with Pitcairn, an island 4,000 miles out in the south Pacific that is only home to 44 Seventh Day Adventists? Whither Anguilla, or Tristan da Cunha, or - it still must be asked - the Falklands? Who wants Montserrat, or the Chagos Islands, or Grand Turk?

The French subsumed almost all their possessions into the mother country in 1946. Why cannot we, provided the inhabitants agree, do the same today? These new "offshore counties" would have full representation, in either the Commons or the Lords; the citizenry could be accorded all the rights of British citizenship; and Britons at home could be as free to live, work and invest in Pitcairn or Cayman or South Georgia as if they were the Isle of Wight.

The benefits would be immense - greater for the islands than for the mainland at first, perhaps, but in the long term inevitably mutual. The old colonies would feel secure and wanted once again; they would no longer be a charge on the parish; they could prosper, and grow; and there would no longer be guilt and resentment built into the relationship.

The alternative is that our 16 dependent territories simply slide slowly into misery - poor, forgotten, bitter, unhappy. That would be an improper end to a once-glorious empire and one which, if we have the courage to take a lesson from the French, could so easily be avoided.

● *St Helena - Island in Exile* will be shown on ITV next Wednesday at 10.30pm.

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Guardian 11/8/84

Falkland seamen killed

By Martin Wainwright

Two seamen were killed and four were seriously injured when a freak wave struck one of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's largest tankers in the South Atlantic.

The RFA Olwen was riding a severe storm 700 miles north-east of the Falkland Islands when the accident happened late on Thursday. The 11,000-ton ship was taking 25,000 tons of fuel to Port Stanley on a regular trip.

The Ministry of Defence named the dead men last night as Mr John Hocking, aged 53, a carpenter from Plymouth, and Mr Ronald Rowsell, aged 48, a seaman from Southampton. Their next of kin have been informed.

During a lull in the weather, which had seen waves rising to 45 feet, a party of officers and men was sent forward to secure oil compartments on the fore-castle. The men were on deck when the wave struck, crushing them against hatches and fittings.

The injured, two officers and two seamen, were flung about the fore-castle head.

The Olwen carries a crew of 25 officers and 62 ratings and usually has four Sea King helicopters on board. There were no reports of serious damage to the ship, which continued her passage to Port Stanley yesterday at reduced speed.

Daily Mail
11.8.84

Sailors killed

TWO seamen died and four were badly hurt when a freak wave hit the deck of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary oil tanker Olwen in the South Atlantic, 700 miles north-east of the Falklands, the Defence Ministry announced.

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RATING 'DISILLUSIONED' AFTER HOMECOMING

Falkland sailor hit an admiral out of boredom

By JAMES GRYLLS

A SAILOR on parade punched an admiral in the chest to show how bored he had become with Navy life since returning from action in the Falklands, a court martial heard yesterday.

Fergus Lyons, 20, who served on the flagship aircraft carrier HMS Hermes in the South Atlantic, was dismissed from the service and jailed for 18 months for his attack on the Commander in Chief of the Home Fleet, Admiral Sir Desmond Cassidi, at an inspection at Portsmouth.

Another senior officer, Provost Marshal Lt.-Comm. Robert Doyle, realised that Lyons was about to lash out at the approaching admiral and grabbed his arm, slowing down the blow.

The inspection had been taking place at the naval barracks, where Lyons was already serving detention.

Defending officer Lieutenant Bernard Davies said Lyons had been in the Navy for three years, serving with enthusiasm in the Falklands.

Disillusion

'He was a happy man, but when he returned to this country he became bored and disillusioned with life ashore. He started drinking heavily,' Lieutenant Davies said.

In December last year, Lyons, from Wiltshire, gave 18 months notice of his intention to leave the Navy, but found life intolerable. He was sentenced to 19 days' for being absent without leave, convicted of drunkenness in March, and given 60 days in July for desertion.

'In detention, he thought he was wasting his time and the Navy's and he planned the assault to make his point. He is not a vicious man, and did not hit the admiral on the face because he wanted to do the least physical harm.'

Lyons later told an investigating officer: 'I did not want to hurt him. I wanted to make my point.'



FERGUS LYONS: Swearing



ADMIRAL CASSIDI: Inspection

The lure of South Atlantic

From Peter Davenport
Matlock

The "sold" sign had been nailed to the estate agent's board in the stone house in Thatcher's Lane, the removal men were packing the last cases and boxes as Peter and Jackie Gilding reflected on their decision to return with their family to the Falkland Islands.

"We seemed to spend the whole time either talking about the place or waiting for letters from friends still there. One day we just looked at each other and said "This is silly, why don't we go back? Now we are," Mrs Gilding said.

At midnight on Sunday, Peter Gilding, former headmaster of the secondary school in Port Stanley, his wife aged 34 and their two daughters, Debbie, aged 11, Sarah, aged seven, will take off from RAF Brize Norton on the first leg of a two-week journey to the islands they last saw two years ago.

"The place just gets in your bloodstream: it becomes addictive," Mr Gilding, who is returning to a teaching post at his old school of 120 pupils, said "It's a different way of life and we have all realized just how much we missed it.



Mr and Mrs Gilding ready to return to Port Stanley with daughters Sarah (left) and Debbie.

"We are going back there to settle for good and make a future for us and the children. We can't wait to get back."

Peter Gilding, who is 39, went to Port Stanley 15 years ago as a contract teacher. Once there, he fell in love with the daughter of the superintendent of education.

They married and made regular trips back to England from their home in Racecourse

Road, Port Stanley. The couple even bought a house in the Peak District village of Tansley, near Matlock, where Mr Gilding's family ran a pub and restaurant.

When the Argentine forces invaded, they left Port Stanley for their young daughters' safety and went to stay with friends at a farm in Green Patch, 12 miles into The Camp, the hinterland of the islands.

The family decided to leave in July, 1982. The last they saw of Port Stanley was a town devastated by the war. But back in England they discovered that the lure of the islands was to prove stronger than they had imagined.

The children were a big influence in the decision to return. Last year, Debbie went back to Stanley for what was meant to be a two-month holiday. It lasted seven months and she returned anxious for the family to go back.

Reports that the island's way of life has been changed by the military garrison have not put them off.

"The islanders we know appreciate the troops have to be there. It had to change after the invasion but it is still the place we want to live and bring up our family," Mrs Gilding said.

Falklands airport progress

By Bridget Bloom,
Defence Correspondent

DRAMATIC progress in building the Falklands airport has been made in the last nine months, according to Mr John Stanley, Minister for the Armed Forces, who has just returned from the islands.

Mr Stanley said in London yesterday that the main 8,500 ft runway at Mount Pleasant, south of Port Stanley, was expected to be operational next April, though all the installations at the £240m airport might not be completed for a further year.

Mr Stanley praised the contractors—a joint venture company formed by John Laing Construction, John Mowlem Construction and Amey Road Construction—for progress made.

The airport is expected to enable a substantial reduction in the estimated 4,000-strong military garrison, though Mr Stanley refused to say by how much.

He also spoke of the "enormous step forward" made in improving facilities on Ascension Island, essential forward base for the air and set-link to the Falklands.

The MoD plans to spend £27m this year to improve accommodation and the Wide-awake airfield, on Ascension, in addition to £33m between 1982 and 1984, and £11m which is planned for next year. The MoD says the sums fall within the special Falklands budget, which this year is set at £584m. Last year's Falklands budget was £642m; next year's will be £522m.

Mr Stanley also visited South Georgia and said the MoD was not thinking of upgrading either the jetty there nor of building an air-strip.

The minister confirmed that there had been no incidents nor military threats to the Falklands since the advent of the Alfonsín government in Argentina late last year. He said the 150-mile Falklands protection zone, which replaced the 250-mile exclusion zone imposed during the conflict, was being respected.

Mr Stanley said he thought islanders had been relieved to learn, following the breakdown of talks between Argentina and the UK in Berne last month, that Britain was not prepared to negotiate away its sovereignty over the islands.

Falklands Servicemen to lose £1 allowance

By OUR DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Falklands local overseas allowance payment of £1 a day to Servicemen and Servicewomen has been cut to 50p a day as from Aug. 1. It is to be cut out altogether as from Oct. 1.

These moves follow approval by the Defence Ministry of the recommendations of its Local Overseas Allowance Review Team which visited the Falklands in January.

The argument is that Local Overseas Allowance — which is paid tax free — is paid to Service individuals to compensate them for the higher prices charged locally and applying in the places where they are stationed, as compared with equivalent prices in Britain.

It is ironic that the Review Team found — as could well be expected — that due to the lack of facilities in the Falklands, there were few opportunities for the Service people to spend their pay.

Taking into account duty-free drink and cigarettes, the Review Team found that there was no justification for the £1-a-day payment to continue, hence the two-stage cut which will eliminate it altogether from October.

Islanders reassured

Falkland Islanders have told a British Minister how reassured they were that Britain broke off negotiations with Argentina in Switzerland last month on the same day they began when the Argentinians raised the issue of sovereignty over the islands.

Mr Stanley, Armed Forces

Minister, who returned from the Falklands on Tuesday, said yesterday: "They were very very reassured that the Government broke off negotiations and they were impressed with the speed with which we took that decision."

"My own view is that the Falklanders see sense in trying to produce more normal relations with Argentina but subject to the caveat that sovereignty is not for negotiation."

The Queen invited to China

By Rupert Morris

Buckingham Palace announced last night that the Queen has been invited to visit China. The invitation was conveyed to Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, on his recent visit to Peking, by Mr Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader.

Sir Geoffrey has invited the Chinese Prime Minister, Mr Zhao Ziyang, to visit Britain next year. The two invitations confirm the success of the recent talks on the transfer of sovereignty in Hongkong, and indicate greater cordiality than ever between the two countries.

Mr Zhao specifically excluded Britain from his European tour last year because of the delicacy of the Hongkong negotiations.

But last week Sir Geoffrey announced that Britain and China would sign a preliminary agreement on the future of Hongkong in September, in line with the deadline set by Peking.

It is possible that the Queen could visit China next year. So far her only scheduled foreign trip in 1985 is a state visit to Portugal in March.

The Times 9/8/84

Falklands pay cut for Forces

A £1 a day cost of living allowance paid to members of the Armed Forces in the Falklands is being phased out during the next two months.

The Ministry of Defence said it was being eliminated by two reductions, each of 50p a day, the first began this month, and the second takes effect in October.

The Local Overseas Allowance, as it is called, varies according to location, and is paid in addition to normal salary to offset higher costs of living which may be incurred overseas.

The allowances are regularly adjusted on the basis of formal reviews of the cost of living in individual stations.

A review conducted in the Falklands in January found that, largely because there was

little on which to spend money, there was no justification for an allowance.

However, through a separate administrative procedure, and on the basis of a recommendation by the Armed Forces Pay Review Board, a special allowance of £2.15 a day is being introduced, back-dated to last April, for Servicemen who make two tours of duty in the Falklands within an 18-month period. This is not related to the cost of living, but is a recognition of the arduous nature of a Falklands posting.

Because a tour in the Falklands is still claimed as "field service", Servicemen do not have to pay either normal food or accommodation charges while there.

Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces,

returned to London yesterday after becoming probably the first British government minister to visit South Georgia, more than 800 miles south-east of the Falklands in the South Atlantic.

He went there to see the contingent of about a hundred troops that Britain has maintained on the island since the Argentines were evicted after a 22-day occupation during the Falklands conflict.

Mr Stanley was careful not actually to claim to have been the first minister to visit the island, but he said he was not aware of any minister having done so at least since the Second World War.

He went on a two-week round trip spending about six days on the Falklands and 2½ days at South Georgia.

**Falkland
troops
lose
£1-a-day
perk...
because
there's
nothing
to spend
it on**

By MICHAEL EVANS
Defence Correspondent

BRITAIN'S 5,000 troops in the Falklands have lost their £1-a-day pocket money.

Their overseas allowance has been withdrawn because, says the Ministry of Defence, there is nothing for them to spend it on.

A Ministry team which investigated the troops' life-style on the islands found there was: —

NO nightlife in Port Stanley;

NOTHING in the shops to tempt the troops to buy; and

OPINION: PAGE 8

NO difference in the cost of living from that in Britain. The tax-free allowance is paid to Servicemen abroad to compensate for different living standards.

The decision to stop is in the Falklands was made in June but kept secret.

Even Sir Anthony Buck, Tory chairman of the Commons Defence Committee, did not know of the cut.

Half the allowance was phased out on August 1 and the remaining 50p a day will go on October 1.

Last night the decision was branded "illogical and unfair" by Army sources.

For, at the same time as stopping the overseas allowance, the Armed Forces Review Body wrought a special £2-15-a-day hardship

Page 2, Column 1

PAY PUZZLE

From Page One

allowance for Falklands Servicemen on a second or third tour of duty.

And one example of hardship which qualifies troops for the allowance is... if there is nothing to spend their money on!

Ministry of Defence officials agreed it was ironic that one allowance had been stopped and another started for virtually the same reason.

They did not know how many men would receive the hardship payment.

Armed Forces Minister John Stanley returned recently from a two-week trip to the Falklands to discuss troop reductions when the new strategic airport is opened next April.

● Britain's 9,000 troops in Ulster get the £2-15-a-day hardship allowance. But this will also be reviewed, as the Daily Express revealed in June.

**Penny-pinching
in the Falklands**

THE Ministry of Defence is phasing out the £1-a-day hardship allowance paid to our troops on the Falklands.

Some bright spark has concluded that as the men have so little to spend their money on they might as well go without the extra £1.

What a misconceived piece of penny-pinching! What bureaucratic bunkum!

Perhaps it should have occurred -to someone in Whitehall that the lack of items to buy is just one of the things—the minor things—that makes the Falklands a hardship posting in the first place.

Daily Mail

9.8.84

Troops pay cut

BRITISH troops in the Falklands now receiving an overseas allowance, are to have their pay cut by £1 a day because, says the Defence Ministry, the island's cost of living is no higher than in Britain.

All inclusive

MUTINOUS murmurs from the British camp about the South American boxing referees. It is being hinted that the señors' scoresheets may owe a trifle more to memories of the war in the South Atlantic than to the punches actually being landed by our lads in the ring.

Well, this is an occasion for upper lips suitably stiff and teeth gritted behind gum shields.

For we can hardly declare Los Angeles an 'exclusion zone'!

Early restart of Falkland talks 'unlikely'

Robert Graham interviews Argentina's Foreign Minister

AN EARLY RESUMPTION of talks between Argentina and Britain is unlikely after last month's abortive meeting in Berne, Sr Dante Caputo, Argentina's Foreign Minister, said.

In an interview in Buenos Aires with the FT—the first to a British correspondent since talks broke down—Sr Caputo said: "I envisage no immediate follow-up." He maintained that Britain's position had, if anything, hardened.

However, Sr Caputo underlined his desire to establish a "flexible dialogue" with Britain. He gave the impression he was willing to consider new formulas for the two sides to get together again, both to discuss a resumption of commercial and diplomatic relations and the future of the Falkland Islands.

Observers expect both sides to wait until after the UN General Assembly annual meetings in the autumn and for Argentina to conclude an agreement with Chile over the Beagle Channel. The Government of President Raul Alfonsin is due to hold a plebiscite on papal proposals for resolving the Beagle dispute in September.

"The talks in Berne were not broken off but suspended as there was no point in continuing them," Sr Caputo said.

He declined to go into how the talks broke down. The talks were held under Swiss auspices between senior British and Argentinian diplomats — the first direct contact since the Falklands conflict two years ago.

It is understood here that Argentina felt Britain had failed to observe a prior undertaking that the meeting would be informal.

At the first main meeting, the British delegation read from a prepared text "as though in front of the UN General Assembly," according to one Foreign Ministry official. This irritated the Argentine delegation, who had expected that, once the two sides had stated their formal positions, a more relaxed attitude would prevail.

The Argentines were further upset by translation of a key

phrase concerning Britain's attitude to discussion of the Falklands. They had expected it to read that Britain was not *ready* to discuss the Falklands. It was translated as not *willing*.

Sr Caputo denied that Argentine attitudes had hardened in advance of the meeting because of the need to appear tough when selling concessions to the nation over the Beagle dispute with Chile.

"What we have been trying to do is to get round the dilemma whereby Britain says no negotiations if sovereignty is raised and Argentina insists no negotiations are possible if sovereignty is excluded," he said.

His aim was to begin with a "dialogue" in the hope that this might lead to serious negotiations. He recognised the need for practical measures to build confidence.

He said: "Sovereignty to the Falklands is the central theme of the dispute. Therefore, the

dialogue has to have a political content, and any dialogue which ignores this central point is not a political dialogue."

This means that Argentina is insisting on a clear link between restoring diplomatic and commercial relations and eventual discussion of sovereignty to the islands. The British position has been to avoid such linkage, establish a series of confidence-building measures, leaving open the eventual possibility of discussing the islands' future with Argentina.

Low key

The issue of relations with Britain has been kept in low key here since the Berne meeting and there has been little sign of pressure on the Government for having sought to establish a dialogue with the UK.

A film about the Falklands War—Los Chicos de la Guerra (The Boys who went to the War)—opened last week and is playing to packed houses.

The film, depicting the fate of three youths sent totally unprepared to fight in the Falklands and experiencing defeat, has excited curiosity rather than anger.

The Guardian 7 8 84
(Education Guardian)



FALKLAND ISLANDS GOVERNMENT TRAVELLING TEACHERS

Falkland Islands Government have vacancies for travelling teachers, teaching at primary level on farms and settlements outside Stanley, offering a challenging opportunity to experience the unique life of the Islands. The job would be suitable for newly qualified teachers or persons of a good level of education, personality being more important than academic qualifications. Successful applicants would be offered an initial one-year contract with return passages. Salary is in the scale £3,444 to £4,380 plus travelling / accommodation allowance.

For further details and application form please write to: **Falkland Islands Government Office, 29 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QL.**

McMillan-Scott Associates Public Affairs

41 Whitehall London SW1A 2BZ Telephone: 01-930 6935

Daily Mail
7.8.84

Falklands return

FORMER Falklands' headmaster Peter Gilding, 39, who took over a pub near Chesterfield, Derbyshire, after the war with Argentina, is returning to the South Atlantic with his wife and daughter. They say they miss the islands.

Argentina in bid to secure IMF support for wage increases

BY ROBERT GRAHAM IN BUENOS AIRES

ARGENTINA is to make a further attempt to bridge the gap with the International Monetary Fund in a fresh round of negotiations on an economic stabilisation programme due to start in Washington tomorrow. The Argentine delegation, headed by Sr Bernardo Grinspun, Economy Minister, is expected to try to wring support for its wages policy in return for evidence of a greatly improved trade surplus and a lower-than-anticipated public sector deficit.

Originally, this new round of talks was to be at a technical level. But the presense of Sr Grinspun has given them a political complexion, even though the delegation includes the main technicians dealing with the IMF.

Despite the conviction here that Argentina is moving close to a long delayed agreement with the IMF, the prospect of achieving this by August 15 is doubtful. On August 15, Argentina is due to repay a \$125m (£95.4m) credit to 11 leading banks. This credit could only be extended if agreement is reached with the IMF before this date.

Speaking yesterday to a convention of Argentine private banks, Sr Grinspun was confident that the country's balance of payments position would enable Argentina "to satisfy the demands of its external debt in terms compatible with our

efforts to beat inflation, re-activate the economy and raise real wages."

He said the public sector deficit by the end of the second half of the year would be 7.2 per cent of GDP, lower than anticipated. He also said that with a first half trade surplus of \$2.8bn, Argentina would exceed year-end projections of a \$3.9bn surplus on the trade account.

Sr Grinspun repeated the Government's intention of conceding a real wage increase of between 6 and 8 per cent and predicted that a 5 per cent growth for the year was feasible. However, he admitted that Argentina's inflation had yet to be brought under control.

As for wages, the Government is desperately trying to arrange a form of social contract with the unions but has so far failed to find a consensus and the country is witnessing a series of wildcat strikes to ensure that the monthly wage increases are above inflation. The main new card the Argentine delegation will be offering to the IMF is the improved trade account.

This could narrow substantially the \$1bn gap between what the IMF and Argentina perceive as the country's re-financing needs. The IMF has suggested Argentina needs no more than \$2.3bn and, until now, the Argentine Government has been talking of \$3.2bn.

Argentine mutiny

Argentine forces moved into northern provincial capital Tucuman to surround a police headquarters occupied by about 500 mutinying over pay and disciplinary action against men accused of acts of repression under the military dictatorship.

The Telegraph 7/8/84

FALKLANDERS TO QUIT BRITAIN

A Falklands family who took over a Derbyshire public house after the war with Argentina are returning to the South Atlantic. Peter and Jackie Gilding and their daughter, Sarah, are going home because they miss the islands.

Mrs Gilding was born there and her husband was headmaster of the islanders' only secondary school. The Red Lion at Stonedge, near Chesterfield, will be run by other members of the family.

The Guardian 7/8/84

Beagle hopes

CHILE and Argentina are near to an agreement on a treaty to end their dispute over the Beagle channel, a Vatican spokesman said yesterday. Vatican diplomats have been mediating since 1979; the two countries nearly went to war about the issue in December, 1978. — AP.

The Times 6/8/84

Stolen Rolls-Royce spares sent to Argentina

By a Staff Reporter

Vital spare parts for Argentine warships have been stolen from Rolls-Royce and illegally exported, a police investigation has discovered.

Thefts have also been carried out, apparently by Rolls-Royce employees, to keep Iranian craft operational in the Gulf War, in spite of a British arms embargo. Investigations into the thefts, at the Ansty Marine Engine factory just outside Coventry, have been going on for more than a year.

They began after police discovered the thefts accidentally, while investigating allegations of fraud over purchases from supplier companies at the plant.

These, separate investigations are believed to have found a network of fraud, totalling more

than £5m, extending from Rolls-Royce into Jaguar, and several British Leyland plants.

The investigations are being carried out by a specially formed squad of detectives from the Warwickshire police.

A police spokesman said that the Prime Minister and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney General, had been kept informed throughout the inquiry by Sir Thomas Heatherington, the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, a persistent critic of the Government's Falklands policy, last night called for a government inquiry into the thefts.

The illegally exported components are believed to have been stolen over a seven-year period. In March this year Rolls-Royce

issued a High Court writ against four people, claiming damages for misappropriation of property over this time. Two of the men worked at the Ansty plant.

One of the four, Rupert Clarke, aged 55, of Deal, Kent, was soon after found dead in his car. A verdict of suicide was returned by an inquest jury.

Police officers investigating the thefts were soon convinced that many parts were finding their way to Iran, but it was only recently they received confirmation that smuggling to Argentina was also taking place.

A computer printed "order form", written partly in Spanish discovered by the investigation is said by Rolls-Royce experts to have "almost certainly" come from Argentina. Final confirmation came when police found a large consignment of

parts about to leave Britain for Argentina.

In all, three caches of parts are believed to have been found by police with a total value of at least £1m. The parts were found at Leicester, Crawley in Sussex, and Ashford, Kent.

Two men are expected to appear at Rugby Magistrates' court on charges relating to the thefts on Tuesday.

The original investigation into fraud at Ansty is believed to have centred on overcharging on invoices to Rolls-Royce for work from suppliers.

At least eight people at Rolls-Royce have now been interviewed by police although no charges have been made yet. Sources put the amount believed lost through corruption in this way at £4m.

During the investigation

detectives are reported to have looked at the books of all companies supplying goods and services to Rolls-Royce. Their discoveries are believed to have centred on one firm now in liquidation.

Further corruption at Jaguar Cars, in Coventry, and Land Rover, in Solihull, was also discovered.

The Ansty plant at the centre of the investigations employs 2,000 workers, producing Rolls-Royce's profitable marine engines, which are used in most Royal Navy ships.

In particular the Tyne and Olympus gas turbines used by the Argentine Navy are made there, as are the Proteus engines used by the Iranians for their extensive fleet of Hovercraft. The engines feature in many other warships

Sunday Times
5th August 1984

Shoot out

● THE Argentinian generals have ways of stopping people making films. When a young director, Bebe Kamin, sought permission to use weapons and explosives for the battle scenes in *The Boys of War* - based on the disasters that befell three green conscripts during the Falklands fracas - the army simply refused. It was only when President Alfonsín himself stepped in that the generals decided to change their minds. The first-night audience in Buenos Aires last week heaped anti-military slogans and gave the film a lengthy standing ovation. The few British soldiers in it are portrayed as Florence Nightingales in combat khaki.

SAS in helicopter blow

BRITISH-built helicopters are being ditched by the SAS in favour of the type the Argentinians used against our troops in the Falklands.

Two of the £1 million Italian-built Augusta helicopters, were flown into Fair Oaks airfield near Chobham, Surrey, last week, awaiting delivery.

The SAS have had two Augusta 109s captured in the Falklands war on test for some time and are now said to want them in place of their ageing Scout and Gazelle machines.

mainland after their chopper crash-landed.

However the switch has come at a politically bad moment for the British helicopter industry. The Scout is made by Westland and the Gazelle by Westland in co-operation with France's Aerospatial.

Yesterday the company announced 700 redundancies at its factories in Yeovil and Weston-super-Mare, and its hovercraft plant at Cowes, Isle of Wight.

Italian order as jobs go

would not comment on the purchase beyond saying that they were 'suitable for the job'.

But it is known that the SAS has been looking at optimum helicopter performance ever since the Falklands episode in which an under-cover unit had to be returned by Chile from the South American

Officially the two new helicopters will be going to the Army Air Corps, based at Middle Wallop, Hants, for 'scouting and liaison duties'. But the corps provides air transport for all sections of the Army and it would be one of its pilots who would fly for the SAS.

Yesterday the Ministry of Defence

Anthony Parsons

No surrender to entreaty

When I was leading the British delegation to the United Nations during the Falklands crisis between April and June, 1982, I felt like a fat and unathletic man (which I am) who had suddenly found himself, as in a dream, competing in a world surfing championship on mountainous Pacific waves. All my mental and physical faculties were concentrated on maintaining my equilibrium minute by minute: it would have been senseless to lift the eyes to the distant horizon.

However, when the delegation, still miraculously upright, paddled ashore in the second half of June, we began to think about the future. We were agreed that another long ride lay ahead. One thing was clear: the Galtieri government would not survive the fiasco of its adventure. Apart from this, it would take years, not months, for the islanders, totally unaccustomed to war, to recover from the shock of the invasion. The same would be true, in different ways, of Britain and Argentina. An armed conflict between two countries which had enjoyed exceptionally close relations for 150 years could not be lightly or quickly forgotten.

And yet, before the month of June was out, our friends and allies in the Commonwealth, the United States and Europe, who had in the main supported us in our resistance to aggression, were urging us to negotiate. What about, we asked? That was not, apparently, a fair question. Particularly at the United Nations, the word "negotiation" has acquired a talismanic quality: to negotiate is good, not to negotiate, whatever the circumstances, is bad.

I was in the United States a month or so ago and met a number of friends, of different nationalities, from my UN days. I was not surprised to find that their impatience at the absence of negotiations between Britain and Argentina had grown. I have observed something of the same feeling among audiences in Britain to whom I have talked about the Falklands affair in recent months.

Well, British and Argentine negotiators have now met face to face, only (I emphasize the word) two years after the conflict, and the talks were broken off a day later. This fact should not lead to recrimination either at home or abroad against the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. As I understand it, British policy has been based on the principle that full normalization of relations must precede any discussion about the future of the islands. This is obvious commonsense. The brief "negotiation" in Switzerland was in fact the culmination of a series of overtures which Britain has made to

Argentina in the interest of normalization - scaling down the exclusion zone round the islands an offer to resume air services, a public welcome for President Alfonsin's election, the lifting of financial restrictions and so on.

But the present Argentine government appears to believe that the customary relationship between the cart and the horse must be reversed and that discussions on sovereignty (which must be interpreted as discussions on a transfer of sovereignty to Argentina) must precede, or at least run concurrently with, the normalization of relations. Continued insistence on this principle can only prolong the deadlock.

This brings me back to a point I made earlier, namely that years, not months, will be required to heal the wounds opened by the invasion. Only two years have passed. We must be patient, and those concerned on our side should think hard before allowing frustration to stimulate the launching of fresh initiatives. Admittedly the defence of the Falklands is expensive in terms of money and effort, but we must discharge our obligations, and no amount of normalization will enable us for years to come to return to the pre-war garrison of 40 Royal Marines.

No one can blame President Alfonsin and his government for the invasion, but they have inherited the consequences; and they cannot expect to gain by diplomatic pressure, exercised bilaterally or through the UN, what their predecessors failed to gain by force.

Would they not be better advised to follow the course which Britain is trying to chart and to resume the broad spectrum of activities which has characterized the relationship between us for so long, rather than continuing to peer through a telescope through which only the one problem between us is visible?

And if our friends and allies throughout the world are finding it irksome and embarrassing to continue to have to choose between the rival positions of the two parties at periodical exercises in the UN General Assembly and elsewhere on the international stage, and are disposed to seek concessions from Britain, they should be told politely that no amount of pressure will deflect us from our policy and that they are knocking at the wrong door.

The most helpful contribution they could make would be to persuade the Argentine government that we, not they, have got the relationship between the cart and the horse right.

Sir Anthony Parsons is now research fellow at the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, Exeter University.

McMillan-Scott Associates Public Affairs

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Alfonsin 'murder plot' investigated

From Jeremy Morgan
in Buenos Aires

Uncertainty surrounded General Jorge Videla's legal position yesterday as reports suggested there had been an attempt to murder the President, Mr Alfonsin.

Most morning newspapers reported that the highest military court had placed the former military president and leader of the 1976 coup under strict custody. This later proved false.

Instead, it appeared that the Armed Forces Supreme Council had yet to decide whether to order General Videla into "rigorous" detention.

A judge in the northern province of Tucuman, meanwhile, began investigating a suspected plot to kill President Alfonsin, after two men were arrested carrying firearms and trying to obtain false identity documents.

The two men, detained on Thursday before the President arrived on an official visit yesterday morning, are believed to be a junior police officer and an army major. They were reportedly denounced by a printer after asking for documents identifying them as counter-intelligence agents.

The absence of any official confirmation here and the apparent amateurishness of the alleged plot aroused suspicions about whether there really had been an attempt to kill the president.

General Videla remained under arrest at an army base

on charges of overseeing the regime's repressive apparatus and the disappearance of thousands of people.

An air force officer, Brigadier Orlando Agosti, another partner in the military coup eight years ago was also held.

The third member of the junta, Admiral Emilio Massera, did not appear before the tribunal because he was in hospital with a stomach ailment.

With the Armed Forces Supreme Council finally showing signs of movement almost eight months after ordered by President Alfonsin to try nine top officers in the regime for "blatantly illegal" crimes, six human rights organisations have denounced almost 900 military officers for their alleged part in the "dirty war."

In a list sent to the Senate, the human rights groups named 326 officers in the army, 209 in the navy and 138 in the air force. They are accused of having taken part in the violent campaign of terror against the regime's opponents.

The list included seven of 13 officers nominated by President Alfonsin for promotion to general and several officers already serving in high government positions.

One full colonel, portrayed as a hero during the Falklands conflict 11 years ago, was identified as the alleged link between the army and the Triple A paramilitary death squads which emerged under the former elected president, Mrs Peron.



Royal thanks for heroine of Falklands

A HEROINE of the Falklands campaign, Dr Alison Bleaney, yesterday received the personal thanks of the Queen when she received the insignia of an OBE at Buckingham Palace.

Dr Bleaney, 32, mother of two small children, was one of only two doctors in the islands during the Argentinian occupation two years ago.

As the Royal Navy prepared to sail to Port Stanley, she left her family and the safety of the hospital to brave the fighting and tell the Navy that the civilian population was not sheltering in the cathedral, as the British commanders believed.

She went to the Argentinians' communications centre and bullied them into allowing her to talk to the British.

Very frightened

Dr Bleaney, from Huntly, near Aberdeen, said: "I was very frightened at first, but then I realised that if the Navy acted on this misinformation, lives would be lost."

Through her the British forces first got in touch with the Argentinian high command. Her husband Michael, a manager for the Falkland Islands Co. said afterwards: "If it was not for her I don't believe there would have been a truce."

Dr Alison Bleaney, heroine of the surrender of Port Stanley during the Falklands campaign, leaving Buckingham Palace yesterday with her children Daniel, 4, and Emma, 2 — and the insignia of the OBE which she received from the Queen.

ARGENTINA'S EX-LEADER ARRESTED

By MARY SPECK
in Buenos Aires

FORMER President Jorge Videla, the general who overthrew Isabel Peron in 1976, has been placed under arrest by the Supreme Council of the Argentine Armed Forces for violating human rights during the military's war against subversion.

Gen Videla was put at the "disposal" of the military tribunal on Wednesday night, after giving four hours of testimony. He will probably be held at a military base while court martial proceedings continue.

Fellow Junta members, Orlando Agosti, the Air Force Chief, and Navy Chief Emilio Massera, are expected to be arrested in the next few days.

Gen Videla was among nine ex-junta members whose court martial was ordered by President Raul Alfonsin shortly after he took office last December.

In the decree ordering their trial, President Alfonsin noted that between 1976 and 1979 "thousands of people were illegally arrested, tortured and murdered"

In another move five human rights group yesterday planned to present the Argentine Senate with a list of some 900 military officers accused of crimes during anti-terrorist campaigns.

China underlines Howe's optimism on Hongkong

By Our Diplomatic Staff

China appeared to go out of its way yesterday to reinforce the progress and mood of confidence that have come from negotiations with Britain on the transfer of sovereignty over Hongkong in 1997.

One aspect of the proposed agreement that has most disturbed Hongkong has been the plan to set up a Sino-British joint liaison group that would function until the year 2000.

In a statement carried by the New China news agency, a spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry indicated that there was no difference in the Chinese and British understanding of the role of the liaison group. He referred to it in terms similar to those used by Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, in Hongkong on Wednesday.

The Chinese statement said the liaison group would not be an organ of power or supervision and would not have any role in the administration of Hongkong before or after 1997.

Its function would be to hold consultations on carrying out the joint declaration of the

Chinese and British Governments; to discuss matters relating to the smooth transfer of government in 1997; and to exchange information

The proposed agreement was attacked yesterday by the Chinese Nationalist regime in Taiwan. A Foreign Ministry spokesman in Taipei said Taiwan would not recognize any agreement between London and Peking on Hongkong's future.



Sir Geoffrey arriving at Heathrow from Peking

Falklands heroine thanked by the Queen

By Patricia Clough

Dr Alison Bleaney, who risked her life under shelling to warn the royal Navy that it was misinformed about the Falkland islanders' whereabouts, was thanked by the Queen at an investiture at Buckingham Palace yesterday. By her action Dr Bleaney, who was receiving the insignia of the OBE, may have saved many lives and hastened the truce between the British and Argentines.

Dr Bleaney, aged 32, a mother of two, from Huntley, near Abredeen, was one of two British doctors in the islands when they were invaded by Argentina two years ago.

As the royal Navy approached Port Stanley she was horrified to hear on the BBC that the area around the cathedral was a neutral zone and the islanders were in it - which was untrue. "I was very frightened at first but then I realized that if they acted on their misinformation lives would be lost."

Braving shells and bullets, she hurried to the Argentine communications centre and bullied them into allowing her to talk to the Royal Navy.

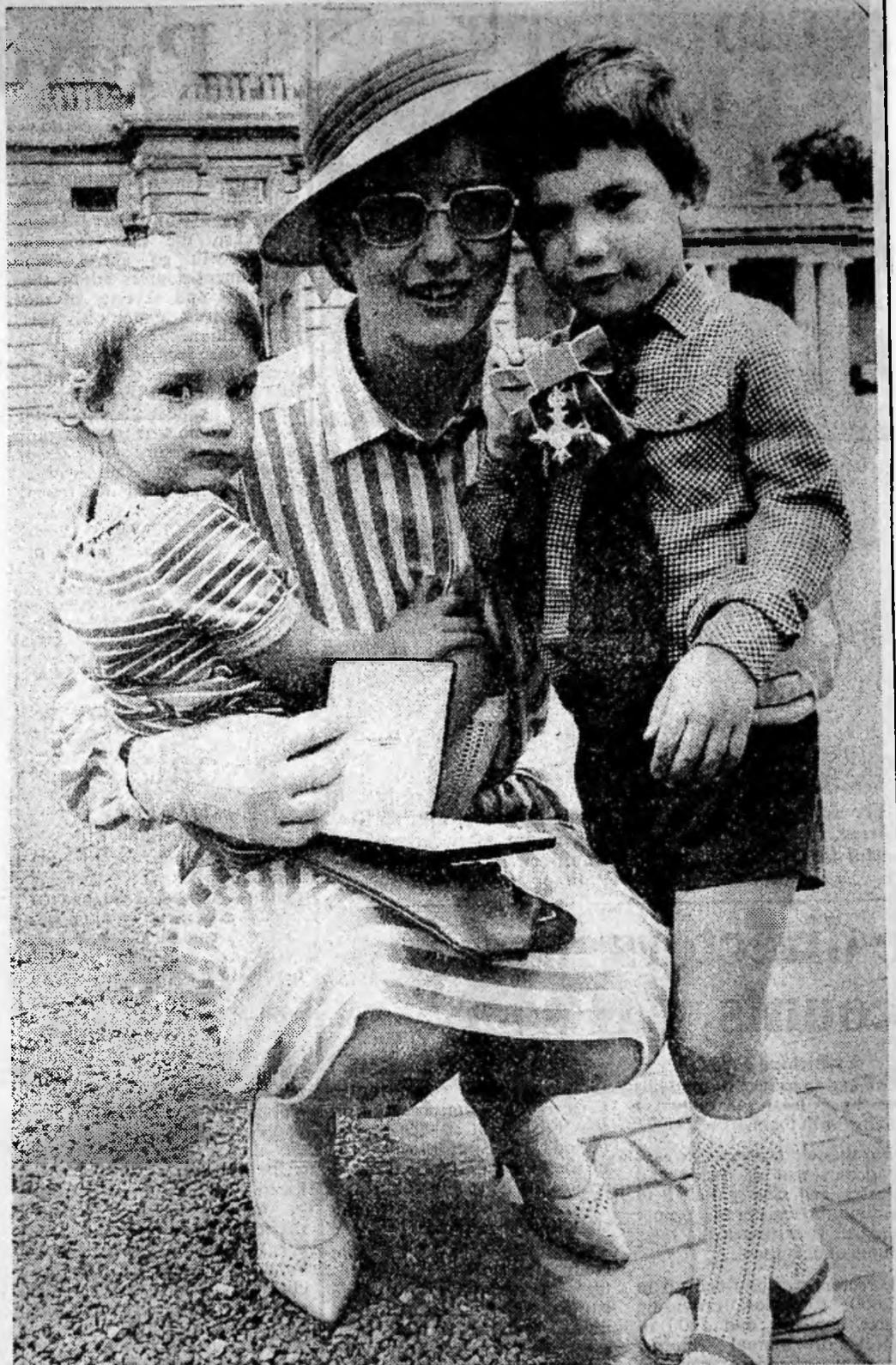
At first she could get through only to the radio station at Weddell, which was in British hands.

Later after hearing on her radio the Navy calling Port Stanley, she returned to the communications centre and warned them that the islanders were not around the cathedral.

The Navy asked to speak to the Argentines and she arranged for General Mendez, their commander, to be called.

Her husband, Michael, manager of the Falkland Island Company, said: "If it was not for her there would not have been a truce".

The Queen also presented the insignia of the OBE to Mrs Betty Callaway-Fittall, who coached ice dancing champions Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean, and to the jazz trombonist George Chisholm.



Life saver: Dr Alison Bleaney, who braved shellfire to alert the Royal Navy, with her daughter Emma, aged two, and son Daniel, aged four, yesterday.

Daily Mail
3rd August 1984

The Queen honours shy heroine of the Falklands

THE shy heroine of the Falklands campaign received the Queen's personal thanks yesterday when she was presented with the OBE.

As the British prepared to sail into Port Stanley during the Argentine occupation two years ago, Dr Alison Bleaney left her family in the safety of the hospital to tell the Task Force it had been misinformed about the islanders' whereabouts.

Dodging he shells, she made her way to the Argentine communications centre and bullied them into allowing her to radio the Navy.

Risk

She then warned the British that, contrary to popular belief, the civilian population was not sheltering in Stanley Cathedral but was, in fact, at risk.

Dr Bleaney, 32, who went to the Palace with husband Mike and their children Daniel, four and two-year-old Emma—refused to discuss her brave action, which almost certainly saved lives.

Her only comment as she held the medal: 'It's lovely. I'm wonderfully happy.'



Proud mother: Dr Bleaney at the Palace with Daniel and Emma



OBE FOR HERO DOC

FALKLANDS doctor Alison Bleaney, 32, who braved bullets to stop the Royal Navy task force from accidentally shelling islanders during the Argentinian invasion two years ago, yesterday received the OBE from the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

Daily Star
3rd August 1984

Shock for our boys as heroine gets her OBE

SAILORS MUST PAY FOR VITAL KIT!

Life-saver uniform row

Another SUN exclusive

HERO sailors who survived the Falklands War are being forced to pay for new fire-resistant uniforms.

But some of the Navy's 50,000 ratings are refusing to accept the battle gear, because it would cost them £18 a year.

One said yesterday: "It's a scandal. Men got badly burned because the old nylon-based uniforms caught fire too easily."

The men are backed by Rear Admiral Martin Wemyss, the former Service chief.

He said: "The old uniforms literally melted on the men after missiles hit their ships."

Perk

"The lads deserve to have new uniforms because of their heroism. This is a small-minded and petty economy."

The cost of the new uniforms — fire-retardant like those worn by



Gallant mum . . . Alison with Emma, 2, and four-year-old Daniel.

Honour for brave mum

HEROINE Dr Alison Bleaney proudly shows her OBE to son Daniel, four, and daughter Emma, two, after receiving it from the Queen yesterday. Alison, 32, of Aberdeenshire was working in the Falklands during the war and risked her life to warn our troops where the islanders were hiding

BY JOHN KAY

racing drivers — is being deducted from the men's kit allowance, which varies from £78 to £105 easily.

Ratings who take care of their kit and make it last regard the payment as a perk.

Another angry sailor said: "That's just like docking your pay. They are robbing us of £18 a year."

Hongkong rights assured by deal

From David Bonavia
Hongkong

Hongkong will continue to enjoy "all the rights and freedoms" which its people have at present, after the territory reverts to Chinese sovereignty as a "special administrative region" in 1997, Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, announced here yesterday.

Summarizing the results of his recent talks with top Chinese leaders in Peking, Sir Geoffrey said it had been agreed that "Hongkong's unique economic system and way of life" would be preserved under a legally binding agreement between Britain and China, to be submitted to Parliament in late September.

At a press conference here Sir Geoffrey was asked how this agreement could be guaranteed after 1997. He said it was the same as any other international agreement which demanded implementation by the signatories.

"The arrangements that will apply in Hongkong for 50 years after 1997 will be prescribed with sufficient clarity and precision to command the confidence of the people who live, work, trade and invest here," he said.

Certain important issues have yet to be negotiated, for instance land, civil aviation and nationality.

One of the most contentious points in the negotiations was the Chinese demand for a "joint liaison group" comprising British and Chinese members to sit in Hongkong to monitor progress towards the handover.

The Hongkong Government's objections - to the effect that this would undermine its authority in the territory - have been partly met by an agreement that the group will meet in Peking and London for the first four years before being established in Hongkong and would have no political authority. It would continue in office until the year 2000 to ensure that the agreement is carried out.

Herald INTERNATIONAL Tribune

Published With The New York Times and The Washington Post

Anything but Sovereignty

Think about anything, said the mother to the child, but don't think about white elephants. In much this spirit, Britain has agreed to informal talks with Argentina about the Falkland Islands. Britain wants "to start a dialogue," but only if the one subject Argentines care most about - sovereignty - is not discussed. When delegates met in Switzerland, the topic arose and the British stalked out.

Why? Because, according to Britain's foreign secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Argentina wanted practical issues "linked to discussion of a mechanism to address the question of sovereignty." If that means what it implies, Britain will not even talk about how and when that vexatious matter might be discussed.

Britain thus disregards the plea for negotiations from its closest allies, including the United States. True, it paid with lives and treasure to reverse Argentina's lawless grab of the Falklands. Yet even during the 1982 war, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had offered to discuss sovereignty. She went on to humble an arrogant junta and helped bring about a democratic transformation in Argentina. What can possibly justify intransigence now?

Mrs. Thatcher will talk about returning Argentina's dead and resuming commerce between the islands and Argentina. Her ostensible goal is to defend the rights and interests of 1,400 islanders who want to remain British. But their home has become a fortress, an anomalous remnant of a vanished empire. No Latin American nation accepts Britain's claim to the islands. It is hard to believe there cannot be an honorable settlement to bring British troops home, restore normal trade and secure the British citizenship of Falklanders whatever flag, or flags, eventually fly over the island.

When the islands were first seized by Britain in 1770, the stalwart Tory voice of Dr. Johnson rose in protest: "We have maintained the honor of the crown and the superiority of our influence. Beyond this, what have we acquired? What, but a bleak and gloomy solitude, an island thrown aside from human use, stormy in winter and barren in summer . . . where a garrison must be kept in a state that contemplates with envy the exiles of Siberia; of which the expense will be perpetual and the use only occasional." In sum, a white elephant.

— THE NEW YORK TIMES.

Sir Geoffrey praised the Chinese concept of "one country, two systems," under which China plans to incorporate the booming capitalist city state into its own socialist fabric. He said it was "far-sighted", - and held "enormous potential for the future of Hongkong".

The British based legal system would be maintained for 50 years after 1997, the Foreign Secretary said. "By that I mean the common law, rules of equity, ordinances, subordinate legislation and customary law." The right of final appeal would be vested in Hongkong courts.

Hongkong would also retain its separate identity as a free port and a separate customs territory, and its participation in the Gatt, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Business is booming in the defence systems market

The Falklands have given the UK computer industry new scope through defence systems. Charles Christian reports

ALL too often we read stories in the popular Press about British companies losing orders to foreign competitors.

Even more distressing, we hear about foreign companies exploiting British inventions so that we do not reap the commercial advantages.

But one sector in which this certainly is not the case is defence, where business is booming. There is considerable evidence that the revival in the UK computer industry as a whole in the last few months has largely been defence systems inspired. And this in turn would appear to be a "knock on" effect from the Falklands War.

Suddenly, it seems, everyone wants to play Space Invaders with real missiles.

We are always hearing about the menace of the US military industrial machine. But in this country — thousands of miles away from the baleful influence of the Pentagon — the warfare technocrats are just as powerful.

For example, one of the issues behind the current attempts by Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine to instil a little more uniformity into the armed forces, is a growing concern that the way the Army, Navy and Air Force procure their new weapons and communications systems is both unco-ordinated and unnecessarily expensive.

In the light of the lessons learned during the Falklands War — so the argument goes — which revealed more than ever the importance of "combined operations" in

the theatre of battle, how much more sensible it would have been if all brands of the Services had had the same compatible systems.

Not only that, but it would have been a lot cheaper for them to have pooled their resources during the development stages, rather than go to the expense and duplication — or even triplication — of having commercial organisations go it alone and devise individual systems for them.

It is easy to see why the politicians are worried, because the defence industry in this country is well and truly switched on to the benefits of high technology.

During Information Technology Year, Kenneth Baker commented that his idea of an automated office would be one in which every two office workers shared a desk and a computer terminal between them.

But if the evidence of the recent British Army Equipment Exhibition at Aldershot is anything to go by, the UK defence industry has a far more ambitious outlook. It appears to envisage every member of the fighting services having a personal computer system in the very near future. Not only that, but the systems they get will be both miniaturised and bullet proof.

In civvy street great interest is being expressed in portable computers, like the Epson. But to the military a portable computer is one that can either be slotted on to the side of a rifle or attached to a pair of binoculars.

Regardless of what else may be happening in the computer world,

the defence market is certainly not one British industry is intending to lose hold of.

For instance, at the end of July that controversial organisation Aims of Industry held a one-day conference in London to discuss new developments in ballistic missile defence systems. Naturally enough there were a fair number of former military brass-hats in attendance to talk about the strategic consequences.

But it is noticeable that in its promotional literature Aims of Industry suggested that one of the

It is easy to see why the politicians are worried because the defence industry in this country is well and truly switched on to the benefits of high technology

reasons commercial organisations might like to attend was that it was "very important British industry understands the implications and takes advantage of the developments and opportunities offered".

Whatever politicians might think then, it is obvious the defence industry is setting its sights high. Aside from the new range of video games like Space Invaders, Ferranti's most recent contribution to the war machine is its Smart small arms trainer.

According to promotional literature, this "introduces full-bore live firing conditions and scenarios to the classroom".

In other words it is a computerised system to help soldiers to shoot straight with a real gun — complete with noise and recoil — but without the need for a full-size firing range or to spend money on live ammunition.

With this "user-friendly" system — Ferranti's words, not mine — the trainee marksman "fires" at a television screen, while the progress being made is monitored by an instructor sitting at a master console.

Considering that computer-based learning techniques are only just starting to catch on in the commercial world, it is a little unnerving to learn that military systems are so advanced that Ferranti now offers a "computer-based learning option" on Smart for weapon handling.

Another company long associated with the defence systems market is Plessey. Admittedly many of its products, such as the new, almost silent running 20kW diesel generator, belong to sections of industry well outside the normal interests of *Computer Weekly* readers.

Nevertheless it has also been active on the computer front and its Displays Division's new MRT (multi-role terminal) is about to be introduced into service with the British Army.

The MRT is intended to provide an intelligent workstation driven by the Plessey MC1-16 microcom-



A multi-role terminal from Plessey Displays, part of the defence armoury.

puter, and in addition a high resolution 512x512 pixel plasma display can present text and symbols as well as line and point graphics. The unit also features comprehensive built-in test facilities providing automatic first line and interactive second line fault diagnosis.

More recently, however, it has been used to support systems. By logistical support the company means systems which ensure that all the electronic equipment the armed forces now increasingly rely upon continues to stay operational for as long as possible — a prerequisite of any military body if it is to remain an effective fighting force for any length of time on the modern battlefield.

So once again we see that while "self-diagnostic" systems are still something of a rarity in civvy street, Racal is merrily devising all sorts of sophisticated military ATE and battlefield diagnostic systems.

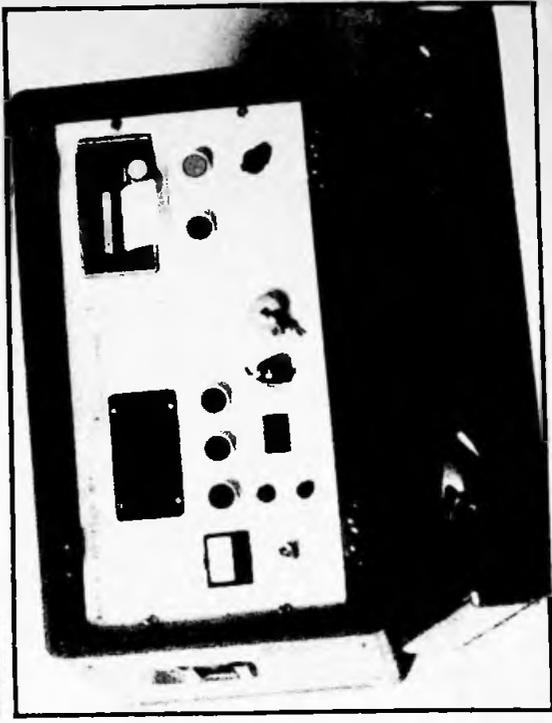
One such system is the Radar

Obviously no battlefield should be without one.

Continued opposite



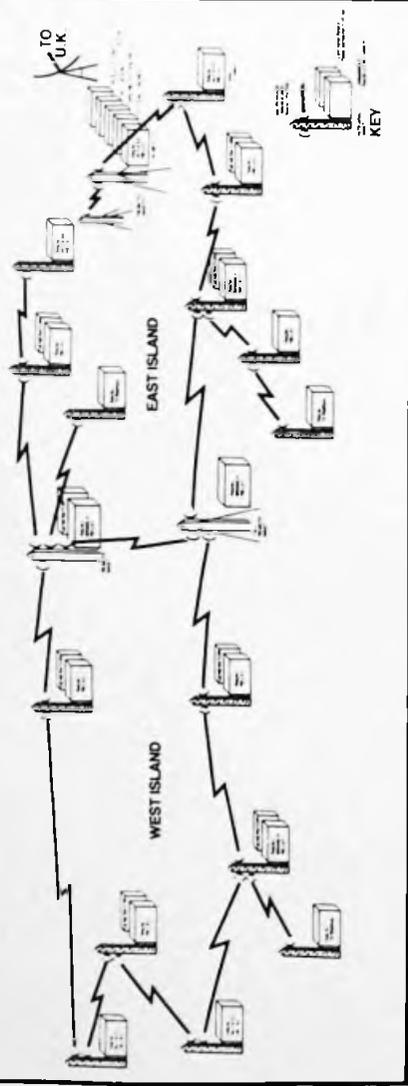
This weapon training system uses radar fitted to an airborne target to gauge approaching or receding missiles. The information is then passed . . .



. . . to a transportable ground processor.

Falkland Islands Trunk System (FITS)

- a containerised digital communication network



The information technology battle plan for the Falklands.

Information technology goes to war with a flourish

■ From previous page

Miss Distance Indicator (or Radar MDI), which incorporates self-test facilities which automatically check out the hardware at switch-on and enable faults to be identified to individual line replaceable units and then rectified.

Radar MDI, incidentally, is a new product for which Racal won a £2.5 million contract with the Ministry of Defence only at the beginning of June. Basically it comprises a low-cost airborne radar system built into a target plane. This, it is hoped, will increase the effectiveness of air defence weapons training, particularly with surface-to-air weapons, by providing an accurate and immediate measurement of the closest point of approach between the target and the missile.

In other words, it will reveal the "miss distance". Not content with devising systems that will automatically reveal any faults in their own equipment, Racal has now come up with a system which will also

analyse operator errors. Yet another big name in the defence field is Marconi, whose interests now spread - literally - from the depths of the oceans with the underwater systems division) to outer space (space systems division). Flight simulators, radar jamming systems like Sentry, gunnery control systems like Quickfire - you name it, they make it.

On the purer computer side, however, some of the more interesting new developments include Voras, a "video overlay resource availability system" which combines information display graphics with video disc technology.

Then there is the Fill Management System, which provides facilities to assist in the management and distribution of control data in a wide variety of systems applications.

One of the best examples of Marconi at work is its new Falkland Islands Trunk System (FITS), parts of which were on show to the public (and no doubt Argentinian military attachés) for the first time at the recent British Army Equipment Exhibition.

FITS is what Marconi believes to be the world's first static military digital transmission network, connecting 16 remote military sites on the Islands with Port Stanley - and if necessary the UK via a satel-

lite earth station (also manufactured by Marconi) - through a chain of line-of-sight transmitters.

Also increasingly heavily involved in the domestic defence systems market is Thorn-EMI. Possibly the most interesting developments on the computer front from that organisation stem from Software Sciences, the group's defence systems subsidiary.

One of its biggest projects to date has been the development of an Electronic Warfare Scenario Generator. This is a computer-based simulator used to model dense and complex electronic environments.

This means that, for those concerned with the intricacies of

It is always pleasing to discover an area of activity in which British industry is probably leading the world in both innovation and implementation

electronic warfare, the systems will enable the design, validation, test and evaluation, of different scenarios without running into the practical limitations normally associated with this type of work.

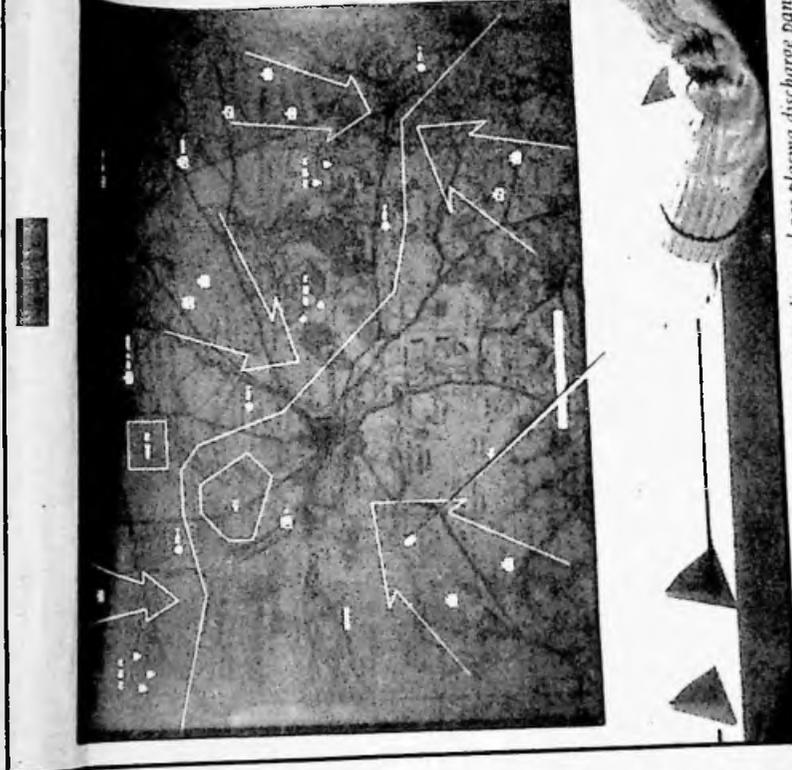
The system is designed for use with either the DEC PDP-11 range of computers operating under RSX 11M+ or the DEC Vax 11 range under VMS (which perhaps explains one reason why the Russians are so keen to smuggle DEC systems behind the Iron Curtain). Still on the technical side, the software is written in Pascal, and Software Sciences reckons the finished product is so straightforward it can be used by people with no computer programming expertise.

Under another contract Software Sciences is producing a test-bed for Dias (Distributed Information Architecture for Ships) and investigating the operational benefits of integrating Action Information Organisation (AIO), Sensor and Weapons Control for future naval systems. Software systems are currently being implemented for AIOs and Fire Control Systems for existing patrol craft, frigates and submarines.

Any discussion about defence systems, and software in particular, would not be complete without



This is Satecon's concept of the high technology infantryman in the year 2000.



A screen plasma display featuring a one-metre diagonal gas plasma discharge panel.

Evening Standard
2nd August 1984



LIFESAVER: Dr Alison Bleaney. Her perilous dash through Port Stanley helped an early ceasefire.

Falklands award for shy heroine

by Bob Graham

THE shy heroine of the Falklands campaign today lined up before the Queen to receive her gallantry award.

Dr Alison Bleaney, a 32-year-old doctor in the Falklands was receiving her OBE at Buckingham Palace — after being awarded it in October 1982.

Dr Bleaney, who braved gunfire to help secure a speedy ceasefire, was unable to attend last year's investiture—she was "too busy working in the island hospital."

Mother-of-two, Dr Bleaney helped with an early ceasefire, saving countless lives, as

the British task force made a final push towards Port Stanley.

She ran through streets filled with exploding shells to the Argentinian radio station to insist the British be told that civilians were scattered in the area and not gathered in a safe place.

Through her contacts, she was able to help in the final negotiations.

Soon after being awarded the OBE, shy Dr Bleaney said: "I don't want to be feted as a heroine. After all this time, I don't want to go over it all again. I'm just getting back to my job again."

Now, today, she finally takes her bow before the Queen.

Ex-president tells how thousands were jailed

BUENOS AIRES. Thursday: Argentina's former military president Jorge Rafael Videla has been arrested after testifying on the kidnap, torture and murder of thousands of political detainees under his rule.

Lt-General Videla, who headed a 1976 coup against President Maria De Peron

and remained in power until 1981, was driven under detention to the main army base

Human rights groups say up to 30,000 people may have disappeared in the military's ruthless anti-guerrilla drive in the early 70s.

President Raul Alfonsin, who took power in December after nearly eight years of military rule, has pledged to punish the engineers of the "dirty war"



JORGE VIDELA

Promotion for victor of Falklands

By Rodney Cowton,
Defence Correspondent

Sir John "Sandy" Woodward, who commanded the naval task force which sailed to the South Atlantic to recapture the Falkland Islands in 1982, is to be promoted to Vice Admiral and become one of four Deputy Chiefs of the Defence Staff.

In a large group of appointments announced yesterday by Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, the key one is that of Sir Peter Harding, who will become Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, with the rank of Air Chief Marshal.

Sir Peter will be the immediate superior of the four Deputy Chiefs. Although he will be of the same rank as the Chiefs of Staff of the Army, Navy and Air Force, his post is expected to emerge as being second only in importance in the Armed Services to that of Field Marshal Sir Edwin Bramall, Chief of the Defence Staff.

Full list page 1.

Senior posts in reorganized MoD

Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, yesterday announced senior appointments to the recently announced Ministry of Defence reorganization. The appointments will be from January 2, 1985. They are:

Defence Staff
Vice Chief of the Defence Staff: Air Marshal Sir Peter Harding (as Air Chief Marshal).
Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Commitments): Rear-Admiral Sir John Woodward (as Vice-Admiral).
Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Systems): Air Marshal Sir Donald Hall.
Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Policy): Mr D. A. Nicholls.
Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Programmes and Personnel): Major-General J. L. Chapple (as Lieutenant-General).
Chief of Defence Intelligence: Air Marshal Sir Michael Armitage.

Office of Management and Budget
Second Permanent Under-Secretary: Mr J. N. H. Belloch.
Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Resources and Programmes): Mr K. C. Macdonald.
Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Finance): Mr J. D. Bryars.
Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Administration): Mr B. E. Robson.
Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Civilian Management): Mr R. M. Hastie-Smith.

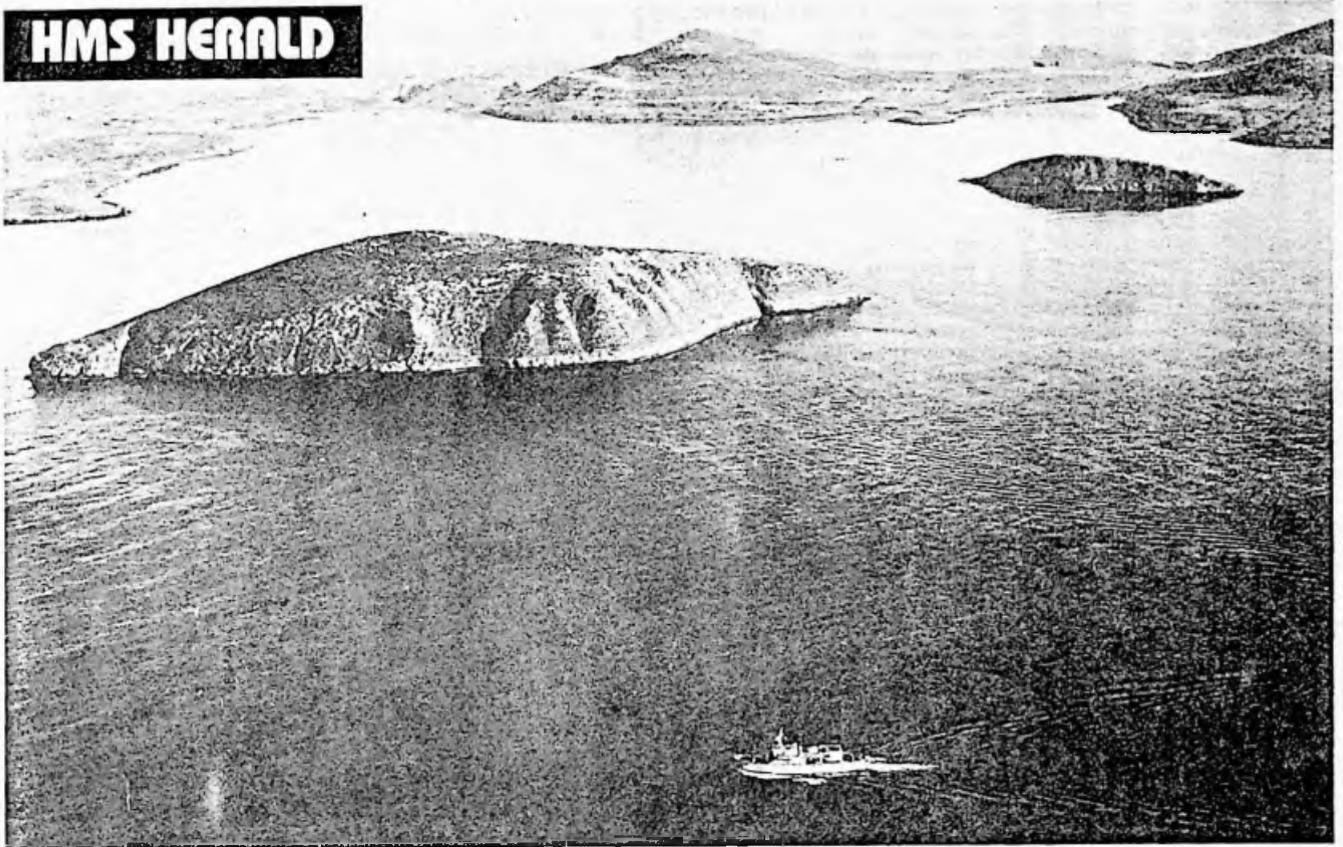
The following appointments to two star under-secretary level posts have been made with effect from January 2.

Defence Staff
Commitments Area: ACDS (Nato/UK): Brigadier G. D. Johnson (as Major-General); ACDS (Rest of the World/Military Assistance Overseas): Air Vice-Marshal J. M. D. Sutton; ACDS (Logistics/Policy and Plans): Rear-Admiral A. J. Richmond.
Systems Area: ACDS (Concepts): Major-General J. C. Reilly; ACDS (Sea Systems): Captain J. B. Kerr (in the rank of Rear Admiral); ACDS (Land Systems): Major-General L. A. W. New; ACDS (Air Systems): Air Vice-Marshal M. K. Adams; ACDS (Communications and Information Systems): Major-General G. R. Oehlers.
Policy Area: ACDS (Policy and Nuclear): Rear-Admiral J. R. Oswald; AUS (Policy): Mr N. H. Nicholls.

Programmes and Personnel Area: ACDS (Programmes): Air Vice-Marshal L. A. Jones.
Intelligence Area: ACDS (Intelligence): Captain T. M. Bevan (as Rear Admiral); Director of Management: Major-General G. M. G. Swindells.

Defence Services Secretary: Major-General J. M. Palmer.
Office of Management and Budget: Appointments as under-secretary in resources and programmes:
Systems: Mr W. D. Reeves; Defence Budget: Mr C. T. McDonnell; Service Programmes: Mr M. Galnsborough.
ACDS = Assistant Chief of Defence Staff.
AUS = Assistant Under-Secretary.

HMS HERALD



HMS Herald surveying off New Island, West Falkland.

Two months have passed since HMS Herald sailed into Port Stanley from the warmer waters of Ascension and St Helena. For some it was merely a return to old pastures green, Mne McCallion's third down South!

Time has passed quickly as the detachment have deployed ashore whilst the ship surveys its chosen sea. Walker Creek, Goose Green, Lively Island, Bluff Creek, Weddel Island and New Island have all played host to the detachment. Beach reces, patrolling in support of the 1st Battalion The Royal Scots as well as carting heavy survey gear up to the top of hills when our Wasp had broken down, has kept us quite busy.

Our stay at Goose Green proved interesting, incorporating a battlefield tour of 2 Para's famous victory ground and a heavy social with the locals celebrating Liberation Day.

The ship sailed for South Georgia for R & R in the first week of June, a stormy passage where even the detachment couldn't get their heads down. We arrived at Grytviken, donned skis and had a lot of good fun, whilst the DSM and Cpl O'Flinn organised a Winter Olympics for the ship's company. The detachment donned their official run ashore rig and a good day was had by all. The odd Royal Scot looked on in amazement at the sight of oddly dressed matelots careering down slopes having just seen skis for the first

time in their lives! A Barbecue at -4°C concluded the entertainment and after a few beers everybody forgot about the cool temperature.

The ship arrived in Stanley after two weeks and moved off for a short visit to New Island

where it put the detachment ashore for 10 days at Beaver and Weddel Islands.

Over half way through the Commission, two more trips ashore including Husvik for 10 days during the ship's survey of South Georgia and it's then homeward bound.



The umpires parade at Herald's 'Winter Olympics'.

Overseas Development
No.98 September 1984

AID ROUNDUP

FALKLAND ISLANDS: Britain is giving an initial £4 million to start the new Falkland Islands Development Corporation in promoting commercial enterprises such as studies on salmon ranching, developing inshore fishing, improving small farms, constructing a wool mill and building workshops and factories.

ST HELENA: Britain is giving £1.3 million for a new power station of 1,712 kW which will help the fish farming industry and provide power for more irrigation.

Observer
30.9.84

ANTARCTICA

Polar dispute heats up

WHILE the United States and the Soviet Union swap insults in public, in private they have been working together in an extraordinary effort to suppress discussion at the United Nations of the world's last undeveloped continent—Antarctica.

Superpower collaboration has even gone as far as stopping publication of the UN's monthly journal, *UN Chronicle*, because it contained an article about last year's General Assembly debate on Antarctica.

The issue due out in April has still not appeared. Nor have any subsequent issues, though the row over the Antarctic article is said not to be the only reason, writes Nigel Hawkes.

The superpowers want to keep the lid on discussions of Antarctica because they are

afraid it may become a rallying point for the militants of the third world. This might upset the operation of the treaty which has controlled Antarctica since 1959.

The treaty has odd bed-fellows: the Soviet Union makes common cause with the United States, Argentina with Britain and Chile, and everybody gets on with the international 'pariah,' South Africa. Despite this, it works admirably. None of the treaty powers wants to risk exposing Antarctica to the mercies of the UN General Assembly.

The treaty powers fear that the large third-world bloc will succeed in declaring Antarctica part of the 'heritage of all mankind' and subject to the same regime as the deep seabed. Such a move, lawyers say, would threaten the legal basis of the Antarctic Treaty, and unleash all sorts

of tricky political problems.

The leading spirit behind moves to declare Antarctica the heritage of all mankind is the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad. Nobody knows quite why, since Malaysia is not exactly contiguous to Antarctica and has no history of exploration there.

Some blame Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for exciting Mahathir's interest. On a visit to Malaysia some years ago she is said to have raised the subject with him. Since then, India has joined the treaty powers, so Mrs Gandhi no longer wants to rock the boat. Mahathir, however, once launched, has proved difficult to stop.

Many UN delegates see the Antarctica issue as the most interesting, as well as potentially the most explosive, at this year's General Assembly.

Mail on Sunday
30th September 1984

Belgrano: The six month secret

By PETER SIMMONDS

DEFENCE chiefs kept Mrs Thatcher in the dark for six months about the change of course by the Belgrano before it was sunk.

And there was similar delay before anyone in Government — from the Prime Minister down — was told that the submarine HMS Conqueror also fired torpedoes at one of the Argentine cruiser's escorting frigates.

The Belgrano was sunk with the loss of 368 lives as it headed back towards port during the Falklands War.

Cover-up

Royal Navy chiefs believed at the time that the information was irrelevant because both American and British intelligence indicated that the Argentine navy was intent on engaging the British Task Force.

Mrs Thatcher has given her approval for Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine to reveal the delays when he gives evidence to the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs next month.

The disclosure seems certain to infuriate Mr Heseltine's staff because it suggests they were involved in a cover-up.



Sad survivors: (left) Freda McKay, with a picture of her dead son; (centre) Tina and Leslie Brookes with their daughter; (right) Pte Brookes in the Falklands.

THE WOUNDS OF WAR

JANET WATTS on what happened to the Falklands wives

THE FALKLANDS war, the first in modern British history to be waged by a woman, was fought by men at a sufficient distance from these islands not to require a home front. But there were rather more victims of this war than the 1,000 British servicemen it injured or killed. It also brought an uncharted amount of suffering to non-combatant British civilians, most of them women: and with that suffering, an anger that is now finding public expression.

These women had waited, through the 74 days of the Falklands action, for information about their husbands, lovers and sons 8,000 miles away: and had often waited in vain. After the war, they waited again — for weeks, months, even up to the present — for some recognition of what they had lost, and some certainty about their futures, if those men had come home injured or psychologically damaged, or had not come home at all.

Jean Carr, a *Sunday Mirror* reporter who campaigned on these women's behalf after the war, tomorrow publishes 'Another Story', a book about her investigations, which won her the disdain of the Ministry of Defence, the armed services, and the South Atlantic Fund administration. 'There was a feeling that war widows should gown themselves in black and stay silent, and the response to me was often "Who's whining now?"', she says.

To her, one woman was struggling against the tide of instant history books (written by men), to express what it feels like to be on the other side of war; and she wanted 'to add some dignity and permanence to their criticism and protest'. But, she notes, amid all the home from his honeymoon. His wife, Tina, was 'heartbroken'; Leslie couldn't help feeling excited. 'It's what you joined up for, after all.'

Private Leslie Brookes of the 2nd Battalion of the Parachute Regiment sailed with the task force a few days after coming home from his honeymoon. His wife, Tina, was 'heartbroken'; Leslie couldn't help feeling excited. 'It's what you joined up for, after all.'

'Two Para was the only battalion to fight two battles in the war. The morning after Darwin and Goose Green, Leslie was shocked to see the dead bodies, and all your mates wounded.' Two weeks later, on the eve of the Argentinian surrender, he was himself shot in the mouth at Wireless Ridge. If he had not had his mouth open at that moment, and his face turned, he would have had his head blown off. As it was, the bullet smashed his teeth and gums and went out through his cheek. 'I was spitting teeth out. I put my fingers up and felt a hole—it was all flesh and rubbish.'

At home in Sheffield, Tina

Brookes, who had just found she was pregnant, learnt of the battalion's actions through the television news. After this one, the regimental base at Aldershot got a message to her father that Leslie had been 'hit in the face by shrapnel.' When Tina tried ringing Aldershot, 'they were about as much good as toothache.' She only discovered the truth when her husband, having had an operation, telephoned her from the Uganda and said he'd lost his teeth.

Leslie Brookes came home a fortnight later. But their troubles were not over. 'I expected he'd come back the way he went,' says Tina. 'I didn't think everything would have changed.' For about a year her husband was 'unbearable to live with,' unable to show affection, physically and emotionally violent, and ill with hepatitis and depression.

Leslie had to wait a year for his new teeth, because of his hepatitis; and he waited 13 months for his share of the South Atlantic Fund: £3,000. He has left the Paras now, and has been unem-

played since then. He woke up screaming from nightmares for months after the war. But he has no regrets.

His wife takes a different view. 'To me, the whole thing should never have happened. Now the British and Argentinians are having "talks" about the Falklands, so what have they fought for?'

Freda McKay's son Ian was one of the two Falklands heroes to be (posthumously) awarded the Victoria Cross.

Through Ian's widow, Marika, Freda came to discover the pressures that the war's widows were suffering as well as their grief. (While on television they watched the Royal Family presenting campaign medals to the survivors and injured, many of them were receiving their dead husband's medals in unassembled pieces through the post.)

They usually lived in married quarters, so they faced the loss of their homes as well as of their men and livelihoods. Many spent months not knowing what money they could expect from

their dead husbands' regiments or from the South Atlantic Fund, for which they were obliged to fill in a form which suggested to them an (officially-denied) means test. Then, when the payments started, they found that they were all getting different sums, which 'seemed to put different values on their husbands' lives,' says Freda.

Freda McKay wrote to Margaret Thatcher in protest. 'Like you, I honour the sacrifice made by every man who fell . . . that others might live in freedom and justice,' replied Mrs Thatcher. 'I do not think it detracts from that honour to recognise that some widows have suffered a greater financial loss as a result of their husband's death than others.' The Fund, she said, aimed 'to ensure . . . that all those who suffered may live the kind of life they might have expected had the conflict not taken place.'

Freda McKay was, 'disgusted' by this response. A colonel's wife would obviously expect to live a more affluent life than a private's; and she felt Mrs Thatcher's statement contradicted the official assertion that payments were not made on the basis of rank.

A Falklands widow, Christina Heyes, went to collect her war widow's pension two months after her seaman husband died on HMS Ardent and heard a woman behind her in the post office queue say: 'What war?' The public's memory is short. 'I was once asked whether, despite what happened to Ian, I thought it had been worthwhile,' says Mrs McKay. 'I think that's a stupid question.'

'Another Story' is published by Hamish Hamilton, price £7.95 (paperback, £3.50).

What Pte Brookes feels now

WE WERE all right cheerful until the Sheffield got sunk. Until then I don't think anyone—officers or men—thought it would end up in people getting killed.

The thought of killing never bothered me. That's your job: it's automatic, it's what you're trained to do. The only thing that shocked me was seeing all the dead bodies, the morning after Darwin and Goose Green. I was surprised: they were like

waxworks, and they stunk something rotten — that sweet, sickly smell. I had to move a young Argentine's body to get into a trench: he was stiff, still huddled up, and holding a letter in his hand. I felt right sorry for him. The official figure was 250 enemy dead, but I know someone who counted 477 bodies. And—though they denied it—people did go round shooting the wounded. I saw a sergeant do it.

I'm glad I fought. I'm very patriotic, and I've always liked adventure. I always wanted to be a Para. I thought we were the best in the world. I was somebody then. Now I've come out, I'm just like everybody else. I'd love a proper job, but I'm not trained for anything. If I wasn't married, I'd still be in there. But Tina didn't want it, and your wife comes first. And they could always get someone else.

'Queen of England' rescues Argentina

IN THE gilded saloons of the Jockey Club in Buenos Aires one subject dominates the gossip of the rich: the behaviour of Bernardo Grinspun, Argentina's increasingly controversial economy minister.

Grinspun's fascination lies in his legendary ability to offend the international bankers on whom Argentina will depend for its next round of loans. The Grinspun technique, according to the traumatised bankers, is a mixture of personal rudeness and a constantly shifting negotiating position.

The announcement last week of the IMF deal set off renewed speculation that President Raul Alfonsin might get rid of his unrepentant minister. After nine

months of prevarication the government has accepted a previously unthinkable headline agreement that will force Argentina into a grinding and painful readjustment. The delay has yielded nothing but faded prestige and an inflation rate of more than 1,000%.

But if Alfonsin did dismiss Grinspun he would be seen by Radical party supporters as violating a political tradition which sets great store on personal loyalty.

The loyalty is maintained in the face of an increasingly vocal public

disappointment with the performance of the government, which even Alfonsin's considerable personal prestige has been unable to stifle.

The government is increasingly perceived as a government of improvisation and amateurism, not just in the excusable inexperience of the elected representatives but through the questionable abilities of the many thousands of their friends and relatives who have been given public posts in recent months.

The nepotism begins at the top. Two of the president's brothers, his

by Isabel Hilton
Buenos Aires

sister, his son-in-law and his former partner have been found niches in public life. Both the minister of the interior and Grinspun have given jobs to their sons. Of the newly-elected parliamentary deputies, 60% have given jobs to close relatives. But the undisputed champion is the energy secretary, who has placed more than 20 relatives on the public payroll.

As the circle of obligation widens, the "pork barrel" takes on extraordinary dimensions. 180,000 new bureaucratic posts have been created.

Apart from the general irritation this has caused among professional civil servants downgraded to make room for the new incumbents, trouble is anticipated when the IMF conditions - which include a drastic reduction in the budget deficit - begin to bite. Alfonsin cannot sack the party faithful, nor, because of Argentina's protective legislation,

government will certainly lose its majority in the lower house and be forced into a series of coalitions.

In the face of this threat, the president has opted for a style of government which closely resembles a permanent political campaign. In the week before he set out for his visit to Washington, Alfonsin made nine public speeches, no country town seemed too obscure to merit a visit, and no club too unimportant to be addressed.

To a country impatient for results, the president's talking and travelling has begun to look like escapism and has earned him the ironic nickname of "Queen of England" - a reference to a head of state who reigns but does not govern.

can he sack the previous incumbents. Clearly, something will have to give.

The government remains phlegmatic in the face of these apparent contradictions - a phenomenon explained by another perceived Radical characteristic: the belief that all problems diminish with time and that God is an Argentinian.

In case He is not also a Radical voter, an anxious eye is being kept on public opinion, with next year's congressional election the main worry. If things go badly, the

First strike in a war

I think that Peter Hill's letter (last Sunday) tends to support my argument about 'deterrence' and the Belgrano sinking, rather than detract from it; I'm not convinced that I have 'misunderstood the basis of Lord Lewin's remark that "there was still a military case for sinking an Argentine capital ship to deter attacks on the British fleet".'

If the Argentine navy was 'deterred' from attacking British ships, the air force plainly was not; it would be surprising if British military chiefs thought that it would be. Instead, as Peter Hill's remarks about the origins of the conflict themselves seem to imply, the attack on the cruiser was a sign that 'deterrence' had failed and that the British Government recognised this. The sinking of the Belgrano was a 'first strike'

action, not a 'deterrent,' and it is misleading to suggest otherwise.

Christopher Clark
University of York.

Alfonsin hint on trials

The Guardian
28/9/84

PRESIDENT Alfonsin of Argentina has indicated that civilian courts may take over the trials of former military rulers on charges of torture and executions in the 1970s, it was reported in Washington yesterday.

He said yesterday in New York that he was disappointed at the failure of the Armed Forces Supreme Council to act on the cases of 12 admirals and generals.

The military tribunal said earlier this week that the 12 accused could not be found more than "indirectly responsible" for cases resulting from thousands of abductions and deaths during a military campaign against suspected leftist subversives. —
Reuter.

SIR GEOFFREY STONE-WALLS

INEVITABLY, PERHAPS. Britain's agreement to return Hongkong, a colony for 142 years, to Chinese rule has given rise to the expectation, if not the belief, in Madrid and Buenos Aires, that sooner rather than later Whitehall will be prepared to off-load Gibraltar and the Falkland islands. Sir GEOFFREY HOWE, the Foreign Secretary, no doubt pleased with himself over how well everything has gone and showered with praise from all quarters, including the United Nations, was bowled this one at a Press conference. He offered a straight bat. Hongkong was unique. There was no doubt about Britain's sovereignty over the Rock and the Falklands. It did not depend upon a lease.

It is arguable which bit of property is Britain's bigger colonial headache. But to take Gibraltar first the Spanish government would be foolish either to excite itself, or to whip up too much domestic excitement, over hopes the colony will now go the same way as Hongkong. Simply Spain has no legal right to Gibraltar and the Gibraltarians decidedly do not seek rule from Madrid. Nevertheless there are all sorts of proposals that could ease tensions over the issue and these must be pursued. For example, Spain, if it wants EEC membership, could make a start by fully opening the frontier at the Rock.

The row with Argentina over the Falklands is something else. President ALFONSIN, who one would have thought has enough problems halving an inflation rate of 650 per cent. and dealing with a military unrepentant over the deaths of some 9,000 Argentinians, has categorically ruled out an Anglo-Argentine reconciliation and normalisation of relations unless London negotiates the sovereignty of the islands. Sir GEOFFREY can talk about the islanders' right to self-determination until he is blue in the face but the General Assembly does not want to know. No matter. Britain has shown realism, above all, over the future of Hongkong. We are simply being no more nor less than realistic over Gibraltar and the Falklands.

The Daily Telegraph
28/9/84

HUGE RESPONSE IN HONGKONG FAVOURS ACCORD

By JAMES MacMANUS in Hongkong

HUNDREDS of thousands of extra copies of the White Paper on the future of Hongkong were ordered yesterday as the people of the territory turned from the traditional pursuit of profits to study the fine print of the Sino-British agreement.

The popular reaction continued to be overwhelmingly favourable to an accord that promises to retain the colony's freewheeling economy and high-spending lifestyle after the reversion to Chinese rule in 1997.

The interest in the terms of the agreement has been such that Government printers are now turning out 850,000 copies in addition to the million already printed in Chinese and 250,000 in English.

The response is said to have gratified the Governor, Sir Edward Youde, who told a Press conference yesterday that the people of the territory must either reject or accept the agreement. There could be no return to the negotiating table to seek amendments.

The initial Press comment and reaction from the business community and appointed members of Hongkong's Legislative and Executive Councils point to a firm "Yes" when the Assessment office makes its written report to the House of Commons for a Parliamentary debate in December.

Index 15 points up

The locally appointed team of civil servants has already begun soliciting public reaction to the agreement, and the two independent monitors, Sir Patrick Nairne and Mr Justice Simon Li, have begun their

separate tasks of evaluating the assessment exercise.

Meanwhile the Hang Seng stock-market index closed 15 points up at 1,014 last night, which was viewed as a respectable gain since most local buyers got into the market last week on the back of optimistic forecasts about the terms of the White Paper.

A spokesman for the joint-venture merchant bank Jardine-Fleming, whose chairman, Mr Simon Keswick, is a prominent business figure in the colony, said yesterday: "The locals are taking this agreement very well."

Very important

"We think it is very important that United Kingdom fund managers now rethink their caution towards Hongkong and follow the example of the United States and Japanese investors, who have shown a much more positive interest in this place recently."

The business community has fastened on to the fact that land leases have been secured for a further 50 years after 1997 on present terms, and this explaining the underlying mood of confidence prevailing in the colony.

Labyrinth of the Belgrano

Sir,—After speculation in the Guardian of September 21 about motives for the sinking of the Belgrano, here is another theory.

Mrs Thatcher and her war cabinet were hell bent on fighting a war "to teach the Argies a lesson." Therefore on April 30, 1982, after the United States had come down firmly on the side of Britain, they decided to step things up by ordering the sinking of the aircraft carrier, Venticinco Mayo, outside the Total Exclusion Zone. I am presuming that the decision to alter the rules of engagement was taken after the Peruvian peace plan, then underway, had collapsed; of course if it was taken before the collapse of the peace plan, this in itself would show the war cabinet's attitude to the plan.

Now, if on May 2 the war cabinet knew something about the Peruvian peace plan — not necessarily a complete draft — it might have occurred to it that, with the United States now supporting Britain, the junta would realise it stood little chance of gaining a military victory, and would probably accept the plan.

Since the war cabinet would not want Britain to be seen to be continuing to use armed force — the bombardment of Port Stanley had already taken place on May 1 — after a signing by Argentina, something would be needed to precipitate mat-

ters: hence the sinking of the Belgrano at that time, and not in the 30 preceding hours.

Such an idea is supported by remarks made by Sir Anthony Kershaw on ITV's Day Three on September 19. He asserted that the Peruvian peace plan was an irrelevance because, even if Galtieri had signed it, we would never have been able to trust him to keep his word. This of course would have been Mrs Thatcher's answer to any such signing. However such an answer could have put us in the wrong in the eyes of the world.

If Sir Anthony's views were those of the war cabinet, what then was the motive in seeking a plan for peace? Was it to placate the other political parties, or just playing for time to allow the task force to get on station?

Diana S. Gould,
11 Queen Elizabeth Road,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

The Daily Telegraph
28/9/84

Naval tactics and the Belgrano

SIR—In the Government's detailed response to Belgrano questions, her course was described as "irrelevant."

As students of naval tactics will be aware, the Belgrano will have been allocated a station (position or area) by the Argentine Navy, and ordered to patrol that area.

A degree of latitude is usually accorded to a force commander as to how he complies. Sea state, visibility, the tactical situation, a change of station—there and other factors could each require a reversal of course, as well as the need to comply with basic orders while maintaining a high enough speed to counter submarine attack.

It is thus inevitable that, often for a lengthy period, a patrolling warship will steer away from the force she threatens.

In the Belgrano case, it is still not clear whether her reversal of course, was, a result of these constraints, or whether she had been recalled. What is quite clear, however, is that those responsible for the conduct of British forces were in no position to know, and would have been obliged to assume the worst case.

In thick weather (and there was plenty of that) Fleet defensive aircraft could not fly. Belgrano, with her heavy gun armament and superior speed could have inflicted grave, and probably decisive damage—subject only to her evading the few defending submarines.

Failure to immobilise Belgrano, when opportunity offered—and thus to accept the possibility of her sinking—would have been a serious neglect of duty. There was no other choice.

BRIAN BAYNHAM
Auchterarder, Perthshire.

IMF defends Argentine deal against critics

BY PETER MONTAGNON IN WASHINGTON

MR JACQUES DE Larosière, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, yesterday sprang to the defence of the agreement on economic stabilisation policies reached with Argentina in Washington this week.

"If we in the management level have agreed a programme, it is because we are sure that all the required conditions meet the standards that make it possible for me to endorse (it)," he said in his first public comment on the agreement, which paves the way for negotiations with Argentina's creditor banks on rescheduling \$20bn (£16bn) of debt.

In response to concern expressed by foreign creditor banks that the programme was too weak, and that Argentina would be unable to comply with it, Mr de Larosière said that

not all details of the agreement had yet been made public.

The memorandum of understanding published by Argentina on Wednesday was "the main document that is the core of the programme, he told a Press conference.

"But this will be encompassed in a broader explanation of the policies that we have agreed the agreement will be completed on," he added. A full report on in a few weeks and sent to members of the IMF's executive board.

Creditor banks have criticised the memorandum for failing to be specific about the two key policy areas of exchange rates and wages policy.

The IMF is said to be not especially concerned about these criticisms and is letting it be known privately that Mr de Larosière would not have recommended the package with-

out firm commitments from Argentina in these two areas.

Details of these commitments are unlikely ever to be made public, however, and a key indicator of the strength of the programme and Argentina's compliance with it will be the degree to which devaluation of the peso is speeded up between now and Christmas.

Leading bank creditors are due to meet Argentine officials today to discuss the pressing problems of interest arrears and the \$750m repayment of principle that has been overdue since September 15.

Argentina's agreement with the IMF is in support of its application for a 15-month Fund credit totalling \$1.4bn, plus about \$200m from the IMF's compensatory financing facility to offset a loss of export receipts.

Tribunal 'refuses' to court martial Argentine juntas

By *CRISTINA BONASEGNA* in *Buenos Aires*

TENSION between Argentina's military and civilians mounted yesterday after the country's highest military tribunal virtually refused to court martial former leaders blamed for the "disappeared ones."

Ten thousand people vanished in the previous régime's drive against alleged Left-wing subversion.

President Alfonsín declined to make any real comment on his return to Buenos Aires yesterday from the United States where he had addressed the opening session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The courts martial of the first three of the four juntas that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983 were ordered by Alfonsín shortly after he took office last December.

Before leaving New York on Wednesday night, Alfonsín claimed he had no information on the issue, but stated "if there is such a decision (by the military tribunal), the cases will pass to civilian courts, as they should."

Under a reform of the military code of justice passed by the elected Government, the Federal Chamber of Appeals, a civilian court, can automatically review the decisions by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in connection with a court martial.

The Daily Telegraph
28/9/84

'Lack of time'

Dossiers on 210 cases of alleged human-rights violation handled by the tribunal are expected to be submitted to the Chamber of Appeals today and on Monday.

The Defence Ministry meanwhile issued a statement saying that the courts and not the executive would have to decide if the Supreme Council had proceeded correctly or not.

In a report that took the Government by surprise, the Supreme Council said on Tuesday it could not reach a verdict by the October 11 deadline because of lack of time and proper evidence. It added it did not find anything wrong with the junta's orders to fight the so-called "dirty war."

Although the Interior Ministry tried to play down the hard blow the report gave to the Government, criticism continued to pour in yesterday from almost all quarters.

Senor Bravo, Education Under-Secretary, who had been abducted and tortured by the military, claimed: "The armed forces are still arrogant."

Death threats

If they had made use of the opportunity for self-criticism, "they would have expelled from their ranks people who don't even deserve to be called human."

Senor Saadi, leader of the Opposition in the Senate, attacked the Government for having allowed the military to try themselves, which he said was "a covert amnesty."

"If those responsible for Argentina's genocide are not punished, we will have a civil war."

The military tribunal reportedly decided not to reach a verdict in the courts martial after receiving anonymous death threats and white feathers, which according to a long-standing tradition in the armed forces, stand for treason to their peers.

Passport promise given by Governor

28.9.84

By David Dodwell in Hong Kong

BRITAIN will make "appropriate provision" for people in Hong Kong who might otherwise become stateless, Sir Edward Youde, the Governor, said yesterday.

He denied suggestions that Britain and China had failed to agree on the issue of nationality.

He said some might wonder whether they would be left stateless. But they could be sure that if there was any question of statelessness, appropriate provision would be made in British legislation.

Sir Edward insisted that, while memoranda on the issue fell outside the joint declaration, there were "formal statements of government policy on each side."

There are about 3m people in Hong Kong entitled to British Dependent Territories passports. China has refused to let them have dual nationality, and this has forced Britain to seek parliamentary approval for laws to give them "the right to a new status, with an appropriate title."

Responding to worries over the vagueness in the declaration on the shape of Hong Kong's future political structure, Sir Edward said the three principles in the declaration—an elected legislature, an executive accountable to the legislature, an executive bound by law—were significant ones.

It is understood the declaration was deliberately vague on the issue because of fears that greater detail would tie the hands of the present Hong Kong government over political reforms now in train.

Our Foreign Staff writes: None of the 3m holders of Dependent Territories passports now in Hong Kong will have rights of residence in the UK, but Britain is preparing legislation to give non-Chinese holders some form of British nationality. The legislation would also provide their children born after 1997 with British nationality at birth if they would otherwise be stateless.

The Financial Times
28/9/84

The people of Hong Kong queue up to read about their future 'Best that could be achieved'

BY DAVID DODWELL IN HONG KONG

LONG QUEUES formed yesterday outside government offices in Hong Kong as young and old alike sought copies of the White Paper that sets out the framework for life in Hong Kong after 1997 when Britain hands the territory back into Chinese hands.

Over 1m copies of the 46-page document were handed out during the day—almost all of the initial print run.

Another 1m copies will be off the presses before the weekend, and Government officials expect a total of 3m copies to be printed.

That says a lot in a community with a population estimated at between 5.5m and 6m.

First reactions seemed to be cautiously favourable. The document was without question more detailed than most had expected.

Left-leaning newspapers and pressure groups hailed the agreement variously as "the dawn of a new era," "a tribute to the leaders of both countries," and proof that they did take note of the many views expressed by Hong Kong's people.

Many praised the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping's "sighted and imaginative proposal for one country with two systems."

Sir Sze-yuen Chung, Senior Executive Councillor, said the agreement was the best that could be achieved, and should regain the confidence of the Hong Kong people. This view was echoed by other members of the territory's Legislative and Executive Councils.

The business and financial communities were also universal in their praise. Most talked of the document removing uncertainty, and lifting the floodgates on investment in the territory. One prominent shipbuilder said he had decided to go ahead with a major investment in Hong Kong after reading the document.

News that there will be no new premium payable for renewal of land leases or for the right to retain 75 or 999 year leases after 1997 came as a

great relief to property owners and to debt-burdened property companies.

Similarly, Cathay Pacific Airways, Hong Kong's flag-carrier, welcomed a caveat-riddled agreement on air traffic rights as one which gives "every cause for confidence."

The stock market—usually a clear indicator of sentiment—gave mixed signals. After a day of more, than usually heavy business the Hang Seng index improved by a modest 10 points to close at 1014.9 with almost as many people keen to take profits on their shares as to buy new ones.

Many were sceptical of the value of the assessment committee, which went into operation yesterday and has been set up to gauge people's reactions to the agreement.

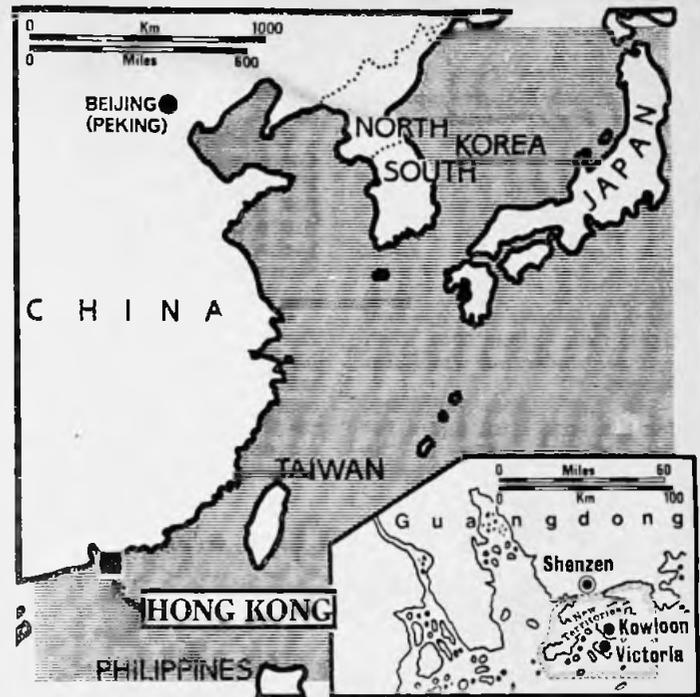
Since the declaration cannot be changed, most people thought the exercise of gathering their views on it was rather pointless.

Specific worries concentrated on the failure to reach agreement on the rights of British nationals in Hong Kong and on the vague terms used to outline the shape and powers of the future Special Administrative Region's Government after 1997.

The voices of strongest scepticism came from the academic community, where respected figures such as Prof Peter Harris from the Politics Department of Hong Kong University, and Mr T. L. Tsim at the Chinese University called for caution.

Prof Harris, for example, described the document as "politically innocent, a trifle utopian," providing a set of ideals that depend on all things being equal.

"The document is magnificent," he said, "but is it politics? Where are the banana skins? Politics is a hard business, and there are no political realities in this whatsoever. It is so idealistic, one almost feels like comparing it with the Ten Commandments."



Real concern lies beneath Taiwan's emotional protest

BY ROBERT KING IN TAIPEI

BENEATH the Taiwan Government's emotionally charged condemnation of the Hong Kong agreement lie two real concerns.

First, should China make good its guarantees to Hong Kong, more international pressure will be brought on Taiwan to accept China's continuing peace overtures.

Second, should public confidence collapse among Hong Kong Chinese, Taiwan might be hit by a flood of refugees it could hardly accept, given the current crowded conditions of the island, but which it could only turn away with embarrassment.

Taiwan has consistently said that the Hong Kong Chinese are citizens of the Republic of China.

The Taiwan Government condemned the Hong Kong pact in predictable terms, claiming that, because Taiwan holds the original 19th-Century documents signed by Britain and Imperial China that cover Hong Kong's present status, it is Taiwan, not China, that should have been consulted.

Mr Yu Kuo-Hwa, the Prime Minister, called the accord "a disgraceful episode in human

history" and "a grievous offence to all seekers of peace and devotees of democracy."

Meanwhile, however, the Taiwanese have not developed a coherent policy for dealing with the implications of the accord, which could effect trade links, shipping and air traffic and even postal and telephone agreements.

Mr Yu Kuo-Hwa included in his statement offers of assistance to the Hong Kong Chinese who might want to settle, invest, educate their children or deposit money in Taiwan. But the offers, vaguely worded, fell far short of opening the door to all comers.

● Japan can expect increased trade and financial links with Hong Kong, according to businessmen and bankers interviewed by Reuter in Tokyo.

They said that there have been virtually no cases of Japanese companies pulling out and that Hong Kong should remain, along with Singapore, a major Asian financial centre.

● South Korea "welcomes" the agreement, a Foreign Ministry spokesman told AP in Seoul, and "looks forward to Hong Kong's continued prosperity."

THE Americans have been keeping a half-interested watch on continued Belgrano rumblings, mainly with a view to assessing the likely impact on Mrs T's Government. General Haig's own versions of the events of April and May 1982 have tended to be somewhat confused—claiming there that “we were down to...single words” in hammering out the Peruvian peace proposals, and here that “there was profound scepticism” that they had any hope. The latter, according to well-placed American sources this week, seems to be a more accurate reflection of his feelings. His view, says these sources, is that the proposals were never a genuine runner, but were a way of buying time and keeping the sides apart. So the current American view is that what went down with the Belgrano was the hope that something would turn up.

Daily Mail
28.9.84

Owen: Tell truth over Belgrano

DR DAVID OWEN renewed calls for a full statement on the Belgrano sinking. In a letter to the Premier, he said there were matters where Parliament had not been given the truth.

~~The Times 27.9.84~~

Few qualify for UK residence

When sovereignty over Hongkong is transferred from Britain to China on July 1, 1997, only a tiny minority of the population will have the automatic right of abode in the United Kingdom.

The remainder of an estimated population of about six million will have the right of abode in Hongkong and be able to obtain permanent identity cards issued by the Hongkong Special Administrative Region Government (David Cross writes).

Based on the current population of 5,350,000, the breakdown will be:

- 20,000, mainly British expatriates, will have United Kingdom passports with the full right of abode here.
- 2,500,000, who currently have British Dependent Territories Citizen passports, will be entitled to a special new British passport which will not allow them, however, to settle in Britain.
- 2,830,000, who can travel abroad at present on a certificate of identity, will be entitled to a similar document to be issued by the Hongkong Special Administrative Region.

IMF grants \$1.4bn standby loan to Buenos Aires

From Sarah Hogg and Bailey Morris, Washington

The Argentine Government yesterday published its long-fought-over memorandum of agreement on economic policy with the International Monetary Fund.

This formal agreement, if endorsed by the IMF's executive board, will permit Argentina to draw up to \$1.43 billion under a standby arrangement with the fund, although that is still conditional on agreement with Argentina's commercial bankers.

The Government must meet interest arrears of \$900m by the weekend if the US banks are not to be forced to declare their loans non-performing.

In all, Argentina is looking for about \$5 billion in immediate new money, of which the IMF loan would provide about a third. Neither the commercial banks nor the Paris Club (of Government creditors) has yet reached agreement with Buenos Aires, but the IMF memorandum is a significant step forward.

The memorandum provides for:

• A plan aimed at progressively reducing inflation to 300 per cent in the year ending next September, and an annual rate

of 150 per cent during the last quarter of 1985, compared with a rate of about 650 per cent now;

• Devaluation of the exchange rate designed "at a minimum" to adjust for the difference between domestic and international prices. This is to permit stabilization of the current account deficit, including rising interest payments on international debt, at around \$2.2 billion.

Debt crisis 'far from over'

International banking officials at the IMF's annual meeting said yesterday that the world debt crisis is by no means over, even though it has moved into a more manageable stage as a result of newly negotiated agreements with the three biggest debtor nations.

World Bank and IMF officials said the debt problem had moved into a third critical stage in which 70 per cent of the world's outstanding debt will fall due between now and 1989.

As a result of agreements with Mexico, Venezuela and Argentina, a workable mechanism for managing outstanding

• "Simplification" of the foreign exchange and trade system. The Government undertakes not to impose or intensify any restriction on payments or transfers for current international transactions;

• A schedule for the phased elimination of external payments arrears not subject to refinancing by the banks;

• A sustained reduction in the rate of growth of credit and

debt has been achieved, they said.

But the situation could worsen quickly if the following conditions are not met over the next crucial year and beyond: sustained recovery in the industrialized nations; open world trading markets to allow continued growth in Third World exports; an increase in investment flows to developing countries projected at 7 per cent a year.

Open world trading markets are a critical component of success in managing the problem according to the heads of the bank, the IMF and key industrialized nations

money, with limits on the deficits of the central bank and the non-financial public sector. The plan is aimed at reducing the cash deficit of the non-financial public sector to 8.1 per cent of gdp in 1984 as a whole, and to 5.4 per cent in 1985. That compares with a peak of 16.5 per cent during the fourth quarter of 1983. In order to restrain public spending, the Government has agreed to stop holding public sector prices below the general level of inflation;

• However, on the vexed question of wages, the Government is still planning monthly wage adjustments for the public and private sectors, with catch-up increases "from time to time" to provide a measure of protection for real wages. It is thought that the Government will try to put something of a check on wages by delaying catch-up increases, but there is no formal commitment to do so

• The Argentine Government has also won through with its insistence that adjustment policies should not precipitate recession: Its financial programme "has provided for moderate growth of output next year".

Outcry at military's defence of 'dirty war'

BY OUR BUENOS AIRES CORRESPONDENT

CLAIMS by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the nation's highest military court, that there was "nothing objectionable" in the orders the military issued during a 1970 so-called dirty war against Leftist guerillas, has raised a huge public outcry here.

On Tuesday, the military court said that it could not reach a verdict by its October 11

deadline in the trials of the members of three military juntas on human rights violation charges, saying they could only indirectly be held responsible for their failure to prevent stop or punish illegal acts by those under their command.

The action by armed forces tribunal is likely to mean the cases will be handed over to civilian courts. The military

body itself said complaints over rights violations were insufficient as they came from alleged victims, relatives or others who they called possible national security risks.

The decision was a dramatic blow to official hopes that the armed forces would purge themselves of the military men responsible for the disappearances and deaths of as many

as 9,000 people during the dirty war.

The announcement by the court came just five days after an official national human rights commission issued a report in which it blamed the former military juntas which ruled here for nearly eight years for being directly responsible for the illegal repression.

Hong Kong stays 'capitalist'

Continued from Page 1

A cause of anxiety among Britons in Hong Kong is that their passports will cease to be valid in 1997. In a memorandum outside the declaration—and therefore lacking the legally binding status of other provisions—Britain promises to seek approval for laws to be passed "which will give British dependent territories citizens the right to a new status, with an appropriate title."

Assurances on land and aircraft landing rights—two issues

in contention until the last minute and of critical importance to Hong Kong businessmen—were more specific and generous than expected.

Contrary to early fears, property owners on Hong Kong Island and in parts of Kowloon who hold long leases of between 75 and 999 years will not have to pay anything to the incoming government in 1997 to retain their leases. Those with leases expiring in or before 1997 will have to pay less than feared to

renew them.

The declaration also seems to provide for Hong Kong keeping control of aircraft landing rights after 1997 so long as the flights do not land on the Chinese mainland. However, the document is riddled with caveats on this point.

The announcement prompted Cathay Pacific, Hong Kong's flag carrier, to praise the agreement as one that "gives every cause for confidence" in the airline.

The commitment to democracy in the agreement adds urgency to the government's cautious plans for political reform. At the moment, these specifically rule out direct elections to the legislative council on the grounds that they might be destabilising.

Fears that the joint Sino-British might usurp the powers of the present government are eased. It is defined as "an organ of liaison and not an organ of power."

An agreement on trial

THE DRAFT agreement on the future of Hong Kong is a remarkable document which goes as far as is reasonable, and a good deal further than might have been predicted, in prescribing principles and practices which should help maintain the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong after the transfer of sovereignty to China in 1997. In that sense, it is a considerable achievement by the British negotiators. But it is important to recognise that this 40 page paper will be only one factor influencing events in years to come, and not necessarily the conclusive factor at that.

The irreducible fact hanging over the negotiations has been that Hong Kong will revert to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 when the New Territories lease runs out, willy-nilly. The British Government does not have, and has never had, any means of resisting that eventual outcome. Its only negotiating strength has been to play on the Peking Government's concern that, when Hong Kong does come under Chinese sovereignty, it shall be as a stable and prosperous going concern; and it has played that card for all it is worth and with great skill.

The Peking Government has been so sensible of these arguments that it has made substantial concessions to preserve the economic system and life-style of Hong Kong. The new Special Administrative Region will not merely have extensive executive, legislative and judicial autonomy, with a government system in the hands of local inhabitants, and with personal, social and political rights guaranteed by law; it will also retain the status of an international financial centre, with free flow of capital and a convertible dollar, and its capital-its system will be guaranteed for 50 years after the transfer of sovereignty.

For China, the great prize will be the peaceful acknowledgment by Britain of Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong. The fact of the agreement, and the prospect of the transfer, may be seen in Peking as important steps towards the eventual recovery of Macau and Taiwan. It is a measure of the

value of this prize that the Peking Government has been prepared to forswear for over 50 years its right to impose its own political and economic system on this tiny territory.

As a document, the agreement is quite as good as could have been expected. But the most important question is not whether this is a satisfactory text but, first, whether the blueprint has a reasonable chance of being implemented, and second, whether the people of Hong Kong will believe that it has a reasonable chance of being implemented. In the nature of things, both these questions are at this stage unanswerable.

The British Government claims the agreement is legally binding, and that the Chinese Government has a decent record of respecting international agreements. It is not clear, however, what sanction could be brought to bear if Peking diverged from the agreement, and while the basic principles—though not apparently the details—of the agreement will be enshrined in China's basic law, it cannot be forgotten that China has had several different constitutions since the Communist revolution.

Prospects

Moreover, circumstances and governments may change. If the people of Hong Kong lose confidence in the prospects, and there is a large outflow of capital and population, Hong Kong may be very different in 1997 from what it is today. The agreement may or may not be "binding," but its real strength is as a detailed expression of intentions, which will be tested by experiences as year succeeds year.

The heart of the matter is that the agreement marks the beginning of the process of adaptation, of which 1997 will be the formal watershed: for Hong Kong the pre-Chinese era has started. For the next 13 years Britain will retain administration; but it is Chinese conduct which will be crucial in helping to determine whether Hong Kong will still be in good shape in 1997. What happens thereafter can only be a matter of speculation, agreement or no agreement.

Argentina seeks \$20bn package after IMF deal

BY PETER MONTAGNON IN WASHINGTON

ARGENTINA IS to seek a \$20bn (£16bn) package of debt rescheduling and new loans from its commercial bank creditors, after agreement with the International Monetary Fund on an economic stabilisation programme, Sr Bernardo Grinspun, the Argentine Economy Minister, said in Washington.

The agreement, which will give Argentina access to about \$1.6bn in IMF credit, has allowed talks with creditor banks to "enter a decisive stage," the minister said before his departure for New York where he was due to join Sr Raúl Alfonsín, the Argentine President, in talks with foreign bankers.

As details of Argentina's 15-month programme agreed with the IMF, were made public yesterday, bankers said they would be looking for firm evidence of action by Argentina to curb inflation in the country and cut its fiscal deficit.

Under the programme, the public sector deficit is to be cut to 5.4 per cent of the gross domestic product in 1985, from 8.1 per cent this year. Bankers say this indicates a degree of austerity comparable with that accepted by other Latin American governments.

Sr Grinspun said the programme maintained Argentina's prescription of "austerity without recession" but the memorandum of understanding by Argentina and the IMF is a compromise that carefully avoids specific mention of what this will mean in terms of economic growth, wages policy or exchange rate targets.

Without action on these fronts, bankers indicated that final agreement on a new debt package for Argentina may be delayed. One slightly worrying sign was that Sr Grinspun maintained after the agreement yesterday that public sector workers would still be allowed wage increases of 6 to 8 per cent a year in real terms.

The bank package promises to be one of the most difficult debt rescheduling exercises yet. It would be almost impossible, were it not for Argentina's promise to eliminate debt service arrears by the third quarter of next year, the bankers said.

Outlining Argentina's debt plans, Sr Grinspun said the bank package would include rescheduling of public and private sector debt falling due between 1982 and 1985, as well as obtaining an unspecified amount of new money. Argen-

tina's public sector debt alone, which is eligible for rescheduling, is estimated at \$12bn.

Argentina also aims to reschedule \$1.5bn of official debt falling due to government creditors from 1982 through 1984, the minister continued, though this amount would be increased if 1985 maturities were rescheduled as well.

Technical work on the government debt rescheduling has already been completed and it will proceed quickly, once the IMF board has approved Argentina's programme in late November or early December, the minister went on.

There has been a public outcry in Buenos Aires at claims by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces that there was "nothing objectionable" in orders the military issued during the so-called "dirty war" in the 1970s.

The council, the nation's highest military court, said it could not reach a verdict by its October 11 deadline in the trials of the members of three military juntas on human rights violation charges. The cases are likely to be handed over to civilian courts. Page 3

In spite of the Falklands problem, Britain has indicated its willingness to reschedule government debt with Argentina, but it will not participate in any new loans from governments and special arrangements will have to be made for would-be bilateral talks to be handled through a third country, probably Switzerland.

Bankers believe that approval of Argentina's programme by the IMF board may take longer than the minister expects—if only because it may not have been possible to raise the required "critical mass" of new money loans by early December.

Sr Alfonsín was due yesterday to give bank creditors a broad overview of the new programme, but it was expected that, after his remarks, initial talks would concentrate on immediate problems, including an overdue payment of \$750m on the bridging loan of last year, settlement of arrears and the repayment due to leading creditors next week of a \$100m cash tranche delivered in March.

Details, Page 3

The Financial Times 27/9/84

Peter Montagnon in Washington explains the details of a long-awaited IMF prescription Argentina debt plan signals war on inflation

ARGENTINA aims to halve its inflation rate from 650 per cent to no more than 300 per cent in the year to next September under the terms of its economic programme agreed with the International Monetary Fund this week.

The fight against inflation is one of the fundamental aims set out in the memorandum of understanding which forms the basis of the IMF agreement. Other priorities are the restoration of sustained economic growth, a sharp expansion of exports, further curbs on the public sector deficit and a resolution of the country's pressing foreign debt problem. Debt service payment arrears are to be eliminated entirely in the third quarter of next year.

The memorandum says Argentina's total foreign debt, which stood at \$45.5bn when the government of President Raul Alfonsín took office, will not grow by more than \$4.5bn over the two years 1984 and 1985.

But it is deliberately vague on two key policy areas—wages and the exchange rate—which have been among the most sensitive issues in Argentina's protracted negotiations with the IMF. No specific targets are

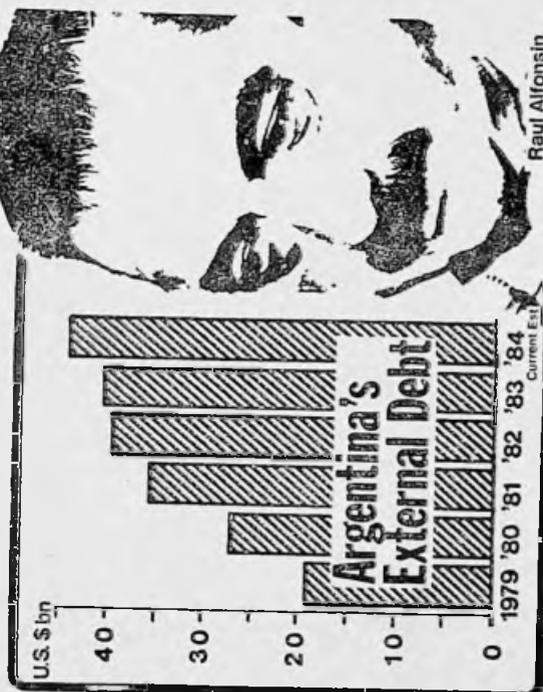
given for either in the memorandum.

"Given the prevailing high rate of inflation, for the time being, the Government will continue to decree wage adjustments for the public and private sector on a monthly basis, with catch-up increases from time to time to provide a measure of protection for real wages," it says.

"The size of the monthly and catch-up wage increases and the length of the period between catch-up adjustments will be determined with a view to ensuring that they are consistent with the government's price objectives."

On the exchange rate, which was one of the last points to be resolved in negotiations here this week, the memorandum says: "The Government intends to adjust the exchange rate as necessary to attain the balance of payments objectives of the programme. At a minimum, the exchange rate will be adjusted in line with the evolution of domestic prices vis-a-vis international prices."

The memorandum is however far more specific in the area of the public sector deficit, which it says will be reduced to 5.4 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in 1985 compared with 8.1 per cent this year.



Raul Alfonsin

expenditure of the public enterprises and including their current account deficit) will not exceed 32.9 per cent of GDP in 1984, compared with 33.9 per cent in 1983 and 36.5 per cent in the second half of that year." A further reduction of the share of government in total spending to 31 per cent by the second half of 1985 will be a target in next year's budget.

The memorandum says the programme should allow the deficit on the current account of the balance of payments to fall to \$2.2bn in 1984 and 1985 from \$2.4bn in 1983. "The government is committed to servicing the external debt, while limiting new borrowings so as not to compound the problem for the future."

The programme allows for a phased reduction of debt service arrears from a peak of \$3.7bn in June 1984 to \$1bn in June 1985. From the third quarter of next year debt service payments will be fully up to date.

As part of this, however, the programme commits Argentina to reaching a recheduling agreement with the Paris Club of industrial country creditors and with commercial banks. The agreement with the banks must be reached by the end of June, 1985.

says military expenses will be cut while outlays for social services, health, housing and education are expanded. Notwithstanding efforts to control expenditure, the ratio of government spending to GDP is likely to increase following approval of the budget by the National Congress.

"However, cash expenditure of the non-financial public sector (excluding the current

Cautious reaction to accord with IMF as problems loom

BY MARTIN ANDERSEN IN BUENOS AIRES

CHEERS HERE over the long-awaited announcement of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund have been tempered by the growing realisation that valuable time has been lost and grave economic problems remain.

Initial reaction to the announcement, made on Tuesday by Economy Minister, Sr Bernardo Grinspun, in Washington was muted since the contents of the accord have not been released here.

There was a considerable sense of relief, however, that an agreement was reached before President Raul Alfonsin met today with the chairmen of the world's largest banks at the New York home of former U.S. Secretary of State Dr Henry Kissinger. The generally cautious reaction also reflected awareness that final approval of the memorandum of understanding by the Fund's executive board is subject to Argentina's receiving refinancing from private banks. It is estimated that Argentina will need as much as \$3.5bn in new money in 1985, depending on export earnings.

"The agreement is undoubtedly a green light from the Fund to the international banks to begin renegotiation efforts on the debt," said Interior Minister Sr Antonio Troccoli here. Local analysts say Argentina is as much as \$1bn in arrears on interest payments, which the \$1.4bn IMF standby credit and a \$200m compensatory Fund package are designed to pay.

Argentina must now move to deal with a \$750m bridging loan payment which fell due on September 15 and which is being rolled over on a day to day basis. Also a \$100m loan, part

of the March 30 rescue package, falls due on October 1.

Officials here had originally hoped the IMF package would be approved before Sr Alfonsin's meeting earlier this week with President Ronald Reagan.

Sr Alfonsin's denial that the agreement was a result of his Sunday meeting with Mr Reagan is taken as a sign that the Argentine leader is worried about criticism on his domestic flank that Argentina went too far in bowing to external pressures. Claims by the ruling Radical Party that Argentina's tough bargaining stance has won it special considerations appear mostly at variance with what is known about the accord.

With monthly inflation expected to top 30 per cent in September, the Radicals rightly see their economic performance as the Government's achilles' heel—negating much of the political and social advances made by the nine-month-old democratic government.

The opposition Peronist Party remains deeply divided, locked in often vicious ideological and personality clashes which have been repeating themselves since founder Juan Peron died in 1974. Mirroring the party strife is the fact that some 700 unions, mostly in the hands of the Peronists, are in the process of holding bitterly disputed internal elections. Nevertheless the unions will be a major hurdle to deal with in selling the agreement. They have so far refused to accept a social contract

Analysts here predict the government's efforts on the debt will be met by growing opposition criticism over just what was gained in more than nine months of often nerve-jangling debt talks.

Financial Times
27/9/84

Falklanders' rights vital, Howe insists

By Our United Nations Correspondent

SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, the British Foreign Secretary, told the UN yesterday that those members who called for negotiations between Britain and Argentina on sovereignty over the Falklands were asking that the wishes of the islanders themselves be ignored.

"To ask us to do that is to ask us to overturn the principle of self-determination in the charter," he said in an address to the General Assembly.

Sir Geoffrey told the General Assembly that the breakdown of the recent Berne meeting with Argentina was an important opportunity missed. He also expressed disappointment with the statement made in the UN on Monday by President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina, which again made sovereignty negotiations an explicit precondition for Falklands talks.

"The Falkland islanders like any other people have the right to self-determination," Sir Geoffrey said. "We had hoped that the new Argentine Government, with its attachment to democracy and human rights, would have been ready to recognise this fundamental human right of the Falkland islanders."

The Falklands question will be debated in the General Assembly later in the session and Britain faces an uphill battle against a powerful third world-communist alliance, with many western members also alarmed by the lack of progress towards a solution of the dispute.

Britain has so far rebuffed efforts by the Secretary General, Sr Javier Perez de Cuellar, to intercede, as the general assembly proposed.

27.9.84

Hong Kong to remain 'capitalist' for 50 years after China takeover

BY DAVID DODWELL IN HONG KONG

BRITAIN and China yesterday ended two years of secret negotiation with an historic agreement handing Hong Kong back to China in 1997. China has undertaken to leave the colony's "capitalist system and life style" unchanged for the following 50 years.

After the initialling in Peking, both sides proclaimed the agreement as an object lesson in the peaceful settlement of differences. Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, called it "historic and remarkable" while Mr Zhou Nan, the chief Chinese negotiator and a vice president, said it solved the question of sovereignty and provided an effective guarantee for Hong Kong's future stability and prosperity.

The settlement was received calmly in Hong Kong, whose stock market registered a modest fall on profit taking. Business leaders generally welcomed it as the best available, while Sir Edward Youde, the colony's governor, said uncertainty had been removed in the run-up to the 1997 deadline, when Britain's lease on nine-tenths of the territory expires.

Enshrined in a 46-page White Paper, the agreement takes the form of a joint Anglo-Chinese declaration with three annexes. Peking is thought to have conceded far more detail than it

THE NEXT STEPS

- Six weeks for Hong Kong citizens to register their reactions to the draft agreement with the Assessment Office.
- November — Assessment Office publishes its findings. An independent monitoring group reports on the adequacy of the assessment.
- December—UK parliament

debates the draft and reactions to it. A vote of approval is needed to clear the way for signature of agreement before the end of the year.

- Spring 1985—a final UK parliamentary debate to vote on the enabling legislation needed to ratify agreement before June 30 1985.

wished and certainly rather more than many people in Hong Kong dared to expect during the nervous months of uncertainty over their fate.

As well as sketching — somewhat vaguely — the future shape of the Hong Kong government, the accord ensures that the proposed Hong Kong "special administrative region" will retain control of its financial resources as well as the right to decide its own economic and trade policies. Property rights will be guaranteed by law, and the region will be free to belong to international trade agreements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The Chinese have agreed that the colony should remain an international financial

centre and be free to maintain its monetary and financial systems including banking and financial markets.

In spite of these detailed provisions, however, concern in the colony is expected to focus on the role and powers of the administrative regions's future chief executive, who will succeed the present British governor.

He will be appointed by Peking after an election "or through consultations held locally," and will have powers to nominate principal officials and to appoint the judiciary.

MPs 'still not given truth on Belgrano'

By NICHOLAS COMFORT Political Staff

DR DAVID OWEN is urging the Prime Minister to make a personal statement on the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano when Parliament re-assembles on Oct. 22.

"There are still some areas where clearly the truth has not been given to Parliament," the SDP leader said in a letter to Mrs Thatcher yesterday.

Repeating his insistence that he was concerned with the Government's statements about the sinking after the event and not with the action itself, he also renewed his call for a White Paper to set the matter straight.

Prime Minister can have on record statements to Parliament which are now admitted to be incorrect and that we should have to rely on letters written to Members of Parliament or statements made by a former MP and Secretary of State for Defence on the 'Today' programme."

Two issues

Dr Owen raised two particular issues in his letter: last week's confirmation from Downing Street that Ministers were not told the Belgrano was steaming away from the Task Force, and their failure to tell Parliament that a torpedo had been fired at one of her escorting destroyers.

Many people, he said, had been surprised to discover that Ministers were not aware of the course and position of the Belgrano on May 2, 1982, when it was sunk.

And the statement of Sir John Nott, then Defence Secretary, in a recent radio interview that he had still not been told on May 4 was an even greater surprise.

Dr Owen also raised with Mrs Thatcher an answer she gave in December, 1982 which stated that the Belgrano had been "converging" with the Task Force but had made several changes of course. Ministers must have been aware for several months that this was not so.

"The more I look at this question," wrote Dr Owen, "the more I believe the record can only be put right by the publication of a White Paper and a personal statement to be made by you to the House of Commons on the return of Parliament on Oct. 22.

"It is not acceptable that a

Army nearer to Alfonsin challenge

By Our Buenos Aires Correspondent

ARGENTINA'S chances of confrontation with its armed forces were stepped up on Tuesday when the highest military court in the country said it had insufficient evidence to try nine former junta members.

Shortly after taking office last December, President Raul Alfonsin ordered the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to court martial the first three of the four military juntas that ruled Argentina between 1976 and 1983 for the abduction, torture and disappearance of

about 10,000 people in anti-terrorist campaigns.

The military tribunal told a Federal Appeal Court there was nothing objectionable in decrees authorising campaigns against subversion in the 1970s. The former C-in-Cs were only "indirectly responsible" for failing to control their subordinates.

In a lengthy report to the civilian court, the nine-member tribunal said it could not reach a verdict by the Oct. 11 deadline "because of lack of time and proper evidence."

Under a reform of the military Code of Justice, passed by the newly elected government, the Federal Appeals Court is to decide whether the council

should be given a further extension to reach a verdict, or whether the cases should now pass on to civilian courts.

The Supreme Council obtained its last three-month extension in July.

In its lengthy statement on Tuesday, the Supreme Council said the evidence accumulated in nine months of investigations was insufficient to prove that the military leaders had deliberately violated human rights.

After giving testimony, both former President Jorge Videla, Army Commander-in-Chief and Commander Emilio Massera of the Navy were placed under arrest. Orlando Agosti, the former Air Force chief, was arrested briefly and then released.

Owen renews call for Belgrano white paper

By Ian Aitken,
Political Editor

Dr David Owen, Social Democratic leader, yesterday repeated his call for a white paper on the Belgrano affair in a personal letter to the Prime Minister. He urged her to make a personal statement to the Commons on its return next month.

Dr Owen, who told the SDP conference in Buxton earlier this month that the Belgrano "cover-up" looked like the beginning of a British Watergate, told Mrs Thatcher yesterday that the more he looked into the question, the more he believed that the record could only be put right by publication of the facts.

"It is not acceptable that a Prime Minister can have on record statements to Parliament which are now admitted to be incorrect, and that we should have to rely on letters written to Members of Parliament or statements made by a former MP and Secretary of State for Defence on BBC Radio."

Dr Owen's letter, which runs to three closely typed pages, deals in detail with many of the points raised by Mrs Thatcher in her letters to him last week, Mr Kinnoch, and

the Labour MP, Mr George Foulkes. Those letters, he said, demonstrated that "there are still some areas where clearly the truth has still not been given to Parliament."

The first and most important of these was that ministers had not been aware of the course and position of the cruiser General Belgrano on the day on which it was sunk, and that the Defence Secretary had been unaware of the course and position of the ship on the following day.

Yet Mrs Thatcher had not yet sought to correct the record of what she had said about the two destroyers which were escorting the Belgrano at the time she was sunk.

Dr Owen insisted that she must have been aware that one of the destroyers had been hit by one of HMS Conqueror's torpedoes, even though it had not exploded.

"Surely seven months later and on the eve of the publication of the white paper on the Falklands war, you were by then aware that three torpedoes had been fired and you were aware of the exact course and position of the General Belgrano and the fact that there had not been constant changes of course?" Dr Owen wrote.

Belgrano 'lapses' query by Owen

By Philip Webster
Political Reporter

The Times 27/9/84

Dr David Owen called yesterday for the publication of a White Paper, and a personal statement by the Prime Minister to the Commons, to enable Parliament to be given what he called a totally truthful account about the events surrounding the sinking of the General Belgrano.

In a letter to Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Social Democratic Party leader asked her why she had not corrected the record of what she told the Commons on May 4, 1982, two days after the sinking, that the two destroyers accompanying the Belgrano "were not attacked in any way".

Dr Owen said that surely she had been aware of the signal by then which was sent back by HMS Conqueror that three torpedoes had been fired, two exploding on the Belgrano and one hitting one of the destroyers though not exploding.

"It is very hard to understand why during the 39 hours that elapsed from the sinking of the Belgrano and your standing up in the House of Commons to answer questions you had not been told that one torpedo had hit an escorting vessel."

Dr Owen raised other issues arising from Mrs Thatcher's letters on the Belgrano affair last week. Many people had been surprised to learn that ministers were not aware of the position and course of the Belgrano on May 2, and even more surprised to hear from Sir (then Mr) John Nott, Secretary of State for Defence at the time, that he was still unaware on May 4.

Dr Owen said that on December 16, 1982, when asked by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, whether the distance from the Belgrano to the nearest British surface vessel at the time the cruiser was torpedoed was known to Her Majesty's Government, she had answered: "Yes".

Had she used the term "Her Majesty's Government" to mean that, while civil servants in the Ministry of Defence knew, no minister was aware? If so why was information known in the Ministry of Defence not made available to ministers on May 3, especially as, according to a report in *The Times* on September 15, the Conqueror was continuing to hunt the escort destroyers.

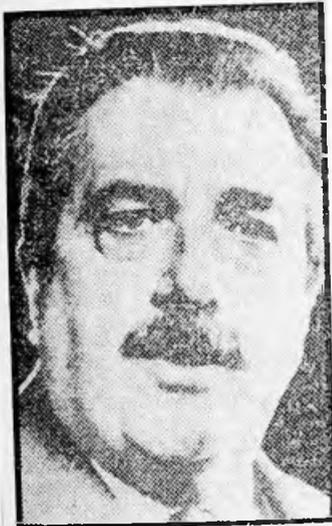
Alfonsin told to pay off arrears

From Peter Rodgers
in Washington

BANKERS yesterday met Argentina's request for a \$4 billion loan with a demand that President Alfonsin's government digs into its reserves first to pay off some of its \$1.2 billion interest arrears over the next few days.

British banks, led by Lloyds, would probably be

The Times 27/9/84



Argentina's Alfonsin

asked to contribute about \$400 million of the \$4 billion loan if their share of the loan is assessed on the same basis as the last loan by international banks to Argentina, arranged in 1983. Lloyds has the deputy chairmanship of the steering committee of banks which are negotiating with Argentina.

This follows approval on Tuesday by the IMF's managing director Mr Jacques de Larosiere of a \$1.4 billion fund package for the country. Argentines said they hoped it would lead to a \$20 billion package for the country's \$45 billion debts.

In Washington, Chancellor Mr Nigel Lawson, also revealed a new policy towards export credit help for countries in debt difficulties. Mr Lawson said that in the past the UK, along with many other countries, has normally suspended official export cover to rescheduling countries. But he added that the government had reviewed the policy and would shortly be ready "in appropriate cases" to maintain or resume cover at an earlier stage, to help recovery of the debtor countries.

He also said: "We see a case for some harmonisation of approach among industrial countries," and he welcomed discussions about this which are now under way.

British officials said that the new policy was not linked to the resolution of Argentina's debt problem and it applied at the moment particularly to countries such as Mexico and Brazil.

The Argentina negotiations in New York yesterday were attended by President Alfonsin and also, it is thought, by Mr Henry Kissinger, a former US Secretary of State who has been acting as mediator.

Any deal is expected to be difficult to reach because Argentina's tactics over nine months of negotiations have deeply annoyed commercial bankers, because of continued brinkmanship. A deal with the banks, which is a condition of final approval of the package by the IMF executive board is expected to take until November or more likely December.

The deal fell into place when Argentina agreed to IMF demands for more rapid devaluation, which was the last obstacle. Argentina is likely to ask for more bridging finance while the negotiations take place.

"We have been pushed this year about as far as we can go. We want a contribution from their reserves," said a senior banker involved. A figure of £150 million has been mentioned but rather more would be needed to make a significant inroad to the arrears of interest which go back to last spring.

Falklands issue at UN

Alfonsin insists on sovereignty talks

From Zoriana Pysariwsky, New York

President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina has categorically ruled out an Anglo-Argentine reconciliation and normalization of relations as long as the British Government continues to refuse to negotiate about the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands.

In an address to the United Nations General Assembly on the first day of the general debate, he emphasized Argentina's intention to recover the Falklands through peaceful means only. He said that the nature of Argentine democracy demanded a respect of international law.

But later at a press conference the President declined to take that pledge a step farther, and he ruled out the possibility of Argentina declaring a formal cessation of hostilities as long as Britain kept up the exclusion zone around and a military presence in the Falklands.

Señor Alfonsin said that his Government's peaceful approach should not diminish the sense of mission that lay behind efforts by the Argentines to recover the islands, a mandate that had been handed down through generations.

He described the British Government as intransigent and said its failure to understand that right was on the side of Argentina and its inability to comprehend the depth of national feeling about the Falklands was at the root of the problem between the two countries.

The British Government has repeatedly stated that it is ready to discuss anything with Argentina but the sovereignty of the Falklands. It is expected to continue in its unbending approach, despite the unpopularity of its position in the General Assembly, lest Argentina misconstrues any ambiguous pronouncements as a change in London's attitude.

President Alfonsin said that

British diplomats hope that eventually, the international community, while not agreeing with this stand, will accept it. Argentina seeks the restoration of friendly relations with Britain that existed before the conflict. "That cannot be achieved if, from the beginning of the attempts towards normalization, we lack the certainty that a mechanism will be established to allow negotiation on the sovereignty dispute."

He made only scant reference to the abortive Berne talks in July, merely stating that Argentina had shown maximum flexibility. When asked whether anything could be salvaged from the Berne fiasco, he insisted that at all multilateral forums and bilateral talks sovereignty must be on the agenda.

Argentina has begun circulating a draft resolution on the Falklands in preparation for the General Assembly debate later this year. Although the restoration of democracy in Argentina should enhance its position, the present draft was caused concern among the non-aligned and West Europeans for its strong language and failure to spell out clearly President Alfonsin's pledge not to resort to force to regain the island.



Señor Alfonsin: A respect for international law.

The Times 26/9/84

ALFONSIN RULES OUT FORCE

The Daily Telegraph 26/9/84

By MICHAEL KALLENBACH
at the United Nations

PRESIDENT Alfonsin of Argentina produced no new ideas for the United Nations yesterday over how the Falklands dispute with Britain might be resolved.

Once again he reiterated that any future dealings with Britain must include the question of sovereignty, but emphasised that the Islands would not be reclaimed by force.

Britain's position was due to be outlined today by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary.

During his address to the General Assembly, Senor Alfonsin blamed the British Government for not adhering to U.N. resolutions which call on the two governments to settle their dispute through negotiation.

Sovereignty stand

"I think it is quite clear that what he would like is to go back to the situation prior to the military episode," he said. "If sovereignty is accepted, we are prepared to maintain this link and thus work towards the solution of our problems."

S. Alfonsin's stand that matters should be dealt with as though no war took place in 1982 is part of the thrust of the Argentine draft resolution prior to the Assembly's full-scale debate on the Falklands, probably early in November.

However, Britain has already begun its campaign to win support and is believed to be worried that EEC countries might not adopt their common abstention which they took last year.

For his part, Sr Alfonsin did not want to be drawn over why he has not formally stated that hostilities with Britain had ended, and brushed that aside by saying "nothing has happened in the past two years."

Hongkong solution

Would he accept a Hongkong-type solution to the question of the Falklands? "Well, perhaps yes, would it it would span a few months, but not years.

"We want it to be . . . in our generation."

Daily Mail
26th September 1984

Argentina's offer

NEW YORK : Argentina's President Raul Alfonsin said he would consider a leasing deal with Britain to break the Falklands deadlock. But the agreement, similar to the one covering Hongkong, must give Argentina control of the islands 'within a generation'.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BELGRANO

SIR—Your leader "Raising Belgrano" (Sept. 20) rightly points out that the Government had a paramount duty to protect its forces in the South Atlantic.

Most certainly it is also true that the circumstances leading to the sinking of the General Belgrano inevitably resulted in the suppression of information where such information may have jeopardised the Task Force then or compromised national security thereafter.

Naturally, also, people will be suspicious when Government Ministers are obliged by such considerations to remain silent.

Can it be a good thing, however, for the nation if such information as has subsequently been forthcoming on the affair has been so (and presumably, therefore, not damaging to national security) because of the persistent questioning by Mr Tom Dalvell, especially when this questioning is based on what he has been told by a civil servant whose duty and loyalty to his employers has come into conflict with his duty to his conscience?

Questions will continue to be asked and remain unanswered. But so also will the leaks continue resulting in re-primination, allegation, counter-allegation, reputation and denial, until the Government heeds Dr Owen's words: "The truth is not discreditable: it simply needs to be told."

M. C. ELLIOTT-SMITH
Kenton, Middx.

Reactions in war

From Sir JOHN MALLABAR

SIR—I have been following the Belgrano story in the Press and in the emergency motion at the Liberal conference.

Let us consider. A large part of the criticism being levelled at the Government is based on the direction in which Belgrano was heading when torpedoed, and that she had changed course.

At Jutland Adml. Scheer realised he

was heading for disaster and ordered a 180 degree change of course to the High Seas Fleet in an attempt to reach his home port.

Had Adml. Jellicoe been indoctrinated with the Liberal conscience he ought to have refrained from any further attack on the German Fleet. Were they not retiring from battle and returning home?

In fact Jellicoe continued to attempt to find and sink German ships, even though, in part, frustrated by the difficulty of finding them. But is he to be censured for continuing his efforts to find and sink?

I wonder what would have been the reaction of the nation in 1916 had any attempt so to censure him been made?

JOHN MALLABAR
London, S.W.1.

Rescue at sea

SIR—Miss Philippa Hadrill (Sept. 22) asks why our ships did not rescue the 500 or so survivors of the Argentine cruiser Belgrano.

The Belgrano was sunk by one of our submarines working independently; there was no Royal Navy surface or Merchant Navy vessel in the immediate vicinity at the time of the sinking.

The Belgrano, we were given to understand, was at the time of the sinking escorted by two enemy destroyers, one or both presumably carrying out the rescue procedure; in any event, they were not sunk by our submarine.

No doubt at the time of the attack the enemy cruiser and/or its escorts must have made immediate radio contact with the Argentine naval authorities. The incident occurred at a position which appears at most to be some 35 minutes flying time from enemy mainland air bases.

The age of chivalry has not passed, at least as far as the Royal Navy is concerned, and those of us who have served at sea in that Service will resent the inference it has.

GERALD I. M. McDONALD
Bishops Stortford, Herts.

Peking refuses to move on issue of nationality

From John Gittings in Hong Kong

A memorandum has been added to the Hong Kong agreement, which will be initialled in Peking today, indicating that the question of nationality and passports proved intractable almost to the end.

The memorandum is said to restate firmly the Chinese position that the inhabitants of Hong Kong after 1997 will be regarded as Chinese citizens. Those holding British "dependent territory" passports may use them "for travel purposes" abroad.

The British side will affirm the validity of the passports—which may number three million by 1997—but it will add that people holding them are not entitled to residence in the UK.

A more satisfactory outcome on another key question—civil aviation rights—was also reported yesterday in the Hong Kong pro-Peking press. The Chinese national airline, it is said, will not after all buy a

share in Hong Kong's own airline, Cathay Pacific, and the disposal of landing rights will be entirely a matter for the Hong Kong administration.

The memorandum is in addition to the main text of the agreement with its eight-part joint declaration and three separate annexes, which is going to be a cumbersome affair. The British version takes the form of a white paper and will also contain a preface and notes. These are not in the Chinese version, although it is suggested that Peking has approved the wording.

After the initialling ceremony in Peking, the Governor, Sir Edward Youde, will return to Hong Kong this evening to address the Legislative Council, after which the full agreement will finally be published.

A special phone number has been issued to advise members of the public where copies — 1.2 million will be printed — can be obtained.

In the main body of the agreement, as reported yesterday, China states that the ter-

ritory after 1997 can issue its own "travel documents" as well but that these will not have the status of passports.

Asked why it was necessary to add a memorandum to the agreement, a British spokesman in Peking was quoted as saying that while the main text has the force of law, the memorandum could cover detailed questions such as passports and aviation rights, which might require further clarification later.

Meanwhile, a leading Chinese lawyer has backed the idea of Hong Kong people being allowed to participate in drafting the "basic law" which will eventually be drawn up in Peking to cover the running of Hong Kong after 1997. Drafting is expected to begin early next year but may take several years.

There has been talk of an advisory commission including a large number of Hong Kong people who will be invited to give their opinions to the Chinese National People's Congress.

Falklands bonus saved

A plan which would have halved merchant sailors' £6-a-day bonus for working the Falklands area was abandoned yesterday after the men had threatened to strike.

Shipowners, represented by the General Council of British Shipping (GCBS), believe that working conditions no longer merited the hardship compensation and wanted it cut to £3 a day from Monday.

But three unions—the National Union of Seamen, the Maritime Navy and Airline Officers' Association, and the Radio and Electronic Officers'

Union—threatened strike action when they met the GCBS yesterday.

"We threatened immediate strike action. We would have stopped every maritime ship in the Falklands," said the NUS deputy general secretary, Mr. Sam McCluskie, who led his negotiating team.

Asked why the union still wanted the payment after the ending of hostilities two years ago, Mr McCluskie replied: "The only difference between now and the Falklands war is that there are no Exocet missiles. But conditions are still primitive."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Alfonsin agrees IMF loan

The Guardian 26/9/84

ARGENTINA last night came to an agreement with the IMF about a financial rescue package, writes Peter Rogers.

The agreement, announced in Washington by the fund's managing director, Mr Jacques de la Rosiere, lasts for 15 months and includes a \$1.49 billion loan conditional on Argentina's coming to an agreement with its commercial bank creditors.

The last stumbling block a disagreement about the exchange rate for the Argentine peso, was overcome during the fund's meeting, shortly after President Alfonsin had met President Reagan in New York. President Alfonsin had resisted an IMF deal because of the political difficulty of imposing the required austerity on his country.

Final salvo?

From Mr Tam Dalyell, MP for Linlithgow (Labour)

Sir, Your leader, "Final salvo?" (September 21), says: "This week's detailed disclosures certainly torpedo Mr Tam Dalyell's main charge that the Belgrano was sunk to scupper peace moves. So he has now changed his ground."

No. On the contrary it is clearer than ever that Mrs Thatcher's assertion to Denzil Davies that the "first indications" of the Peruvian peace proposals reached London three hours after the Belgrano was sunk is wrong.

On tape, played on Thames TV, we now have the interview between Arthur Gavshon, for more than two decades the trusted Diplomatic Correspondent of Associated Press in London, and Alexander Haig.

Haig: "The British Ambassador [in Lima] was in on every bit of the negotiations in Peru. He was right in with the President."

Was he reporting to London? - "That would be my assumption".

During a visit to Lima (at my expense) in the third week of October, 1983, I was separately told by Fernando Belaunde Terry, President of Peru, Dr Manuel Ulloa, Prime Minister of Peru at the time of the Falklands war, and Dr Oscar Maourtua, head of the Presidential Office, that they were in the closest touch with Charles Wallace [the Ambassador].

"How do you expect us to try to negotiate peace unless we were in touch with both parties to the conflict?" they reasonably asked.

Charles Wallace did report back to London. Mrs Thatcher was indeed told. Will she now explain why she has repeatedly told the House of Commons that she had no news of the Peruvian peace proposals until three hours after the Belgrano was sunk?

Yours, etc.,
TAM DALYELL,
House of Commons.
September 21.

The Times 26/9/84

Hongkong's future

From Mr John Walden

Sir, In the three parliamentary debates on Hongkong's future in July, there was unanimous bipartisan support, in both Houses, for the Government's approach in dealing with this question.

The Foreign Secretary argued, persuasively, that the best way of achieving a durable and satisfactory Sino-British agreement would be to ensure that the agreement corresponded broadly with the long-term interests and aspirations of both Britain and China; but, at the same time, amplified the general assurances given by the Peking Government that the civil liberties enjoyed by Hongkong people under British rule and their way of life would be respected, after 1997, by specific provisions.

This approach is clearly a realistic and sensible one. If the joint Sino-British declaration about to be promulgated, meets those objectives and, barring massive objections by Hongkong residents, the declaration is likely to be endorsed by Parliament without much altercation.

Parliamentarians, in the July debates, were at pains to point out to Hongkong people who had made them, the futility of their demands for written guarantees on the preservation of their freedoms. Speaker after speaker assured the House that communist China could be relied upon to honour its pledges.

However, MPs, Foreign Office officials, and members of the Hongkong Government, who are urging the people of Hongkong to

take a realistic and long-term view of their future and set their minds at rest, have something else in common. Few, if any of them, are going to be living in Hongkong in 1998 and not one of them will be obliged to suffer the consequences should their optimistic assumptions of communist China's reliability turn out to have been ill-founded.

Mr Bernard Levin's proposals (September 15) to resettle Hongkong people who adjudge communist pledges by track record may not be practical. But in advancing them he accurately reflects the fears of very large numbers of Hongkong people, who, for reasons that are clear enough to those who are vulnerable to retaliation, cannot be loudly articulated. Their point of view was almost totally ignored in the July debates.

Whatever the merits of the parliamentary convention of not making party capital out of colonial issues, Parliament's job, when the Sino-British declaration comes before it, is not to carry it shoulder high through both Houses on a wave of bipartisan wishful thinking. It is to apply to it the same critical and searching scrutiny that it does to domestic issues. Otherwise it will not be seen to be holding the Prime Minister accountable for the promises she gave to the Hongkong people in Hongkong in 1982, that Britain would fulfil its moral responsibilities towards them.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN WALDEN
St John's College,
University of Hong Kong,
82 Pokfulam Road,
Hong Kong.
September 23.

Times 26.9.84

Consultation in the Ponting case

From Mr S. C. Silkin, QC

Sir, In her reply to Mr Kinnock's letter concerning the prosecution of Mr Ponting the Prime Minister emphatically asserted that "the Law Officers did not seek the view of, or consult with, any other minister, nor was the view of any other minister conveyed to them, before they took their decision to prosecute Mr Ponting."

As a statement of fact I do not question this assertion. Had it been incorrect the Law Officers would certainly have corrected it. It is unfortunate, however, that they have not yet corrected the inference which many are likely to draw from it, that it would have been wrong for them to consult with or to hear the views of ministers with a departmental concern.

For the last half-century at least Law Officers have followed the principle to which Sir John Simon and later Lord Shawcross gave expression. In reaching their decision whether or not to consent to a prosecution - or to take other action within their independent public-interest role - the Law Officers must take instructions from nobody; but they are free to consult colleagues, particularly those with a departmental concern and, as Sir John Simon rightly said, there are times when they would be fools not to do so. In a case such as the Ponting case it is hard to believe that there are no aspects of the public interest upon which consultation with colleagues could have assisted the Law Officers in reaching their eventual and independent decision.

Even now that the decision has been made there is surely an

important aspect of which the Attorney General should at no stage lose sight. That is whether in all the circumstances a fair trial is possible. By "fair trial" I do not mean merely fair to the defendant, important as that is; I mean fair to the public interest.

Is it still possible, after all the attention paid to this case at party conferences, in well publicized articles and letters and in the media generally, for a jury to give a true verdict according to the evidence; or will the trial, however careful the trial judge, inevitably become a forum for canvassing issues - freedom of speech, the responsibility of Crown servants to Parliament, the limits on their responsibility to the Crown - which are themselves vital aspects of the public interest and which no intelligent juror could easily dismiss from his mind and his conscience?

This is precisely the sort of case upon which long and anxious consideration should have been - and I hope was - given before a consent to prosecute under section 2 was issued. But the grant of that consent is not a final act. The Attorney General should consider with the deepest anxiety, and certainly if necessary after consultation with colleagues concerned, before he decides to allow events to take their course.

Yours faithfully,
SAM SILKIN,
The Croft,
The Green,
East End,
North Leigh,
Witney,
Oxfordshire.
September 24.

I wish I'd stayed with 2 Para says adventurer

By PETER SHERIDAN

THE nightmare ordeal of French Foreign Legion deserter Mark Jenkins has finally ended with his escape back to Britain.

Fighting with the British Army's 2 Para at Goose Green in the Falklands had not prepared the 23-year-old from Plymouth for the brutality of the feared desert force, and he risked his life to leave.

'I couldn't take the continual beating—if I wanted to be paid for being hit, I'd have taken up boxing,' said Mark, who spoke of murders, maltreatment and sadism.

'The legionnaire's worst enemies are other legionnaires. In my section there should have been 47 men, but there were only 13 standing when I left. Two had broken backs, some had died, and the rest were wounded or unfit for duty. They were as tough on their own troops as they were on their enemies.

'There were murders in training camps with people being buried behind the firing range—then classed as deserters.

'I had never spoken French before, and when they start barking orders at you which you don't understand, they use the language of fists.'

Stabbed

Mark showed a long scar across the back of his left hand. 'When I was based in Corsica, the locals would come down in lorry-loads looking for legionnaires to fight with. Many of us got stabbed,' said the adventurer who wishes he had stayed with 2 Para.

The horrors of legionnaires killing their fellow soldiers grew when Mark went to fight in Chad against Libya for four months.

'In Chad, the Legion reported that nine of its men were killed in an explosion—but the truth

was that they were victims of a horrific legionnaires shoot-out.

'Two legionnaires who faced military trials had escaped. One was charged with shooting down an entire herd of hippopotami; the other was accused of running into a village with guns blazing.

'The legionnaires sent to capture them had orders to kill. When they eventually caught up with them there was a mass battle.

'Nine were killed—including the two deserters—and I was one of the party that had to go and clear up the carnage.'

He said that a drunken soldier was toying with a rifle grenade when it exploded. 'The shrapnel burst through a hut only yards from where I stood, killing two men and injuring five others.'

The Legion, he claimed, class all such deaths as 'heart attacks' and return the bodies to

Marseille where they are buried with full military honours.

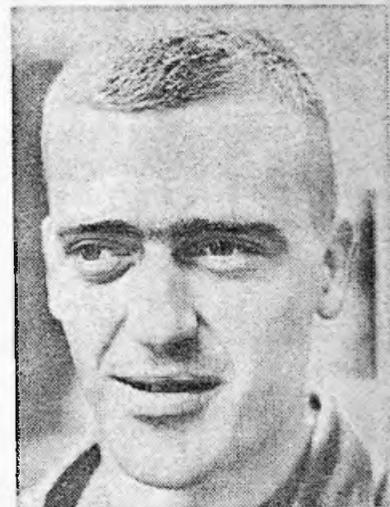
'Many legionnaires are injured jumping from the planes in their Paras, which I joined. The Legion is the fastest in the world at clearing a plane of 85 soldiers in 13 seconds. It takes the British Army about a minute to do that.

Perilous

'The food,' he said, 'was atrocious. There was horse's tongue every day, stale bread, and food which gave no nutrition at all. I had such a calcium deficiency, that when I was out running the strain was so much that both my ankles broke.'

Mark's escape from the harsh regime was perilous. If captured, he knew he faced 40 days solitary confinement, 40 days further imprisonment—and many dangerous, potentially lethal beatings.

Falkland veteran escapes from his Legion ordeal



Mark Jenkins: Fled to safety

He was allowed out of the Corsican base camp on a rare night pass when he took his chance. 'I had saved enough money to get a train to the coast, and with false leave papers got a night ferry to Marseille,' he said.

'Then with only a platform ticket at Marseille, I boarded the train for Paris, dodging the ticket inspectors until I was finally spotted, and literally thrown off the train in the middle of nowhere, about 50 miles from Paris.

'I hitch-hiked into Paris, where I was chased through the Metro by gendarmes.'

He finally crossed the Channel and entered Britain without his passport. 'That is the first thing the Legion confiscates when you join, to make sure you stay.'

He added: 'Now I have no job, no passport, and I have to be very careful—because the Legion's friends are everywhere, and they will be after me.'

Falklands struggle 'continues'

From Jane Rosen
in New York

The President of Argentina, Dr Raul Alfonsin, told the UN General Assembly last night that his country would never give up its struggle for the Falklands.

Although he said his government would act "only through peaceful means," he made it plain that the Falklands issue is as important and laden with emotion today as it was under the former Argentine dictatorship.

"The mission of recovering the Malvinas, South Georgie, and South Sandwich islands for our heritage is a mandate that has been transmitted by successive generations of Argentines up to our days and this process shall continue until the attainment of its objective," he said.

Dr Alfonsin accused Britain of maintaining "a military force equipped with the most sophisticated armaments in the South Atlantic" and of "threatening the interests and stability of the entire area and constituting a dangerous intrusion of the East-West conflict into the region."

British sources dismissed those charges and said that the military force on the islands is the minimum necessary to deter a repeat of the invasion Argentina mounted in 1982.

Dr Alfonsin excluded any possibility of restoring normal relations with Britain unless London agrees to negotiate the sovereignty of the islands with Argentina.

Support that sank

Sir,—Mrs Thatcher's latest statement on the Belgrano affair relies upon the shortness of people's memories. Was Britain "engaged in an operation to take back the Falkland Islands from a military junta which had seized them by force"? If so, this was a contravention of United Nations' resolution 502.

Resolution 502, recognising a breach of the peace in the region, called for three actions. First it prescribed an immediate cessation of hostilities. Secondly, it called for the withdrawal of Argentinian forces from the islands. Thirdly, it enjoined both Governments to seek a diplomatic solution fully respecting the purposes and principles of the United Nations' Charter.

Thus, the United Nations' decision was binding on both the Argentinian and British Governments. That the British Government made such a noise about United Nations' "support" for its just cause only underlined the obligation upon Britain to seek a peaceful solution.

If the Belgrano was sunk in order to prevent the success of the Peruvian peace initiative, or even if it was sunk in order to close diplomatic options in general, then this was a crime against the peace under the Nuremberg principles.

There is now already abundant evidence of Governmental prevarication on these issues, although the reasons for official lies have not been generally understood. By indicting the Thatcher administration at home, we are also impeaching it before a wider court of world opinion.—Yours

Ken Coates
Matlock
Derbyshire.

Financial speculation made easy

The Buenos Aires cycling trick

In the second of two articles from Buenos Aires, DOUGLAS TWEEDALE looks at how the policies of a military government encouraged the speculation and flight of capital that accounts for much of Argentina's debt.

In the Argentina of the late 1970s *la bicicleta* (the bicycle) was an essential vehicle for manoeuvring through the labyrinths of Buenos Aires financial markets, which had just been freed from government regulation by the Economy Minister Señor José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz.

But not, of course, the two-wheeled kind. *La bicicleta* was an Argentine term coined in

world \$45 billion (£34.6bn) or ten times what it earns from foreign trade in any given year.

"Our debt is different from that of Brazil or Mexico", says Señor Aldo Ferrer, named by President Alfonsín to head the state-owned Bank of the Province of Buenos Aires, the country's second largest bank. "Instead of contributing to development, Argentina's indebtedness was caused by speculation in foreign currency and capital flight promoted by the (military) government."

Whether or not Señor Martínez de Hoz deliberately set out to encourage speculation, at least two aspects of the policy he implemented clearly allowed "bicycling" to become the national sport of Argentina's middle class after 1978.

The combination of high local interest rates (which allowed speculative capital to earn approximately twice as high a rate of return as on international markets) and of an artificially overvalued peso on the Government's exchange table encouraged Argentines to borrow increasingly from banks flush with Eurodollars and to put the money to "work" on local markets.

The economist, Señor Jorge Schvarzer, who believes the Government did this deliberately, has calculated that "smart" money could in theory have earned 20 times its own value during the years of military rule (1976 to 1983).

Señor Martínez de Hoz's policy of overvaluing the peso



Señor Alfonsín: Trying to find the money.

with the backing of huge foreign currency reserves gave birth to another uniquely Argentine expression of the times: *plata dulce*, or "sweet money".

Argentines dazzled by the sudden new purchasing power of their pesos and by their ability to buy cheap dollars began to take them out of the country in quantities the current Central Bank president, Señor Enrique García Vázquez has said were "unparalleled in modern times in any country of the world".

With practically no legal restrictions on how much currency any one citizen could buy from the Central Bank or how much he could take out of the country, the Government was forced to resort to huge new credits from the public sector to meet the demand for dollars.

When a string of bank closures early in 1980 set off a run on the Government's dollar reserves (that was not to slow down until a change in the ruling military junta removed Señor Martínez de Hoz from office in 1981), capital flight began in earnest.

In testimony before congress earlier this year, Señor García Vázquez estimated that between 1979 and 1981, at least \$10.7 billion was taken out of the country in this way. Señor Schvarzer puts the figure at \$15 billion for the period of the Martínez de Hoz administration (1976-1981) "The state was selling dollars at half their true value - it had to go into debt to subsidize this capital flight," Señor Schvarzer said.

With their peso so sweet from 1978 to 1981, Argentines poured an estimated \$5.5 billion into air tickets and tourist agencies.

In those years, it was not uncommon to see whole families of Argentines, grandparents and cousins included, struggling through the airport on their way back from a "shopping spree" in Miami or Europe, each family member loaded down with a colour TV, video recorder or similar gadget.

Now, with the dollar some 500 times more expensive in nominal terms, Argentines for the most part stay at home, wondering whether their new-found democracy will find a way to pay back the money spent under the military.

Concluded



ARGENTINE DEBT Part 2

those years to describe the kind of razzle-dazzle financial manoeuvres in which loose capital was "pedalled" around in circles for the sole purpose of generating more capital. In a word, speculation.

According to officials of President Raúl Alfonsín's newly-elected administration, *la bicicleta* is also essential to understanding how Argentina came to owe the rest of the

Leaks only way to get truth, MP claims

By Richard Evans

The leaking of confidential Whitehall documents is the only way to obtain the full truth about government activities, Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, said last night.

Mr Dalyell, who has pursued the government over the sinking of the General Belgrano in the Falklands Conflict added: "The civil servant who jeopardizes his own career for the public good is possibly the noblest Roman of them all."

He told constituents at Whitburn in West Lothian that he was concerned about how hard it was not only for MPs but also for select committees and the Leadership of the Opposition to get the truth.

"It seems you only do so when you receive leaks. The main point of my endless flow of questions has been to be identified as a receptacle for leaks," he said.

"In a democracy like ours the answers should come voluntarily not only when they are favourable to the government. Only leaks, it seems, will reveal the more spectacular parts of the iceberg."

As at Watergate which, exposed President Nixon, so investigators, whether journalists or MPs, needed a "deep throat" to suggest what questions to ask.

Mr Dalyell's remarks are bound to infuriate ministers who are likely to interpret them as an invitation to civil servants to continue leaking confidential documents.

Mr Dalyell told his audience he hoped the forthcoming trial of Mr Clive Ponting, a Ministry of Defence official charged with the authorized passing of documents to Mr Dalyell contrary to the Official Secrets Act, would lead to a new code of ethics being worked out between politicians and the First Division Association, which represents the highest grades of civil servants.

"I agree with the public statement of Clive Ponting that on occasions the duty of civil servants is to inform parliament and the public rather than to display servile loyalty to an ephemeral minister", Mr Dalyell added.

The Times 25/9/84

The Daily Telegraph 25/9/84

War is war

SIR—When are Neil Kinnock, David Owen, Tom Dalyell and the rest of our "patriots" going to realise that two-and-a-half years ago we were at war.

The Belgrano was an enemy man-of-war and as such was a threat to our forces for the duration of that war whether it was in the Exclusion Zone, elsewhere in the Atlantic or the South China Sea or whether it was sailing East or West.

HARRY EVERARD
London, W.2.

The riches that lie beyond the

AN Indian tribe, in 1626, thought they had made a good deal when they sold Manhattan Island to the Dutch for \$24 worth of triquets and a bottle of whisky. Their descendants came to regret the transaction. The British may have cause to feel similar regret if they yield to Foreign Office pressure to hand over sovereignty of the Falkland Islands to Argentina.

The parallel is perhaps not exact. Argentina seems to want the islands without giving us anything in return — except that we would no longer need to spend several hundred million pounds annually on their defence and development. But in the long run, were we to forgo this modest investment, we would find we had cheated ourselves almost as wretchedly as did the now forgotten natives of New York.

The Falklands by themselves are admittedly not worth very much. A latchkey is not worth much either — by itself. But when that latchkey is fitted to open the front door of a palace filled with riches beyond calculation, one comes to take a very different view of its economic value.

The palace in this case is the vast continent of Antarctica, lying barely 1,000 miles to the south. We may one day find there fishing stocks to feed the hungry in their millions, untold resources of oil and natural gas, commanding strategic positions for a combatant in war, spectacular landscapes for the tourist, all from a barely inhabited land more than half the size of Africa.

But all that is gold does not glisten; and had Moses come across Antarctica in search of his promised land he might well have given it a miss. Capt. Cook took the same view when he set eyes on it in 1774. "Lands doomed by nature to perpetual frigidness," he wrote in disgust. "Never to feel the warmth of the sun's rays and whose horrible and savage aspect I have not words to describe."

It is a common fault to be deceived by present appearances; to lack the imagination to see that what today seems repulsive and worthless may tomorrow, under the tillage of machines not yet dreamed of, yield an imperial fortune.

The Indian chieftain, surveying his gloomy domain of rocky, barren land under a sub-tropical forest; the Treasury mandarin with an accountant's soul — such people look, and cannot see. But more penetrating observation may convince us that the costs of holding on to the Falklands would still be a good bargain if they were five times what they are.

Nobody knows exactly how much oil and natural gas lie undiscovered off Antarctic waters. Geolo-

Falklands

gists on board the exploration ship *Glomar Challenger*, which cruised there in 1973, estimated that these vital raw materials may amount to hundreds, if not thousands, of millions of tons.

The day will eventually come when it will be economic and practical to drill for them. But this will not be easy. Stationary oil-drilling rigs of the kind used in the North Sea would be hopelessly impractical in Antarctica's offshore waters. Even in summer, these waters swarm with icebergs, some of gigantic size, moving swiftly and unpredictably, that could all too easily smash a conventional oil rig before it could be moved out of the way. It will be necessary to drill, not with rigs but with ships, of special strength and manoeuvrability.

It is even possible that Antarctica could one day feed the Third World. The hopeful new food source is krill, matched-sized shrimps, at present the diet of the

have been able to do this because Britain, unlike France, has refused to impose a 200-mile fishing limit around its territories in the South Atlantic, for fear of offending Argentina.

Argentina will have to be offended sooner or later if we are not to imperil our investments in Antarctica, now in the form of three research bases managed by the British Antarctic Survey. (The international Antarctic Treaty of 1961 forbids any military or economic exploitation of the continent, but the treaty is due to expire in 1991, and this treaty in renewed form will not long survive sufficiently strong economic pressure.) The Falkland Islands, because of their geography, will always be the central base for servicing those investments. And so what should be done about those sovereignty negotiations with Argentina? The answer is straightforward: nothing.

To satisfy international pressure it may be necessary to go through the motions of negotiating, but with no intention of ever reaching an agreement. The Argentines are at present making this task easy for us by staging petulant walk-outs, but the day will come when they insist on negotiating seriously. That will be the signal to commence a process of age-long procrastination.

Some people may object that it was procrastination that provoked the Argentine invasion, and that it might yet provoke another. But the objection is false. It was not diplomatic frustration that led to the invasion; it was Argentina's belief in Britain's military weakness. That weakness no longer exists.

A deliberate policy of procrastination should involve no moral difficulty. Argentina has not the slightest legal claim to the Falklands beyond its proximity to them, and we, probably soon after the turn of the century, will not be able to afford to give them up.

To think about the Falklands and Antarctica in any other way than this would be irresponsible folly. The great icy continent has only been barely explored. Vast tracts of its land have only been surveyed from the air. Few of its mountains have been climbed and much of its waters have never been charted. We simply do not know the extent of the economic resources which it is likely to contain.

Capt. Scott, in a lecture to the Royal Geographical Society to explain the long-term purposes of his Antarctic expeditions, is said to have held up a lump of coal to symbolise the idea of riches beyond the dreams of avarice. He may prove to have been right. He may prove only to have been partly right. But if we want to find out, we must hold on to all our possessions in the South Atlantic.

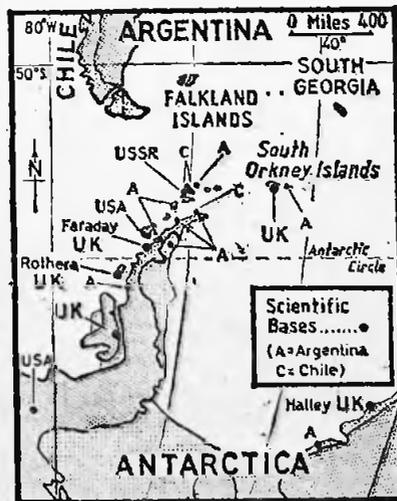
This week the Anglo-Argentine dispute comes up again at the UN.

ADRIAN BERRY

puts the hard financial case for not giving in.

great blue whale, the largest animal on earth, which gets through three tons of krill every day.

Krill is the most plentiful supply of protein in the oceans. But attempts to sell it as food on the free market have so far been unsuccessful, perhaps because it lacks taste. The Russians, however, have been harvesting it on a gigantic scale from the islands around South Georgia for consumption among their subject peoples. They



The Financial Times 25/9/84

Alfonsin denounces 'intransigent' Britain

By Reginald Dale, U.S. Editor in
New York

PRESIDENT Raul Alfonsin of Argentina yesterday denounced British "intransigence" over the Falklands and said his country would never give up its historic "mission" to recover the islands. He pledged, however, that Argentina would use only peaceful means.

In an address to the United Nations General Assembly, Sr Alfonsin said Argentina could not restore its traditional friendly relations with Britain until it was certain "that a mechanism will be established to allow negotiation on the sovereignty dispute."

The UK, however, had clearly stated its intention of postponing the opening of negotiations that had been urgently demanded by the General Assembly, Sr Alfonsin said. The assembly's demand should be "carried out as soon as possible for the benefit of law and justice," Sr Alfonsin said.

Sr Alfonsin's remarks reflected no change in the position that his new democratic government has taken since assuming office late last year.

Later, Sr Alfonsin rejected arbitration as inapplicable to the islands. As for a "Hong Kong type solution," he told a press conference it would have to lead to a final settlement "within our generation."

Sr Alfonsin told the assembly that the recovery of the Falklands was a "cause" for the whole of Latin America. The British military presence on the Falklands was "threatening the interests and stability of the entire area."

The Financial Times 25/9/84

Hong Kong pact can be added to, say Chinese

BY DAVID DODWELL IN HONG KONG

THE JOINT Sino-British declaration on Hong Kong's future, due to be initialled in Peking tomorrow, cannot be altered—but it could be added to, Chinese officials revealed in Hong Kong yesterday.

The statement, 10,000 words long, is a significant reminder that a number of issues remain unresolved on Hong Kong's future, and will not be part of the declaration.

The colony, which has been under British control for over 140 years, will be handed back to China in 1997 when leases expire on nine-tenths of the territory.

Officials from the Hong Kong branch of the New China News Agency which acts as China's defacto embassy in Hong Kong said at a briefing intended to prepare correspondents for the

announcement of the joint declaration, that there would have to be a new round of talks if anything was to be added to the declaration.

But if both governments agreed, then this could be done, they added. Nevertheless, this was "a hypothetical question."

Government officials in Hong Kong confirmed yesterday that there would be

matters falling outside the joint declaration which would be taken up by the Joint Sino-British Liaison Group once the declaration is signed.

If this group could not reach agreement on particular issues, then these would be referred to Peking and London, with special working groups likely to be set up to resolve differences. Whenever settlements are reached, they

will be added to the joint declaration.

Officials emphasised that this mechanism would not apply to the three issues which blocked agreement in the final stages of negotiation—over the joint declaration—land rights, aircraft landing rights, and the rights of British nationals in Hong Kong.

Daily Mail
24.9.84

Don't prolong Belgrano agony

LIKE many, I am sick of the constant calls for an inquiry into the sinking of the Belgrano by a number of Labour and SDP Members of Parliament.

When will the do-gooders realise that at that time Britain was in a state of war with Argentina. With the terrible loss of life on both sides in the conflict, I am appalled the so-called pacifists should prolong the agonies and sad memories for the families and loved ones left behind on both sides.

I am sure the officer in command took a decision with the safety of our boys first and foremost. I doubt if Argentina's politicians will be calling for an inquiry into the sinking of the Sheffield or Antelope, or be concerned for the boys who suffered and died aboard Sir Galahad.

Councillor **JOHN LINES**,
Bartley Green,
Birmingham,

... So Commander Rocca
[Letters] accuses Dr David

Owen of 'ignoring the realities of war.' May I remind him that Dr Owen, a man of considerable experience as a former Foreign Secretary, was one of Margaret Thatcher's most vociferous supporters throughout the Falklands campaign.

One might have thought that the fact that such an obviously patriotic man as Dr Owen should raise these questions would lead most reasonable people to consider that such questions might be justified.

(Miss) **J. PYKE**,
Leicester.



Owen: Experience

... I agree with Commander Rocca that Dr Owen should not blabber on about the Belgrano. Perhaps Dr Owen would be better occupied helping to keep his party afloat.

T. K. HILL,
Exeter, Devon.

Alfonsin's deal with the IMF

IF THE annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund were like a school assembly, Argentina should be standing in a corner. Its nine-month long saga negotiating a standby credit has worn the Fund's patience thin and is now openly exasperating the commercial banks which are awaiting the outcome of these negotiations before disbursing new money or rolling over existing arrangements.

So many false alarms have come out of Buenos Aires announcing the imminence of an agreement with the Fund that the latest reports of the two sides being in the final stages of agreement have to be treated with caution. It is in Argentina's interest to stave off criticism at the Fund meeting and to assure its critics that all is agreed save a few details.

Argentina's international friends, whether in Europe or among fellow Latin American debtors, have urged on President Alfonsin the need to reach this agreement. The Fund itself has made it clear that a break with financial orthodoxy is not possible despite any amount of special pleading; the principal Latin American debtors, Brazil and Mexico, have pointed out that their chances of offering a unified approach to the broader issues of debt are weakened so long as Argentina is still haggling with the Fund.

Central issues

The central issues in dispute with the Fund have been the size of the public sector deficit, exchange rate policy and, above all, how President Alfonsin can reconcile his unwise pledge to raise real wages by 6 to 8 per cent with controlling the country's hyper-inflation.

The only value gained from such protracted negotiations is that the international community has been made fully aware of the economic, political and social pressures bearing on Argentina's fledgling democracy. The powerful trade unions have so far refused to sign a social contract, determined to demonstrate their muscle and dubious about the

Government's capacity to reduce inflation.

On a more political level the delivery last week of the report by the Government commission investigating human rights abuses by the military junta has thrown this issue right into the spotlight. The detailed list of crimes committed by the military submitted to President Alfonsin risks forcing him to countenance a much wider criminal prosecution of officers than he has already hinted to the military establishment. Such action could irrevocably alienate the military.

Awareness of these pressures has earned President Alfonsin considerable sympathy abroad but sympathy is being eroded by the President's indecision and his failure to use his personal prestige to good effect. He has, for instance, made no effort to take the public into his confidence and educate them in the real nature of the package being negotiated with the IMF.

Parlous plight

One could be more sanguine about the present deal if President Alfonsin had prepared the public ground better. For it is one thing signing an agreement whose details the parlous plight of the Argentine economy make impossible to accomplish. It is quite another to sign and to have the very guidelines questioned. At present there is no guarantee that an agreement, if and when it is reached, will prove acceptable to Argentina's highly nationalistic electorate.

It should also be said that President Alfonsin and his economic team have no alternative policy to dealing with the IMF, and certainly the President has his reputation staked on it.

The message of urgency and the need for leadership can and must be conveyed to Argentina this week during the Fund's meeting, and by President Reagan who received President Alfonsin at the White House yesterday.

This may prove Argentina's last chance to retain the goodwill of its main creditors and of those who genuinely wish democracy to prosper there.

The Financial Times
24/9/84

In place of leaks

ONE OF THE striking features of Mrs Thatcher's administration is the way that it has been prone to leaks—the disclosure of information, largely by the Civil Service, that the Government would have preferred to have kept secret.

None of the leaks has been especially damaging to the Government's credibility. Ms Tisdall, for example, only gave to the *Guardian* a few details about the timing of the arrival of cruise missiles, which everybody knew were about to be deployed in any case. The leaks about the sinking of the *Belgrano* during the Falklands war have not substantially altered the argument that Britain was in a state of conflict with Argentina and that casualties were therefore unavoidable.

Three questions

Yet the succession of leaks and the way that the Government has reacted to them has become the problem. It is not the mark of a mature democracy to have civil servants sent to prison for disclosing information, particularly when it is true and could have been perfectly well made public in the first place. Since there is no sign that the leaks are about to stop, the Government needs to ask itself three questions. Why do they occur? What is the best method of dealing with them when they do? And is there not a better way of governing the country which consists of keeping the public regularly informed of what is going on?

The answers to those questions can be given together. Mrs Thatcher has seldom disguised her suspicion of, if not hostility to, the traditional Civil Service. She thinks that it is at least partly to blame for Britain's relative decline. Civil servants can properly counter that they have had to deal with the pendulum swing of British politics from left to right and that it is their duty to pursue a course down the middle. They may well regard the Prime Minister's proclaimed radicalism as no more than a passing phase. They are tempted to leak, and some of them do it more discreetly than others, when they think that she has gone too far.

There are rights and wrongs on both sides. It was foolish of the Civil Service not to have acknowledged at the start the possibility that Mrs Thatcher

was after radical change and was pursuing it with some electoral support. But it was equally foolish of the Prime Minister to expect total loyalty from an institution that she herself kept attacking. It ought to be possible by now to seek a mutual reconciliation.

When civil servants transgress, it ought also to be normally possible to find a solution without resort to the courts. Except in the most extreme cases, there is no reason why the disclosure of information should lead to public prosecution, which in any case tends to discredit the Government more than the individuals involved. There is plenty of scope for internal disciplinary action.

The most complete answer to present problems, however, would be a fundamental reassessment of why so much information is kept secret. It is not self-evident that Britain has better government because the reasons for taking executive decisions are concealed. On the contrary, everyone would benefit from a greater knowledge of the issues involved. Nor is it clear why the Government should have anything to hide. More informed public discussion would be to the advantage of all.

Select committees

One way of moving towards such a position would be for the select committees of the House of Commons to become more assertive in demanding documents and cross-questioning ministers and officials. They have been pretty feeble so far. Another, even less likely, way would be for the parliamentary whips to relax their discipline and allow MPs to behave as individuals rather than party hacks: MPs could, of course, rebel themselves, but they do not.

Quite the best way, however, would be for the Government to issue its own statement about access to information, in a Green or White Paper, as soon as possible. It should stress that no information should be concealed, unless there are good and proven reasons why. The only question is whether that needs a Freedom of Information Act or whether it can be done by the Government itself voluntarily becoming more open, and allowing civil servants more freedom of expression. The Green or White Paper could devote itself to that.

The Financial Times
24/9/84

Call for inquiry into sinking of Belgrano

THE LIBERAL Assembly yesterday called for a full inquiry into the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, torpedoed during the Falklands War two years ago.

Delegates voted overwhelmingly for an emergency motion condemning "the withholding of full and accurate information" on the sinking, and urging Liberal MPs to move a vote of censure on the Government.

Later, Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, said the Government's refusal to give adequate or accurate information to the House of Commons revealed its contempt for the principle of parliamentary sovereignty.

The Belgrano incident showed that ministers were prepared to engage in "active dissemination of misinformation to parliament," he said.

Mrs Thatcher, the Prime Minister, has dismissed suggestions that she and other Ministers misled the Commons over

the sinking, insisting that the Belgrano was a threat to the Royal Navy task force.

But the issue refused to go away, and yesterday's Liberal resolution is bound to help maintain the momentum of calls for an inquiry.

Accepting the emergency motion on behalf of the leadership, Mr Alex Carlile, MP for Montgomery, said there was an epidemic of secrecy in Whitehall. The British people had a right to know the full facts about the sinking because it was ultimately their responsibility.

Mr Carlile said Mrs Thatcher had made a laughing stock of democracy by refusing to disclose details of the affair.

The facts would be revealed, and they would be dramatic in both content and consequences. The truth would mean the end of the Thatcher Government because it would show the Government's "amoral" disregard for what was expected of it

The Telegraph 24/9/84

FALKLANDS TO PROMOTE HOLIDAYS

By Our Port Stanley
Correspondent

THE Falklands could soon become a playground for wealthy American and European tourists. That is the belief of the islands' Development Corporation and the British tourist authority.

Their executives are embarking on an ambitious tourism development plan

Mr Simon Armstrong, the local corporation's general manager, and an ex-member of the Highlands and Islands Development Board in Scotland, believes that the Falklands are now sufficiently well-known, and that extraordinarily abundant wild-life resources and potential for outdoor activities can attract wealthy tourists in considerable numbers.

"I honestly believe there will be enough here to keep them busy," he said, citing ornithology, sailing excursions, overland safari expeditions, trout-fishing, and even skin-diving. Even the Falklands' wilderness quality could prove to be an attraction. "The country is so beautiful and unspoiled," he said.

The Development Corporation, formed this year with a budget of £4,600,000, is being aided in this latest enterprise by the British tourist authority which agrees that the potential is considerable.

The new international airport at Mount Pleasant could, they believe, give tourism a green light, and after an initial study they are to promote the Falklands in Europe and the United States.

British Tommy is 'best in world' says American

By FRANK TAYLOR in Washington

BRITISH troops taking part in the Nato exercise in West Germany have come in for lavish praise by American defence officials.

In an interview with the WASHINGTON POST, Mr James Webb, Assistant Secretary of Defence, said:

"The Brits are not just good fighters. Their planning is well thought-out.

"But the great thing is that there is a sense of history in British military life that gives them an affirmative attitude.

"They go about this thing with an historical certainty. They know this area. They've done it twice before in this century."

Mr Webb, who lived in Britain as a youngster when his father was a liaison officer with the R A F, added: "The British are just very professional."

The Post correspondent covering the exercises said in his despatch: "The British Army is widely viewed as among the best in the world." He quoted an American defence official as saying: "Man for man, the British infantryman today is probably the best.

"Their NCO corps is also probably the best in the world," an American military attaché was quoted as saying.

'On the edge'

The Post correspondent said that at just under 160,000 troops, the British Army was the smallest of any major Nato power. He quoted a British general as saying: "If you take away the women, trainees and Gurkhas, then you are really left with 139,000 of what we call the 'trained, adult, male strength.' That means you could probably fit the whole army into Wembley stadium."

Another British officer was quoted as saying that the size of the British Army on the Rhine, 56,000, was "right on the edge.

"Any smaller and it is not a credible deterrent that backs up the military and political role Britain plays in the Alliance."

The Post correspondent said that keeping 4,000 troops "tied up" in the Falklands was "also a source of concern to some officers."

Hongkong deal to be initialled in Peking this week

By HUGH DAVIES in Peking

THE text of the Sino-British joint declaration on the future of Hongkong is to be released at noon (London time) on Wednesday nine hours after the initialling in Peking's Great Hall of the People.

A brief ceremony is being planned in Peking.

Sir Richard Evans, British Ambassador in Peking, and Zhao Nan, the chief Chinese negotiator, will add their names to the lengthy document.

If endorsed by Parliament, it is expected to be signed jointly in the Chinese capital by Mrs Thatcher and Teng Hsiao-ping shortly before Christmas.

The declaration, which Teng and the British Cabinet have approved, has three annexes, the longest outlines Chinese policy. The others give details of the joint liaison group to monitor the handover of sovereignty, the land tenure arrangements and what is to happen about civil aviation right, in particular the future of Cathay Pacific.

Land tax change

Both sides have agreed that land leases will be extended after 1997. Sources close to the talks said that Britain wanted the term to be for 75 years, but China stressed that the accord only pledged to continue capitalism in the territory for half-a-century.

An annual land tax is to replace the current premium system. This is to be between three and five per cent.

The Hongkong government wants to generate more revenue from land sales in the transition period and Britain has pressed for the annual figure to be 100 hectares. China wanted this halved, anxious to ensure that future special administrative regions have as much land on hand as possible.

The tricky nationality issue

has been solved by China, allowing the 2.6 million Hongkong British passport holders to retain their documents for life, but they will not be allowed to pass them on to their children.

While the passports carry no right of residence in Britain, holders want to hang on to them because they guarantee consular protection for travellers.

China has already pledged election to the post-1997 government in the territory, and presumably Britain has secured some sort of guarantee that the elections, whether they be direct or indirect, are more democratic than those on the mainland.

Defensive role

The declaration is to mention the fact that Chinese soldiers are to be stationed in the territory, as already stated by Teng. No figures for troop levels are expected to be actually stated in the document, although it thought that the text will stress their defensive role.

On the vexed question of civil aviation rights, Sir John Bremridge, the colony's financial secretary, has denied a report that China is to have a half stake in Cathay Pacific. According to one source, the declaration will state that the post-1997 government of Hongkong, rather than China herself, is to acquire the 50 per cent share.

This new administrative body is also expected to be vested with the power of negotiating international agreements over aircraft landing rights.

The rest of the text is understood to be virtually the same as outlined by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, when he visited Hongkong last month.



COMMENTARY

John O'Sullivan

MRS THATCHER'S statement outlining the reasons behind the decision to sink the Belgrano, frank and unusually detailed though it was, never had the slightest prospect of satisfying her critics. They were bound to manufacture trivial discrepancies out of straw and, Watergate-obsessed, to mutter darkly about "unanswered questions."

But almost all the claims of Mrs Thatcher's perfidy rest on a single assumption: namely, that once the Belgrano changed course, it no longer posed a military threat to the British task force. This is nonsense. If the Belgrano had changed course at 9 a.m., then it was capable of changing course back again at 9 p.m. Since Argentine planes had attacked the task force the previous day, this was the only prudent judgment to make.

Even if the Belgrano had actually returned to its home port, moreover, it would still have been a threat since it would have been able to emerge from harbour at any moment and attack British ships. Its sinking was therefore a justified, necessary and legitimate act of war.

Critics have accordingly retreated from the charge of war-crime to the lesser accusation that Mrs Thatcher had allowed the Royal Navy to wage war without proper political control. (This is a rare exception to the general Left theme that Mrs Thatcher is a centralising dictator — but no matter.)

One slim fact supports this allegation. In the four to five hours that elapsed between news of the Belgrano's change of course arriving at Northwood fleet headquarters and the submarine Conqueror carrying out its earlier order to sink the Argentine ship, the War Cabinet was not told of the change of course. But if the change of course was not militarily significant — and, as we have seen above, it was not — then there was no reason to inform Ministers. Even in retrospect Ministers agree with the Navy's judgment and claim that they would not have altered their Belgrano decision in the light of this fresh but trivial information. So this criticism, too, falls.

The Telegraph 24/9/84

That leaves the distinctly limp accusation, levelled by Dr Owen among others, that although it was right to sink the Belgrano, the subsequent "cover-up" is a scandal. But if the word "cover-up" is to have any intelligible meaning, there must be a crime to cover up. Where is the crime here? If we were to stretch every possible point, we might conceivably argue that Mrs Thatcher and Mr John Nott *may* have inadvertently exaggerated *not* the threat posed by the Belgrano, but its *immediacy*, and subsequently failed to correct this exaggeration.

Otherwise the charge of "cover-up" must be reduced to the petulant complaint that Mrs Thatcher has not revealed every detail and circumstance of a military operation involving intelligence information. How can she?

Mrs Thatcher has answered most of the allegations against her in unusual detail. Should her critics not shoulder an equal obligation? The *NEW STATESMAN* has claimed that the British Government planned to use nuclear weapons against Argentina. Mr Dalyell has said that Mrs Thatcher "... coldly gave orders to sink the Belgrano . . . in the expectation that the torpedoes would torpedo the peace negotiations."

It would be difficult to invest more serious charges than these allegations of intended and actual mass murder. Are not the *NEW STATESMAN* and Mr Dalyell obliged either to substantiate these accusations or to tender the Prime Minister the most grovelling apologies for such fantastic libels?

Kinnock on attack over Ponting

The Guardian 24/9/84

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The Labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, is to challenge Mrs Thatcher's denial that Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, intervened in the Official Secrets Act prosecution of a senior civil servant accused of passing on documents about the sinking of the Belgrano to an MP.

He is also expected this week to seize on some of the unanswered questions — in particular the Prime Minister's refusal to explain how and why the Government consistently misled the Commons — after her detailed account of the events surrounding the attack on the Argentine cruiser.

In a letter to Mr Kinnock last week the Prime Minister denied that Mr Heseltine overruled the advice of his civil servants that Mr Clive Ponting, an assistant secretary in the Ministry of Defence, should not be prosecuted.

She implied that the decision to prosecute was taken by the Government's law officers, the Solicitor-General, Sir Patrick Mayhew, and Attorney-General Sir Michael Havers.

According to yesterday's Observer, Mr Heseltine told senior officials on August 13 that he wanted a criminal charge against Mr Ponting, and only then did officials draw up a full report for the Director of Public Prosecutions. This report was sent to the DPP on August 16.

Mrs Thatcher implied in a letter to the Social Democrat leader, Dr David Owen, that Mr Heseltine did not discuss the case until after it had been officially reported to the DPP. The Ministry of Defence declined to comment yesterday.

Mr Tam Dalyell — the Labour MP to whom Mr Ponting is alleged to have passed on the documents—introduced a new element into the controversy yesterday. He said that he believed on the basis of reliable sources that Mrs Thatcher personally visited naval headquarters at Northwood during May 2, 1982, the day the Belgrano was sunk.

Although this does not mean that the Prime Minister could have rescinded the order, if true, it suggests that Mrs Thatcher knew of the signal which arrived in London at 3.40 pm that the Belgrano had reversed course and had been steering away from the Task Force since 9 a.m.

Mrs Thatcher has avoided any mention of when she learned of the Belgrano's change of course.

Mr Dalyell said yesterday that the Prime Minister had also not answered two other key questions.

Why, he asked, did the decision to sink the Belgrano and all other Argentine warships require a specific war cabinet decision to change the rules of engagement, whereas the decision to attack the Argentine carrier, the 25 de Mayo, a few days earlier, did not?

And he asked why the Prime Minister avoided any mention of the five-day delay in giving what a leaked Ministry of Defence document describes as "the appropriate warning" for the May 2 change?

Denial of Thatcher at HQ on day of sinking

By Anthony Bevins
Political Correspondent

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour's backbench campaigner for an inquiry on the sinking of the General Belgrano, has been told that the Prime Minister visited Fleet headquarters at Northwood on the day that the Argentine cruiser was sunk.

One of Mr Dalyell's sources has suggested that Mrs Thatcher went to the headquarters at about 6.30 pm on May 2, 1982, just 1½ hours before the General Belgrano was torpedoed and nearly three hours after the submarine Conqueror signalled the cruiser reversal of course.

A Downing street source said last night that the Prime Minister's movements had been checked, and that she had not been to Northwood that day. Mr Dalyell said: "I believe the sources who have assured me that she was there."

Mr Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow said he was raising a number of Commons questions to the Prime Minister, including one in which he would ask whether she did, in fact, go to Northwood on May 2.

He is asking when ministers were told, and when she was told, of the Conqueror's signal which was received by Northwood at 3.40 pm on May 2.

The Guardian 24/9/84

The depths

Sir, — Peter Jenkins (Guardian, September 19) was wrong when he said that we were at war when the Belgrano was sunk. If we had been at war, we would have claimed the right to sink hostile enemy craft anywhere in the world, but instead of this we had declared a Total Exclusion Zone around the Falklands.

We (quite rightly) established this T.E.Z. in order to protect our forces while peace negotiations were being conducted, and the declaration of this zone clearly implied that shipping outside of it would be immune from attack.

The sinking of a vessel which was a long way outside the zone, and which was steaming for a home port, was not an act of war — it was an act of barbarism. — Yours faithfully,

W.B. Fox
1 Bradley Park Road
St. Marychurch,
Torquay.

Military regime's wasted billions

Sweet money leaves sour aftertaste

In the first of two articles, Douglas Tweedale reports from Buenos Aires on how Argentina borrowed billions of dollars under the military government but has nothing but headaches to show for it today.

Although Señor José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz has never been in the military, he may well be the most unpopular man in Argentina today.

Even more than the despised generals who ruled by force after the 1976 coup, the former Economy Minister is - rightly or wrongly - held personally responsible for the unpayable \$45 billion (£34.6 billion) foreign debt that hangs like Damocles' sword over President Raúl Alfonsín's Government.



ARGENTINE DEBT
Part 1

Señor Martínez de Hoz's long-necked image has become a favourite of political cartoonists as a symbol of the \$1,500 Argentina owes for every man, woman and child in the country.

His name is synonymous with a time of "sweet money" - *plata dulce* - in 1978-1980, when an artificially overvalued peso encouraged Argentines to buy up or borrow "cheap" dollars and engage in an orgy of speculation, foreign travel and spending on imported luxury goods.

Now that the loans are no longer flowing in and the bills

DEBT TABLE (in billions of US\$)			
Year	Total debt	Private debt	Public debt
1975	7.37	3.35	4.02
1976	8.28	3.09	5.19
1977	9.67	3.63	6.04
1978	12.50	4.14	8.36
1979	19.03	9.07	9.96
1980	27.16	12.70	14.46
1981	35.67	15.65	20.02
1982	43.63*	14.36	26.34

* (Total includes \$2.93bn in overdue payments from 1981)

have come due, Argentines look back bitterly on those years and blame it all on Señor Martínez de Hoz and the military government he served.

His supporters claim that his free-market policies are not to blame for the size of the debt, pointing out that cash-rich banks were all too willing to lend irresponsibly to nations such as Argentina in the mid-1970s.

His detractors say he carried out a deliberate plan to fuel speculation and destroy domestic industry on behalf of his "imperialist masters" in the multinationals.

Whatever the truth, the bitterness is understandable, for Argentina has virtually nothing solid to show for all the money it borrowed. In the years when Señor Martínez de Hoz was Economy Minister - from 1976 to 1981 - the country's total debt soared from a reasonable \$8.2 billion to an unmanageable \$35.7 billion.

But unlike Brazil or Mexico, there are no visible signs that this debt was put to productive use. Many of the grandiose public works projects undertaken by the military government are either unfinished, operating at a deficit, under suspicion of corruption, or a combination of the three.

Millions were invested in



Señor Martínez de Hoz: Butt of cartoonists.

huge joint hydroelectric projects with Paraguay. The construction of the Yacyretá Dam on the Paraguayan border, for example, has not even begun yet. Its cost is already suspiciously spiralling and work is years behind schedule.

A motorway was built by the city of Buenos Aires at a cost of some \$300m, much of it borrowed from abroad. But recent investigations suggest

that the true cost was closer to \$100m and that the difference simply "evaporated" in shady deals.

Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales (YPF), the state oil company, borrowed more than \$100m for purposes which have never been adequately explained, yet it was virtually bankrupt, with its drilling capacity greatly reduced, when the Alfonsín administration took over.

The statistics also show that the borrowed billions did not go towards promoting industry. According to the current president of the Central Bank, while the size of the overall debt grew from \$12.5 billion in 1978 to \$43.6 billion in 1982, Argentina was suffering one of its most severe recessions in

Latin American debt 17

history. In the same period, gross domestic product (GNP) fell by 6.8 per cent and industrial production plummeted by 24.1 per cent.

Two public spending projects which could account for a large part of the debt were closely-guarded secrets under the military: arms purchases, which are known to have been substantial, and the controversial nuclear energy programme. There are no reliable figures as to how much was spent on these.

Where did all the money go? Officials of the Alfonsín administration and private economists do not know for certain, but most opinions point in one direction: widespread financial speculation prompted by an overvalued peso and the resulting capital flight indirectly subsidized by the Government.

Tomorrow: cheap dollars and "the bicycle".

storm which caused flash... able. You will be invited to

Royal Air Force News
24th September 1984

New Air Defence System for Falklands

THE MINISTRY of Defence has awarded a contract, worth more than £0.5M, to Ferranti Computer Systems Limited, to supply an Air Defence Ground Environment System for use by the Royal Air Force in the Falkland Islands.

The system was developed with assistance from the RAF and is based on the Ferranti Air Defence System Mk. 4, which will be on show for the first time at Farnborough International '84.

Air defence systems based on the FADS 4 concept are already in-service with the RAF in the UK

and on order for NATO. Typical uses are in command centres and dispersed locations to provide up to date displays on the existing tactical situation, by compiling, managing and distributing "the recognised air and surface picture."

Information may be accepted from radar or other sensors, either automatically through datalinks or by operator entry via the keyboard. Other possible uses would be to provide local tactical displays or situation displays for Naval forces which would be particularly useful for coastal defence applications.

... more comment-
able. You will be invited to

extremely fertile, as a tropical
storm which caused flash

Day

looks forward to the time
when the new air head build

in being an RAF station with a
sea outlet. Indeed, here lies

10,500 foot airstrip was about
all the island had going for it

ASCENSION ISLAND — a pain in the ash?

NOTHING quite prepares you for the shock of arriving on Ascension Island for the first time.

Positively alien or lunar are among the more printable epithets used to describe this small South Atlantic island just below the equator and midway between the South American and African continents.

Ironically, it is perhaps because Ascension looks like a series of slag heaps reminiscent of industrial England at its worst that people at first find it so disturbing. It is difficult to believe that this is not man made devastation.

For Ascension is nature in the raw. In geological terms, the island is new and the weather has not yet had time to soften the stark, sterile landscape comprising more than 40 volcanoes and lava flows. The only exception is the appropriately named Green Mountain where in fact, man has indeed taken a hand.

REMARKABLE

As near as makes no odds, Ascension is exactly half-way between the UK and the Falklands. It may be a simplistic view of strategy to say so, but the island could hardly have been better placed as a staging post in support of the operation to retake the Falklands.

But its position and its now 10,500 foot airstrip was about all the island had going for it. To all intents and purposes, the island had to rely totally on supplies brought in from outside; water had to be produced by a costly desalination process; there were no port facilities, vessels had to moor offshore; there was very little spare accommodation, and support facilities at the airfield were virtually non-existent.

Yet over the next few weeks, the population had doubled, daily air movements at Wideawake were on a par with and in some cases exceeding the busiest airports in the world, thousands of tons of supplies were being loaded into a fleet of ships at anchor off-shore and some of the most remarkable sorties in the history of air operations were taking place.

Personnel to support this mammoth operation had to be billeted all over the 34-square-mile island, the majority accommodated under canvas. All catering was done in field kitchens, and transport was a 24-hour operation with a hard-pressed handful of Sherpa mini-buses and any other vehicle which could be brought into service trying to ensure everybody was at the right place at the right time. It looked chaotic, many said it was chaotic, but it all added up to a superb achievement

that was the vital stepping stone to success in the Falklands.

The role Ascension Island played in Corporate was kept very low key and it was some time before any information was released. By that time, interest was focused on the activities further south. Even today, more attention is given to events on the Falkland Islands so it is easy to forget that RAF Ascension Island is also a posting in the South Atlantic. For most it will be six months, two months longer than Stanley, and those on three-week detachments, namely the Victor and Hercules crews, will find their return visits soon adding up.

So what is it like and how has it changed since those Corporate days?

Now, as then, Ascension is operating in support of the Falklands. The manpower level is just over 500, predominantly RAF but with small Army and Naval detachments, the latter including 845 Squadron who provide the helicopter service between ship and shore with their three Wessex Vs.

Many people think of Ascension as simply being the northern end of the Falklands Air Bridge, but that is just one aspect of this station's important role. In addition to the five Air Bridge flights a week, there is a continual shuffle of ships between Ascension and the Falklands. Ascension must be very unusual, if not unique, in being an RAF station with a sea outlet. Indeed, here lies the major part of its work, for the majority of passengers and freight go by sea, only priority passengers and cargo using the Air Bridge.

Some 5000 men on a permanent pass through Ascension every month, disembarking from their TriStar and being ferried straight out to their awaiting ship, or the reverse procedure when they return to the UK. Some freight is also airlifted by helicopter, but heavy materials are taken out to the ships by lighter via the pierhead at Georgetown. It is during these roulement turnarounds that Wideawake once again seems reminiscent of the Corporate days with the non-stop drone of the helicopters and feverish activity on the pan as cargos are prepared for transit.

HISTORY

At the centre of all this activity is the Movements Squadron. They are based in a building known as the Nose Hangar, one of three Second World War buildings remaining on the airfield and from where the movements operation was carried out during Corporate.

Much of the freight, particularly that which arrives by VC10 for the Air Bridge, has to be sorted when it is dark, a

During Operation Corporate, CHRISTOPHER YORKE, Ascension Island to serve on the staff of Commander British Forces Support Unit (CBFSU) as the Public Relations Officer and also to be the RAF NEWS' man on the spot. It was almost exactly two years later that he returned to the island and in this article he observes some of the changes that have taken place since those hectic days and what those going on this "other posting" in the South Atlantic may expect to find. Is serving on a pile of ash and cinders as bad as it might at first seem?

except that it's like that the whole year round.

The working day on Ascension is hard and long, and can include shift work. Expect to notch-up anything from 210 to 290 hours a month, but don't expect to be off on public holidays, except Christmas Day.

The most dramatic change on Ascension since Corporate is in the living accommodation and other domestic facilities. Compared with the old "tened cities" at English Bay and Two Boats, and the "continenta cities" at the American base, the new Travellers Hill complex is positively luxurious. But everything is relative and despite the great improvements, conditions are still pretty basic compared with home. Overcrowding is still the order of the day, as the camp was built for 360 and is currently home for more than 500. But that situation will improve as accommodation occupied by the building contractors becomes available on completion of the air head.

Getting rid of that dust is now a lot easier as there are plenty of well fitted-out shower blocks. Again the facilities are basic, but would not be out of place on a well-run holiday camp site.

In fact the whole complex has the look of a holiday camp with its neat rows of "chalets", particularly if viewed from the attractive terraces of the messes which look out over the volcano-flanked Donkey Plain down to the sea.

There is also a junior ranks social club and something which is the envy of the whole island, a magnificent swimming pool. Other facilities include a well-equipped gymnasium which incorporates two purpose-built squash courts; and tennis courts and playing fields should now be available.

If you like cross country running with a difference, there is the post box run taking in nine volcanoes which, at the summit of each, you get your card stamped. Some fishing is available and it is hoped that sailing will soon be added

to the list of sporting activities. You might like to try potholing down some of the old volcanic fumaroles, but before you venture out onto the lava flows there are mandatory precautions that have to be taken.

TEMPTING

The magnificent golden sandy beaches are very tempting, but there is only one from which swimming is safe, or indeed allowed. It's a small roped-off and supervised cove near English Bay and on Sundays the MT runs a bus service there.

But for many, the most remarkable experience on Ascension Island tooms behind Travellers Hill. It is Green Mountain, its summit sometimes shrouded mysteriously in cloud. The full impact of a visit to this paradise some 2,800 feet up will be enhanced if you delay it until you have been on Ascension at least a week. Not for nothing is it called Green Mountain, and the remarkable thing is that man is responsible for it.

During the last century when the Navy had its garrison on the island, this peak, Ascension's oldest and highest volcano, was the location of the only water supply — a small dew pond. Accordingly, the Royal Marines set-up a small farm, which is still there, and imported a variety of trees, shrubs and other plants. Ascension may look barren, but in fact, given water, it is extremely fertile, as a tropical storm which caused flash floods showed earlier this year by turning the island green overnight. (The floods also caused a few problems, but such storms are reckoned to take place only once in a decade.) Since then, most of the vegetation has withered away, except on Green Mountain, where the level of precipitation is much greater than elsewhere on the island.

Arguably, nature would sooner or later have got round to developing the island herself, but in the mean time we are looking at a man-made environment. Now the RAF is playing its part. Already trees, mainly citrus and vines, are being planted around Travellers Hill and they will thrive, provided they get water. That the water they receive has already been used by humans matters not, indeed it is all to their good.

But like the marines before them, the RAF is not just concerned with making the place look pretty. It is extremely costly to import produce, so it makes sense to grow it locally, and there are plans to do just that using hydroponic farming. If the scheme is successful, the expected £50,000 cost would very quickly be recovered, for not only will enough fruit and salad be produced to supply

the whole of the island, but there would be sufficient surplus to export to the Falklands.

The group captain on the station is known as Commander British Forces Ascension Island (CBFASI). For him, the tour on Ascension will now last at least one year and accordingly it is accompanied. The senior RAF officers on his staff, seven squadron leaders, will also find Ascension becoming an accompanied tour lasting at least 12 months as suitable accommodation becomes available. As such accommodation is being taken-up from that which already exists on the island and not being specially built, it might be some time before the RAF has the full benefit of the continuity that this move will bring.

PROSPECT

Of course, not all people who step off the VC10s at Wideawake are destined to stay. They are those who are bound for the Falklands via the Air Bridge. Much is being done to improve facilities during their brief overnight stay. For example, as soon as you get off the aircraft, you are shepherded to the airfield camp where there is a wide selection of meals available. Having been fed and watered, it is time for a briefing, at present in a sweat generating inflatable tent. No doubt the proposed facilities in the new air head will be more comfortable. You will be invited to make full use of the mess facilities, but with the cautionary note that you will be called at 0330 for an 0600 hours take-off the next morning.

After the briefing, you are re-united with whatever baggage you need for the night and taken to Travellers Hill. At present, you are accommodated under canvas, but this will change as more chalets become available with the departure of the building contractors. Female passengers are accommodated in a bungalow in Georgetown.

The prospect of six months on a lump of barren cinder may fill many with dismay. But it is a view held by many that six months in the warmth of Ascension is better than four months down on the Falklands. Indeed, quite a few want to stay. Presumably they are those with no family or other attachments back home! But accepting the obvious disadvantages of an unaccompanied posting, the long and hard working days and living in what must still be described as field conditions; and if you have the ability to generate your own "entertainment", you'll soon get over the shock of arriving on Ascension Island. It's really got quite a lot going for it.



■ Exploring the lunar world of Ascension



■ The swimming pool from the Officers' Mess terrace

More pictures on next two pages

POLITICAL DIARY

IN THE last couple of weeks Dr David Owen, Mr David Steel and Mr Roy Jenkins have all agreed on at least one thing: there will be no general election this year or next year either. They are agreed on something else too: when it comes, in three or four years, Mrs Margaret Thatcher will still be Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party.

It is easy to guess the reasons for this concurrence of view. Rational men all, they have no wish to indulge in the rhetoric of Turn out this Wicked Government, as practised by Arthur Scargill and other members of the Labour Party who should know better than Mr Scargill.

At the same time the continuing presence of Mrs Thatcher can be used as a unifying device within the Alliance. Mr Jenkins has already employed it twice, first at Buxton and last week at Bournemouth. He has quoted J. M. Keynes saying he did not wish to live the rest of his life under a Conservative Government. He has added that neither does he, and that the Prime Minister to whom Keynes was objecting, Stanley Baldwin, was a distinct improvement on Mrs Thatcher. This always raises a laugh, as it deserves to. There is no reason why Mr Jenkins should not re-use his material; we all of us do.

There is something else. It suits Dr Owen, Mr Steel and Mr Jenkins—it is comfortable and convenient—to proceed as if time is on the Alliance's side. Awkward questions can be settled, or disposed of somehow, in years rather than months.

After Thursday's vote on defence, admittedly, people were saying this one would never go away, that was that, rolls of sticking plaster could be used up to no avail, and much else along the same lines. Well, I have no wish to minimise the importance of disputes on defence conducted within parties that are out of office. But the funny thing about them is that they go away as suddenly as they came up in the first place. For no apparent reason—for the weapons remain the same, or more destructive still—the disputants become bored, and

ALAN WATKINS

A rough ride ahead for Mrs Thatcher



proceed to argue with equal fervour about other matters entirely.

In last week's vote, incidentally, the assembled Liberals may have snubbed Mr Steel and, through him, Dr Owen, which gave them greater pleasure. But they did not adopt a unilateralist policy, however little the policy they did adopt may be to the doctor's taste. In the platonic universe of Liberal policy-making, Polaris stays, for the time being anyway, and only cruise goes.

In a year's time the problems of defence may look quite different. But the present Government will still be in office. So will Mrs Thatcher. That is the view of the Alliance's leaders. As a founding member of the Keep Calm Party (which works in loose co-operation with the Apathetic Tendency), I have much sympathy with this view. I think it will probably turn out to be right. And yet, there are signs of political instability in plenty.

It is a truism of my trade that late summers are good for governments, with holidays, sunny weather and Parliament not sitting. It is a truism equally that early summers are bad for governments, with Parliament still sitting and the MPs growing weekly more tetchy. This year the latter was demonstrated once again. But the holidays did not bring relief: quite the reverse. The Government's narrow lead in the latest opinion poll (brought about by defections from the Alliance rather than from Labour) would not survive a by-election.

This is not simply a matter of the

may even do her some good. But Mrs Thatcher has now lost the confidence of the political class, inasmuch as she ever possessed it.

Observers who like to place themselves on the radical Right reply that her lack of rapport with, even outright hostility towards, the chattering classes is her principal strength. So it may have been when things were going reasonably well. But the prospects for the winter now look bleaker than they did when Parliament broke up.

Nor are the new Members of that Parliament, the beneficiaries of Mrs Thatcher's appeal last year (even though it was diminished compared to 1979), themselves Thatcherites. The loyalists come from the previous political generation. And some of the older dogs are beginning to turn on their mistress. Mr Norman Tebbit, for instance, has been going around for months saying he is a reasonable sort of chap who does not hold with all this confrontation that Mrs Thatcher likes to go in for.

Mr Steel's and Dr Owen's hope is that the electors will adopt the same view, hold to it even more tenaciously and vote in large numbers for Alliance candidates in 1988. But it seems to me to be too easily assumed that if Thatcherism goes out of fashion, the gainers will inevitably be the Alliance. This assumption is made not only by Mr Steel and Dr Owen but also by Mr Jenkins, a political observer of greater experience and knowledge. He says, in an untypical phrase, that the 'Tory Wets are up the creek without a paddle' and that he feels rather sorry for them.

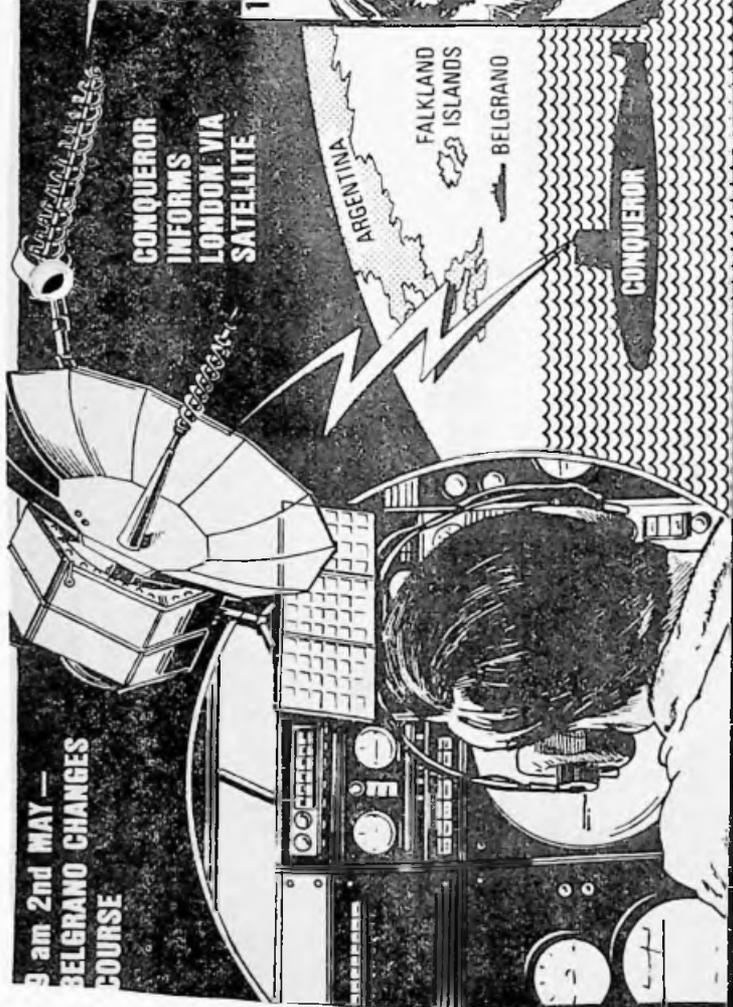
Yet wetness could become a desirable condition once again. My own guess is that, after five years of Mrs Thatcher, the natural majority in the country is not for Mr Steel and Dr Owen or Mr Neil Kinnock either, but for Lord Carrington, Mr Francis Pym and Mr James Prior. If enough Conservative MPs and Conservative Ministers come to share this opinion, Mrs Thatcher will be in for an even rougher year.

Government's failure to come up with any good news, or even to provide a reasonably quiet life. Rather we have several of the elements which can produce rapid and unpredictable political change: an increasingly bitter industrial dispute; a sterling crisis, or as near to one as makes no difference; unrest not merely in the coalfields but also in the higher civil service; and a scandal.

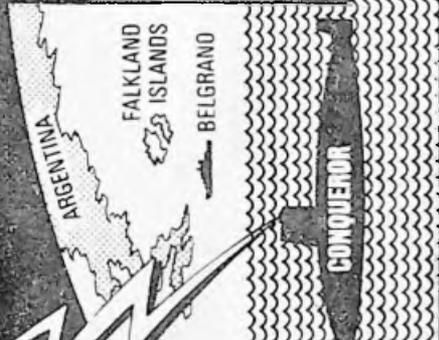
The scandal is that surrounding the Belgrano affair. It is connected with the unrest in the civil service. Scandals about ships are evidently no different from scandals about sex. Everyone immediately starts playing the game of Hunt the Issue. I see no reason why I should not play it too. And the issue here is not whether Mrs Thatcher or any of her Ministers lied to or misled the House. It is whether the military and naval authorities misled their political superiors in order to attain their own end—the sinking of the Belgrano. This they brought about by delaying telling the War Cabinet of the ship's reversal of course.

Instead of meeting this question (which may be answerable in innocent, though hardly reassuring, terms involving muddle), Mrs Thatcher takes refuge in bullying and bluster, as she commonly does when confronted by any genuine difficulty. Among the *Sun*-perusing, Jimmy Young-admiring public who, as the recently re-installed Mr Gordon Reece taught her all those years ago, are the only public worth bothering about, this kind of escape ('Maggie Refuses to Budge') may do her no harm and

9 am 2nd MAY —
BELGRANO CHANGES
COURSE



CONQUEROR
INFORMS
LONDON VIA
SATELLITE



FALKLAND ISLANDS
ARGENTINA
BELGRANO

CONQUEROR

Thirty hours after HMS Conqueror sights the Belgrano, she reverses direction and starts heading steadily back towards the Argentine coast. But this crucial fact is not relayed to London for more than six hours—a delay which led to evasions.

3.40 pm: NORTHWOOD OPERATIONAL
HEADQUARTERS, RECEIVES SIGNAL



1.00 pm : WAR CABINET ORDERS ATTACK
ON THE BELGRANO



Admiral Lewin drives to Chequers to ask Ministers to authorise a change in the rules of engagement to enable Conqueror to attack. The change is made and Lewin tells Northwood.

TOTAL EXCLUSION ZONE

FALKLAND ISLANDS

FIRST SIGHTING OF BELGRANO / MAY 1982

CONQUEROR

BELGRANO SUNK 8 pm



TIERRA DEL FUEGO
Ushuaia

5.00 pm: ATTACK ORDER REPEATED



4th May —
HOUSE OF COMMONS

« The Belgrano . . . was closing on elements of our task force . . . »

8 pm : BELGRANO SUNK

The attack order doesn't reach Conqueror until 5 p.m.—by which time the sub has signalled Admiral Herbert (top, left) that Belgrano has changed direction. Naval chiefs do not tell the cabinet—and Belgrano is sunk.

BELGRANO: THE MISSING LINKS

FOR two years and five months the truth about the sinking of the *Belgrano* has been a matter of debate, conjecture and suspicion. Only now, long after that far-away war in the South Atlantic has turned into an uncertain peace is it possible to construct an accurate account of the events surrounding the single most deadly attack of the Falklands war.

Yet, as Mrs Thatcher's account, published last week, demonstrates only too clearly, she *could* have come clean long ago. For what is now agreed by all but the most implacable of the Government's critics is that the decision to sink the *Belgrano* was militarily defensible. Even Argentine commanders concede as much.

It is clear that at the heart of the Government's embarrassment, and its determination to conceal the true facts lay three considerations:

- The Government did mislead Parliament in its early statements about the sinking.
- The war cabinet was not kept fully informed about the *Belgrano*'s movements.
- The United States was giving military assistance far earlier than has been admitted.

But, as the following account demonstrates, all of these facts could have been conceded without fatally damaging the war cabinet's credibility.

It was just at Britain's civilian

population started to settle into the long 1982 May Day weekend that Mrs Thatcher and her war cabinet secretly ordered the start of the 'shooting war.'

They knew it would be a risky undertaking. The British fleet had little defence against air attack, particularly from carrier-borne planes. And it was known, from documents found on a captured Argentine submarine in South Georgia, that the enemy fleet was prepared 'to destroy any British ship it could find' at the right moment.

By that Friday, 30 April 1982, the British expeditionary force was ready to go into action, and the international stage was cleared.

Covertly, the United States was already providing key military help. Ascension Island and its US base facilities were available to the British long-range bombers. The Argentine fleet was being spied on by FOSIF, the US 'fleet ocean surveillance facility,' which passed on the intelligence obtained from spy satellites, sea-bed hydrophones and reconnaissance flights back through Edzell in Scotland and US Navy HQ in London.

Most crucially, the US was lending Britain extra 'slots' on its DSCS military satellite which hovered over the Equator, to enable the British

nuclear submarines submerged in the South Atlantic, to make secure, if limited, contact with London.

It was a vital communications facility. Without it, the submarines would have been totally out of touch. The normal method of continuous contact for a submarine submerged at 200ft was via the Very Low Frequency radio station at Rugby. But that only functioned in the North Atlantic. The secondary method, via conventional High Frequency radio, was highly vulnerable to Argentine direction-finding.

But the US satellite channel had one big drawback. The slots were only available to each submarine at intervals of several hours, and then in a brief coded burst only receivable near the surface.

These delays were to play a crucial part in the confusion which was to surround the sinking of the *Belgrano*.

Mrs Thatcher had, of course, never fought a war before, although she knew what she wanted. She and John Nott, her Defence Secretary who had held the job for less than a year, were inevitably very much influenced by their Chief of Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Terence Lewin. A war cabinet member, he met Nott three or four times each day throughout the crisis.

The war cabinet agreed that Friday to a three-pronged military onslaught. A Vulcan would leave that night from Ascension to bomb the Falklands runway. At dawn, Harriers from the task force would join in, strafing the Argentine garrison.

The sinking of the General Belgrano was the single most controversial act of the Falklands War. DAVID LEIGH reports on the crucial events that led to the decision—concealed until now by a determined government cover-up.

The submarines would hunt down the pride of Argentina's fleet and its most dangerous component, the aircraft carrier 25 de Mayo. Their orders were to sink it, in or out of the recently announced exclusion zone, without warning. The submarines' Rules of Engagement were relaxed to permit this, after what Mrs Thatcher now calls 'the most careful consideration of the legal, military and political issues'.

Careful or not, the decision caused the Foreign Secretary, Mr Francis Pym, grave anxiety. Next morning, as lines were cleared at the Defence Ministry to announce the anticipated sinking of the 25 de Mayo, he sent the Prime Minister an urgent 'secret' minute, warning that such an attack might be illegal unless the Argentines were warned that the rules had been changed.

He left for Washington and further talks: his warning was ignored. Later that day, alarming news was flashed to London. The 25 de Mayo was lost in the fog and the scheme for a grand hammer-blow had foundered. Worse, the carrier's

planes were now free to counter-attack the fleet.

But the Argentine counter-attack went wrong as well. The British fought off mainland fighter sorties on the Task Force, and they had good intelligence. They correctly got wind—probably from US-UK radio intercepts—of orders for a naval pincer movement. The 25 de Mayo was to close in from the north while—as Argentine naval sources now confirm—the Belgrano was to advance from the south, luring the task force into aircraft range.

Events now began to run faster than the capacity of the British communications system to detect and record them. The ability of the politicians to control, or even understand, them was thus severely limited.

Admiral Lewin was not told until Sunday morning, at Northwood naval HQ, that the '25 de Mayo' was lost and that the Argentine pincer movement had apparently begun. The only contact that remained with enemy ships was that of the submarine Conqueror with the

The war cabinet was very robust. I remember the mood was: "We've got nothing to be ashamed of"

Belgrano. She had been spotted on the Friday, and had been tailed, a sitting duck, through Saturday. The rules of engagement forbade any attack.

What Lewin did not know was that at the very time he was being informed that the pincer movement had begun, it had, in fact, already been aborted. The Argentines had called it off because the carrier's planes could not take off without a wind and the British task force's flurry of assaults had stopped.

Information was coming in too slowly for him to know, Lewin says. Overnight intercepts of Argentine fleet orders took time to collect and decipher. And Conqueror, faithfully tailing the Belgrano, had not yet managed to contact the US satellite to signal that Belgrano had reversed course.

So Lewin hurried off to Chequers. The Task Force commander, he said, feared he was about to be attacked, and wanted an Argentine warship sunk.

This was the pivotal moment. Arriving at Chequers before lunch on Sunday, 2 May, Lewin called those he could find aside and spoke of a 'direct threat' from the Belgrano. No one now will ever prove exactly what he said, because no record was ever made of it. But Thatcher and Nott seem to have lifted all remaining restrictions on the British submarines. Before settling down to lunch and a formal afternoon war cabinet, Lewin picked up the phone to Northwood. His message was: 'Sink the Belgrano.'

As Sunday afternoon wore on, Northwood tried to contact the submarine to tell her that she could attack at will. The first message was never received: it was garbled.

Then, at 3.40 p.m. London time, the Conqueror's own news came in. Her signals made it clear that Belgrano had not only reversed course, but had steered more or less steadily for six hours and 150 miles, away from the Falklands and the task force, towards the Argentine coast. This information rose no higher than Admiral Peter Herbert, Flag Officer Submarines.

Northwood repeated their 'sink' order at 5 p.m. Conqueror fired her three torpedoes at 8 p.m., when the Argentine cruiser was a full 350 miles from the Task Force. She was sunk and 368 of her sailors were killed.

Lewin is forthright: 'It was what any reasonably red-blooded Englishman would have expected' he said last week. But he is uncharacteristically vague when discussing whether he explained to the politicians in the succeeding 48 hours, exactly what had occurred. He uses words like 'probably,' 'perhaps,' 'as I remember.' He stresses that Nott only had a limited grasp of naval jargon. And he stresses, too, that the war cabinets he attended on the following Monday and Tuesday mornings were in a truculently self-righteous mood.

'The war cabinet was very robust,' Lewin says. 'They seemed stunned and hurt. I remember the mood was: "We've got absolutely nothing to be ashamed of!"'

'Yes, I realised by then that the Argentine attack plan had been aborted, and that the 25 de

Mayo had also turned round,' Lewin says. 'But it might have just been postponed, of course.'

He briefed Nott about the facts. 'I probably did . . . whether I told them the Argentine attack had been called off beforehand, or perhaps because of the sinking of the Belgrano itself, I don't know.'

Nott, who says he scribbled his Tuesday statement to Parliament in the back of a car, maintained last week that when he did so he was in ignorance of the full truth. If so, it was a politically convenient ignorance. For it not only enabled Defence Ministry men to brief the world's Press that 'this is *not* war': it also enabled both Nott and the Prime Minister herself to soothe parliament and world opinion, by speaking the UN charter language of 'self-defence.'

This worked well. The Tory MP Michael Latham rose in the House of Commons to contrast

'the difference between the military dictatorship of Argentina telling lies to 'its people' and John Nott's 'duty to respond fully and truthfully in the House, as he has been doing this afternoon in our democracy.'

What Nott and Thatcher were saying that afternoon was, it is now admitted, 'inaccurate.' Nott painted a picture of Conqueror suddenly encountering Belgrano hell-bent on direct attack, 'closing on elements of the Task Force, which was only hours away.'

Only two torpedoes were fired, he said, and the escorting destroyers should therefore have been able to help survivors. (In fact, three were fired, and one destroyer thought at first it had been hit, and withdrew. Nott had given the submarine specific licence to attack all the ships, not just the Belgrano).

Nine days later, pressed again on the subject, by a suspicious

Denis Healey, Nott subtly tried to shift ground. The Belgrano 'had been' closing on the task force, he said. But his claim about 'only hours away' had fatally boxed him in. He then made a parliamentary statement which, in view of international concern, and the fact that 11 days had passed for him to brief himself properly, can only be called reckless.

'At the time she was engaged, the General Belgrano and a group of British warships could have been within striking distance of each other in a matter of five or six hours, converging from a distance of some 200 nautical miles,' he said.

It was these untruths around which the subsequent Government cover-up was mounted. Nott's words, however, and indeed the horror of many of the British public at what had occurred was overtaken the same night by the news that Argentina, in a violent counter-attack, had sunk HMS Sheffield.

European 'sell-out' fears on Falklands

from NIGEL HAWKES at the UN in New York

SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, the Foreign Secretary, is due to arrive here today to lend his weight to some hard British lobbying within the United Nations over the Falklands issue.

It is a fight Britain cannot possibly expect to win; the Argentine-sponsored resolution, which calls in effect for the transfer of sovereignty over the islands to Argentina, will be approved by the General Assembly with a huge majority.

Britain can live with that—similar resolutions have been passed in the last two General Assemblies. But this time there is real concern that one or two of Britain's European allies might vote with Argentina instead of abstaining as they did last year. Such defections would be deeply embarrassing for Britain, and the British mission here has been going all out to prevent them.

The greatest anxiety is felt over Italy and France, the two Community countries thought most likely to defect. Greece, which abstained last year when it was in the middle of its period in the chair of the European Community, might also change sides this year.

In a confidential *aide-memoire* sent out by the British to potential waverers and obtained by *The Observer*, the defects as Britain sees them of the Argentine resolution are pointed out. The resolution is skilfully phrased: at first glance it appears to call for nothing more than a resumption of negotiations in order to find a peaceful solution to the sovereignty dispute.

The way to put an end to the

'special and particular colonial situation' over the Falklands, the resolution says, is the peaceful settlement of the sovereignty dispute. The reason the words 'special and particular' have been inserted is to get around the awkward difficulty, for the Argentines, that this is a case in which the people of the 'colony' have shown no desire to free themselves from the colonial yoke. Self-determination, the normal UN criterion in colonial situations, cannot therefore be allowed to apply.

It goes on to call for resumed negotiations, which should be 'in accordance' with a series of earlier General Assembly resolutions. The only resolutions listed are those which support the Argentine position.

The British *aide-memoire* points out that 'there is no mention in the resolution of even a *de facto* cessation of hostilities, nor indeed is there a reaffirmation of the non-use of force. The omission of these two points removes from the resolution any recognition that a war was fought over the Falklands in 1982 as a result of the unprovoked Argentine invasion.'

'From the UK point of view it is clear that this year's draft resolution is more prejudicial than last year's,' the *aide-memoire* says. 'We trust that countries which have shown so much support and understanding on our position in the past will continue to refrain from lending their support to Argentina's diplomatic campaign, in particular by supporting a resolution that represents a clearer endorsement than previous General Assembly

resolutions of Argentina's position.'

In last year's vote, Argentina gained 87 votes against nine for Britain, with 54 abstentions. Whether Britain can improve on this position or at least prevent it from worsening, hangs on whether it can convince waverers of the truth of its own version of the abortive Berne talks with Argentina.

The Argentine resolution makes only a passing reference to the talks, in the British view 'a hardly adequate recognition of the time and effort that went into those talks.' 'Moreover,' says the British *aide-memoire*, 'the draft resolution refers to the Argentine permanent representative's letter to the secretary-general of 23 July but makes no reference to the British letter sent on 2 August.'

Although the Falklands is a major issue for Britain at this year's General Assembly, it is pretty small beer for most others. The General Assembly is expected to be dominated by two issues—East-West tension, and the desperate economic plight of Africa and Latin America.

Sir Geoffrey Howe is expected to devote about half his speech to the General Assembly on Wednesday to these issues, as well as touching on areas of perennial concern to the UN—the Middle East, South Africa, Cyprus, Afghanistan. In addition he will undoubtedly have something to say about the Hong Kong agreement, which he is likely to claim as a success for British—and Chinese—diplomacy.

**MORE FOREIGN
NEWS, pages 10-14**

Ponting: Heseltine decided

by DAVID LEIGH

THE CONTENTS of a highly confidential Defence Ministry minute, of which only three copies have been made, directly contradict the Prime Minister's account last week of how the decision was made to prosecute Mr Clive Ponting on an Official Secrets charge.

Full details of the minute, whose existence was known to Opposition leader Mr Neil Kinnock when he wrote to Mrs Thatcher, have now been obtained by *The Observer*.

It reveals that Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, clashed with the most high-ranking officials in the ministry in discussing the Ponting case. They were recommending no prosecution be brought against Mr Ponting for allegedly passing the Belgrano papers to an MP — in 'in view of the limited potential damage.'

Mr Heseltine, however, said he wanted a criminal charge brought. If the Attorney-General would not agree, then Mr Ponting, he ordered, should be dismissed. According to the minute, he referred to his 'betrayal' and said he was 'disappointed' by Mr Ponting's alleged actions.

It was only after Mr Heseltine thus made his views known to his officials that a full report was drawn up inside the department. Its proposed contents were changed. This report was submitted on Thursday, 16 August, to the Law Officers, who immediately ordered Mr Ponting's arrest and charge.

Mrs Thatcher wrote to Mr Kinnock last week: 'Your letter and last Sunday's *Observer* allege that Michael Heseltine overruled advice given to him, and insisted that Mr Ponting be prosecuted. This is not so . . . Michael Heseltine noted the report, and that the decision to prosecute rested with the Law Officers.'

In a previous letter, she told SDP leader Dr David Owen: 'The results of the [Heseltine] investigation were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions on 13 August. Later that day, the Defence Secretary and I were informed of the outcome and that the matter had been referred to the DPP.'

In fact, on 13 August, inqui-

Exclusive

ries show, Sir Ewen Broadbent, permanent secretary at the MoD, who had been controlling the Heseltine 'leak inquiry,' first informally visited the office of the DPP, Sir Tony Hetherington. He did not 'refer' to any official sense the case papers to him. But Sir Patrick Mayhew, deputy Law Officer in Mrs Thatcher's Government, called for an urgent MoD report.

Later that afternoon, Sir Ewen drove to Mr Heseltine's Oxfordshire home.

Afterwards, Mr Heseltine's private secretary, Mr Gerald Brennan, wrote a minute for the departmental record, giving a careful, if muted, official record of what occurred.

His minute was stamped with an unusual classification: 'RESTRICTED — PERSONAL — STAFF IN CONFIDENCE.' This meant that police could be called in if it leaked, but the document would not be filed on general MoD registries.

There were only two addressees: '2nd PUS' (Sir Ewen himself) and 'PS/Min AF' (the private secretary to John Stanley, the Armed Forces Minister). A copy was retained in Mr Heseltine's own office.

The Observer cannot give a verbatim account of the two-page document for two reasons. First, it contains material which impinges on evidence at Mr Ponting's pending trial. Second, the DPP last week instructed MoD police to threaten journalists at the *New Statesman* with prosecution for reproducing the full text of the Belgrano documents.

Although they have taken no action against *The Observer*, which first disclosed extracts from those same papers, MoD police were last week also called in to investigate our disclosure that the existence of the Brennan minute was known to Mr Kinnock, leader of the Opposition.

On Tuesday 14 August, Whitehall sources have told *The Observer*, one senior official concerned in the case said that the situation had altered, because 'Ministers were jumping up and down.'

The Observer 23/9/84

Belgrano rights and wrongs

I must take issue with Mr Christopher Clark (Letters, last week), and particularly so as he classifies himself as a lecturer in history.

He has misunderstood the basis of Lord Lewin's remark that 'there was still a military case for sinking an Argentine capital ship, to deter attacks on the British fleet.' As a result of the sinking of the Belgrano the Argentine Navy withdrew to its bases and did not reappear, thus any surface threat to our ships was totally deterred.

The basis of a deterrent is that the potential enemy must be left in no doubt as to the retaliatory action he may expect should he proceed with his action.

From the evidence now emerging from the campaign it would appear that the Argentines calculated that we would not go to war to regain the Falkland Islands. Had we been able to leave them in no doubt as to our intention to retaliate if they attacked there might have been no conflict—it is in not

making our intention totally clear that the deterrent failed.

Peter Hill,
Lt Cdr RN Rtd,
Chesham.

★

You are to be congratulated on the tenacity with which you have struggled to resolve the Belgrano affair.

I find it astonishing that the Government has failed to learn from its mistakes. At several stages it could have used security as a reason for reticence. If it had added nothing to reliable facts there might have been resentment, but there could have been little else.

It has instead embellished its responses to criticism with details which suggest either that it was poorly informed about what was happening or that it disregarded public opinion sufficiently to be cavalier in its explanations.

Both these propositions are probably to some extent relevant; both are consistent with the character of the

present Government, which has a cherished capacity for ostentatiously grasping single nettles firmly, and with great conviction — unfortunately usually within whole fields of other nettles. The result has been catastrophic, in economic performance, the employment record, our use of our oil assets, and above all for national unity.

Government also assumes the character of its leader: this one is strident, arrogant and simplistic, which is perhaps a little ironic when we recall how its leader announced, at the outset, the virtues of humility, as expressed by Saint Francis of Assisi — although admittedly that was several years ago.

I was shocked when David Owen suggested that we might be moving toward a British Watergate; sadly, however, I fear that he may be right. Leaders who consolidate narrow tribal allegiances sacrifice objectivity; they interpret evidence in partisan ways and discount collective trust. But when that is lost, all is lost.

Dr Crawford Robb,
Alderley Edge.

The Observer 23/9/84

Islands cash 'waste'

by HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY

A LEADING Falkland Islands councillor is quitting and returning to Britain amid accusations of mismanagement and massive waste of public money by the British Government.

Mr Terry Peck, 46, a member of the Legislative Council and a former head of the Falklands police force, told *The Observer*: 'Millions of pounds of British taxpayers' money are being wasted in the Falkland Islands as a result of Government mismanagement.'

He singled out the Falkland Public Works Department and the Overseas Development Administration in London for special criticism. He claims that mismanagement has been on a similar scale to that surrounding the erection of the £133,000 'Brewster' houses, revealed in *The Observer* last January.

Mr Peck's criticisms carry considerable weight. Apart from being a leading Falklands spokesman, he was made MBE for his actions during the Argentine occupation.

He alleges that hundreds of tons of cement

were left out at the mercy of the weather and hardened, and that roads in Port Stanley were surfaced before their foundations had been finished.

He cited the case of an electrician who had been brought out from Britain to work, at an estimated cost of £160 a day, on the new power station.

Because of delays to the work, Mr Peck charged, the man had not been able to start the job.

'Several times this year I have sought details of Government expenditure in the Legislative Council, and I have never received a satisfactory answer,' he added.

Not only had money been wasted but funds earmarked for the reconstruction of the islands were also inadequate.

Mr Peck is to resign from the council in Port Stanley next month and quit the Falklands. He hopes to make a new life in Scotland.

In London, Mr John Murphy, a spokesman for the Overseas Development Administration, said: 'We reject the charges.'

The Observer
23rd September 1984

'Millions wasted in Falklands'

by HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY

A LEADING Falkland Islands councillor is quitting the islands and returning to Britain amid accusations of mismanagement and massive waste of public money by the British Government.

Mr Terry Peck, 46, a member of the Legislative Council and a former head of the Falklands police force, told *The Observer*: 'Millions of pounds of British taxpayers' money are being wasted in the Falkland Islands as a result of government mismanagement.'

He singled out the Falkland Public Works Department and the Overseas Development Administration in London for special criticism. He claims that mismanagement has been on a similar scale to that surrounding the erection of the £133,000 'Brewster' houses, revealed in *The Observer* last January.

Mr Peck's criticisms carry considerable weight. Apart from being a leading Falklands spokesman, he was made MBE for his actions during the Argentine occupation two years ago, when he helped to guide the forces to Port Stanley.

He alleges that hundreds of tons of cement was left out at the mercy of the weather and hardened, and that roads in Port Stanley were surfaced before their foundations had been finished.

He cited the case of an electrician who had been brought out from Britain to work, at an estimated cost of £160 a day, on the new power station which is being constructed.

Because of delays to the work, Mr Peck charged, the man had not been able to start the job and was unlikely to do so until next year.

He said the authorities were engaged in a cover-up of the true financial position in the islands.



TERRY PECK : Quitting

'Several times this year I have sought details of Government expenditure in the Legislative Council, and I have never received a satisfactory answer,' he added.

Not only had money been wasted but funds earmarked for the reconstruction of the islands after the war were also inadequate.

However, he said that the Army was not to blame. 'The Ministry of Defence and the forces seem to have got their act together.'

Mr Peck is to resign from the council in Port Stanley next month and quit the Falklands. He hopes to make a new life in Scotland.

He rejected suggestions that his decision was due to domestic circumstances.

He married earlier this year to Mrs Eleanor Reid, the former wife of Mr John Reid, head of the Falkland Islands Development Corporation. 'My wife is happy to stay in the Falklands,' he said.

In London, Mr John Murphy, a spokesman for the Overseas Development Administration, said: 'We reject the charges of waste and administrative incompetence.'

LOBBY AT U.N. OVER FALKLANDS

By MICHAEL KALLENBACH
at the United Nations

BBRITISH diplomats at the United Nations have circularised a three-page paper urging friendly countries "to refrain from lending their support to Argentina's campaign."

This is part of the intensive lobbying effort prior to the forthcoming Falklands debate in the General Assembly.

A copy of the British position, obtained by THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, states clearly that Britain feels the Argentine draft resolution "is more prejudicial than last year's," and that it represents a "clearer endorsement than previous General Assembly resolutions of Argentina's position."

Common abstention

Britain is annoyed that Argentina is touting a resolution which seeks to define the dispute over the Falklands exclusively in terms of sovereignty, and makes no mention of the right of self-determination of the islanders.

On these grounds alone, the resolution is unacceptable to Britain, and diplomats have urged the countries which abstained last year to do the same this time round.

BELGRANO 'MAY SINK THATCHER'

THE issue of the sinking of the General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict could mark the end of the Thatcher Government, Mr ALEX CARLISLE, MP for Montgomery, told the conference.

He was speaking during an emergency debate which resolved to call for a full and impartial inquiry into the Belgrano sinking.

A note of censure on the Government for its handling of the matter was also carried overwhelmingly.

Mr Carlisle, Liberal Parliamentary spokesman on Home Affairs, said the sinking had revealed an "immoral disregard" by the Thatcher Government for all that the British people expected of their governments.

He criticised the Government's "obsessive secrecy" over this and other matters.

Nelson image

Mrs Thatcher might think that she was Nelson and that she had sunk the Belgrano but it was the British people who had done so and who had to bear the responsibility for that act.

The sensible majority did not take any pride in the sinking, which had killed more than 360 Argentines, some of whom had had close links with Britain.

Mr Carlisle said Britain was entitled to know the truth though he did not think the present Government would provide the facts.

"Fear not, however hard we have to fight for it, the truth will out. It will be dramatic in its content and its consequences."

Earlier, moving the resolution, Mr LEIGHTON ANDREWS (Dulwich), a member of the National Executive Committee, said of the sinking: "The reality is that Mrs Thatcher has created a total exclusion zone around the truth."

2 HOME NEWS

New Whitehall explanation unlikely to satisfy critics

No records kept of war cabinet's Belgrano brief

By Richard Norton-Taylor

There is no written record of when members of the war cabinet were told about the change in the course of the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, away from the task force on the day it was sunk, Whitehall sources said yesterday.

They say that the war cabinet was never formally told and that there is thus no official minute of ministers being briefed by Northwood fleet headquarters of the signal it received from the submarine Conqueror between 2 pm and 3 pm on May 2, 1982. That was shortly after the war cabinet gave orders to sink the cruiser but about five hours before it was finally attacked.

This account — confirmed by other sources yesterday — may explain why the Prime Minister made no reference to when she knew of the Belgrano's change of course in her detailed account of events published on Wednesday. It may also explain why Sir John Nott, the then Defence Secretary, still insists that he did not know of the change in the Belgrano's direction when he addressed the Commons two days after the sinking.

The explanation is unlikely to satisfy Opposition MPs who want to know more about the degree of political control over the military during the Falklands conflict. They believe that Whitehall officials tried unsuccessfully to dissuade Sir John from making his misleading statement to the Commons.

The Labour MP for Linlithgow, Mr Tam Dalyell, has tabled a question to Mrs Thatcher asking her when the Conqueror's signal about the cruiser's change in direction was made known to ministers, and to her personally, and whether she was informed at

Chequers, at 10 Downing Street, or at Northwood.

Lord Lewin, Chief of Defence Staff during the conflict, tried yesterday to damp down the controversy over Mrs Thatcher's insistence that the Belgrano's movements were irrelevant. He told the Guardian that the Belgrano's captain could have easily and quickly changed course again, and that the Conqueror could communicate to London only every two to six hours.

Communications with submarines in the South Atlantic had to go via satellite. Britain's Polaris submarines, which operate chiefly in the North Atlantic, are known to be in continuous contact on low frequency networks.

MPs also asked yesterday why the Prime Minister made no mention of the Conqueror's movements on May 3 when the submarine — having received a new signal after it attacked the Belgrano — aimed to attack the cruiser's escorts.

Mrs Thatcher said the Conqueror was told on May 4 not to attack warships engaged in rescuing survivors from the Belgrano.

Ministry of Defence police again visited the office of the New Statesman magazine yesterday about its publication last month of ministry documents explaining how Whitehall intended to withhold information from MPs about the cruiser's movements and change in the rules of engagement.

Three journalists — Duncan Campbell, John Rentoul and the editor, Hugh Stephenson — were officially cautioned but said nothing. The police said they wanted to question the journalists in connection with Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act.

Assembly censure, page 4

Falklands airport cost hits £250m

THE COST of the new airport being built for long-haul jets on the Falkland Islands has risen from £215 million to £250 million, the Ministry of Defence said last night, writes John Ezard. A Guardian report last February forecast that it would go up to at least £240 million by the end of this year.

The MOD said part of the extra money would help to pay for concentrating the garrison of 3,000 men near the airport at Mount Pleasant, East Falkland.

Inquiry 'could sink Thatcher'

Revelations about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, could bring Mrs Thatcher's Government down, the Liberal MP Mr Alex Carlile claimed yesterday. Mr Carlile, MP for Montgomery, was speaking in support of a motion—which was overwhelmingly approved—condemning government secrecy surrounding the incident and calling for a full and impartial inquiry.

He told the delegates: "I suspect that this issue could mark the end of Mrs Thatcher's Government because it will reveal such a moral disregard for what British



Mr Carlile—'right to truth'

people really do, I hope, expect of their governments." They deserved and were entitled to know the truth "as to why we maimed, burned and then drowned over 360 men

"Mrs Thatcher may think that she is Nelson, or perhaps even Napoleon, and that she sank the Belgrano personally" said Mr Carlile. "But it was us, the people of the United Kingdom, who have to bear the responsibility for that act."

The secrecy which had informed the Government's response to demands for information about the sinking was not motivated by national security "but because the Government does not want people to find out what it has been up to.

The motion was moved by Mr Leighton Andrews, a member of the party's standing committee, who said the object of concern was not the sinking of the vessels but ministers who had misled Parliament.

Recent disclosures had revealed "as never before the excessive secrecy and authoritarian tendencies of the Government.

"Mrs Thatcher has created a total exclusion zone around the truth," said Mr Andrews. "Perhaps she is protecting the United States intelligence services, or the divine, unchallengeable right of national leaders to do as they wish. She is undermining democratic government in this country. There must be no whitewash in Whitehall."

22.8.84 Truth on Belgrano 'will finish Thatcher' Times

When the truth about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser the General Belgrano finally came out it could mark the end of Mrs Margaret Thatcher's Government, Mr Alex Carlile, MP for Montgomery, predicted during an emergency debate at the assembly yesterday condemning government secrecy.

The motion, calling for an impartial inquiry, with the Government providing all necessary information, and a vote of censure for the Government's handling of the affair, was passed overwhelmingly.

Mr Carlile said the truth would bring down the Government because it would reveal such an amoral disregard for what the people expected of their governments.

The affair was surrounded by secrecy not for reasons of national security nor in the interests of the United King-

dom, but simply so that the people should not find out what the Government had been up to.

Mr Leighton Andrews, a member of the national executive committee, who proposed the motion, said he was concerned that the revelations about the sinking of the Belgrano showed that, like President Nixon, Mrs Thatcher felt a leader had a right to do anything without challenge.

Rodgers criticized for seats speech

Mr William Rodgers, vice-president of the Social Democrats was criticized for suggesting that there should be no new sharing of seats between the Alliance partners before the next election.

Mr Paul Hannon, chairman of the assembly steering com-

mittee, said it was the worst thing Mr Rodgers could say in the circumstances. "Mr Rodgers has just galvanized hundreds of Liberals to make sure what he wants does not happen."

Addressing the assembly on Tuesday, Mr Rodgers had said that he hoped SDP and Liberal candidates in the next general election would fight the same seats as their respective parties fought last year.

His remarks led to an attempt to get an emergency motion on the agenda declaring that there should be "no presumption that the lead party in 1983 in any constituency should be the same for the next election".

On a show of hands, however, delegates rejected a move to suspend standing orders so that the motion could be discussed.

Women's debate brings confusion

Positive discrimination in favour of women was rejected by the assembly during a debate on a motion which ended in procedural confusion.

Delegates opted instead for "affirmative action to encourage women to develop their full potential".

Delegates support council spending

Mr David Williams, Richmond-upon-Thames, opening a debate on reimbursing local government, proposed a motion expressing concern at the deterioration of local services because of restrictions on public spending and calling for such spending to be increased. The motion was passed.

The Times 22/9/84

£119m Falklands contracts

Contracts worth £119m for construction work to enable the British garrison in the Falkland Islands to be concentrated at Mount Pleasant are to be placed with the Wimpey-Taylor Woodrow consortium and the Laing-Mowlem-Aimey Roadstone Construction joint venture.

The real horror

THE JUNTA ruled Argentina by terror and by torture. Even measured against the sadistic standards of other South American dictatorships, the scale of persecution perpetrated by the military regime in Buenos Aires was savage.

We can now read in grisly and well-attested detail what this regime did to its own people. It was from an army of occupation answerable to these gold-braided thugs that our troops liberated the Falkland islanders.

Many things contributed to Britain's victory in the South Atlantic — not least the sinking of the Belgrano. Many things led to Argentina's switch from murderous dictatorship to democracy — not least the Junta's defeat by Britain.

That is the true perspective.

We do not expect Belgrano-obsessives in this country to see it. For they are more concerned to smear a British Prime Minister than they are to shed light on the real horror which the ordinary people of Argentina experienced.

Belgrano 'will sink Mrs Thatcher'

THE Belgrano affair could bring down Mrs Thatcher and her Government, Liberal MP Alex Carlile said yesterday, 'because it will reveal an amoral disregard for what the British people expect from their Government.'

He said people were entitled to know the truth about what happened when a British submarine sank the Argentine cruiser during the Falkland war. 'However hard we have to fight for it, the truth will out—and the truth will be dramatic.' The Liberal conference is demanding a Commons censure motion on the Government.

Nearly 9,000 tortured and killed, says inquiry team

Horror camps of Argentina

Daily Mail Foreign Service in Buenos Aires

NEARLY nine thousand men, women and even children were tortured and murdered in Argentina in the 1970s by the military authorities, a human rights inquiry confirmed yesterday.

They disappeared into at least 340 secret concentration camps where they suffered 'hellish' treatment before their bodies were burned, buried or dumped in the sea, says the report. And it was all carefully planned, systematically carried out and then covered up.

In Buenos Aires yesterday, around 50,000 people gathered outside Government House to mark the report commissioned by their new democratically elected president — and to protest that no one has yet been punished for the atrocities.

The victims in the reign of terror ranged from Left-Wing revolutionaries to caring teenagers who helped slum-dwellers, says the report. They also included monks and priests, trade unionists pressing for wage rises, students, journalists, psychologists and sociologists.

And theft was another category — friends of any of those and even friends of friends, who were denounced for personal revenge or by abducted people crazed with pain under torture.

The account of their fate is chilling.

The kidnappings would happen after the military authorities ordered local police to stay away from particular areas.

Dragged

Victims were abducted at work, on the street in broad daylight or at night at home, with commandos surrounding a block, gagging and terrorising children and relatives and dragging their targets away hooded.

'In this way, thousands upon thousands of human beings . . . became part of a dark and ghostly category, that of the "disappeared",' says the report.

In the camps, says the report they were tortured and their bodies were burnt to ashes, buried or thrown into the sea with blocks of cement tied to their feet.

The inquiry team spent 10 months on its investigations.

It has been unable to find any case in which a member of the armed forces had been punished for the kidnappings or torture and plans to name 200 alleged to have violated human rights.

President Raul Alfonsin promised that justice would 'act as it should.'

**President promises:
Justice will be done**



ALFONSIN: NEW PRESIDENT

Daily Mail COMMENT

Belgrano — facts behind the fantasy

THE contrived hysteria over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano by the British submarine HMS Conqueror some 30 months ago has had about as much effect on the British public as the absurd pronunciamientos of the Argentine dictator Galtieri at the time of the Falklands conflict.

The Belgrano was sunk because the Argentine was involved in a war with Britain of its own making and its navy was preparing to attack the British task force on its way to liberate the Falkland Islands from Galtieri's Fascist invaders.

But, because of a pathetic, almost clinical, obsession by Mr Tam Dalyell, MP, this simple incident of military history continues to bore the country almost every day. Now the Opposition leaders, Neil Kinnock and David Owen, are inflating the fantasies of Mr Dalyell into what they hope will be a cause celebre to harm the Government.

Mrs Thatcher has now dealt with them by outlining the events which led to the sinking. They are very simple. The Belgrano and its escorting ships were engaged in a pincer action against the British task force—a fact admitted by Argentine Admiral Lombardo, the officer in charge.

The British submarine reported that the Belgrano — still outside the exclusion zone — was a serious threat to the task force.

On this information, the Cabinet authorised the British ship to attack. By the time of the attack, the Belgrano had altered course—for what reason we do not know—and was steaming in the opposite direction. The Admiralty was informed of this but the Cabinet was not.

The submarine carried out its orders to attack. The Belgrano was sunk with loss of life. The pincer attack on the task force was called off. The Argentine navy fled to the safety of its home waters and the risk of naval attack on the British ships was removed for the rest of the conflict.

To most people this calls for congratulations to all concerned. Only conspiracy freaks such as Mr Dalyell with his absurd notions of absolutely certain-to-succeed-Peruvian-peace initiatives deliberately being torpedoed could think otherwise. Now a few cynical and politically-motivated hit-men are attempting to widen the attack on the Government under the specious argument that the Commons was misled. That has now been dealt with. Sir John Nott, who as Mr Nott was the Defence Minister at the time, did tell the Commons that the Belgrano was steaming towards the task force. That was not a deliberate lie. That is what he understood. He was misinformed and he passed on his misinformation to the Commons in the hurry and excitement of the times.

The Belgrano obsession is typical of the lunatic side of British politics. One would expect a great Belgrano campaign, if there were any basis for it to begin in the Argentine. But there the matter is not a major issue.

The General Belgrano lies in a watery grave. The attempts to turn its tragic sinking into a cheap political hatchet job for the sake of domestic politics is beneath contempt and an insult to all who died in a sad and needless conflict.

Daily Mail

21st September 1984

Belgrano:

I didn't tell lies says Nott

By GORDON GREIG
Political Editor

THE BELGRANO row raged on yesterday as former Defence Secretary Sir John Nott denied he had lied to the Commons about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser—and Labour MPs called for a judicial inquiry into the evidence.

Sir John confirmed he had not been told by the Defence Chiefs that the cruiser had reversed course on May 2, 1982 — the day of the sinking — but he repeated Mrs Thatcher's claim that the Belgrano's bearing was irrelevant. Its missiles posed a threat to the 10,000 men on Britain's Task Force.

Pounced

During a radio interview Sir John said: 'What would have happened if the Belgrano had turned back again and had sunk with its Exocets one of our ships and we had lost a thousand or five hundred men and then it became clear we had prevented the submarine from attacking her? Remember, there had been air attacks on the fleet.'

But Labour critics pounced on the Premier's disclosure of communication difficulties with the submarine Conqueror.

Opposition defence spokesman Denzil Davies said: 'A garbled or delayed or misunderstood message to a Trident submarine could plunge the whole world into a nuclear war.'

Labour MP George Foulkes, who started the latest flurry of controversy about the sinking, demanded an independent inquiry into the affair.

Rights report nails Argentine military

Buenos Aires: The presentation yesterday of a report on human rights violation in Argentina is aimed at paving the way for trials against hundreds of officers, official sources said.

Mr Ernesto Sabato, president of the state commission on missing persons, will hand the report to President Alfonsín, ending the commission's 10-month investigation.

An extract of the report will be made public, naming about 200 of 1,300 officers who are accused of violating human rights in a bloody campaign against political opponents and leftist guerrillas while the military ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983, sources said.

They said that the 50,000-page report proves the existence of at least 280 clandestine detention centres, the systematic use of torture, and military responsibility for the fate of almost 9,000 missing people.

The 12-man commission appointed by Mr Alfonsín last December carried out its investigation despite death threats and the refusal of military authorities to release documents or testify on their involvement in human rights violations.

Mr Alfonsín's Radical Party has expressed its support for the commission's findings, as have most other political parties and most human rights groups. But sectors of the opposition Peronists, and other groups, will protest at the Government's alleged reluctance to try officers for human rights violations and call for a parliamentary investigation. —
Reuter.

The Guardian 21/9/84

Thatcher's claims over Belgrano sinking provoke theory of military conspiracy

By Ian Aitken,
Political Editor

The Prime Minister and her colleagues in the war cabinet during the Falklands crisis were last night faced with a new accusation: that they were victims of a military conspiracy to conceal the facts from them before they ordered the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano on May 2, 1982.

Having shrugged off an earlier accusation that they ordered the sinking in order to scupper the Peruvian peace initiative, Mrs Thatcher acknowledged that ministers had not been informed by naval commanders that the Belgrano had altered course towards her home port some hours before she was sunk, stimulating the new charge that the order was made in ignorance of the facts.

Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP who has hounded the Government over the Belgrano affair for more than two years, yesterday reiterated his demand for a public inquiry. His call was echoed by his Labour colleague Mr George Foulkes, who has consistently opposed the Government over the Falklands war.

Both of them latched on to Mrs Thatcher's admission that the war cabinet had not been informed of the Belgrano's changes of course immediately before her sinking by the British hunter-killer submarine,

HMS Conqueror. They and other Labour MPs rejected her claim on Wednesday that such matters were irrelevant to the grounds on which the war cabinet ordered the attack on the cruiser.

But even more extravagant claims were being made against Mrs Thatcher by senior shadow ministers. Mr Gerald Kaufman, the Shadow Home Secretary, told trade unionists in Manchester yesterday that democracy was in danger when the word of a prime minister could not be trusted.

Mr Kaufman said that this was the disturbing predicament which the nation faced in re-

Leader comment, page 14.

action to Mrs Thatcher. Her new admissions on the Belgrano sinking were confusing, and almost certainly deliberately confusing.

Mr Kaufman claimed that it was now clear that Sir John Nott, the Defence Secretary at the time of the war, had misled Parliament two years ago and that Mrs Thatcher had made misleading statements on this subject only a year ago.

Mr Kaufman's remarks came after Sir John Nott had appeared on BBC radio claiming that the Government had maintained total political control over every single action of the task force.

Sir John said: "The rules of engagement were always agreed by the war cabinet and the parameters in which the task force was allowed to act were always under political control."

But Sir John conceded that his original statement about the sinking of the Belgrano had been drafted in ignorance of the fact that the ship had changed course towards Argentina before she was sunk. On the other hand, he insisted that the war cabinet had been in no doubt that the Argentine navy was seeking to impose a pincer movement on the British task force, with the carrier 25th of May on the northern arm and the Belgrano to the south.

He echoed the Prime Minister's declaration that the precise course being pursued by the Belgrano was irrelevant to the ultimate decision to sink her. He said: "When we were engaged in this affair we had 10,000 servicemen and civilians strung out in the South Atlantic, and largely undefended. We did not know what information was being passed by the Russians to the Argentines, and we did not know where the Argentine submarines were. The fleet was in a very perilous situation, and our overriding duty was to defend our ships and our men."

But Mr Dalyell, MP for Linlithgow, said: "If they did not

know for 11 hours what the course of that ship was, what for heaven's sake happens to all of us when it comes not to Argentina 11,000 miles away, but to the Russians 2,000 miles away, and we are dealing with Polaris and Trident missiles?"

Mr Dalyell went on: "The consequences of that kind of cock-up are spine-chilling and terrifying." What happened to claims about strict military control if the Cabinet had not been informed?

Mr Foulkes, the MP who received Wednesday's letter from the Prime Minister said the contents confirmed his belief in the need for an independent judicial inquiry.

Mrs Thatcher's letter, he added, reinforced his view that the Government was guilty either of incompetence or gross deception and disregard for human life.

Richard Norton-Taylor adds: Additional points were made yesterday by other critics of Mrs Thatcher's account of events. Her detailed account, they said, avoided any mention of the delay in warning Argentina about changes in the rules of engagement.

According to leaked Ministry of Defence documents, the "appropriate warning" for the change which preceded the order to sink the cruiser and other Argentine warships on May 2 was not issued until five days later.

The Ponting dimension

Watergate was different. Behind the years of lies, there was a discreditable truth: the President of the United States was playing dirty tricks on political adversaries. The Belgrano affair is not Watergate. The more the facts have seeped out over two years, the more the theories of Machiavellian motivation have dwindled. One interpretation of Mrs Margaret Thatcher's latest commentaries on the business seems benignly commonsensical. We were at war. We knew the Argentine Navy — under the fulminating Admiral Anaya — was out to do us damage, exclusion zone or no exclusion zone. And we knew that not just because HMS Conqueror kept peeping through its periscope but because of other intelligence gathering by a rather large and friendly superpower which needs to keep cosy with Buenos Aires and would turn its stars into stripes if we formally blew the gaffe. Our tangled tales since 1982 have been an effort not to blow that gaffe. Please believe that the Argentine Navy was a threat, and rejoice that Northwood's prompt action saved many hundreds of lives in the days that followed.

All of which may well be true. But we can still only guess as, piece by piece, the blocks of truth in the facade are adjusted. Sir John Nott is now said to have been confused on May 4, 1982; as presumably, at much later dates, were Mrs Thatcher and Mr Peter Blaker. Time after time, public and Parliament were directly misled: and that (as David Owen remarks) is the remaining, nagging issue. More, the extent of the synchronised evasion would not have emerged without the leaks which have brought Mr Clive Ponting to criminal trial. The Belgrano, on current examination, may be a mountain of contortions piled on a molehill of calculations. But, as in the departed dog days of Richard Nixon, the issue seamlessly becomes not what was done in the beginning, but what was done in the end. Mrs Thatcher may now find the Belgrano's course "irrelevant;" but the fate of Mr Ponting is very relevant indeed.

Belgrano's course change irrelevant, says Nott

Daily Telegraph 21/9/84

By *NICHOLAS COMFORT Political Staff*

SIR JOHN NOTT, Defence Secretary when the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was sunk, joined the Prime Minister yesterday in insisting that it was "irrelevant" that the ship had changed course to sail away from the Falklands Task Force.

Mrs Thatcher had confirmed in a lengthy statement on Wednesday that Defence chiefs were aware of the change of course but had not reported it to Ministers.

The result was that Sir John told the Commons the Belgrano was "closing" on the British Fleet.

In a BBC radio interview yesterday Sir John said that his best information had been that the Belgrano was involved with Argentina's aircraft carrier in a pincer movement on the Task Force.

"If I had known at the point of time when she was sunk that she was steaming in another direction I would not have used the word 'closing'," he said.

But he added that he did not think the position or course of the Belgrano was relevant or that the Ministry of Defence should have informed the "War Cabinet" of the change.

"The Fleet was in a very perilous situation and our overriding duty was to defend our ships and men," said Sir John.

Labour irritation

He added that the statements he made to the Commons during the conflict had often been drafted in his car on the way from the Ministry because of the pressure of events. He had had no intention of misleading MPs.

Meanwhile Labour critics of the sinking and of subsequent discrepancies in ministerial accounts of it reacted with irritation and scepticism to Mrs Thatcher's attempt to clarify the position.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow and most outspoken of the Prime Minister's critics, claimed that the "War Cabinet" had known of the Belgrano's change of course, despite the official explanation.

If Ministers were not informed, he said, it called in question not only government insistence that the military was under full political control but whether they would be told any more about Russian deployment in time of war.

"The consequences of that kind of cockup are spine-chilling and terrifying," he said.

Belgrano replies fail to stop new questions

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

The Times 21/9/84

The Government's attempts to defuse the long-running controversy over the Argentine cruiser the General Belgrano by publishing a more detailed account than ever before of the circumstances of its sinking were judged by MPs of all parties to have failed yesterday.

Mrs Margaret Thatcher's disclosure that ministers were not informed of the change of course by the Belgrano away from the task force on the day she was sunk, May 2; and the confirmation yesterday by Sir John Nott, then Secretary of State for Defence, that he still did not know of the change two days later when he made a statement to the House of Commons, were already being used by the Opposition to raise new questions about the political control of the task force.

Those are to be pressed with renewed vigour when the Commons return after the summer recess. Labour's shadow Cabinet will discuss the issue next Tuesday and it seems likely that Mrs Thatcher will be urged to make a statement to the House, a demand which even Conservative MPs believe she will find hard to resist.

There was some exasperation in government quarters yesterday at the failure of the issue to die, and that the provision of fresh information had led to new lines of questioning.

Sir John Nott, in an interview on BBC radio, remarked: "The more you say, the more frenetic the questioning becomes."

Sir John, who left the Government early in 1983 and did not stand for Parliament at the last election endorsed the view put by Mrs Thatcher on Wednesday that the position and course of the Belgrano were irrelevant when she was sunk.

He agreed that when he made his statement in the Commons on May 4 he did not know she had changed course.

On that occasion he told the Commons that the Belgrano had been "closing on elements of our task force."

He said yesterday that the latest information he was given was that there was a clear and definite attempt to make a pincer movement on the fleet involving the Veinticinco de Mayo and the Belgrano and her escorts.

"That is why I used the word

"closing" he said. "If I had known at the point of time when she was sunk that she was steaming in another direction I would not have used the word 'closing'."

Sir John said that he did not think the position or course of the Belgrano was relevant at the time, nor that the Ministry of Defence, which was aware of the change of course, should have told ministers. The way the Belgrano was facing was not relevant to the decision.

In her account of the sinking, given in an annexe to a letter to the Labour MP, Mr George Foulkes, on Wednesday, Mrs Thatcher did not say when ministers did learn that the Belgrano had changed course before it was sunk.

Pressed on that point yesterday by *The Times*, Downing Street declined to give any further information than had been published on Wednesday.

Mr Foulkes said yesterday that given Sir John's statement that the Government did not know of the change of course on May 4, its claims of political control throughout the conflict were pure fiction. If, as the Prime Minister has said, "fast moving and sometimes confused circumstances" were responsible for inaccuracies in Sir John's statement, why did he not later go to the House with an explanation, Mr Foulkes said.

Mr Denzil Davies, Labour's defence spokesman, said the Prime Minister had asserted that she did not know the Belgrano had changed course because the military did not tell her.

"If the military only tell politicians what the military, in their own judgment, want politicians to know then the consequences especially in a war where there are nuclear weapons could be horrendous".

Mr Gerald Kaufman, opposition spokesman on home affairs, said yesterday that democracy was in danger when the word of a prime minister could not be trusted, yet that was the disturbing predicament the nation faced with regard to Mrs Thatcher.

Sir John Nott said in his interview: "The rules of engagement were always agreed by the war Cabinet and parameters in which the task force was allowed to act were always under political control."

Leading article, page 11

FINAL SALVO?

At cruising speed it would take only a few minutes to turn round a warship the size of the Belgrano. Because of that the direction in which the ship was pointing at the time it was sunk should never have been endowed with such significance by the Government's critics. Its course was, as the Prime Minister has averred, irrelevant. Moreover in addition to our own intelligence about Belgrano's purpose we have the words of the Argentine admirals in command, that Belgrano's task at that time was to take part in a pincer movement against the British fleet, with a northern group led by the aircraft carrier 25 de Mayo.

The charges against the Government are basically two. The first, though now receding, is that Belgrano should not have been sunk because it was about to return home, and that sinking it in such circumstances was a deliberate attempt to sabotage the Peruvian peace plan which was then about to germinate. The second is that over the past two years ministers have responded to the various allegations of warmongering with contradictory answers which constitute a deception of parliament.

This week's detailed disclosures certainly torpedo Mr Tam Dalyell's main charge that Belgrano was sunk to scupper peace moves. So he has now changed his ground. He suggests that because the Royal Navy,

having received orders to sink Belgrano, did not subsequently inform ministers that the cruiser had changed course, it shows that ministers had lost control of the war.

Ministers are not supposed to stand behind their commanders telling them when to shoot. They lay down general objectives and devise a set of rules of engagement which govern operations. In the case of the Falklands it was clear that a general threat to the fleet existed from Ascension Island southwards for several thousand miles. An Argentine attack could have come anywhere along that line and not just in the exclusion zone round the Falklands. If a troopship had gone down, or one of the British carriers, there would have been colossal loss of life which could hardly have been explained away by ministers confessing that they had let Belgrano off because her bows were pointing to the home shore.

Mr Dalyell's point is doubly invalidated since there is evidence that ministers had indeed refused a previous request to sink the Argentine aircraft carrier, lodged before the change in the rules of engagement. Those rules were changed originally only to apply to the aircraft carrier but then broadened to include the cruiser when that appeared in the sights of HMS Conqueror.

So Mr Dalyell is left high and dry with his fantasies. Dr Owen,

followed by Mr Kinnock, is now trying to concentrate his fire on the alleged deception of Parliament. Here ministers are at some disadvantage because the Government has trickled out information little by little on a subject about which the less that is said on the operations of nuclear submarines and their highly sensitive methods of communications and intelligence, the better. Ministers should have held to that rule firmly at the start and not published details about HMS Conqueror for the perfectly respectable reason that they would be revealing matters which could only prejudice future operations, perhaps today or the next day. As it is, ministers have always disclosed too little too late, giving the impression of being on the defensive and having something incriminating to hide.

It is understandable that the Government might have been reluctant to respond expansively to Mr Dalyell's allegations because to have done so might have been thought to have taken them seriously. With hindsight it must be obvious to ministers that it would have been better to have responded immediately and fully with the details given this week. It is a lesson for ministers to think through to the end of a line of inquiry so as to avoid looking as though every scrap of information is being forced out of them.

Questions about the Belgrano Mrs Thatcher is dodging

Sir.—The statements by the Prime Minister, Sir John Lord Lewin (Guardian, September 20) raise a plethora of questions that should and could be answered.

For the two weeks up to May 1, we were repeatedly advised by the Government that Britain would use minimum force and pursue diplomacy to the ultimate. Exactly what did Lord Lewin tell the war Cabinet to convince it within about 20 minutes—according to Cecil Parkinson—to abandon that policy and order the sinking, as opposed to the disabling, of a 46-year-old, poorly armed, comparatively slow cruiser, 400 miles from the task force—as well as the no doubt “irrelevant” potential deaths of more than 1,100 human beings.

The Argentinians ordered their navy to withdraw at 0007 BST) and again at 0519 (BST) on May 2. It is inconceivable that neither the Americans nor British intercepted these orders. The Prime Minister issued her orders many hours later at 1300 (BST). Did that vital intelligence reach Lord Lewin, and if not why not? On the previous day, Mr Pym had written a memorandum expressing doubt about the legality of an attack on the *Venturino de Mayo*. He

then flew to Washington and announced that that day's bombardment of Port Stanley was intended to “concentrate Argentine minds,” and: “No further military action is envisaged for the moment other than making the Total Exclusion Zone secure.”

And yet, involved as he was in diplomacy to the ultimate, neither he nor our US ambassador were ever forewarned of the war Cabinet's decision. Why not?

Mrs Thatcher's statements seem carefully to avoid all mention of the activities of Northwood and HMS Conqueror on May 3. Why? (Mr) Lee Chadwick, The Old Rectory Hotel, Denton, Manchester.

Sir.—Peter Jenkins writes (September 19) that “the Belgrano was sunk because there was a war on.” But in fact at that point, there wasn't; without the Belgrano/Sheffield exchange it is conceivable that the Argentine Air Force might not have been committed in strength to oppose the San Carlos landings, and the whole affair might have fizzled out with as few casualties as in the original April invasion. Not likely perhaps, but possible; we shall never know. But the really alarming aspect is the assumption,

which Mr Jenkins evidently shares with Lord Lewin, that escalation is purely a matter for “technical” military logic. God help us all if a “small” war should ever break out in Europe.—Yours sincerely, C. M. Milford, 11 Church Meadow, Long Ditton, Surrey.

Sir.—Your Leader, “What price the crown jewels?” (September 15) concludes that the Belgrano affair reveals a picture “of Northwood and the admirals running the show, and the politicians—if at all informed—damply letting them get on with it and twisting away about their own non-control of events.”

In the past four weeks, commentaries on the Belgrano affair have tended to look to either cock-up or conspiracy theory explanations, with the former receiving more credence. While your Leader takes a position somewhere in between, may I suggest that it is far too early to dismiss the idea that military action was directly the Belgrano was directly concerned with discouraging a negotiated settlement. It has been argued, especially by Tam Dalyell, that the attack on the Belgrano was authorised after the War

Cabinet learned of the Peruvian peace initiative, and after it was made aware of the recall of the Belgrano. Not one of the revelations of the past four weeks counters this claim. Indeed the most recent evidence supplies quite remarkable support.

The Government, on its own admission, learned of the Peruvian proposal at 11.15 pm London time on May 2. This was three hours after the attack on the Belgrano. It may have known of the plan much earlier but let us, for the moment, accept its version.

The first point to make is that the Government has stated that this was not just a Peruvian initiative but also an outline of the “American-Peruvian framework proposals” (Hansard, May 12, 1983) thus carrying the full weight of the American involvement in the whole mediation process.

Yet we now know that the Conqueror, having received new orders from London, was back on anti-shiping patrol at 1 am London time on May 3, with orders to sink any Argentinian warship, whether inside or outside the Total Exclusion Zone, and whenever it might be heading. That order was not re-

scinded, even many hours after the Government had learned of the American-Peruvian proposals. Indeed it was an order not just to the Conqueror but to the other submarines as well.

We now know, from the diary of an officer on the Conqueror, that London was under the impression that the Belgrano was crippled but not sunk in the first attack, and was probably being protected by the two destroyers which had originally accompanied it.

Therefore, the Conqueror returned to the position of the original attack, 25 hours later and nearly 28 hours after the Government had learned, on its own admission, of the American-Peruvian proposals. The Conqueror intended to have a go at the destroyers, presumably laden with survivors from the first attack.

In fact, we now know that the Government's information was wrong; that the Belgrano had sunk the previous evening; and the Conqueror could not find the destroyers.

The implications of this new information are profound, for they indicate that the Government did indeed want war—and victory—rather than a peace settle-

ment, whatever the cost in Argentinian, and ultimately British lives.

What concerns me is that people now seem so concerned with the cover-up, and less concerned with the circumstances surrounding the original events. Watergate was initially about a burglary. This is about something altogether different.—Yours faithfully, Paul Rogers, 2a Hallas Road, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.

Sir.—Peter Jenkins attempts to exonerate Mrs Thatcher's Cabinet from the accusation of deception in the Belgrano affair; he wouldn't have expected anything else in the circumstances because of the “overriding purpose of winning the war.” What concerns me, and I guess a few million other non-Gotcha-yobos, is not so much the deceit and lies and double-dealing in this country but the fact that the Belgrano was 250 miles outside the Exclusion Zone when it was hit. Mrs Thatcher's Cabinet drew this line; how can one expect people who don't honour such things as Exclusion Zones not to lie and deceive?—Yours faithfully, Graham Jones, 10 South View Drive, Rumney, Cardiff.

Colony's financial houses boosted by optimism

Cabinet gives its approval for draft Hong Kong pact

By Patrick Keatley,
Diplomatic Correspondent

The draft agreement on Hong Kong was approved by the Cabinet in London yesterday. A message was sent to the Chinese leader, Mr Deng, in Peking, telling him of the approval, together with British assent to the plan for the formal initialling ceremony in Peking next Tuesday.

In the colony, the report of pending cabinet approval boosted the already buoyant stock market, and sent the Hang Seng index over the 1,000 mark for the first time in four months. It closed at 1002.13, a rise of 18 points on the day.

From New York came word from the Chinese mission at the UN, where the Foreign Minister, Mr Wu, has arrived for the opening of the autumn session. A spokesman, expressing China's satisfaction at the successful conclusion of negotiations, indicated that Mr Wu and Sir Geoffrey Howe would be having a cordial meeting. The Foreign Secretary arrives there at the weekend, for a week of discussions with other ministers.

In Whitehall, orders went

out for the printing of the draft agreement as speedily as possible. The text is said to run to more than 200 numbered paragraphs, and the print order is for a million copies in Chinese and a quarter million in English, for distribution in Hong Kong.

Technical factors will determine the date of publication, but the target is said to be

John Gittings, page 15

Friday of next week. The following Monday, October 1, is China's national day and will be marked by celebrations in Peking.

Robert Whyment adds from Hong Kong: The mood in the colony could be summed up as one of hope mingled with resignation.

"Most people here are not too worried about what's in the agreement, because it's been so extensively leaked, despite the farce of secrecy," said a middle class housewife. "Anyway it's all been decided for us and we can't do anything to change it."

There was more encouraging

news from New York, with the broadcast in which Mr Wu assured Hong Kong that any points in the agreement not acceptable to the people of the territory would be ironed out by the joint liaison group which Britain and China are to set up to monitor the transition.

Mr Wu said on television that the four special economic zones and 40 open cities in China were not meant to serve as a model for Hong Kong under Chinese sovereignty. They were merely a way for China to develop through the introduction of advanced technology from the West. The "one country, two systems" policy would allow a capitalist system (in Hong Kong) in a Communist country.

Mr Wu said he believed both systems would benefit China. Asked if the "one country, two systems" formula would be also suitable for Taiwan, he said that Taiwan would also be allowed to retain its present social system and political system. However, this idea was not being discussed because Taiwan is not willing to consider reunification with China.

The Thatcher letters

The sinking of the General Belgrano

The following extracts are from the annex to Mrs Thatcher's letter replying to Mr Foulkes's questions on the sinking of the General Belgrano:

In late April 1982 the task force was strung out between Ascension Island and the Falklands and vulnerable to attack. On April 23 1982, the Government accordingly sent the following message to the Argentine Government, making it clear that the terms of the communication came into effect immediately:

"In announcing the establishment of a maritime exclusion zone around the Falkland Islands, Her Majesty's Government made it clear that this measure was without prejudice to the right of the UK to take whatever additional measures may be needed in the exercise of its right of self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. In this connexion, HMG now wishes to make clear that any approach on the part of Argentine warships, including submarines, naval auxiliaries, or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of British Forces in

the South Atlantic will encounter the appropriate response.

All Argentine aircraft including civil aircraft engaged in surveillance of these British Forces will be regarded as hostile and are liable to be dealt with accordingly."

It is clear from the above text that the warning applied outside the Exclusion Zone as well as within it. On April 28th, 1982, the Government announced the establishment of a 200 nautical mile total exclusion zone round the Falkland Islands, effective as from April 30, which would apply to all

Argentine ships and aircraft. The announcement again stressed that "these measures are without prejudice to the right of the United Kingdom to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its right of self-defence, under Article 51 of the UN Charter."

HMS Conqueror had sighted the Belgrano for the first time on May 1. On May 2, in response to the threat to the Task Force, Admiral Woodward sought a change to the Rules of Engagement to enable Conqueror to attack the Belgrano outside the exclusion zone. On the basis of the clear and unequivocal indications available to the Government that the Argentine Navy posed a real and direct threat to the Task Force and those sailing with it and on the advice of their most senior military advisers, Ministers decided at 1 pm that the Rules of Engagement should be changed to permit attacks on all Argentine naval vessels on the high seas.

The necessary order conveying this change was sent by Naval Headquarters at Northwood to HMS Conqueror at 1.30 pm (all timings in this and the following paragraphs are given in London time). Shortly after 3 pm, HMS Conqueror reported the position of the Belgrano at 9 am and 3 pm that day. HMS Conqueror had not then received the order changing the Rules of Engagement. The limi-

tations in communications with our submarines operating in the far South Atlantic meant that submarine operations there could not be monitored and controlled hour by hour. It was not until after 5 pm that HMS Conqueror reported that she had received and understood the new order and intended to attack. The Belgrano was attacked just before 8 pm.

Conqueror's report on the Belgrano's position was received by Northwood at 3.40pm and made known to senior naval officers there and at the Ministry of Defence later that afternoon. The report showed that the Belgrano had reversed course. But she could have altered course again and closed on elements of the Task Force, acting in concert with the carrier to the north. In the light of the continued threat posed by Argentine naval forces against the Task Force, the precise position and course of the Belgrano at that time were irrelevant. For this reason, the report was not made known to Ministers at the time.

Attention has been focused on inaccuracies in the statement made by the then Defence Secretary, Mr Nott, in the House of Commons on May 4. It should be borne in mind that this statement had to be prepared in fast-moving and sometimes confused circumstances while Ministers were preoccupied with continuing threats to the Task Force.

The Ponting prosecution

The following is the partial text of Mrs Thatcher's letter to Mr Kinnock concerning the prosecution of Mr Clive Ponting:

I have given an account of the decisions relating to the charging of Mr Ponting in my reply to Dr David Owen (*The Times*, September 17). There are only two points which I would add. The first is that there is no long-established convention of the sort described in your letter: the Law Officers consider each case on its merits in deciding whether proceedings should be brought. The second point is to stress again that decisions on these matters are taken

by the Law Officers, not by Ministers. Your letter and last Sunday's *Observer* allege that Michael Heseltine overruled advice given to him and insisted that Mr Ponting be prosecuted. This is not so. The Director of Public Prosecutions had been advised of the case on the morning of August 13, and after consultation with the Solicitor General had already asked for a very early police report. When the senior Ministry of Defence official, Sir Ewen Broadbent, who had earlier briefed the Director of Public Prosecutions, reported to Michael Heseltine later that afternoon, he informed him of the stage reached.

Michael Heseltine noted the report and that the decision whether or not to prosecute rested with the Law Officers. Neither I nor any other Ministers in the Ministry of Defence or elsewhere intervened in the succeeding days. The Director of Public Prosecutions received the detailed police report on August 16 and consulted the Law Officers who decided on August 17 to proceed with the prosecution. The Law Officers did not seek the view of, or consult with, any other Minister, nor was the view of any other Minister conveyed to them before they took their decision to prosecute Mr Ponting.

Argentina pushes for IMF loan

BY JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES AND PETER MONTAGNON IN LONDON

ARGENTINA was due yesterday to begin a series of top-level meetings in the U.S. to press for approval of its application for a \$1.6bn (£1.3bn) loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Sr Bernardo Grinspun, the Argentine Economy Minister, met M Jacques de Larosiere, the IMF managing director, in Washington last night to seek his endorsement of a memorandum of understanding on the loan proposal which the Argentine government had agreed with IMF negotiators in Buenos Aires.

The minister is to meet Mr Donald Regan, the U.S. Treasury Secretary tomorrow. Mr Regan confirmed in Washington yesterday that President Ronald Reagan will meet President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina at the UN in New York over the weekend.

But, despite optimism in

Buenos Aires that an agreement can be wrapped up fairly quickly, bankers remain deeply cautious about M de Larosiere's response to the memorandum of understanding which should provide the basis for a formal letter of intent.

Argentina remains under pressure to finalise its agreement with the fund before its \$44bn foreign debt can be rescheduled by commercial bank creditors. "We do think an IMF programme is a necessity for them," Mr Regan said.

Commercial bankers, remembering many false starts, say they will wait "until the ink is dry on the IMF paper" before considering Argentina's request to reschedule. They add, however, that Argentina does seem now to be inching towards an agreement.

The memorandum of understanding sets out technical aspects of Argentina's programme, but some basic policy

issues would need to be agreed with M de Larosiere before the proposal could go to the IMF board. Argentina is seeking a \$1.4bn, 15-month stand-by credit, plus a \$200m loan from the IMF's compensatory financing facility.

Stuart Fleming writes: The meeting between President Reagan and President Alfonsin was being seen in Washington as another potentially important step in the steady improvement in relations between the two governments, since the Democratic Argentine government took office last December.

According to diplomats, it will be the first meeting between the Heads of State of the two countries, in a generation. Some Latin American experts suggested that the planned meeting with Mr Reagan could be an important boost for Mr Alfonsin politically in Argentina.

Fund for Africa, Page 4

Alfonsin faces major test on human rights

BY JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES

PRESIDENT RAUL ALFONSIN will today face what could prove a major political test when he is asked to endorse the publication of the most detailed report ever made on human rights violations in Argentina.

The report has been prepared during the nine months of democratic rule by the Government-appointed commission on disappeared persons. It will be officially handed in to the president this evening by prize-winning writer Ernesto Sabato, who together with a group of lawyers, bishops, and journalists has conducted thousands of interviews with the victims of the former military regime.

The ruling Radical party has called a massive demonstration in support of the commission to coincide with the publication of the report, and similar rallies will be held throughout the country.

But some Government officials are understood to be worried by reports of unrest in sectors of the armed forces and threats of destabilising action by isolated groups linked to the former hit squads.

Military officers of all ranks have done little to hide their displeasure with the prospect that a public airing of their past activities may further undermine the prestige of the armed forces. In spite of a concerted campaign in the local media aimed at alerting public opinion to the crimes of the previous military regime, there is little sign that this has worked its

way through the armed forces.

On the contrary, most of the military remains reluctant to accept any guilt for what it still regards as a necessary strategy to wipe out left-wing terrorism. This attitude has been epitomised by the refusal of military courts to issue judgments on any of those responsible for the past repression.

In recent weeks, the highest military court, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, has bended to pressure from the Government and arrested the three former members of the military junta that led the 1976 coup, including former President Gen Jorge Videla. In addition, former Buenos Aires police chief General Ramon Camps, the former head of the notorious torture centre, the naval mechanical school Admiral Ruben Chamorro, and the former head of the third army corps General Luciano Menendez have also been detained.

But with the time limit placed on the military court cases expiring before the end of the month, the council has shown little inclination to reach a verdict or to institute proceedings against hundreds of other officers who were involved in human rights violations.

This has provoked a tug of war between military and civilian judges with a growing number of civil courts instituting proceedings, on the basis of evidence submitted by former victims and human rights pressure groups.

The Financial Times 20/9/84

Thatcher tries to end Belgrano controversy

By John Hunt

THE Prime Minister yesterday made a comprehensive attempt to end controversy over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano, during the Falklands conflict.

"Our job as a government and people is to protect our boys," Mrs Margaret Thatcher said in an interview on BBC radio. "I would—and every one of my ministers would—do exactly the same thing again."

Later, Mrs Thatcher sent three letters on the subject to Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour leader, Dr David Owen, SDP leader, and Mr George Foulkes, a Labour backbencher who has taken a close interest in the affair.

"There has been no desire or intention on the part of the Government to mislead or misinform parliament on this matter," she told Mr Kinnock.

"I entirely refute your suggestion that there was either operational confusion or error in communications with the Task Force.

"Nothing that has been put forward since we took our decision about the Belgrano has led me, or any of my colleagues, to doubt that the decision was right and necessary in the interest of safeguarding British lives."

She made it clear, however, that she was not in a position to disclose all the relevant information. She told Mr Foulkes it would be wrong to disclose all the material available to ministers at the time, as this would risk irreparable damage to national security and could put lives at risk.

She said there was no truth in the allegation that the decision to sink the vessel was taken contrary to advice from senior Foreign Office officials.

Nor was there any truth in the suggestion that Mr Francis Pym, then Foreign Secretary, and Sir Michael Havers, Attorney General, had opposed or dissented from the decision on April 30 to attack the vessel.

She also denied that Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, overruled his civil servants' advice in the decision to prosecute Mr Clive Ponting, an official in his department, for allegedly divulging information to Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP, about the Belgrano.

Dr Owen's demand for a White Paper on the Belgrano was rejected.

WORLD NEWS

PM not told of Belgrano movements

The Prime Minister yesterday admitted that Ministers were not told that the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano had altered course after they ordered it to be attacked during the Falklands war.

Mrs Thatcher said the sinking was necessary to protect "our boys" and the ship's position was irrelevant.

Labour leader Neil Kinnock called her admission "extraordinary" and said she had failed to refute allegations against the Government. Earlier story, Page 6

The Financial Times 20/9/84

Premier: We weren't told — but no regrets

Thatcher says Belgrano was heading home

By Ian Aitken and Richard Norton-Taylor

The Prime Minister yesterday launched an aggressive counter-attack against the mounting chorus of criticism of her Government's handling of the Belgrano affair.

Given the chance, she insisted, he would still order the sinking of the Argentine cruiser in exactly the same way. And she flatly denied ministerial interference in the prosecution of Mr Clive Ponting for allegedly leaking state documents on the matter to a Labour MP.

But Mrs Thatcher also confirmed the fact — reported exclusively in yesterday's Guardian — that operational headquarters at Northwood did not tell the war cabinet that the Belgrano had changed course after the war cabinet in London had authorised an attack but before the ship was torpedoed.

"The precise position and course of the Belgrano at that time were irrelevant," she said. For this reason the news that the cruiser was steaming homewards "was not made known to ministers at that time."

Mr Neil Kinnock the Labour leader immediately seized on this admission. Her ignorance of the Belgrano's course, he said, was extraordinary. "It was either gonging towards the exclusion zone or going away. The evidence is that it was going away for hours."

Dr David Owen the SDP leader, condemned her "deliberate exercise in public relations" and "the untruths" that had been told in the House of Commons.

He said: "On the fundamental and substantive point of why the Government misled Parliament, she is incredibly silent."

Mrs Thatcher's vigorous response came in a BBC radio interview and in two detailed letters addressed to the Labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, and his Scottish backbench colleague, Mr George Foulkes.

In her radio talk with Jimmy Young, she put the matter in the starkest and most personal terms: the Task Force had not gone to the south Atlantic for a cruise and

her duty throughout had been to protect the lives of "our boys."

Mrs Thatcher offered no excuses and made no pleas for special understanding. Britain had been engaged in an operation to take back the Falkland Islands from a military junta which had seized them by force and was seeking to deprive their inhabitants of their traditional British liberties.

In those circumstances the sinking of the General Belgrano on May 2 had been fully justified.

The British fleet, she said, would have been seriously threatened if any of its key ships had been sunk by the Argentine navy.

By far the longest of Mrs Thatcher's two written communications yesterday was addressed to Mr Foulkes. Besides a personal letter, she sent him a long annex giving an account of the events leading to the order to sink the Belgrano.

But the Prime Minister stopped short of telling Mr Foulkes the full facts. She told him that the annex provided "as full an account of these matters as is consistent with national security."

She added: "I must make it clear that it would be, and will remain, quite wrong for me to disclose all the material that was available to ministers at the time. To do so would still risk irreparable damage to national security and could put lives at risk in the future."

The annex, however, does reveal notable shift in position. Mrs Thatcher says that the War cabinet decided at 1p.m. on May 2 that the rules of engagement allowing an attack on the Belgrano should be changed. Northwood was told at 3p.m. Conqueror reported at 3.40p.m. that the Belgrano had changed course, but ministers were not told — Northwood still continued an attack. The ship was torpedoed at 8p.m.

Mrs Thatcher also admits that the Defence Secretary, Mr John Nott, misled the Commons on May 4 when he said the Belgrano was steaming towards the Falklands when it was attacked.

"It should be borne in mind," she says, that Sir

John's statement — that the cruiser was closing on the task force when it was hit — "had to be prepared in fast-moving and sometimes confused circumstances." She says that the precise position and course of the Belgrano were anyway irrelevant and "for this reason, the report (from the submarine Conqueror that the Belgrano had been heading west homewards for eleven hours before its torpedoed) was not made known to Ministers at the time."

The Prime Minister — as Dr Owen was quick to point out yesterday — did not refer to her own statements that have since proved to have been inaccurate, notably that the Conqueror did not attack the cruiser's escorts. Mrs Thatcher was still suggesting publicly in 1983 that the cruiser was sailing towards the Task Force.

Mrs Thatcher says that there was no change in the "standard deployment pattern of our Polaris submarines during the conflict," but for the first time she acknowledges that the then foreign secretary, Mr Francis Pym, raised the need for a further warning to the Argentine government on May 1 — the day he left for Washington — about Britain's intention to attack its ships outside the exclusion zone.

She says that shortly after 3p.m. Conqueror reported the position of the Belgrano — heading west. She says that it was not until 5p.m. that the Conqueror reported that she had received and understood the order to attack — made at 1p.m. by the war cabinet.

Mrs Thatcher also says that, on May 4, the submarine was ordered not to attack warships engaged in rescuing survivors from the Belgrano. Despite persistent Peruvian suggestions to the contrary, she says that the first indications of the new Peruvian peace proposals did not reach London until after the cruiser was attacked.

On the main issue she reiterates: "On the basis of all the material that was available to ministers at the time, my colleagues and I were satisfied that we took the right decisions in order to protect the lives of our forces."

"Nothing that has since
Turn to back page, col. 8

Thatcher explains why she sank the Belgrano

The Guardian 20/9/84

Continued from page one

been put forward — and I can assure that it has all been examined with the utmost care — has led me or any of my colleagues to have any doubts that we were right."

She denies allegations that Mr Pym, and the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, had opposed or dissented from the war cabinet's decision to allow British naval forces to attack Argentine ships on the high seas, whether within or without the exclusion zone.

The Belgrano was known to be one wing of a deliberate Argentine pincer movement against the task force of which the aircraft carrier 25 de Mayo was the northern half.

Her document draws attention to the fact that Argentine naval officers had subsequently confirmed in interviews in BBC Panorama that this was the junta's aim.

The document also confirms that the fact of the General Belgrano's change of course away from the task force shortly before she was sunk was not conveyed to the war cabinet by British naval commanders. She records some surprising delays in communicating changes of orders from RN headquarters at Northwood to the Conqueror.

The document insists that, although the Belgrano reversed her course between the change in the rules of engagement and the actual attack, she could have altered her course yet again and thus closed on elements of the Task Force.

"In the light of the continued threat posed by Argentine naval forces against the Task Force, the precise position and course of the Belgrano at that time were irrelevant. For this reason, the report was not made known to ministers at the time."

She explains that the Conqueror herself came under attack from the Belgrano's escorting destroyers after the sinking and moved away from the area in order to evade them.

The submarine subsequently patrolled to the north and west of the area where the Belgrano had been sunk, and when she signalled that she was returning to the area two days later she was ordered not to attack warships engaged in rescuing the survivors.

As for the allegation that the sinking was ordered in order to scupper the prospect of peace negotiation centred on the Peruvian formula, Mrs Thatcher says: "Diplomatic action was also pursued vigorously. Every effort was made to secure by diplomatic means the objective of the withdrawal of the Argentine forces."

But at the heart of Mrs Thatcher's argument is the assertion that there are some things that are still so secret that they cannot be disclosed without endangering British lives and national security.

The heavy hint is that these matters concern the means by which Britain got detailed information of the intentions of the Argentine junta and the orders issued to their military commanders.

Dr Owen said last night that the Prime Minister had glossed over the fact that she told the Commons herself on May 4 1982 that the Belgrano's two escort destroyers were not shot out, when it is now known that a torpedo was fired at one of them.

Mr Kinnock said last night: "There is no detailed report of what transpired two and a half years ago."

"The reluctance of senior Civil Servants to provide information that would mislead Parliament is at the root of the Clive Ponting case. Mrs Thatcher has not refuted what I said. There will be a trial, and the truth will come out."

Ministers not told Belgrano changed course

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

In the fullest report yet given of the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict in 1982, the Government admitted for the first time last night at the Ministry of Defence knew that the Argentine cruiser had reversed course away from the Task Force on the day it was sunk but that ministers were not informed of the change.

It said that the news of the Belgrano's switch of course had been received at naval headquarters at Northwood at 3.40 pm from HMS Conqueror on the day she was sunk and was made known to senior naval officers there and at the Ministry of Defence later in the afternoon.

But because she could have altered course again and closed on elements of the Task Force, and in the light of the continued threat posed by Argentine forces, the precise position and course of the Belgrano at the time were considered irrelevant.

"For this reason the report was not made known to ministers at the time," it was stated in a long annex to a letter from the Prime Minister to Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley.

In a letter yesterday to Mr Neil Kinnock, Mrs Thatcher also denied allegations that Mr Michael Helseltine, the Secretary of State for Defence, had overruled officials' advice and insisted on the prosecution of Mr Clive Ponting, who is accused of passing on documents about the Belgrano affair. She said that the Government's law officers did not seek the view of, or consult with, any other minister, nor was the view of any other minister conveyed to them, before they took their decision to prosecute Mr Ponting.

The account of events surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano, described by Mrs Thatcher as "as full as is consistent with national security", conflicts with the statement given to the Commons by Sir John Nott, then Secretary of State for Defence, on May 4 1982 which said that the Belgrano and two destroyers were "closing on elements of our Task Force, which was only hours away.

Acknowledging inaccuracies

in the Nott statement, it is stated in the annex that it should be borne in mind that he had to be prepared in "fast-moving and sometimes confused circumstances while ministers were preoccupied with continuing threats to the Task Force."

Mrs Thatcher told Mr Kinnock that there had been no desire or intention on the part of the Government to mislead or misinform Parliament over the Belgrano. Nothing that he had been put forward since the decision over the Belgrano had led her or any of her colleagues to doubt that it was right and necessary to safeguard British lives.

But she said that it would be quite wrong for her to disclose all the material that was available to ministers at the time, which would still risk irreparable damage to national security.

However, Mr Thatcher confirmed in her account earlier leaks that on April 30, 1982, ministers had sanctioned an attack on the aircraft carrier the Veinticinco de Mayo, but said there was no truth in reports that Mr Francis Pym, then Foreign Secretary, and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney General, opposed or dissented on the decision.

It was admitted, however, that Mr Pym on May 1 had raised the need for a further warning to the Argentine government. The matter was taken no further because of the complete change in the situation with clear indications that the Argentine navy was committed to hostile action against the Task Force.

Turning to the events of May 2, 1982, the account stated that the Argentine navy was attempting to engage in a pincer movement against the Task Force, using the Veinticinco de Mayo and its escorts in the north and the Belgrano and its escorts in the south.

HMS Conqueror sighted the Belgrano for the first time on May 1. On May 2 Admiral Woodward sought a change to the Rules of Engagement to enable the Conqueror to attack the Belgrano outside the exclusion zone. At 1pm ministers decided to permit attacks on Argentine vessels on the high

Continued on back page, col 2

Ministry knew Belgrano had reversed course

Continued from page 1

seas, as previously agreed for the Veinticinco de Mayo alone.

The order conveying the change was sent by Northwood to the Conqueror at 1.30pm. Shortly after 3pm Conqueror, which had not then received the order, reported the position of the Belgrano at 9am and at 3pm that day. It was not until after 5pm that Conqueror reported she had received and understood the new order and intended to attack. The Belgrano was attacked just before 8pm.

Mrs Thatcher said in a BBC radio interview yesterday that it had been the Government's job to protect the British servicemen it had sent to fight for freedom and it had done so.

Thatcher letters, page 2

BELGRANO

SINKING

'WAS RIGHT'

Thatcher 'can say no more'

By NICHOLAS COMFORT Political Staff

THE Prime Minister last night robustly defended the decision to sink the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict, saying that it was "right and necessary in the interests of safeguarding British lives."

She insisted that she and members of the "War Cabinet" would take the same decision again if they had to.

"Nothing that has since been put forward has led me or any of my colleagues to have any doubt that we were right," she said.

Mrs Thatcher acted to quell the chorus of claims by political opponents that the sinking of the cruiser was ordered in unsavoury circumstances, and that there had been a Government "cover-up."

In letters to Mr Kinnock and Mr George Foulkes, Labour spokesman on European affairs, a 17-point accompanying statement and an earlier radio interview, she said:

The Belgrano was not sunk to thwart peace moves by Peru.

The Government had had "no desire to mislead or misinform Parliament."

Crucial evidence which would justify the sinking had to remain secret because publication could cost lives in the future.

Concerted effort

by Downing Street

The clutch of documents issued by Downing Street marks the first concerted attempt to bring order from the trickle of ministerial explanations, some contradictory, of the circumstances in which the Belgrano was sunk.

To some critics, led by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgo, the sinking of the Belgrano on May 2, 1982, with the loss of more than 300 lives was designed to guarantee conflict at a time when a Peruvian peace plan was about to be accepted by Argentina.

Others, such as Dr David Owen, the SDP leader, argue that, while the action was probably justified, discrepancies between ministerial explanations and apparent efforts to hold back information from a Commons Committee bespeak a "cover-up."

Both schools of critics press their point more forcibly with the prosecution of a senior Ministry of Defence official, Clive Ponting, for allegedly "leaking" documents to Mr Dalyell.

The Prime Minister has consistently stood her ground on the issue.

Labour has for some time been committed, with varying degrees of enthusiasm to seeking an inquiry into the Belgrano episode, but it appears

Statement and text of letters — P8 and Back Page; Editorial Comment — P18

to have been the intervention of Dr Owen, a former Foreign Secretary, during last week's SDP conference which brought matters to a head.

Downing Street's counter-attack began yesterday morning when the Prime Minister appeared on the Jimmy Young Programme.

Mrs Thatcher said that it would do "irrevocable harm to the future" to tell the whole story because of her responsibility for the intelligence and security services.

Insisting "I shall give all the information I can," she said that the Belgrano was involved in a pincer movement with an aircraft carrier against the Task Force, and that the government's first priority was to "protect our boys".

Writing later to Mr Kinnock, the Prime Minister said that advice had been taken on how far the Government could go in disclosing information concerning national security. It would be "the height of irresponsibility to go beyond it."

She also denied that the decision to prosecute in the Ponting case had been taken by Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, against the advice of the Law Officers.

'Indications of hostile action'

The Prime Minister's letter to Mr Foulkes acknowledged that the Government's reluctance to release sensitive material made it impossible to rebut some of the allegations being made.

These are dealt with in detail in the 17-point statement accompanying Mrs Thatcher's letter to Mr Foulkes.

This spells out the Government's view of the circumstances in which the sinking of the cruiser by the nuclear submarine Conqueror was ordered.

It says that there were "unequivocal indications" that the Argentine Navy was committed to hostile action towards the Task Force.

Information that the Belgrano had altered course away from the British fleet was not passed to ministers because "in the light of the continued threat posed by Argentine naval forces, her precise position and course were irrelevant."

The statement says: "There was no question of taking the

Continued on Back P, Col 5

Continued from P1

By NICHOLAS COMFORT

Sinking 'was right'

action in order to undermine peace proposals put forward by the President of Peru, about which ministers in London had no knowledge at the time."

"Inaccuracies" in a report to the Commons at the time by Sir John Nott, then Defence Secretary, are attributed to the pressure of "fast moving and sometimes confusing circumstances."

Demand for White Paper

An earlier letter sent by the Prime Minister to Dr Owen dealing largely with the Ponting case was also circulated by Downing Street as background to the latest exchange. In it Mrs Thatcher rejected a call from the SDP leader for a White Paper on the sinking of the cruiser.

The statement issued sent to Mr Foulkes does not amount to a White Paper and had been in preparation before Dr Owen made his public criticism. But the detail into which it goes will be seen as a desire to counter the arguments of more influential figures than Mr Foulkes, who was sceptical about the campaign to regain the Falklands from the outset.

Critics of the Government's handling of the episode were last night studying Mrs Thatcher's statement in detail, with Government sources fully expecting that it would not satisfy them.

One apparent discrepancy is that the fifth paragraph claims that Argentina was warned at the outset that its ships could be attacked outside the total exclusion zone, but that on May 2 Adml Woodward, then commander of the Task Force, sought specific permission to enable the submarine Conqueror to attack the cruiser outside the zone.

Questions are certain to be

asked about why the admiral asked the War Cabinet for such permission if he had it already.

Mr Kinnock said last night: "The sinking of the Belgrano took place nearly 2½ years ago. There is no detailed report of what transpired at that time that could conceivably transgress the interests of national security."

"The reluctance of senior civil servants to provide information that would mislead parliament is at the root of the Clive Ponting case and has brought about the readiness of civil servants to be rather more forthcoming than is their convention."

"Mrs Thatcher has not refuted what I said. She says she believes otherwise and says otherwise."

"There will be a trial, and the truth will come out. People will be on oath. Mr Ponting will give evidence himself."

Dr Owen said: "The Prime Minister defends her decision to sink the Belgrano, which most people have never challenged, but ducked out of correcting the untruths that have been given to Parliament by herself and her ministers."

"She admits inaccuracies in what Sir John Nott said on May 4, 1982, but avoids mentioning her own inaccuracies on that same day and subsequently."

"The main issue is the misleading of Parliament, and the reality that we are only discussing it because of information that is alleged to have been revealed by a civil servant fed up with being made a party to misleading MPs and the parliamentary Select Committee."

"The Government should have published a White Paper, not an eight-page 17-paragraph annex to a letter to an MP."

Text of statement—P8;
Editorial Comment—P18

Thatcher letter to MP

The following is the text of Mrs Thatcher's letter sent yesterday to Mr George Foulkes, Labour European Affairs Spokesman.

You wrote to me on 23 August and 14 September about decisions taken by the Government at the time of the Falklands conflict.

Your questions reflect a number of fundamental misconceptions about the situation in the South Atlantic in April and May 1982. I am enclosing, as an annex to this letter a statement of the position which should clear up these misconceptions, and remove any doubts in your mind about the reasons for our actions.

To put the matter briefly, in April 1982 Argentina had attacked and invaded British territory; despite intense and continuing diplomatic efforts, Argentina refused to comply with a mandatory resolution of the United Nations Security Council to withdraw its forces; with all-party support, and in exercise of our inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter, the British Government despatched the Task Force to the South Atlantic.

Ordered to attack

By the end of April as it approached the Falkland Islands the Task Force was increasingly vulnerable to Argentine attack; by 2 May it had already been attacked by Argentine aircraft and there were clear and unequivocal indications that it was under further threat from a strong and co-ordinated pincer movement by the major units of the Argentine Navy, including the cruiser "General Belgrano" and the aircraft carrier "25 de Mayo."

The then Argentine Operations Commander, South Atlantic, has since confirmed publicly that his warships had indeed been ordered to attack. No Government with a proper sense of responsibility could have refrained from taking appropriate measures to counter the threats to the Task Force, and to ensure its safety to the maximum extent possible. Risks could not be taken, especially when hostilities had been so clearly embarked upon by the Argentines.

Your questions about the

Argentine aircraft carrier and events on May 2 are answered in the annex.

You also asked whether a Polaris submarine was deployed as described in the New STATESMAN article on August 23. There was no change in the standard deployment pattern of our Polaris submarines during the conflict. Moreover, the Government gave a categorical assurance at the time that nuclear weapons would not be used in the Falklands conflict (see statement made by Viscount Trenchard in the House of Lords on April 27, 1982—Hansard Vol. 429, Col. 778).

Quite wrong

I have given you in the annex as full an account of these matters as, I am advised, is consistent with national security. I must make it clear that it would be, and will remain, quite wrong for me to disclose all the material that was available to Ministers at the time. To do so would still risk irreparable damage to national security and could put lives at risk in the future.

Those who seek to criticise the Government's actions (including people outside this country who have every reason to discredit the Government of the United Kingdom) are not subject to the same constraints and have felt free to make a large number of assertions. I have already explained why I cannot make public everything which would make it possible to discuss whether those assertions are true or false.

In these circumstances, I must emphasise the central point. On the basis of all the material that was available to Ministers at the time, my colleagues and I were satisfied that we took the right decisions in order to protect the lives of our forces.

Nothing that has since been put forward — and I can assure you that it has all been examined with the utmost care — has led me or any of my colleagues to have any doubts that we were right.

Text of Thatcher letters—P8

RAISING BELGRANO

AS MINISTERS KNOW quite well already, the fresh material now published as an annexe to correspondence between the Prime Minister and Mr FOULKES will not lay the matter to rest. To put it simply, an act of war seldom lends itself to straightforward explanation. It will certainly never do so in the minds of those who from the outset chose to regard the Falklands war as wrong-headed and the victory as correspondingly vain. Between those in Government who were conducting a war with many lives at stake in the South Atlantic and those who would rigorously apply the rules of the peacetime political game to this affair the gap can never be closed, certainly not by open correspondence accompanied by annexes.

In her letter to Dr OWEN of Sept. 15 the Prime Minister appears to rule out a White Paper, and to indicate that Mr HESELTINE's forthcoming evidence to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee will suffice. In her letter of Sept. 19 to Mr FOULKES she offers an account described as an annexe. There seems to have been second thoughts here; they are not always best. Those determined to make a meal of it are now provided with fresh material to feed on. They will. Why, the uninformed will ask, did Adml Woodward have to seek a change in the Rules of Engagement on May 2, so that Conqueror could attack Belgrano outside the Exclusion Zone, which, as an earlier part of the narrative declares, the message to Argentina on April 23 left no doubt that the warning applied outside the zone as well as in it.

This sort of argument is tailor made for television discussion but it leaves us some way from the heart of the matter. The Government had a paramount duty to protect the vulnerable forces it had dispatched to the South Atlantic. Communications (and this the annexe brings out) between submerged Conqueror, Commander-in-Chief and Cabinet were simply not as efficient as, say, between Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in London. In war, they never are. International opinion may indeed have restricted what Ministers could say then; just as security considerations restrict what can be said now. Plenty of material here for those so minded to charge Government with deception. Let Ministers, however, take comfort from this: the nagging campaign (which will continue) is minor by comparison with the inquest which would have raged all these two years, had the decision been to lay off the Belgrano and had one of our two aircraft carriers then gone to the bottom.

Text of Prime Minister's letters

Mrs Thatcher wrote yesterday to Mr Kinnock, Leader of the Opposition:

Thank you for your letter of 14 September.

The first part of your letter dealt with the sinking of the General Belgrano. I am publishing today, in reply to a letter which I have received from Mr George Foulkes, a further statement of the circumstances surrounding that decision, designed to correct a number of misconceptions which were reflected in Mr Foulkes' letter to me and in recent Press accounts.

I enclose a copy of my reply. As you acknowledge, Michael Heseltine also agreed, as long ago as 26 July, to assist with the inquiry being undertaken by the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs and will be giving evidence before them when Parliament returns.

There has been no desire or intention on the part of the Government to mislead or misinform Parliament on this matter; and I entirely refute your suggestion that there was either operational confusion or error in communications with the Task Force.

As I have said in my reply to Mr Foulkes, nothing that has been put forward since we took our decision about the Belgrano has led me or any of my colleagues to doubt that the decision was right and necessary in the interests of safeguarding British lives.

But Ministers have to take the responsibility, with the help of our security experts' advice, of deciding at what point it is necessary to withhold information in the interests of national security.

To go beyond that point in order to justify the Government's decisions and thus to jeopardise lives in the future would be the height of irresponsibility. I can say specifically that Geoffrey Howe and I know of no basis for your suggestion that senior Foreign Office officials have given advice in the terms described in your letter.

Ponting case

The latter part of your letter deals with the treatment of Mr Ponting. I have given an account of the decisions relating to the charging of Mr Ponting in my reply to Dr David Owen, a copy of which I also enclose.

There are only two points which I would add. The first is that there is no long-established convention of the sort described in your letter: the Law Officers should consider each case on its merits in deciding whether proceedings should be brought.

The second point is to stress again that decisions on these matters are taken by the Law Officers, not by Ministers. Your letter and last Sunday's OBSERVER allege that Michael Heseltine overruled advice given to him and insisted that Mr Ponting be prosecuted. This is not so.

The Director of Public Prosecutions had been advised of the

case on the morning of August 13, and after consultation with the Solicitor General had already asked for a very early police report.

When the senior Ministry of Defence official, Sir Ewen Broadbent, who had earlier briefed the Director of Public Prosecutions, reported to Michael Heseltine later that afternoon, he informed him of the stage reached. Michael Heseltine noted the report and that the decision whether or not to prosecute rested with the Law Officers.

Neither I nor any other Ministers in the Ministry of Defence or elsewhere intervened in the succeeding days.

The Director of Public Prosecutions received the detailed police report on August 16 and consulted the Law Officers who decided on August 17 to proceed with the prosecution.

The Law Officers did not seek the view of, or consult with, any other Minister, nor was the view of any other Minister conveyed to them, before they took their decision to prosecute Mr Ponting.

'Non political' role stressed

In her letter to Dr Owen, the SDP Leader, dated Sept. 14, Mrs Thatcher said:

Your letter of 13 September covers a number of separate matters.

As regards the charges against Mr Ponting, you must know that the Attorney General acts in a totally independent and non-political capacity in making decisions on prosecutions.

It would be improper for me or my colleagues to interfere in any way with his discretion in the exercise of that function and I confirm that we did not do so in Mr Ponting's case. Similarly, I have no intention of commenting now on the Attorney General's decision and I am astonished by your suggestion that I should do so.

You asked about the sequence of events leading up to the decision to charge Mr Ponting. When the two documents were returned to the Ministry of Defence by the Select Committee Michael Heseltine decided that an investigation should be undertaken by the Ministry of Defence Police into the circumstances in which the documents had come into the hands of Mr Tam Dalyell.

The results of that investigation were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions on 13 August. Later that day the Defence Secretary and I were told of the outcome of the inquiry and that the matter had been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Director of Public Prose-

cutions consulted the Solicitor General, in the absence of the Attorney General who decided on 17 August that charges should be brought against Mr Ponting.

The Attorney General endorsed this decision. The Law Officers did not consult any of their Ministerial colleagues. Nor was there an initial decision by them not to prosecute: indeed, it was made clear to Mr Ponting when he was interviewed on August 10 and again in writing on August 14 that the possibility of prosecution was under consideration.

You also enclosed your speech to the SDP Party Conference, in which you requested an immediate White Paper about the Belgrano. I see no need for such a White Paper. The Select Committee on Foreign Affairs is, as you know, carrying out an inquiry of these matters, and Michael Heseltine wrote to the Chairman on 26 July to say that he would be happy to give evidence to that inquiry.

Finally, you refer to Mr Bernard Ingham, presumably basing yourself on an item in the diary column of the GUARDIAN on 13 September. I understand that this referred to an internal meeting of Government Information Officers and that the account entirely misrepresents the nature of Mr Ingham's remarks.

Human rights terror report

By Our Buenos Aires Correspondent

THE darkest side of Argentina's recent past is expected to come to light today as a 50,000-page report on the former regime's illegal drive against subversion in the mid- and late 70s is submitted to President Raul Alfonsin.

The report includes findings by the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons, created by Alfonsin shortly after he took power on Dec. 10, 1983, to investigate human rights abuses. The president has put the number of missing people at 10,000, while human rights organisations put it at 30,000.

According to leaks to the Press yesterday, the report is to include the names of about 1,300 military servicemen who allegedly took part in the repression and testimony on 8,780 cases of human rights violations since 1976. It is also expected to list almost 260 clandestine detention centres throughout the country.

Only the names of about 200 servicemen linked to the anti-subversion operation are expected to be made available to the public.

WHY THE NAVY TORPEDOED THE BELGRANO

THE Government last night released the text of a 17-point statement about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict.

The statement was an annex to a letter sent by the Prime Minister to Mr George Foulkes, Labour's European affairs spokesman.

The text of the annex was:

1 The threats which faced the Task Force at the end of April and the beginning of May 1982 can only be appreciated in the light of the situation in the South Atlantic at that time.

2 On April 2, 1982, the process of diplomatic negotiations over the Falkland Islands was abruptly interrupted by Argentina's unprovoked armed invasion of the islands. Having obtained control of the islands, the Argentines then refused to comply with mandatory Resolution 502 of the United Nations Security Council, which demanded an immediate withdrawal of their forces.

3 In exercise of the inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, and in parallel with intense but ultimately unproductive diplomatic activity, the British Task Force was despatched at the beginning of April, with all-party support, following Argentina's action, which was wholly inconsistent with international law and the UN Charter.

Government's

'foremost duty'

Twenty-eight thousand British Servicemen and civilians eventually sailed in the Task Force; it was the foremost and continuing duty of the Government to take such decisions as were necessary to protect them as the events of the moment demanded.

4 On April 7, the Defence Secretary had announced the establishment, as from April 12, of a 200-nautical mile Maritime Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands; but it was made clear in the announcement that this was "without prejudice to the right of the United Kingdom to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its right of self-defence, under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter."

Mr Nott told the House of Commons that if it became necessary, the British Government would use force to achieve the objective of securing Argentine withdrawal.

He added: "We hope that it will not come to that. We hope that diplomacy will succeed. Nevertheless, the Argentines were the first to use force of arms in order to establish their present control of the Falklands. . . ."

5 In late April, 1982, the Task Force was strung out between Ascension Island and the Falklands and vulnerable to attack. On 25th April 1982, the Government accordingly sent the following message to the Argentine Government, making it clear that the terms of the

communication came into effect immediately:

"In announcing the establishment of a Maritime Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands, Her Majesty's Government made it clear that this measure was without prejudice to the right of the United Kingdom to take whatever additional measures may be needed in the exercise of its right of self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

"In this connection, Her Majesty's Government now wishes to make clear that any approach on the part of Argentine warships, including submarines, naval auxiliaries, or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of British Forces in the South Atlantic will encounter the appropriate response.

Security Council

notified

"All Argentine aircraft including civil aircraft engaging in surveillance of these British Forces will be regarded as hostile and are liable to be dealt with accordingly."

It is clear from the above text that the warning applied outside the Exclusion Zone as well as within it. This message was notified to the United Nations Security Council and circulated accordingly on 24th April. It was also released publicly.

6 On 28th April, 1982, the Government announced the establishment of a 200-nautical mile Total Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands, effective as from 30th April, which would apply to all Argentine ships and aircraft.

The announcement again stressed that "these measures are without prejudice to the right of the United Kingdom to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its right of self-defence, under Article 51 of the UN Charter."

7 On 30th April, Minister met to consider the implications of the capability of the aircraft carrier, the "25 de Mayo", to threaten our forces from the air at substantial distances from the Argentine mainland.

After the most careful consideration of the legal, military and political issues, Ministers decided that our forces should be permitted to attack the "25 de Mayo" on the high seas (that is both within and outside the Total Exclusion Zone), in circumstances in which it posed a military threat to the Task Force.

As set out in paragraph 5 above, a warning that Argentine warships threatening the Task Force would meet with an appropriate response had already been delivered to the

Argentine Government on 23rd April; and Ministers concluded that no further warning was needed.

There is no truth in the suggestion that the Foreign Secretary and the Attorney-General opposed or dissented from the decision of April 30. But on May 1, the day he left for Washington, the Foreign Secretary raised the need for a further warning to the Argentine Government.

The matter had been taken no further, however, when the general situation changed completely: first, with the attacks which the Argentine Air Force launched for the first time on the Task Force on May 1 and second, with the clear and unequivocal indications which became available that weekend that the Argentine Navy was committed to hostile action against the Task Force.

8 On May 1, 1982, the Task Force came under attack for the first time from the Argentine air force, operating from the mainland. As the Defence Secretary said in the House of Commons on May 4:

"On May 1 the Argentines launched attacks on our ships, during most of the daylight hours. The attacks by Argentine Mirage and Canberra aircraft operating from the mainland were repulsed by British Sea Harriers. Had our Sea Harriers failed to repulse the attacks on the Task Force, our ships could have been severely damaged or sunk.

"In fact, one Argentine Canberra and one Mirage were shot down and others were damaged. We believe that another Mirage was brought down by Argentine anti-aircraft fire.

"One of our frigates suffered splinter damage as a result of the air attacks and there was one British casualty whose condition is now satisfactory. All our aircraft returned safely.

"On the same day, our forces located and attacked what was believed to be an Argentine submarine which was clearly in a position to torpedo our ships. It is not known whether the submarine was hit.

"The prolonged air attack on our ships, the presence of an Argentine submarine close by, and all other information available to us, left us in no doubt of the dangers to our Task Force from hostile action."

All British units were on maximum alert to deal with any naval or air attacks.

Argentine

pincer movement

9 As Adml Woodward has explained, "Early on the morning of May 2, all the indications were that the "25 de Mayo," the Argentine carrier, and a group of escorts had slipped past my forward SSN barrier to the north, while the cruiser General Belgrano and her escorts were attempting to complete the pincer movement from the south, still outside the Total Exclusion Zone."

The Argentine Operations Commander in the South Atlantic at the time, Adml Juan Jose Lombardo, confirmed without hesitation on the BBC Panorama programme on April 16 this year that the Argentine Navy, as we thought, were attempting to engage in a pincer movement against the Task Force, using the "25 de Mayo" and its escorts in the north and the General Belgrano and its escorts attempting to complete the movement from the south.

10 As was further explained in the Prime Minister's letter to Mr Denzil Davies, HMS Conqueror had sighted the Belgrano for the first time on 1st May. On 2nd May, in response to the threat to the Task Force, Adml Woodward sought a change to the Rules of

Engagement to enable Conqueror to attack the Belgrano outside the Exclusion Zone.

On the basis of the clear and unequivocal indications available to the Government that the Argentine Navy posed a real and direct threat to the Task Force and those sailing with it and on the advice of their most senior military advisers, Ministers decided at 1 p.m. that the Rules of Engagement should be changed to permit attacks on all Argentine naval vessels on the high seas, as had previously been agreed for the 25 de Mayo alone (see paragraph 7 above).

The necessary order conveying this change was sent by Naval Headquarters at Northwood to HMS Conqueror at 1.30 p.m. (all timings in this and the following paragraphs are given in London time).

Shortly after 3 p.m., HMS Conqueror reported the position of the Belgrano at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. that day. HMS Conqueror had not then received the order changing the Rules of Engagement.

The limitations in communications with our submarines operating in the far South Atlantic meant that submarine operations there could not be monitored and controlled hour by hour.

Attack on Belgrano

It was not until after 5 p.m. that HMS Conqueror reported that she had received and understood the new order and intended to attack. The Belgrano was attacked just before 8 p.m.

11. Conqueror's report on the Belgrano's position was received by Northwood at 5.40 p.m., and made known to senior naval officers there and at the Ministry of Defence later that afternoon.

The report showed that the Belgrano had reversed course. But she could have altered course again and closed on elements of the Task Force, acting in concert with the carrier to the north.

In the light of the continued threat posed by Argentine naval forces against the Task Force, the precise position and course of the Belgrano at that time were irrelevant. For this reason the report was not made known to Ministers at the time.

12.—No evidence has at any time become available to the Government which would make Ministers change the judgment they reached on 2nd May that the Belgrano posed a threat to the Task Force. In the Panorama interview which is referred to earlier, Adml Lombardo stated that the decision to sink the Argentine cruiser had been tactically sound, and one which he too would have taken had he been in Britain's position.

It is, of course, the case that after the sinking of the Belgrano major Argentine warships remained within 12 miles of the Argentine coast and took no further part in the campaign.

13.—As to subsequent operations by HMS Conqueror, immediately after the attack upon the Belgrano, Conqueror herself came under attack from the Argentine escorting destroyers and, to evade this, moved away from the area.

As her continuing role was to protect the Task Force from the threat posed by Argentine warships, she subsequently patrolled to the north and west of the area where the Belgrano had been sunk; when, on 4th May, Conqueror signalled that she was returning to that area, she was ordered not to attack warships engaged in rescuing survivors from the Belgrano.

14.—Attention has been focused on inaccuracies in

the statement made by the then Defence Secretary, Mr Nott, in the House of Commons on 4th May.

It should be borne in mind that this statement had to be prepared in fast-moving and sometimes confused circumstances while Ministers were preoccupied with continuing threats to the Task Force.

It was explained in the letter to Mr Denzil Davies why it was then possible to correct earlier statements which were made in good faith and to give further information about the Conqueror's operation.

It would have been inappropriate to have given details at the time about the circumstances in which Conqueror detected and tracked the Belgrano and other aspects of the engagement since these could well have provided information valuable to the Argentine Navy.

'No undermining' of peace proposals

15 The need to do everything we could to protect the lives of some 10,000 British personnel — Service and civilian then in the Task Force and at risk from the Argentine Navy — was the sole reason for the attack on the Belgrano.

No other consideration entered the calculations of the Ministers concerned, and, in particular, there was no question of taking the action in order to undermine peace proposals put forward by the President of Peru, about which Ministers in London had no knowledge at the time.

As has been frequently made clear the first indications of these proposals did not reach London from Washington until 11.15 p.m. London time on 2nd May — over three hours after the attack on the Belgrano — and from Lima until 2 a.m. London time on 3rd May.

16 Diplomatic action was, however, also pursued vigorously. Every effort was made to secure by diplomatic means the objective of the withdrawal of the Argentine forces. As the Prime Minister said in the House of Commons on 29th April 1982, it was the British Government's earnest hope that this objective could be achieved by a negotiated settlement. But by 29th April, the initiative of the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr Haig, had foundered on Argentine obduracy.

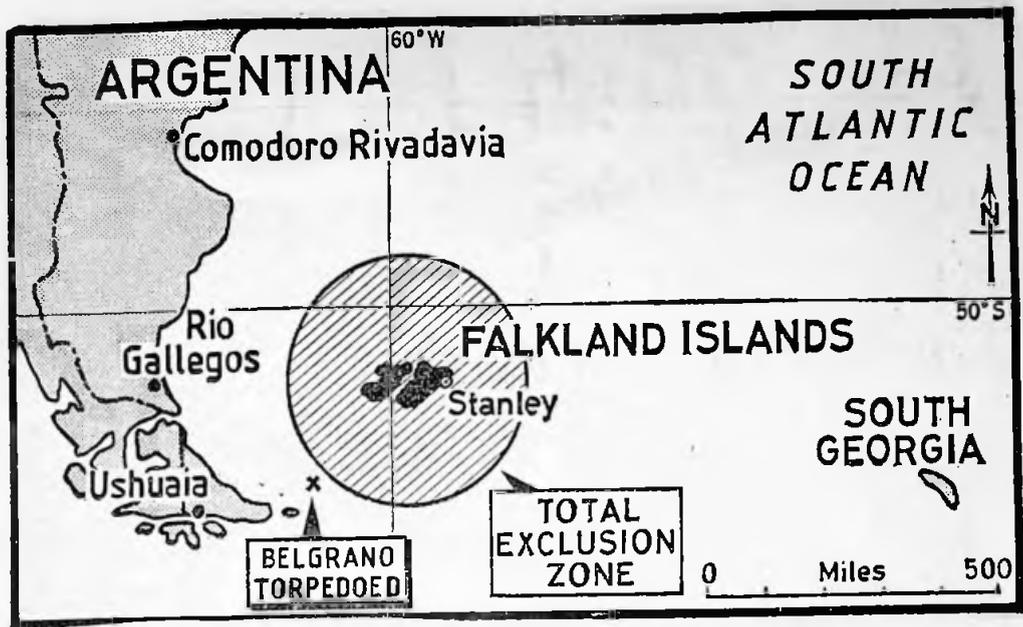
On 20th April, he announced that the United States Government had had reason to hope that the United Kingdom would consider a settlement on the lines of the second set of proposals formulated by the U.S. Government; but the Argentine Government had informed the Americans on 29th April that they could not accept it.

As Gen. Galtieri later explicitly admitted in an interview with an Argentine newspaper, Argentine domestic political opinion made it impossible for the Junta to agree to a solution that would entail the withdrawal of Argentine forces.

The British authorities by contrast, continued the search for a negotiated settlement until 17th May.

17 The measures taken in late April and early May 1982 were designed clearly and exclusively to safeguard the lives of those serving with our forces, by responding to the threat posed to our ships in order to ensure, in particular, the safety of our two aircraft carriers on which the protection of the Task Force ultimately depended.

There was no question of any attempt to destroy the prospects for a negotiated settlement.



Islanders given land rights

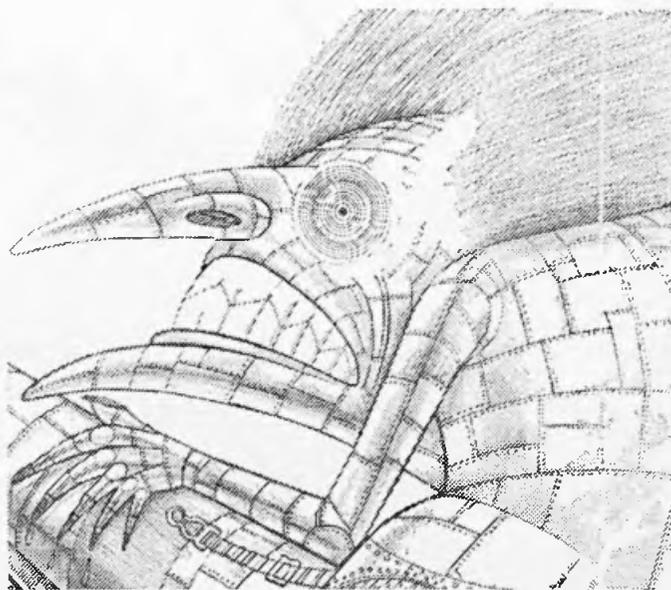
Melbourne. - The 400 inhabitants of the Cocos Islands, who voted in April to become part of Australia, have been granted land rights by the Federal Government (Tony Duboudin writes).

The islanders, mainly of Malay descent, voted in a United Nations act of self-determination to join Australia, breaking with the Clunies-Ross family which had ruled the island since 1830.

Iron Lady tract for the Falklands War

There's not much of a story in Raymond Briggs's new picture book (*imprimatur* James Gillray, *nihil obstat* Tam Dalyell). It starts promisingly enough: "Once upon a time ..." and there look to be dramatic possibilities in the opening scenes, when some sad shepherds living on an island, are set upon by a giant, all dressed up in tin-plate and tassels. "Mea baggazza el islando!" he roars. "I bags the island!"

Instead of Tom Thumb or Jack-the Giant-killer arriving to outwit the fellow with some fine stratagem, Mr Briggs now brings on an even less appealing iron-clad giantess. ("It's MINE" she screeches. "I bagsied it AGES ago! I bagsied it FIRST!") She fires off a few rounds from her sixteen-inch mammaries and swipes the giant round the bottom with her iron suspenders. Various lay-figures, sketched in monochrome, are shot, drowned or immolated; and, as a result, the iron-clad giantess claims vic-



tory. Medals are distributed, the tin-plate general vows to come back, "and the families of the dead tended the graves."

Like most tract-writers and

satirists Raymond Briggs enjoys to the full the prerogative of a simple vision. His epigraph quotes Dr Johnson on the last refuge of scoundrels, down at

Brian Alderson

THE TIN-POT FOREIGN GENERAL AND THE OLD IRON WOMAN

By Raymond Briggs

Hamish Hamilton, £4.95, paperback £2.50

the bottom of the world, and Einstein: "Nationalism is an infatiable disease. It is the measles of mankind." The ferocity of his attack on the warring giants, the gentleness of his sympathy for their slain minions are the easy responses of a reductive imagination. What he does not do is to ponder the state of the sad shepherds with whom the book began. In their pot-lid hats and their green smocks they seem to be figures of fun—mere counters of sheep and eaters of mutton. What would have become of them though if the tin-plate giant had had his way? What sort of story would Mr Briggs have wanted to tell us then?

'Our job is to protect our boys—what if she'd got the Invincible?'

Maggie's broadside at her Belgrano critics

By GORDON GREIG
Political Editor

MRS Thatcher admitted last night that the Falklands War Cabinet was not told that the Argentine cruiser Belgrano had changed course for home when she was sunk.

A signal from the nuclear submarine Conqueror, which fired the two fatal torpedoes, was not passed on by Naval Chiefs and the Defence Department.

The admission came at the



May 1982: The General Belgrano sinks in the South Atlantic

end of a day in which the Premier had fired her heaviest broadside yet in a bid to sink the growing political controversy about the Belgrano affair.

The position of the Argentine cruiser was, said Mrs Thatcher, 'irrelevant'. She could have altered course again and closed in on the Task Force.

In a BBC radio interview on

The admission that only a few senior defence chiefs had been given a report on the Belgrano's change of course is likely to fuel the political controversy.

In Mrs Thatcher's mind, however, there are no second thoughts about the merit of sinking one of the biggest threats to the 10,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen in the Falklands Task Force.

On radio she said: 'My goodness! Supposing she'd got the Invincible or Hermes! I would do—and everyone of my Ministers concerned in the decision would do—exactly the same thing. It was right. Our job is to protect our boys.'

Navy chiefs believed that both an Argentine aircraft carrier and the cruiser were attempting a pincer attack on the Task Force. The Belgrano was thought to be altering

course for the outward leg of a zig-zag bearing towards the British convoy but she could have altered course again and closed on elements of the Task Force. Mrs Thatcher said. 'In the light of the continued threat posed by the Argentine naval forces, the precise position and course of the Belgrano at that time were irrelevant.'

For this reason, the report was not made known to Ministers at the time.'

Former Defence Minister Sir John Nott last night confirmed that he had not been told of the Belgrano's change of course when the order was given.

Threat

He said: 'The precise position of the Belgrano was not made known to me or the Prime Minister at the time, and in my view quite rightly so, as this information was totally irrelevant to our decision to allow the Belgrano to be attacked. We knew it was a major threat to our men

Lord Lewin, who was chief of the Defence Staff during the Falklands campaign and was one of the few senior officers privy to the secret of Belgrano's change of course, said: 'Then minutes later she might be taking a different course. In fact she was zig-zagging.'

But SDP Leader Dr David Owen insisted that the Government must come clean on the affair. He said: 'I do dislike intensely Parliament being lied to.'

Mr Kinnoch said: 'There will be a trial, and the truth will come out.'



'I see Maggie is still keeping everyone well outside her Belgrano exclusion zone.'

The Standard
19th September 1984



Belgrano goes down : honour first or people?

Waiting for a bullet

LET us declare a Day of Mourning for Belgrano. Let us also fly our flags at half-mast for valiant sailors lost when a brutal British Navy, aided by vicious thugs from the Royal Air Force, sank the Bismark.

Forget Hood, Renown, Repulse, Prince of Wales and KG5, Out of mind Coventry, Sheffield, Ardent and Antelope. Ignore Sir Galahad and Atlantic Conveyor. Those dead were merely our own

native sons.

Then let us, on collective bended knee, beat our breast to the demented chant *mea culpa, mea ad nauseam*, awaiting a bullet in the neck, to end our misery.

Then may Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition say, with justifiable pride: "We preserved our honour, by not preserving our people.—Noel Fitzwilliam-Wentworth, Longridge Road, Kensington.

Jaguars skim trees to attack RAF field

By DAVID GRAVES

on Exercise Lionheart at RAF Wildenrath, West Germany

FOUR attacking Jaguar fighter-bombers skimmed the treetops in a low-level "attack" on RAF Wildenrath, one of Britain's four front-line airfields in West Germany. Four Phantom FGR-2s were scrambled to intercept.

The mock air and ground attack yesterday marked the second day of the Field Training Section of Exercise Lionheart, the biggest military exercise since the 1959-45 War.

A pre-emptive air strike by enemy "orange" forces — euphemistically the Warsaw Pact — on RAF Bruggen on Monday evening marked the start of activities after 57,000 troop reinforcements had travelled from the United Kingdom during the previous fortnight.

During this week and early next, more than 151,000 British and Allied troops will take part in Exercise Spearpoint, the field training section of Lionheart, which is costing £31 million to stage over 3,600 square miles of Lower Saxony.

Attack beaten off

The attack on Wildenrath, watched by members of the Nato Council and foreign military observers, including one from Communist China, saw the RAF Regiment with Scorpion light tanks and Spartan armoured personnel carriers successfully counter a ground attack on the airfield.

After the mock air attack and the scrambling of the air defence Phantoms from 19 and 92 squadrons, the simulated bomb crater damage to one of the runways was cleared up by members of 55 Field Squadron



(Construction) of the Royal Engineers.

Lt-Col Peter Mackie, military deputy to the Director of Public Relations for the Army, said yesterday that two people had been killed since Lionheart had begun, but there had been no mass protests from the German peace movement.

A 21-year-old German woman died when her car collided with a four-ton lorry and a Royal Artillery bombardier was crushed to death when the truck in which he was a passenger collided with another lorry.

The exercise—which involves 476 tanks, 2,400 other track vehicles and 12,800 wheeled vehicles—is part of the Nato series of Autumn Forge exercises involving British, American, German, Dutch and other Allied troops.

It has involved the mobilisation of 35,000 Territorial Army troops, 4,500 reservists and 17,000 British-based regular troops who have been transported by air and ship across the Channel.

A group of 25 Germans, acting as accredited "war correspondents," is accompanying the troops as part of Ministry of Defence attempts to build up Press relations in the wake of the Falkland conflict two years ago.

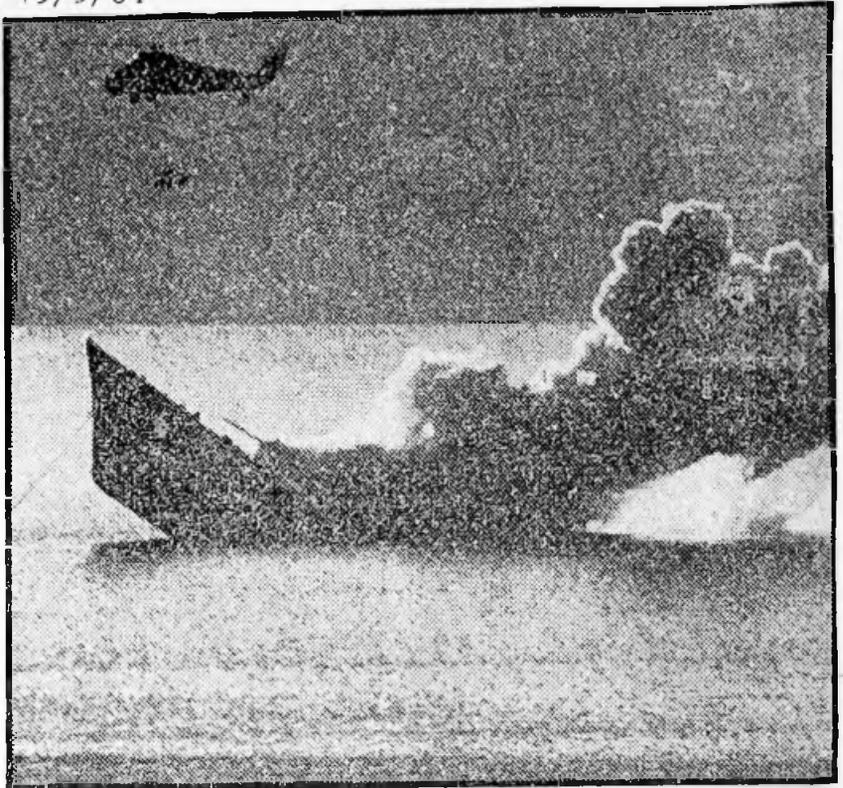
The reporters are being asked to accept the "bargain" by the MoD in which they exercise voluntary censorship within the framework of a set of regulations in return for access to classified briefings by senior military commanders in the field.



Peter Jenkins

The deep waters of deception

The end of HMS Antelope: "The Belgrano was sunk because there was a war on"



IT WAS the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser General Belgrano which brought home to us the meaning of the Falklands War. At first it was thought that a thousand young sailors were dead; 368 was dreadful enough as the first fatalities in a war that was to be fought for rocky islands, miles from anywhere, sparsely populated by shepherds. The football yobboes' response was "Gotcha!" but from that moment any idea that the Falklands expedition was some kind of post-imperial away game was gone. Two days later our own sailors were being burned to death in the inferno of the Sheffield.

Now, more than two years afterwards, everybody is on board the Belgrano again — Mr Kinnoch, Mr Steel, Dr Owen — with a crew of investigative reporters and whistle-blowers and, of course, the magnificent obsessionalist Mr Tam Dalyell. No one wants to be left out of a Watergate if that is what the Belgrano affair is to become.

Both as critic of the Falklands War and as veteran of the Watergate story (I was the Guardian's Washington correspondent for most of that time), I am unpersuaded by the analogy. The persistence of the questions about the sinking of the Belgrano remind me more of the Who-killed-Kennedy obsession, a protective myth spun around a too stark event. It is more convenient when there are evil explanations of evil happenings.

Watergate was a criminal conspiracy to conceal a crime. The implication of describing the Belgrano affair as a Watergate is that somewhere behind the lies and obfuscations lies a war crime or, at least, some guilty secret. In the Dalyell version, which most fully answers the need for conspiratorial expiation, the Belgrano was sunk — although sailing away from the Task Force — in order to torpedo a new peace initiative mounted by Peru.

It was always an implausi-

ble theory and the recently leaked information from the Department of Defence makes it more so. The moment of peace had passed by then. The War Cabinet had already come to the conclusion that the Argentinian junta was unwilling or incapable of agreeing to any kind of settlement which would involve withdrawal and not prejudice the question of sovereignty. Its judgment was shared by Secretary of State Haig, as his memoirs make clear. Haig's vivid account to a meeting of the War Cabinet of the state of things in Buenos Aires had played an important part in persuading its softer members — Whitelaw, Pym and Parkinson — that hopes of a negotiated settlement were forlorn.

On Saturday May 1, the day before the decision to sink the Belgrano, Mr Pym was in Washington meeting with Haig. The Peruvian proposals which were a streamlined version of the already rejected Haig plan, although made less acceptable to the British, were not judged important enough for Pym to remain in Washington and he left that evening, as planned, for New York. It was also decided that they were not worth disturbing the Prime Minister's night's sleep at Chequers with a telegram that evening Haig was told that the telegram would not be sent until the following morning.

By the time it arrived the War Cabinet at Chequers had authorised the sinking of the Belgrano and, we now know, other Argentinian warships over a large area extending beyond the exclusion zone. In any case, the decision to sink the Belgrano cannot be explained by a wish to scupper the Peruvian peace moves because before these were even known to Pym in Washington the War Cabinet had decided (on April 30) to authorise the sinking of the aircraft carrier, Veinticinco de Mayo, which would have been a greater prize than the Belgrano. Conqueror's torpedoes were launched at the Belgrano, it now seems pretty clear, because the Veinticinco de Mayo had managed to elude the submarine Splendid. This was after the Argentine aircraft carrier had attempted to launch an air attack on the main task force and after the Glamorgan had come under actual attack from Seahawks

In other words, the naval war had begun. Who changed course at what time and what messages were received when scarcely adds to our useful knowledge. It would be astonishing if the Conqueror's signals were the only source of intelligence about Argentinian naval movements and intentions. Investigative reporters, incidentally, plainly prefer leaked documents to published sources: a great deal of what has been recently "revealed" can be read in the Times Literary Supple-

ment of March 9 in an article by Professor Lawrence Freedman, whose sources in this area I imagine are second to none. Freedman gives a convincing military explanation of what happened and his conclusion deserves to be quoted:

"The difficulty is that in contemporary conflict a military logic is always expected to be subservient to a political logic, which is why there has been a persistent search for political motives for the attack on the Belgrano. This political logic is supposed to point to a graduated response, with each escalation only justified if political remedies continue to be frustrated; and all action at the early stages is expected to be solely for defensive purposes, which is why the question with the Belgrano is seen by all sides as being one of the characters of the immediate threat posed to the British task force. In the Falklands war of 1982 such an approach could not be followed because neither side could be confident of victory. Once hostilities had begun, both found themselves approving a military logic that turned out to be politically uncomfortable. That is why the Belgrano was sunk."

The Guardian 19/9/84
(continued)

The chief reason for doubting the wisdom of despatching a task force and for challenging the proportionality of the military response to the occupation of such insignificant islands, was precisely because of the certainty that this military logic would prevail over political and diplomatic considerations as the fleet sailed further from home and became more vulnerable to attack. What seems to shock some people now was obvious at the time.

April 30 was a turning point for several reasons. The Haig negotiations had broken down. At the same moment the United States declared her full support for Britain. Haig's memoirs imply that this made available intelligence resources which had not been available before. While the Haig diplomacy was in progress the pressures of the military were resisted. I recorded in my notebook for April 26 a complaint about the "formidable military lobby" at work on ministers.

When the negotiations eventually did breakdown the British had agreed to a peace plan which, had the junta grasped it, would have had an extremely rough ride in Parliament. Haig commented: "It seemed incredible to me that any rational government would reject those terms." When the Argentinians subsequently turned down a still more advantageous plan, and one which Mrs Thatcher could scarcely have considered, Haig concluded "War was now inevitable." The sinking of the Belgrano took place two days later. From that moment military considerations, which included the lives of men and the safety of ships and aircraft, had the upper hand.

If we dispense with conspiracy as the explanation of the sinking of the Belgrano ought we to be shocked nevertheless by the lies told about it at the time and subsequently?

At the time I, for one, expected to be told nothing which did not serve the overriding purpose of winning the war. I scarcely bothered to consult official sources and learnt what I could mostly from the other side of the Atlantic. What was said to Parliament at the time was presumably designed to persuade the world that we were justified in waging an undeclared war under Article 51, which provides for self-defence, of the UN charter. The support of international opinion was necessary for winning the war.

The subsequent deceptions are another matter. I imagine there to be one good reason only for continuing to suppress the truth — which, as I have argued, will not be very interesting — about the Belgrano affair and that is the role played by US intelligence. This is just about the most sensitive subject in Whitehall, as we saw during the GCHQ affair, because of the importance which is attached to our unequal "special relationship" with the US in the intelligence field.

Apart from that the reasons for suppression are all bad and if there is, in a banal sense, any comparison with Watergate it lies in the cover-up syndrome in which new lies are told to conceal old lies, generating new leaks, until the cover-up itself becomes the crime and what was originally to be covered up is largely forgotten. It was the cover-up, rather than the original burglary, which led to Richard Nixon's self-impeachment and I have long suspected that if he had owned up to a bit of bugging in the first place — who doesn't? he could have asked — he would have been re-elected President all the same.

Mrs Thatcher's Government is becoming victim of a similar process. The Belgrano affair is ceasing to be about the Belgrano. Tam Dalyell whose maverick genius consists in fastening on to the least important aspect of any subject has kept the issue alive long enough for it to become a different issue. The Belgrano was sunk because there was a war on. It was neither a conspiracy nor a cock-up.

About the war itself there is not much more to say. About government secrecy and the proper role of civil servants in the deceit of Parliament or the manipulation of public opinion there is plenty more to be said. Perhaps in the way that an ugly building in Washington became as famous as the Taj Mahal, the dead of the Belgrano will one day be honoured in the English language as the unwitting and unlikely agents of a more open government.

Thatcher Belgrano denial supported

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin, former Chief of the Defence Staff and a member of the war Cabinet during the Falklands war, said yesterday that the Prime Minister was telling the truth in saying that she knew nothing of the Peruvian peace proposals until after the General Belgrano was sunk on May 2, 1982.

Lord Lewin was appearing in a Thames Television programme about the sinking, during which a tape-recording was played of an interview by a journalist with Mr Alexander Haig, the former American Secretary of State. In it he said that the British Ambassador in Lima was with President Belaunde of Peru as he negotiated on the telephone with Mr Haig, and was reporting back to London.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP

for Linlithgow, who was also on the programme and always claimed that the Belgrano was sunk to ensure the failure of the Peruvian initiative, described the recording as "staggering new evidence" which showed that the Prime Minister's statement that the first indications of the Peruvian peace proposals reached London three hours after the Belgrano was sunk could not be true.

But Lord Lewin said: "Mrs Thatcher is telling the truth. She did not know anything at all about the Peruvian peace proposals until after midnight that night after the Belgrano was sunk." He did not suggest that Mr Haig was lying, but the memory was notoriously fickle.

He added that even if they had known something about the peace talks in his view it would have made no difference

Repeal secrets Act call

A call for the withdrawal of the prosecution against Mr Clive Ponting, a civil servant charged under Section Two of the Official Secrets Act, was made by Mr Des Wilson, chairman of the 1984 Freedom of Information Campaign, during a debate which ended with

the party reaffirming its support for the repeal of the Act and its replacement with a Freedom of Information Act.

The assembly also approved an amendment to the main motion deploring the use by the Attorney General of Section Two of the Official Secrets Act

as a means of disciplining a senior civil servant for allegedly having supplied information to an MP on a matter of acute public interest.

The amendment had been moved by Mr Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, chairman of the party's home affairs panel.

Secrecy 'growing like a disease'

The Telegraph 19/9/84

By WILLIAM WEEKES

ALLEGATIONS that secrecy in Britain was becoming a disease were made during a debate which resulted in the assembly reaffirming the party's support for repeal of the Official Secrets Act.

It also called for freedom of information laws giving a statutory right of access to official information.

The Prime Minister was singled out repeatedly for criticism.

One delegate, r Paul Nicholls, Westminster N., accused her of translating the term national security to mean "a threat to Margaret Thatcher."

Delegates also endorsed an amendment deploring the use of Section Two of the Official Secrets Act "as means of disciplining a senior civil servant allegedly for having supplied information to an MP on a matter of acute public interest."

The assembly agreed that a new right of access should include exemption where there is an overriding case for confidentiality.

It rejected a suggestion that "national security" should be removed from the exemption list.

Mr Des Wilson, chairman of the Freedom of Information Campaign, said Mr Cliv Ponting, a senior civil servant, had

appeared in court under the Official Secrets Act.

He was accused of leaking documents about the sinking of the Belgrano that were no conceivable threat to national security but were embarrassing to the Prime Minister.

Miss Sarah Tisdall a former Defence Ministry secretary, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for leaking documents that once again involved no threat to national security.

The Telegraph 19/9/84

Sinking of the Belgrano

SIR—The Naval task force under Rear-Adm Woodward was a tiny fraction of Adm Jellicoe's fleet at Jutland.

If Jellicoe had lost a lot of battleships Britain would have lost the Great War. If Woodward had lost his only three carriers we would have lost the Falkland campaign.

The Belgrano with her attendant destroyers was a threat to our carriers. We had to sink her.

Surely the action of a civil servant in leaking a secret should be relegated to its proper importance.

P. D. S. HEWITT
Hove, Sussex.

'MANY LINKS' TO ARGENTINA, SAYS ENVOY

By Our United Nations Correspondent in New York
Britain's Ambassador to the United Nations, Sir John Thomson, has expressed the hope that this year's General-Assembly debate on the Falklands dispute with Argentina will be postponed because "debates are confrontational and don't form a useful prelude to negotiations."

During a private briefing before yesterday's opening of the 39th session of the United Nations General Assembly Sir John emphasised that Britain was willing to negotiate with Argentina on a wide range of other issues besides the sovereignty of the islands.

"Over many generations we have enjoyed a particularly close relationship with Argentina, and there are many links that could be renewed. We are not too fussy about which order," he said.

The Telegraph
19/9/84

Belgrano switch not told to war cabinet

The Guardian 19/9/84

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Naval headquarters at Northwood did not inform Mrs Thatcher's war cabinet when it learnt that the Argentine cruiser Belgrano was heading away from the British task force on May 2 1982. Lord Lewin, chief of the defence staff during the Falklands war, said yesterday.

"Northwood would have known but may have decided quite properly that it was an operational matter," he said after appearing on the Thames Television Daytime programme about the controversy surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano with the loss of 368 lives.

The timetable, established partly through leaked Ministry of Defence documents, shows that at 2pm on May 2 the

Peter Jenkins, page 15

submarine Conqueror informed Northwood that the Belgrano had reversed course and turned west.

The cruiser started doing so at 9 am, eleven hours before she was attacked.

Also at 2 pm Northwood sent a signal to Conqueror with orders to attack the Belgrano. This was repeated at 4 pm, and again at 6 pm, because the earlier messages were garbled.

During the programme Lord Lewin said that this timetable was "generally correct" but misleading. The questions that should be added, he said, were who knew? what? and when?

Later he told journalists that he did not know when the war cabinet—of which he was a member—was first informed about the change in the Belgrano's course.

Defending Northwood, he said that headquarters could not be expected to report to the war cabinet about all the operational movements of Argentine ships. The captain of the Belgrano could have easily and quickly changed course again, Lord Lewin said.

Whitehall officials have criticised Northwood for not keeping ministers informed of which signals it was receiving and which it was sending to the task-force.

They insist that Sir John Nott, then defence secretary, and Mrs Thatcher, did know that the Belgrano had reversed course by the time they addressed the Commons on May 4.

Sir John told the Commons then that the cruiser had been sighted only at 8 pm on May 2 and that it was "closing on the task force."

The controversy surrounding the issue of whether London knew of the latest US-Peruvian peace moves before the Belgrano was sunk also deepened yesterday.

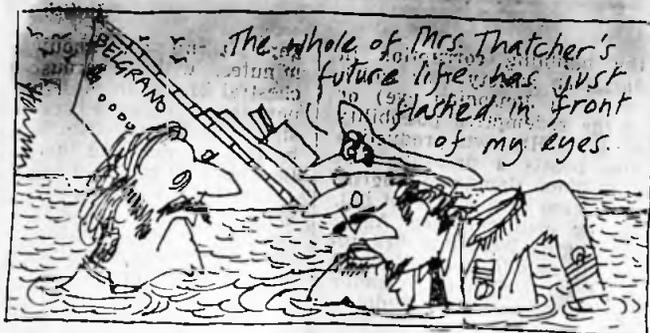
Contradicting Whitehall's version of events, Mr Alexander Haig, then US secretary of state, said that Mr Charles Wallace, the British ambassador in Lima, was kept informed of the peace talks through the afternoon and night of May 1.

Daytime broadcast a tape of a recent interview in which Mr Haig said it was irrelevant what Mr Francis Pym—then foreign secretary who was in Washington at the time—knew or did not know because Mr Wallace, "was in on every bit of the negotiations in Peru."



Lord Lewin — defending
naval HQ

Sinking of the war Cabinet



Sir, — Your survey of events leading up to the sinking of the Belgrano ("What price the crown jewels?", September 15) makes it clear that the war Cabinet, with the honourable exception of Francis Pym, were both treacherous and trigger-happy. Any sinking outside the exclusion zone must have scuppered all peace initiatives; but a sinking, apparently, was what the Navy and the war Cabinet thirsted for.

By May 1 Port Stanley had already been roughed up enough to show that no easy Argentinian victory was in prospect. Peace plans were in progress. Once British determination had been demonstrated, Galtieri must have known that his poorly

trained army could not see the invasion through. That meant that his credibility was done for, but a face-saving withdrawal was still his best bet.

Sinking the Belgrano put paid to all that. This is the measure of the war Cabinet's responsibility. — Yours faithfully,

(Dr) James Hemming,
31 Broom Water,
Teddington, Middlesex.

Sir,—I trust that the captain of the Conqueror will follow the good example set by the U-boat commander — who sank the passenger liner City of Cairo — and meet the survivors of the Belgrano.—Yours faithfully,
(Mrs) J. A. Doyle,
14 Sandwich Road,
Worthing, W Sussex.

Hong Kong agreement promised 'within days'

By John Gittings

A statement of the final steps for reaching agreement on Hong Kong has been promised "within two or three days" by the Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr Wu Xueqian.

Both sides agree that the negotiations are on course for wrapping up the draft agreement by the end of this month. A statement this week may fix the date for the final, twenty-third round of talks in Peking which is expected to be largely a formality.

The Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Edward Youde, will be joined today by the 10 "unofficial" (non-civil servant) members of the Executive Council for a last meeting tomorrow with Mrs Thatcher. A statement would then follow naturally after Hong Kong's unelected representatives have given their approval for the record.

Sir Edward has already seen the Foreign Secretary and had consultations with senior offi-

cial handling the Hong Kong problem.

Mr Wu left Peking yesterday to attend the United Nations General Assembly, and said that China attaches great importance to this planned meeting in New York with his Soviet counterpart Mr Gromyko.

The Chinese press has said in an article written by the Foreign Ministry that China hopes to open up new diplomatic prospects with "as many new friends as possible." It urges both superpowers to "ease their strained relations in the interest of world peace."

Mary-Louise O'Callaghan adds from Peking: China is demanding compensation for losses caused by the new US country-of-origin restrictions on textile imports.

The regulations which came into effect on September 7 this year prevent exports of textiles from countries other than those where the goods were

produced. The US Ambassador to Peking, Mr Arthur Hummel was summoned late on Friday by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Economic Relations and Trade in Peking, Mr Wang Pingqing, who demanded "fair and reasonable" compensation for losses resulting from the new restrictions.

Mr Wang is believed to have told the ambassador that China was "strongly dissatisfied" with the new regulations.

Mr Wang claimed that the US regulations violate the Sino-US textile agreement because Chinese textiles processed in Hong Kong may be restricted if their origin is unclear.

It is estimated that both Hong Kong and China stand to lose up to US \$300 million as a result. China has already claimed that 100,000 jobs will be affected if goods processed through Hong Kong are re-fused entry to the US.

Liberal Party leans towards nuclear freeze

By Dennis Johnson
and Jim Lewis

The Liberal Party showed signs yesterday of moving towards the "larger objective" of a nuclear freeze instead of insisting on banning cruise missiles in Britain as an immediate priority.

A day-long discussion by the party's defence and disarmament commission, charged with framing a resolution for Thursday's defence debate in the full assembly, revealed a continuing opposition to cruise but a clear readiness to adopt a more open-minded approach towards achieving its priority of nuclear disarmament.

In a series of straw polls taken by the chairman of the commission, Mr Paddy Ashdown, MP for Yeovil, the crowded session was evenly divided on whether the first step should be to go for a freeze or to remove all cruise missiles.

The delegates also voted overwhelmingly in favour of introducing an independent nuclear freeze in Britain, moving from that towards a mutually verifiable freeze agreed with other countries.

On the issue of a nuclear-free zone for Britain they were again overwhelmingly in favour of a modest, though temporary, increase in defence spending if that was necessary to provide adequate conventional forces.

A further straw poll revealed a majority for merging all the East-West disarmament talks, and for Britain's having its own voice in the combined discussions.

A small committee, elected at the end of the session, is to compile the resolution for Thursday's debate.

Mr Richard Holme, a former president of the party, outlined measures towards lowering tension and building confidence. He wanted to raise the nuclear threshold while maintaining security and to stop the arms race as a first step towards de-escalation, a policy seen to be defensive and non-provocative in intent, and



Mr Paddy Ashdown:
straw poll tests

which would command public support.

He sensed that a majority wanted to remain in Nato, but the purpose should be to change the alliance from within by making it visibly defensive, more European, and far less nuclear.

Britain, he said, should end the Fortress Falklands policy, end the independent deterrent, resist and campaign against Trident, contribute adequately towards the conventional forces of Nato, and stop arms sales to the Middle East.

Mr Holme also wanted to change the Nato first use policy, into which the West had allowed itself to drift.

"The Liberal Party is anti-cruise, and it is right to vote against cruise, which is technically dubious, tragically ill-conceived, and politically disastrous," Mr Holme said.

Mr Brian May, a member of the Alliance's joint committee on defence, told delegates that they should not be deflected from making up their own minds on nuclear weapons by the fear of a split with the SDP. "The nuclear threat is too important for that," he said.

The party's defence spokesman in the Lords, Lord Mayhew, who told the commission that he did not believe

nuclear war was possible, intentionally or by accident, was accused of dangerous complacency by Mr Martin Horwood, chairman of the Union of Liberal Students. He said the Republican Party in the US was already thinking about a winnable nuclear war.

In a written submission the party's defence and disarmament panel said that Liberals should reject the current Nato doctrine of flexible response which envisaged the first use of nuclear weapons.

It called instead for a more effective European influence within Nato, the cancellation of Trident, and the creation of a nuclear-free zone in central Europe.

The panel also demanded that there should be no further deployment of cruise missiles in Britain and that existing ones should be controlled by a dual key system.

As a first step towards this strategy the panel argued that there should be a mutual and verifiable freeze on the production and deployment of all nuclear weapons.

Field Marshal Lord Carver, former chief of the defence staff, said that Britain should be thinking of reducing its nuclear strength rather than adding to it with weapons such as Trident.

It was absurd to think in terms of using nuclear weapons for any purely military purpose or to compensate for inadequate conventional forces, though they remained a strong deterrent to prevent Russia and the US from getting involved in hostilities against each other.

No one could suggest, however, that America did not have enough nuclear weapons. There was no need to add to them, but that did not mean they should be thrown away.

"We should be devising means to reduce them, we should not be adding to them ourselves, as we shall with Trident."

Today's business: Speech by the president-elect, Mr Alan Watson; parliamentary question time; debate on freedom of information; constitutional amendments.

Former defence staff chief calls for reduction in nuclear forces

Field Marshal Lord Carver, former Chief of the Defence Staff, said Britain ought to be thinking of reducing its nuclear forces rather than adding to them with weapons such as Trident when he spoke in a defence commission yesterday on the opening day of the Liberal Assembly in Bournemouth.

The commission, which discusses possible alternatives for motions to be put before the conference, heard Mr Russell Johnston, Liberal MP for Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber, say that Dr David Owen had been wrong to argue there was a need for Britain to retain an independent nuclear capability into the next century.

Lord Mayhew, Liberal spokesman on defence in the House of Lords, said that in the nuclear age there was no possibility of the Russians or the Americans deliberately, by design, precipitating a war: common sense showed they understood that neither side, even with the most perfect "Star Wars" system, had a first-strike capability able to prevent devastating retaliation with the losses out of all proportion to any possible gain.

There was a suggestion that the Russians or the Americans were deliberately planning to start a war, but that was dangerous rubbish because it increased distrust and suspicion and raised temperature.

There was also the thought that the more nuclear weapons the world possessed the more likely it was one would go off by accident, but that was to assume the leadership was incompetent. Those possibilities had the dangerous effect of diverting attention from the real threat, the threat of war by misunderstanding.

It was possible to imagine the

Russians misinterpreting some move by the Americans as being a prelude to an attack. It was possible for the Russians to imagine and conclude that war was being forced on them and for them to make a first strike in self defence.

It could be confidently assumed that they would not start a preemptive strike unless they were sure their own security was at stake, therefore Western action in the Middle East was unlikely to be a flash point.

The more serious threat to peace was the growing challenge to Soviet control in Eastern Europe with the return to the agenda of possible German reunification. Chancellor Kohl had said that reunification was legitimate political objective

Reports by Stephen Goodwin,
Anthony Hodges and
Barbara Day

and for historical reasons the Russians would see that as a Germany allied to the West, possibly possessing nuclear weapons, and seeking to reclaim lost territory. Such a situation could cause the Russians to react in a violent manner with a preemptive war.

It was important, therefore, that the Liberal Party should make a study of that problem as no other party had done so. It was no use hoping the problem would go away: the Liberals should be thinking ahead to take the lead.

"I would like to see this assembly request the Alliance to study this problem and report back to the two parties," he said.

By keeping cool and retaining the balance of power between East and West while trying to foresee and forestall the

dangers, it would be possible to get rid of the nightmare of nuclear war altogether.

Mr Bob Fyson, a member of Liberal CND, said Liberals felt that because they found the Soviet system abhorrent the greatest threat in terms of international peace came from there. In talking about threats, it did not make sense to omit the threat from the West.

They all knew the dangers of the SDP tail wagging the Liberal dog. There were some issues on which Liberals should take a principled stand, even if some then regarded them as extremists. It was not the Liberals' function to search for the centre of public opinion on every issue.

Their resolution would include a demand for a non-nuclear defence policy within 10 days.

Mr Howard Fry, Taunton, said the party should not throw away the chance of power by sticking to every jot and tittle of Liberal principle and policy. They should not put themselves in a position manifestly at colossal odds with their SDP partners in the Alliance. There were other issues on which the Liberals and SDP agreed entirely.

Mr Des Wilson, a member of the party council and president of the National League of Young Liberals, said that if those who believed the nuclear missiles at Greenham Common should be returned from whence they came were "hot heads" then so were the majority of the British people. If there was one political issue on which they could not compromise the fundamentals it was peace and war.

Some argued that now cruise was here they should learn to live with it. But that implied also accepting three million

unemployed because they were here now and all of the other realities of Thatcher's Britain. Liberals wanted to change those things, not accept them. They must promise the British people they would send cruise back.

Mr Russell Johnston, party spokesman on defence, said: "What we are doing, in a new political atmosphere in the UK, is trying to work out a stance on defence we believe an Alliance government could realistically and effectively pursue and which, in the election preceding it, would be seen by our electorate to make sense."

After his recent visit to the Kremlin with Mr David Steel, he concluded that nothing would be achieved without the most vigorous and continued dialogue at the highest level and that that dialogue would not succeed if the West was seen to be internally divided.

Field Marshal Lord Carver said if the Americans were to be persuaded it was in their interests to continue their commitment to Nato they needed to be reassured on two matters: that their commitment to Western Europe was not a forlorn hope and they would stand a reasonable chance of success if attacked by the Soviet Union, and that Western Europe was seen by the American public to be playing a full part in their own defence.

Nato would collapse if we made a significant reduction in our standing forced in West Germany or in our maritime operation, he said.

Among policies supported by a show of hands were: a move away from Fortress Falklands; the Liberal commitment against an independent nuclear deterrent for Britain, the existing deterrent to be negotiated away; renouncing the first use of nuclear weapons.

Science report

Falkland spiders link to New Zealand

By Tony Samstag

A study of spider species in the Falkland Islands suggests that the region may be a missing link between the famously isolated fauna of New Zealand and the rest of the world.

If the "Gondwanaland" hypothesis is correct, and there was once a monolithic southern continent that broke apart to form the various continents that exist today, it follows that slight resemblances among species might remain, however far apart their environments drifted and however divergent their evolutions became over the intervening aeons. Intermediate regions between the continents might also, logically, have evolved intermediate kinds of species or subspecies.

Only five people have seriously studied the spiders of

the Falklands; there is little published material on them, almost no knowledge of their lifestyles, and none of the 19 species recorded is known to have acquired a popular English name.

Of seven species of spider collected on Beauchene Island, the most isolated of the Falklands archipelago, two very small species of the Mynogleninae sub-family of money spiders strongly suggest a New Zealand origin.

Mynogleninae have been recorded previously only in New Zealand, except for a few species in upland areas of southern Africa and one possible species in Australia. *Falklandoglenes spinosa* is a typical member of its sub-family, thought likely to represent a remnant popu-

lation isolated for millions of years after the break-up of Gondwanaland, and is the first record of a new world Mynoglenina.

Beauchenia striata is less convincingly a Mynoglenina, although its male palpal organ is typical of the sub-family. It may, however, be the only spider with an uncoloured flap of skin projecting downwards from under its eyes and shielding part of the fangs.

A recent series of Falklands postage stamps portrays two species of spider; more than half of the indigenous species may remain to be discovered.

Source: "Spiders in the Falklands Islands", by Dr Michael B. Usher, newsletter from the Falkland Islands Foundation, no 2, August, 1984 (PO Box 9, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 1BY).

The Army changes some entrenched ideas

There is not much that remains unchanged for long in modern armies, and now even the infantry's immemorial task of digging trenches looks as though it is about to be mechanized.

At present the British Army of the Rhine has a small number of mechanical diggers for its infantry battalions, but for trench digging they are so few as to be not much more than novelty items. The army hopes that within a few years each rifle company will have at least one.

The aim is that two men could complete a four-man trench in four hours, which would take 12 or more hours to dig manually. This will not only save time, but also a great deal of strenuous work, so that infantrymen will not have to turn to their other military tasks exhausted by hours of digging.

The mechanical digger is only one of several changes being contemplated. The place of corrugated iron, which has been the essential material of trench construction since the First World War is now in question, with the possibility of glass-reinforced plastic, or other

man-made materials, as a better alternative.

Even the size of the trenches is a subject of argument. The miles of inter-connecting trenches, the dominant symbol of the First World War, are long gone, and the one-man foxhole of the Second World War is out of favour.

A man on his own under fire is too likely to crouch as low as he can in his hole, and not fight his position. This is understandable, and possibly healthy, but it does not make for military effectiveness. The view now is that the presence of several men, including an NCO, in a trench helps to generate fighting spirit, and the argument is whether for this purpose a four-man or an eight-man trench is best.

During Exercise Lionheart going on in Germany, three battalions will try out some other new approaches.

Trenches require a lot of material. In war (though not in peacetime) material can often be improvised from gates, barn doors and the like, and it is said that German infantry units carry spanners to remove

roadside barriers for use in trench construction.

The British infantry, at least in theory, would have available official supplies of materials; for a two-man trench these would consist of 40 metal posts or stakes of different sizes, 16 corrugated iron sheets and 10 kilograms of wire, not to mention numbers of sandbags which would be filled with earth taken out of the trench.

In Germany troops will test a system of construction which would halve the weight of metal needed, and greatly reduce construction times, even without the aid of mechanical diggers.

Apart from the effort involved in actually digging the trench, one of the biggest tasks is to drive in metal posts or pickets, to support the corrugated lining of the trench, and then place and put under tension wire guy ropes to hold the pickets. On a two-man trench 20 of these pickets, each with its own guy-wire, is needed.

This week the army will be trying out a system using not flat sheets of corrugated iron, but interlocked

curved sheets that are largely self-supporting. This not very remarkable advance would dramatically reduce the number of guys and pickets needed.

The army is also reviewing the amount of overhead protection provided in trenches. There is considerable concern about some forms of Soviet artillery shells that dispense thousands of metal needles, which are much more penetrative than ordinary explosives.

The army found in the Falklands conflict that where the Argentines had constructed trenches with heavy overheads protection and open sides through which their troops fired, a tunnel effect was created funneling lethal blasts from nearby explosions.

The simple responses to these problems would be to pile more sandbags and other protection on the roof of the trench, but that merely adds to the labour involved and makes it more obtrusive, and therefore an easier target.

Rodney Cowton
Defence correspondent

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TOPICAL TAPES

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AND LATIN AMERICANS

1 Party Assembly delegates declared their Monday to the fortress Falklands policy of the government. On Tuesday at Question and Answer Party's spokesman on foreign affairs and defence, Mr Johnston, MP, was asked to give his views on various alternatives. Mr Johnston who's visited the islands is from the Bournemouth constituency. From Bournemouth, reports.

He wanted some means of allowing the Falklanders to

retain their way of life. He said he favoured a United Nations solution as being most likely to be stable and secure, adding that it was through the United Nations that early direct contact might also be established between Britain and Argentina. Another delegate, Mr Peter Gould, pressed Mr Johnston to declare his support for a guaranteed solution to the Falklands' problem and to recognise that Britain should have proper relations with all Latin American countries which needed help in their struggle for democracy and human rights:

ACTUALITY OF MR JOHNSTON:

"It is quite easy to give you the assurances you've just had, firstly quite evidently and obviously one knows that it is impossible to sustain the kind of expenditure on defence in regard to the Falklands that we have done already for any lengthy period of time. Indeed, I've always taken the view in talking to the Falkland islanders as I did. I've been to the Falkland Islands, I've spoken to them. Very enormous similarities, you know, between the Falkland Islands and the Highlands of Scotland. Everybody thinks it is a terribly cold, bleak, miserable sort of place -- not the Highlands of Scotland, but the Falkland Islands (LAUGHTER). It's not so, at all. It's rather beautiful, it's not altogether as warm as perhaps Bournemouth is, but it's a very attractive kind of place, and particularly if you are of a - brought up on an island, you gain that sort of attitude. Now, these people have developed a way and attitude - a way of life of their own. Very integrated. Now I've said to them there that in my view the honest decision

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NEWSCOPY FROM=BOURNEMOUTH =
BY=GEOFFREY LANE =
TEL CALL 1730

(NO TAPE NUMBER)

=LIBERALS ON FALKLANDS=
FOR RADIO NEWSREEL AND LATIN AMERICANS

CUE: At the Liberal Party Assembly delegates declared their opposition on Monday to the fortress Falklands policy of the Conservative government. On Tuesday at Question and Answer session the party's spokesman on foreign affairs and defence, Mr Russell Johnston, MP, was asked to give his views on various possible alternatives. Mr Johnston who's visited the islands is MP for a northern Scottish constituency. From Bournemouth, Geoffrey Lane, reports.

Mr Johnston said he wanted some means of allowing the Falklanders to retain their way of life. He said he favoured a United Nations solution as being most likely to be stable and secure, adding that it was through the United Nations that early direct contact might also be established between Britain and Argentina. Another delegate, Mr Peter Gould, pressed Mr Johnston to declare his support for a guaranteed solution to the Falklands' problem and to recognise that Britain should have proper relations with all Latin American countries which needed help in their struggle for democracy and human rights:

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for a British government as some stage to take up has to be to say to them 'look, we believe that you have a right to live. You haven't done anybody any harm, but I'm very sorry we cannot afford into the unlimited future to defend you, and therefore we are prepared to assist you in any other way that you wish, and we're sorry that we are in this position, but it is a reality.' Now I think that that is a much more honest position. (APPLAUSE) I entirely agree with what the good doctor said about Mr Alfonsin, -- Dr Alfonsin, is he not? Yes. -- and the need that Britain has to at the earliest possible moment establish a reasonable relationship with the new and long may it last, democratic government of the Argentine. (APPLAUSE)"

The Liberal Foreign Affairs spokesman, Dr Russell Johnston, MP, speaking at the Liberal Party Assembly.

THIS IS GEOFFREY LANE, IN BOURNEMOUTH.

END MT/BUSH NIU.

Roger Scruton

Why the Belgrano had to be sunk

Mr Tam Dalyell's obsession with the Belgrano is boring as only the obsessions of public people can be. But if a bore goes on long enough he has to be confronted.

Suppose then that it is all true. Suppose that the Belgrano, having advanced so far towards the Falklands, had turned round and begun to head for port without entering the 250-mile limit within which no enemy ship could assume itself to be safe. And suppose "peace initiatives" were at that moment being made, with whatever credibility might, in the circumstances, attach to them. Would we then have acted rightly in sinking the ship?

The answer, I believe, is yes. First we must remind ourselves of the overriding moral premise, which is that the war was not our doing. It was started by Argentina, through an aggressive action which limited our sovereignty and presented us with a *fait accompli*. Part of our territory was seized by force, in defiance of all procedures recognized either by international law or by the tenuous morality of nations. We had no choice but to respond. The responsibility for every death in that war lies with Argentina, and with those Argentines who initiated, applauded, or supported the original aggression. The Belgrano sailors were sent to their deaths, not by our torpedo, but by the state to which their allegiance was owed. Moreover, they knew this, accepted it, and died as men should, honourably and blamelessly in their country's cause.

That said, however, there is the problem of our own military conduct. There is a distinction, even for the offended party, between a war conducted justly and one conducted in defiance of the limiting scruples that ensure the morality of every defensive act. Had we infringed that morality, which must govern our actions even in the limit of danger then part of the blame for the loss of life must lie with us. But I believe we did not infringe it.

In setting the 250-mile limit around the Falklands our high command said that enemy ships within that limit would be attacked. But it did not say that enemy ships outside it would *not* be attacked. To say the latter would be to refute the realities of war, in which the first objective must be to neutralize those enemy forces which pose a genuine threat to our forces.

Our troops had no foothold on land; they were fighting 10,000 miles from home, in icy and dangerous waters, with no more secure a base than that which could be provided by a navy yet to be tried in the exacting conditions of modern weaponry. Our high command had one overriding duty, which was to protect the fleet, the loss of which would have meant the certain deaths of thousands. Danger could come from the air and this forced the fleet

to steer east of the Falklands. Danger could also come from the sea, and in this case could be neutralized by no evasive action. Our commanders therefore had a duty to hunt out the Argentine navy and inflict upon it a blow that would effectively destroy its power.

There is only one decisive way of achieving that end, which is to sink an important ship at sea. The Belgrano offered itself, and the Belgrano was sunk. Moreover, the Argentine navy thereafter presented no serious danger.

It is irrelevant that the Belgrano was heading homewards - or relevant only in one particular - namely, that this evasive action would show that the Argentines too had perceived the logic of our strategic thinking, and recognized that, by all unwritten rules the Belgrano had to be sunk.

It is also irrelevant that peace initiatives had been made, however bona fide. The essential premise of any meaningful negotiation is a balance of power. The Argentines, having secured control over the disputed territory, could be brought to make concessions only by a threat of force, and the threat had to be credible.

In order that serious negotiations could begin, therefore, a decisive military blow was by then absolutely necessary. Whoever doubts this should recall the peculiar *braggadocio*, with which all Argentine pronouncements following the seizure of the Falklands were embellished. The language was the swaggering bravado of the bully, who can negotiate only after his bluff has been called. The sinking of the Belgrano could not possibly have closed an avenue to peace that already existed; it might have opened an avenue yet to be explored.

It was fortunate for our troops that the aggressor in this war was a "right-wing" junta. Had the Falklands been "liberated" by a left-wing dictatorship, our high command would have fought a far harder and perhaps ultimately hopeless battle against a state decreed constitutionally incapable of wrongdoing by many of the makers of British public opinion. It was also fortunate for the Argentines that they were governed by such a regime. For our victory unseated the junta, as it could have unseated no leftist dictatorship. The Falklands war is therefore now painted by the British left not as a triumph of civilization over moral chaos (which it was) but as a catastrophe.

Let us not lament the Belgrano. Let us praise instead the bravery of the men who tracked her in those dangerous waters, and who unhesitatingly obeyed orders that might at any moment have sent them to a horrible death.

The author is editor of the *Salisbury Review*.

Daily Mail
18th September 1984

Belgrano: New move

MRS THATCHER is tomorrow expected to offer the fullest account yet of the sinking of the Argentine cruiser Belgrano during the Falklands war.

In a letter to Labour Leader Neil Kinnock Mrs Thatcher will maintain that the prosecution of Defence Ministry civil servant Mr Clive Ponting on secrets charges was a legal, and not political decision.

And she will stress that all the confusion and nit-picking about the military chronology of Belgrano's sinking and whether it should ever have happened are irrelevant as the cruiser posed a deadly threat to the British task to the British Task Force.

Doctor, No!

IGNORING the realities of war Dr David Owen, the SDP leader, continues to blather about the sinking of the Belgrano. When this question is out of the way presumably he will demand an enquiry into the destruction of the Bismarck.

How can one support a party that wastes so much time in looking back?

(Cdr) L. ROCCA R.N.
Rtd,
Seaton, Devon

Don't rock the boat

Following my disclosure that General Haig has refused to take part in Thames Television's *Daytime* discussion today on the Belgrano for fear he will get involved in another "Watergate", I hear Francis Pym has just withdrawn at the last minute. It seems the sacked Foreign Secretary has heard that Mrs Thatcher plans to reply tomorrow in writing to a question from Neil Kinnock about the Belgrano. Pym does not want to risk being put in a position that might conflict with the Prime Minister's. At the last count, the only men willing to stand up and be counted on the programme are Sir Anthony Kershaw, chairman of the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, Lord Léwin, former chief of defence staff, and, of course, "Belgrano Tam" Dalryell.

The Uganda may be saved from scrapyard

A society has been formed to save the Falklands hospital ship, the Uganda, from the breaker's yard.

The 32-year-old liner, which once ferried parties of schoolchildren round the Mediterranean and Scandinavia, is at present leased to the Ministry of Defence, ferrying troops and equipment between Port Stanley and Ascension Island.

The lease runs out in December. Uganda's owners, the P&O Line, says it is too early to predict the fate of the 17,000 ton vessel, but has cooperated with the SS Uganda Society in schemes to ensure its survival.

The Falkland Islands Development Corporation last week published a feasibility study on the possibility of turning the ship into a permanent educational, leisure, and maritime exhibition centre in the West India Docks. The estimated cost of refurbishing is between £5m and £6m over five years.

Mr David Pollard, a marine fuels expert from Surrey, who launched the society last year, is concentrating his 400 members' efforts on raising £300,000. P&O's expected asking price for the scrap value of the vessel.

The Uganda's attraction, said Mr Pollard, is that she epitomizes an era of cruising to the colonies in style, instead of being packed into a jumbo jet. The colonies have gone, so has the style, he says, but the Uganda remains and should be saved.

When she was handed over by the Barclay Curle shipyard of Glasgow in 1952, the Uganda's first route was with P&O's subsidiary, British India Steam Navigation Company, sailing to East Africa.

However, it was as the hospital ship to the Falklands Task Force that she gained wider attention. Her first patients, on May 12, 1982, were from HMS Sheffield and during the next two months she handled 780 casualties, including 150 Argentines.

CRUISE SHIP SAILS ICE PASSAGE

By ERIC DOWD
in Toronto

A SWEDISH vessel has become the first cruise ship to travel the North West Passage, the route between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans along the northerly, Arctic coast of North America.

The specially-reinforced Lindbad Explorer, 2,367 tons, with 92 passengers and 60 crew, has reached the northern coast of Alaska 42 days after setting out from St John's, Newfoundland, on its voyage to Yokohama, Japan.

A spokesman for Salen Lindbad Cruisers, the owners, said the voyage may pave the way for regular commercial cruises over the route, first navigated by Roald Amundsen in a three-year journey ending in 1906 after explorers had sought it since the 16th Century.

Polar bears seen

The Lindblad Explorer, with a double hull and reinforced bow, and built for cruising in icy waters, sailed up the western coast of Greenland, north across Baffin Island and through the Canadian Arctic islands to the Beaufort Sea, north of Alaska.

It was helped by an ice-breaker only once.

The passengers, who paid up to \$22,000 (£17,000) each for the trip, went ashore most days to look at plants and wildlife, and visit abandoned trading posts and ruins of ancient Eskimo settlements.

They saw polar bears often and beat a hasty retreat when one came too close.

The 20th-century Arctic explorers did not exactly rough it, however. They dined on gourmet food, including caviar, paté and champagne, but there was no entertainment on board—only daily lectures.

Belgrano prosecution

Confusion over Heseltine role

By Julian Haviland, Political Editor

Government sources were yesterday disdainful of the suggestion by Mr Neil Kinnock, leader of the Opposition, that the prosecution of Mr Clive Ponting, a senior official in the Ministry of Defence, accused of passing on documents about the Belgrano affair, was brought at the insistence of Mr Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of State for Defence, against the advice of senior civil servants and in breach of established conventions.

However, no minister or official spokesman would make any public denial. It was said that Mr Kinnock, who made his charges in a long letter to the Prime Minister sent on Friday, would receive an answer "in due course".

There was similar reluctance to take issue publicly with a report in *The Observer* which purported to give details of

discussions between Mr Heseltine and the acting senior official in his department, Mr Ewen Broadbent, on an occasion in August.

The report stated that Mr Broadbent told the minister that prosecution of Mr Ponting under the Official Secrets Act was not recommended; but that Mr Heseltine surprised officials by insisting that the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, be called on to agree to a prosecution.

The Observer account referred to a minute of the meeting kept by a private secretary on which Mr Kinnock's letter to the Prime Minister was believed to have been based.

A spokesman for Mr Kinnock said yesterday that he and his staff had not seen such a minute, but were aware of its contents.

It was said that Mr Kinnock was receiving information from a number of sources in Whitehall, in particular the Foreign Office and the Defence Department, which showed uneasiness about the prosecution of Mr Ponting and the reticence of ministers when asked about the sinking of the General Belgrano.

Mr Kinnock's letter to Mrs Thatcher implicitly denies her account, in a letter sent to Dr David Owen on Saturday, of how the decision to charge Mr Ponting was taken.

She told Dr Owen that the Attorney-General "acts in a totally independent and non-political capacity" when making such decisions; that it would be improper for ministers to interfere with his discretion; and that they had not done so.

Letter texts, page 2

Texts of the Belgrano letters

The following is a partial text of Mr Neil Kinnock's letter to Mrs Margaret Thatcher.

It came to my notice over a week ago that senior Foreign Office civil servants have sought to persuade your government to release full details of the timing and nature of communications with HM submarine Conqueror and of the deliberations of the Cabinet in relation to the decision to sink the Argentine warship General Belgrano on 2 May 1982.

I understand that ministers have been advised that publication of such details would not compromise national security and there is not good reason to suppress further or withhold such information. Civil servants who must prepare documents for parliamentary answers and other ministerial statements on this matter are clearly right to believe that they have no duty to obscure information or present it in a way which could mislead or misinform Parliament and the public.

I believe you were wrong initially to refuse to establish the independent inquiry into the sinking of the Belgrano which we have continually pressed upon you. I hope you will reconsider your original decision, and accept the advice that you are currently receiving.

There is a further matter of very grave concern, the conduct of your government towards Mr Clive Ponting. There is reason to believe that when the inquiries into the disclosure of documents to my colleague, Mr Tam Dalyell, and through him to Sir Anthony Kershaw had been completed, it was decided the action involved a breach of trust and was not of a

criminal nature. As you will be aware, that decision followed the long-established convention in such cases.

I understand that the Secretary of State for Defence was notified of the outcome of the investigation and that, despite this convention, and despite the fact that senior civil servants intended to follow that convention in the case of Mr Ponting, he overruled their advice and insisted Mr Ponting be prosecuted under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act. I can only presume you endorsed this action either before or after arrangements to prosecute Mr Ponting had begun.

I am informed of further and even more serious allegations concerning the treatment of Mr Ponting will made by the defence, on which it would not, of course, be proper for me to comment at this stage.

Whilst I welcome the decision, in the wake of the leaking of the documents and other related events, that the Secretary of State will appear before the Select Committee of Foreign Affairs, that may well be after proceedings against Mr Ponting have been begun, and the select committee's questions will not necessarily relate directly to the treatment this individual has received.

I hope therefore that you will provide me with a separate and accurate account of the decisions relating to Mr Ponting which were made in the department and by the Secretary of State for Defence.

A partial text of the Prime Minister's letter to Dr David Owen:

As regards the charges against Mr Ponting, you must know that the

Attorney-General acts in a totally independent and non-political capacity in making decisions on prosecutions. It would be improper for me or my colleagues to interfere in any way with his discretion in the exercise of that function and I confirm that we did not do so in Mr Ponting's case. Similarly, I have no intention of commenting now on the Attorney-General's decision and I am astonished by your suggestion that I should do so.

You asked about the sequence of events leading up to the decision to charge Mr Ponting. When the two documents were returned to the Ministry of Defence by the Select Committee, Michael Heseltine decided that an investigation should be undertaken by the Ministry of Defence police into the circumstances in which the documents had come into the hands of Mr Tam Dalyell.

The results of the investigation were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions on 13 August. Later that day the Defence Secretary and I were told of the outcome of the inquiry and that the matter had been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Director of Public Prosecutions consulted the Solicitor-General in the absence of the Attorney-General, who decided on 17 August that charges should be brought against Mr Ponting. The Attorney-General endorsed this decision. The law officers did not consult any of their ministerial colleagues. Nor was there an initial decision by them not to prosecute: indeed, it was made clear to Mr Ponting when he was interviewed on 10 August and again in writing on 14 August that the possibility of prosecution was under consideration.

SDP and the Falklands

From Lord Kennet

Sir, Professor Regan (September 12) writes under a misapprehension. The SDP does not propose to "give Argentina sovereignty over" the Falklands. The policy adopted last week by the Council for Social democracy (which is the parliament of the Party) reads:

"an arrangement whereby sovereignty is vested initially either in the UN under the provisions of trusteeship, or under the auspices of the Organisation of American States . . . or under satisfactory arrangements for joint sovereignty . . ."

May be that wording is open to criticism on grounds of legal imprecision, but not I think because it gives sovereignty to Argentina. And incidentally, not only was sovereignty not Argentina's 150 years ago, or "even before that"; Argentina did not even exist then.

Yours etc,

WAYLAND KENNET,
House of Lords.
September 14.

The Times 17/9/84

Twice shy

Mr Alexander Haig, the failed "shuttle negotiator" in the Falklands crisis, clearly thinks the Belgrano affair is too hot to handle. When approached by Thames Television to take part in tomorrow's *Daytime* programme on the subject, Haig's long-serving staff assistant Woody Goldberg said: "It's strange that you should mention that. Only this morning the general and I were reading a report of Dr David Owen's speech in which he argued that your Prime Minister was in the early stages of a Watergate of the Belgrano affair. General Haig has endured one Watergate in his time, and I guess he's not about to walk into another."

A wise man. It was Haig who was effectively in charge of President Nixon's White House during the tense weeks leading up to Nixon's resignation.

The Times 17/9/84

On the record

Mr Haig's reluctance to speak on the Belgrano "special" may not, of course, be entirely unrelated to tomorrow's lineup of original speakers, such as one Tam Dalyell. Irrepressible as ever, "Belgrano Tam" now feels, in the light of recent disclosures, that his suspension from the House in May for accusing Mrs Thatcher of lying over its sinking was unjustified. Stung by an aside from a Commons clerk that MPs get themselves suspended as an act of political calculation, Dalyell tells me he has written to Speaker Weatherill asking him to remove the blot from his record. However, I fear his request, of which there is no precedent, (there is no precedent for expunging records) will cut little ice. As the Speaker told the errant MP at the time, the word lie is one just not used in the House.

Belgrano row criticism of Thatcher renewed

BY PETER RIDDELL, POLITICAL EDITOR

MRS MARGARET THATCHER, the Prime Minister, yesterday faced renewed criticism from opposition leaders over allegations of a cover-up in the dispute about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, Belgrano in May 1982 in the Falklands hostilities.

The affair has been given new impetus both by the disclosure of new evidence raising questions about previous official explanations and by the prosecution under the Official Secrets Act of Mr. Clive Ponting, a Defence Ministry civil servant, for allegedly leaking the documents.

In a letter to the Prime Minister and in a BBC radio interview Mr. Neil Kinnock, Opposition leader, said Mr. Michael Heseltine, Defence Secretary, had overruled Civil Service advice that Mr. Ponting should not be prosecuted.

Mr. Kinnock said the decision to prosecute was a departure from the practice that such

leaks were regarded as breaches of trust and not as a criminal offence unless questions of national security or endangering life were involved.

The Labour leader said ministers had been advised by civil servants that publication of details of the events leading to the order to sink the Belgrano would not compromise national security.

In a television interview yesterday morning Dr David Owen, leader of the Social Democratic Party, said there had been a cover-up and the Civil Service had been made a party to it.

"There is no excuse for parliament to have been lied to in 1984 about a military operation that took place in 1982," he said.

His remarks followed receipt of a letter to him from Mrs Thatcher in which she denied interfering in the decision to prosecute Mr. Ponting. This letter was not sent until after

that from Mr Kinnock had been received.

Mrs Thatcher also rejected Dr Owen's call for a White Paper on the Belgrano affair, pointing to the inquiry into it by the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee to which Mr Heseltine is to give evidence. She is also due to reply soon to a letter from Mr George Foulkes, MP, a Labour spokesman on foreign affairs.

The significance of the latest exchanges is not just in the allegations but in that both Mr Kinnock and Dr Owen have become involved. This has raised the political status of the affair and make it more embarrassing for the Government.

There are now related issues: ● Whether Mr Ponting should have been prosecuted;

● The apparent inconsistencies in official explanation of events leading to the sinking of the Belgrano, notably over its position before the action;

● Whether it was justifiable to order the sinking.

Mr Kinnock and Dr Owen have concentrated on the first two points, noting possible confusion in communications in battle conditions.

Few MPs share Dr Owen's view that the affair is another Watergate, not least because of the crude political calculation that most of the British public is not interested and is relieved Britain won the conflict without an even larger loss of life. Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, has attracted large audiences at his meetings on the subject.

The Government's view has been that the Belgrano was a threat to the British task-force whatever its precise course before the sinking and that it was necessary to act to defend the vulnerable British carrier force and to protect many British lives.

Justinian Page 19

The Ponting case and secrets law

THERE SEEM to be no inhibitions, legal or otherwise, on the ceaseless stream of public comment about the prosecution of Mr C live Ponting, the senior Ministry of Defence civil servant, for allegedly supplying documents to Mr Tam Dalyell, MP about the Belgrano affair.

The discounting of any sub judice rule by these commentators is not an aberration, but symptomatic of what Lord Arman noted at last week's conference of the Royal Institute of Public Administration as the increasing public demand that in matters that do not involve national security, the veil of government secrecy should be pierced in the public interest.

Two separate issues of constitutional importance arise. The first is the influence, if not insistence, of political considerations upon the Attorney General's sole authority to order the process of law to be invoked against a civil servant for breaches of section 2 of the Official Secrets Act, 1911.

The second question is the propriety of using an instrument of the criminal law that is widely regarded as a blunderbuss for disciplining civil servants revealing secret information.

Since 1924 attorneys general have been sensitive to any suggestions that their prosecutorial role has been dictated by their political colleagues. In that year the first Labour government took office and instantly ran into trouble.

Workers' Weekly, the Communist Party organ, published seditious articles and incitements to mutiny in the armed services. This was too much for Mr Ramsey MacDonald, the Prime Minister, and most of his Cabinet. Sir Patrick Hastings, the Attorney General, who had had little political experience, having been an outstanding advocate at the Bar, authorised the prosecution of Mr J. R. Campbell, editor of Workers' Weekly.

Left-wing Labour MPs were p in arms, and the prosecution

was lamely abandoned with unfortunate results for both the extremists and the moderates in the Government. The Liberals, egged on by the Conservatives, pressed for an inquiry into the conduct of the Attorney General, and a vote on the question went against the Government. Accelerated by the Zinoviev letter, Mr MacDonald and his Government were defeated in November 1924 and replaced by a Conservative administration with a comfortable majority.

The classical position was enunciated by Lord Shawcross when he was Labour's Attorney General in 1951. He concluded that the Attorney General's duty, in deciding whether or not to authorise the prosecution, in the interests of the state, is "to acquaint himself with all the relevant facts, including, for instance, the effect which the prosecution, successful or unsuccessful as the case may be, would have upon public morale and order."

But the one consideration that is altogether to be excluded is the repercussion of a given decision upon the Attorney General's personal, or his party's, or the Government's political fortunes. Thus the Attorney General may properly consult his political colleagues for the purpose of informing himself of the relevant implications of any decision to prosecute or not.

What is constitutionally impermissible, however, is for the Attorney-General to defer to his political colleagues in making the decision. Ordinarily, the courts may not question the Attorney General's decision, but they may do so if there is positive evidence that he has in any way abused his powers.

Section 2 of the notorious Official Secrets Act makes it an offence for any civil servant to communicate any document or information to an unauthorised person. "Unauthorised person" effectively means everyone outside state employment, including, therefore, an MP.

As Sir Martin Furnival-Jones,

a former head of MI5 told the Franks Committee, set up in 1971 to review the operation of section 2: "It is an official secret if it is in an official file." Given this ludicrously wide definition hundreds of people break the law every day. The civil servant who tells his wife where his work is taking him the following day, press officers of every government department, MPs and journalists briefed by ministers and senior civil servants, are but a few of the daily offenders.

What might offend against the interests of the state is determined by the government of the day, so many minister may himself reveal information about his policy and decisions. This is how advance information to the press lobby is justified. In short, what constitutes an offence under the Act is entirely arbitrary in practice.

The Franks Committee recommended the abolition of the section, to be replaced by a new statute bearing the title Official Information Act. The new legislation would cover information in the following areas: defence and internal security; foreign relations; currency and reserves; Cabinet proceedings; maintenance and law and order; information given by the citizen; and information used for gain. In the first three areas, only those matters covered by the classification "secret" and "defence-confidential" would involve an offence, and at the time of prosecution and classification would be re-examined to see if it still held.

The Labour Party manifesto of October 1974 promised to replace the section "by a measure to put the burden on the public authorities to justify withholding information." The promise was never honoured. Section 2 remains as the main instrument whereby as a last resort government suppresses public knowledge of the workings of the State.

When Mr Ponting appeared before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate last week his solici-

tor referred to an item in the Guardian diary column about a meeting of Whitehall information officers at which the Prime Minister's Press secretary was reported as saying the Government wanted the case to be listed before a "severe judge."

Judicial inclinations of severity might be relevant to the question of any penalty to be imposed. But judges in criminal trials on indictment are not the arbiters of guilt. Hence the impropriety of the remark can hardly provoke the outrage of the commentators.

Indeed any hint that a severe sentence might be given to a civil servant who breached the Act in following what he saw as his higher duty to the public than to his immediate political masters might arouse sympathy in the jury.

Even though lawyers might conclude that there is no defence on the grounds of public interest, a jury, more attuned to the public attitude towards the revealing of matters of public interest, might decline to convict.

Any judicial severity that might be appropriately applied would, therefore, count for naught if there was an acquittal, or a jury disagreement that was not a majority of at least 10 to two.

Those who in the coming weeks before the trial are inclined to persist in criticising the Attorney-General for having embarked upon an improper prosecution, might do better to wait upon the verdict of 12 ordinary citizens who can effectively register the public verdict upon the propriety of the case against Mr Ponting.

Our history is strewn with examples of a single verdict in the courts having effectively pronounced upon the state of the law. What the Franks Committee has failed to achieve may yet be propelled by the Freedom of Information lobby, armed with the outcome of Mr Ponting's case, towards practical reform.

Justinian

Belgrano: Thatcher hits back

The Sunday Times 16/9/84

MRS THATCHER told David Owen yesterday that she was astonished at his suggestion that she should intervene in the prosecution against Clive Ponting, the civil servant accused of leaking official secrets over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano. *writes Michael Jones.*

The SDP leader wrote to the prime minister on Thursday urging her to seek an end to the prosecution. He also called for a government white paper to be published on the circumstances of the Belgrano's destruction during the Falklands War. And he expressed concern at reported remarks by Bernard Ingham, Mrs Thatcher's press secretary, that Ponting should be tried by a judge who would hand down a severe sentence.

In her letter of reply yesterday, Mrs Thatcher said that Sir Michael Havers, the attorney-general, acted in "a totally independent and non-political capacity in making prosecution decisions"

"Similarly, I have no intention of commenting now on the attorney-general's decision."

Mrs Thatcher said that charges against Ponting followed investigations by the Ministry of Defence police into how ministry documents had come into the hands of Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow. On August 13, the results were sent to the director of public prosecutions

The next day, Sir Patrick Mayhew, the solicitor-general, decided in the attorney-general's absence that charges should be brought.

Rejecting Owen's request for a white paper, Mrs Thatcher said she saw no need; she referred him to the inquiry into the Belgrano affair by the House of Commons foreign affairs select committee.

And dismissing Owen's point about her press secretary's remarks, she said she understood that the report of them in the Guardian newspaper entirely misrepresented their nature at an internal meeting of government information officers.

● Neil Kinnock, the leader of the opposition, claimed yesterday that Michael Heseltine, defence secretary, had overruled advice that Ponting should not be charged.

In a letter to the prime minister, he requested a "separate and accurate account of the decisions relating to Mr Ponting". He added that there was "very grave concern" about the government's conduct.

New York Times
Sunday 16th September 1984

Desirable Falklands

To the Editor:

I have just returned from the Falkland Islands to find the usual silliness about them being perpetuated in the press ("Albion in the Falkland Fog," editorial July 30).

Samuel Johnson, in 1770, simply gave the place a nasty description in order to make people think as he did about the issue of sovereignty. The climate is in fact not particularly harsh. The islands are not "bleak and gloomy" or "barren in summer"; they are not even foggy. Other sources fairly record the fertility of the soil and the pleasant, brisk climate. I can agree, having been in many locations on the islands through summer and winter.

The Falklands are heavily guarded from the Argentine colonialist aggressor, but the place seems scarcely a fortress to the 1,800 (not 1,400) islanders. By their own testimony, their peaceful lives go on essentially as before. They want to keep it that way. Other people have the right to determine their own fate after 150 years of living in one place. Let the Falklanders have that right too.

The Falklands are no white elephant; if they were, Argentina would not want them.

JULIA CARRAGAN
Troy, N.Y., Sept. 10, 1984

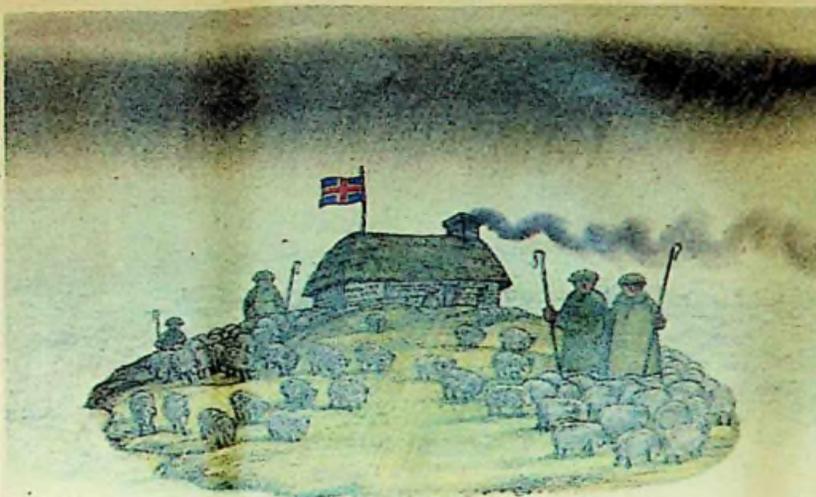
RAYMOND BRIGGS GOES TO WAR

The biographer of Father Christmas and creator of that magical children's classic 'The Snowman' has now written and illustrated a scalding satire about the Falklands War. Those who have followed the descending curve of

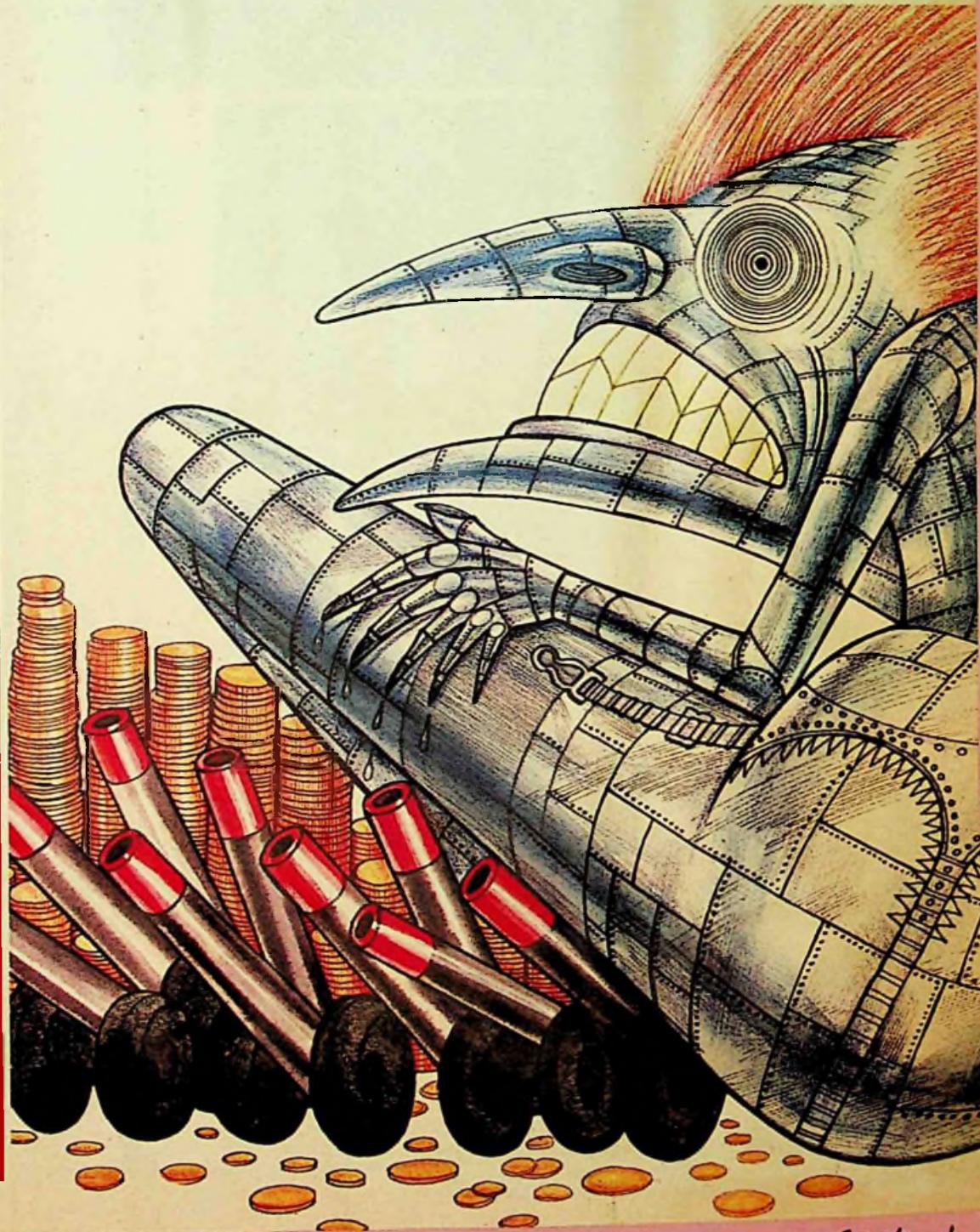
Raymond Briggs's pessimism will not be surprised. After the merely lavatorial fun of 'Gentleman Jim' and the ghoulishness of 'Fungus the Bogeyman' came his powerful tale about nuclear war, 'When The Wind Blows'.

His new book, published next Friday, is possibly even more uncompromising, as these illustrations from it show. 'The Tin-Pot Foreign General and the Old Iron Woman' goes from the garish colours of war to the soft grey crayon of death and mourning without attempting to raise a smile. It is not a children's book. No doubt Briggs hopes that children will read it, nonetheless.

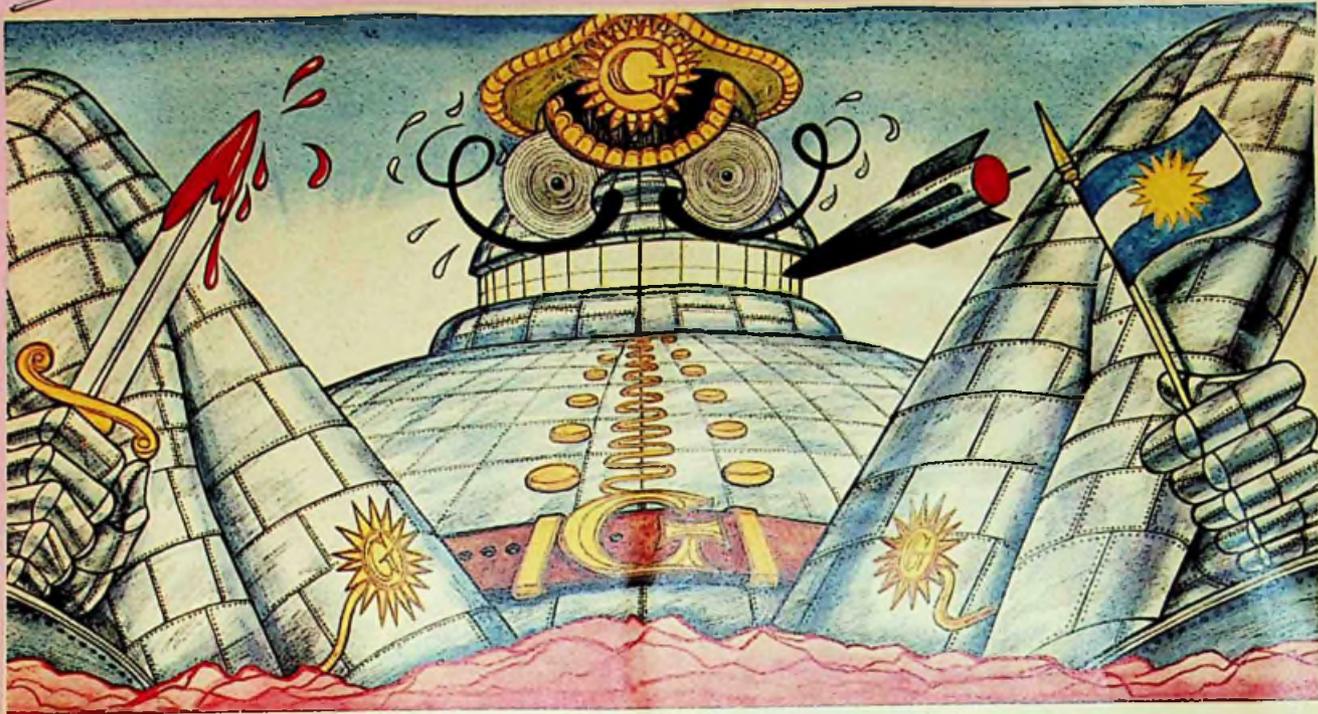
'The Tin-Pot Foreign General and the Old Iron Woman' is published by Hamish Hamilton on 21 September at £4.50 hardback, £2.50 paperback



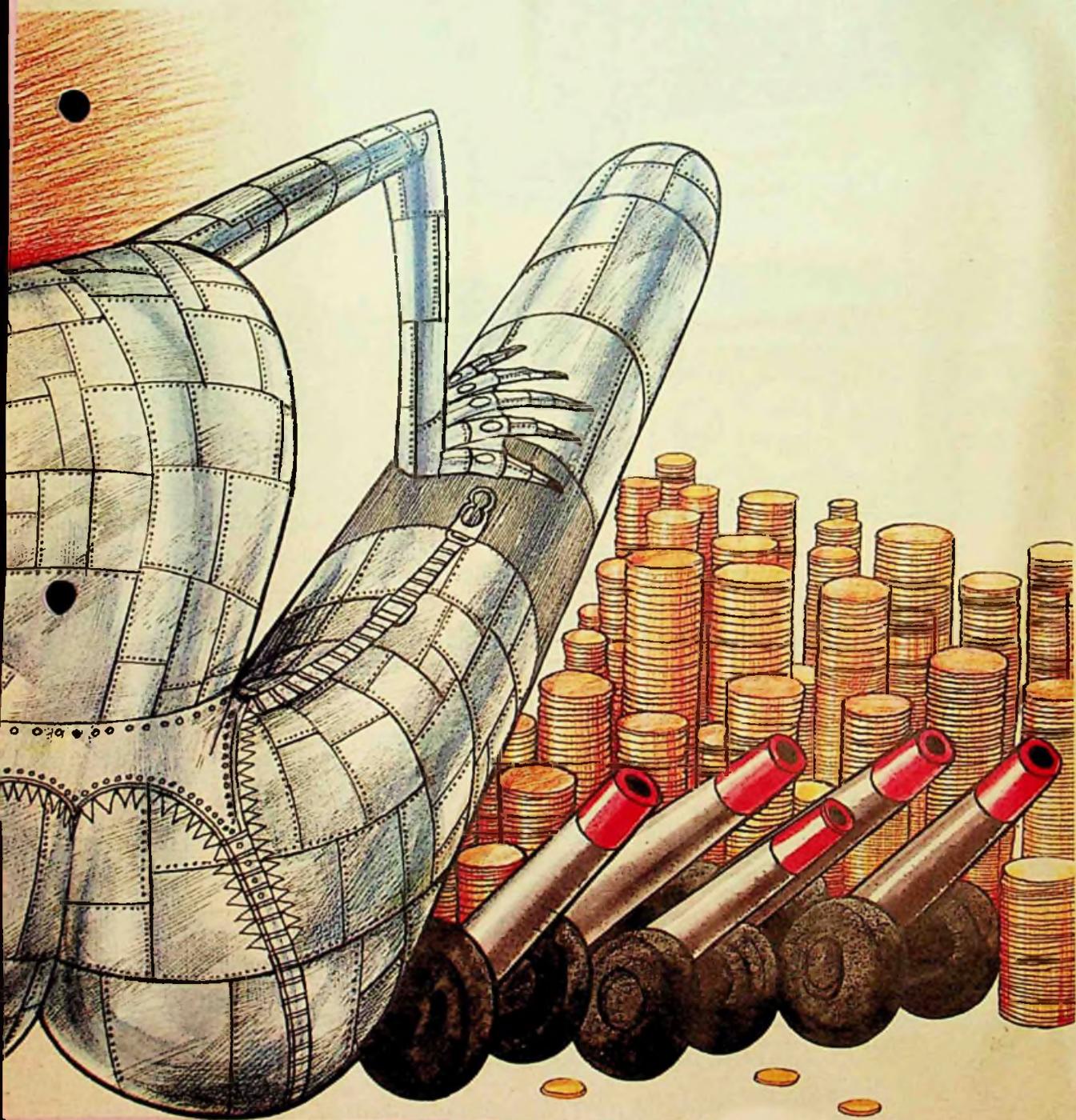
Once upon a time, down at the bottom of the world, there was a sad little island. No one lived on the sad little island except a few poor shepherds. They had mutton for breakfast, mutton for dinner, and mutton for tea



Cont..1



Next door to the sad little island was a great big kingdom, ruled over by a Wicked Foreign General ... although he had lots of gold on his hat, he was not real. He was made of Tin Pots



Now listen! Far away over the sea there lived an old woman with lots of money and guns. Like the Tin-Pot Foreign General, she was not real, either. She was made of Iron

Cont../3
Observer
16.9.984



Some men
were shot.
Some men
were drowned

The soldiers with
bits of their
bodies missing were
not invited to take
part in the Grand
Parade, in case the
sight of them spoiled
the rejoicing. Some
watched from a
grandstand and
others stayed at
home with
their memories
and their medals



Belgrano: Kinnock accuses Heseltine

by DAVID LEIGH

THE BELGRANO affair took a dramatic new turn last night when Opposition leader Mr Neil Kinnock bluntly contradicted Mrs Thatcher's version of events.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Kinnock accused the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, of personally over-ruling his own officials' advice that civil servant Mr Clive Ponting should not be prosecuted on secrets charges.

This directly challenges the Prime Minister, who denied in a letter yesterday to SDP leader Dr David Owen that Mr Heseltine had behaved improperly.

The Prime Minister's letter also disclosed that she has ruled out a new Government White Paper on the affair.

What is more likely to provide controversy, however, is the detailed account she gives of how the Ponting prosecution was brought. This account is now being called into question. Mr Kinnock said he regarded the matter as one 'of very grave concern.'

The argument centres on the events of 13 August. It was on this day, says Mrs Thatcher, that the results of the Defence Ministry investigation into the leaked Belgrano documents were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. 'The Defence Secretary and I were told of the outcome of the inquiry and that the matter had

been referred to the DPP,' she wrote. A spokesman for the DPP's office has told *The Observer*, however, that the documents were not received until 16 August—three days later.

Mr Kinnock's advisers have been told by senior officials within the Ministry of Defence that on the afternoon of 13 August Mr Heseltine was visited at his Oxfordshire home by the acting senior official at the MoD, Mr Ewen Broadbent.

He had been informed that the Chief Constable of the MoD police had completed his inquiry and recommended that no prosecution should be brought. This was in line with a long-standing convention in the MoD that only cases involving leaks liable to endanger national security should attract a criminal charge.

Mr Kinnock's letter is believed to be based on a minute signed by Mr Dennis Brennan, an assistant private secretary, recording the discussion at Mr Heseltine's home.

Mr Broadbent was the most senior civil servant at the Ministry in the absence on holiday of the Permanent Secretary, Sir Clive Whitmore. Mr Heseltine himself was due to leave for Cyprus the following day.

At the meeting, Mr Broadbent informed Mr Heseltine that the Chief Constable of the MoD police, backed by his departmental superior, did not recommend prosecution as the result

of Mr Heseltine's 'leak inquiry.'

Mr Heseltine surprised officials by countermanning their advice and insisting that the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, be called on to agree to Mr Ponting's criminal prosecution. The detailed arrangements were left in the hands of the junior minister, Mr John Stanley. Whitehall sources confirm that Mr Stanley phoned Mrs Thatcher on holiday in Switzerland on the same day.

Mrs Thatcher's letter to Dr Owen, published yesterday and presumably based on a brief from Mr Heseltine, paints a very different picture.

This gives the impression that impartial officials had already themselves referred the case to the DPP as a criminal matter. She says: 'It was made clear to Mr Ponting when he was interviewed on 10 August that the possibility of prosecution was under consideration.'

The Brennan minute, however, discloses that prosecution had been considered but rejected by 13 August. What happened during Mr Ponting's interviews the previous Friday is a matter of evidence not yet tested in court, though Mrs Thatcher makes assertions about what happened.

Mrs Thatcher further claimed last night that Mr Ponting had again been warned, this time in writing on 14 August, that prosecution was 'under consideration.' In fact, this notification

tion must have been as a result of Mr Heseltine's intervention the day before.

Mrs Thatcher went on to claim that the Attorney-General had acted 'in a totally independent and non-political capacity' in agreeing to prosecute, and claimed to be 'astonished' to be asked to comment on the decision.

She did not, though, deny that Ministers might have made representations to the Attorney-General on the subject, merely stating that the Attorney himself had not sought to consult ministers, and that Ministers did not 'interfere in any way with his discretion.'

Within three days of Heseltine's intervention, the Government law officers—Sir Michael Havers, on holiday in France, and the Solicitor-General, the former Home Office Minister, Sir Patrick Mayhew—complied with Mr Heseltine's request, and authorised a criminal charge.

The DPP's office confirmed last week that normal procedure in the case of proposed extensions in the scope of the law was not followed. The papers in the Ponting case were not sent out to independent counsel for a legal evaluation.

The particular sensitivity of Ministers over-ruling the impartial advice of their officials in the Ponting case is that each Minister involved, if Mr Kinnock's charge is correct, had a



Kinnock: Grave concern.
vested political interest in the decision whether or not to prosecute.

Mrs Thatcher herself, Mr Heseltine, Mr Stanley and Sir Michael Havers all figure in the documents disclosing the facts about the Belgrano which form the background to the case.

Mr Kinnock's allegations follow a week in which Mrs Thatcher's press secretary, Bernard Ingham, was disclosed to have talked to government information officers about getting 'a severe judge' for the case. Mr Heseltine himself issued a statement last week denying that he had agreed to testify to the Commons select committee on foreign affairs about the Belgrano sinking because of recent *Observer* disclosures.

What his statement omitted to mention was that he had only consented to do so last July because Sir Anthony Kershaw confronted him, at the foreign affairs committee's request, with the contents of the documents Mr Ponting is now alleged to have criminally disclosed. Sir Anthony agreed last night that this was the true sequence of events.

Mr Ponting's solicitor, Mr Brian Raymond, said last night: 'The Prime Minister's account of the events of 10 August is not accepted by Mr Ponting.'

Mrs Thatcher's ~~reference~~ to conversations between Mr Ponting and other ministry officials on that date was a comment on evidence which formed a significant element of the prosecution case, he said.
Text of letters, page 2.

The Belgrano letters

Text of Mr Neil Kinnock's letter yesterday to Mrs Thatcher :-

It came to my notice over a week ago that senior Foreign Office civil servants have sought to persuade your Government to release full details of the timing and nature of communications with HM submarine 'Conqueror' and of the deliberations of the Cabinet in relation to the decision to sink the Argentine warship 'General Belgrano' on 2 May 1982.

I understand that Ministers have been advised that publication of such details would not compromise national security and there is no good reason to suppress further or withhold such information. Civil servants who must prepare documents for parliamentary answers and other ministerial statements on this matter are clearly right to believe that they have no duty to obscure information or present it in a way which could mislead or misinform Parliament and the public. *The Observer* report of last Sunday gave further indication that civil servants were resentful about the role they are being required to play in the 'Belgrano' affair. Before writing to you about this matter, however, I wished to satisfy myself about the accuracy of the reports I had received.

I believe you were wrong initially to refuse to establish the independent inquiry into the sinking of the 'Belgrano' which we have continually pressed upon you. I hope you will reconsider your original decision, and accept the advice that you are currently receiving.

Operational confusion in the long-distance transmission of orders and reports in battle conditions is understandable. But the refusal of the Government to acknowledge even the possibility of error is not so easily explained. Since there are now no considerations of national security or 'pressing operational reasons' to inhibit such explanations, I trust they will be quickly and comprehensively published.

There is a further matter of very grave concern; the conduct of your Government towards Mr Clive Ponting. There is reason to believe that when the inquiries into the disclosure of documents to my colleague Mr Tam Dalyell and through him to Sir Anthony Kershaw had been completed, it was decided the action involved a breach of trust and was not of a criminal nature. As you will be aware, that decision followed the long-established convention in such cases.

I understand that the Secretary of State for Defence was notified of the outcome of the investigation and that, despite this convention, and despite the fact that senior civil servants intended to follow that convention in the case of Mr Ponting, he overruled their advice and insisted Mr Ponting be prosecuted under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act. I can only presume you endorsed this action either before or after arrangements to prosecute Mr Ponting had begun.

I am informed of further and even more serious allegations concerning the treatment of Mr Ponting will be made by the defence, on which it would not, of course, be proper for me to comment at this stage.

Whilst I welcome the decision, in the wake of the leaking of the documents and other related events, that the Secretary of State will appear before the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, that may well be after proceedings against Mr Ponting have been begun, and the select committee's questions will not necessarily relate directly to the treatment this individual has received.

I hope therefore that you will

provide me with a separate and accurate account of the decisions relating to Mr Ponting which were made in the department and by the Secretary of State for Defence.

Text of Prime Minister's letter to Dr David Owen :-

Your letter of 13 September covers a number of separate matters.

As regards the charges against Mr Ponting, you must know that the Attorney-General acts in a totally independent and non-political capacity in making decisions on prosecutions. It would be improper for me or my colleagues to interfere in any way with his discretion in the exercise of that function and I confirm that we did not do so in Mr Ponting's case. Similarly, I have no intention of commenting now on the Attorney-General's decision and I am astonished by your suggestion that I should do so.

You asked about the sequence of events leading up to the decision to charge Mr Ponting. When the two documents were returned to the Ministry of Defence by the Select Committee, Michael Heseltine decided that an investigation should be undertaken by the Ministry of Defence Police into the circumstances in which the documents had come into the hands of Mr Tam Dalyell.

The results of that investigation were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions on 13 August. Later that day the Defence Secretary and I were told of the outcome of the inquiry and that the matter had been referred to the Director of Public Prosecution. The Director of Public Prosecutions consulted the Solicitor-General in the absence of the Attorney-General, who decided on 17 August that charges should be brought against Mr Ponting. The Attorney-General endorsed this decision. The Law Officers did not consult any of their Ministerial colleagues. Nor was there an initial decision by them not to prosecute: indeed, it was made clear to Mr Ponting when he was interviewed on 10 August and again in writing on 14 August that the possibility of prosecution was under consideration.

You also enclosed your speech to the SDP Party Conference, in which you requested an immediate White Paper about the 'Belgrano.' I see no need for such a White Paper. The Select Committee on Foreign Affairs is, as you know, carrying out an inquiry of these matters, and Michael Heseltine wrote to the chairman on 26 July to say that he would be happy to give the evidence to that inquiry.

Finally, you refer to Mr Bernard Ingham, presumably basing yourself on an item in the diary column of *The Guardian* on 13 September. I understand that this referred to an internal meeting of Government information officers and that the account entirely misrepresents the nature of Mr Ingham's remarks.

Kinnock challenges Thatcher claim on Ponting

New leak in Belgrano row

By GEORGE JONES
Political Correspondent

THE Prime Minister was at the centre of a new row over the Belgrano affair last night after a fresh leak of Ministry of Defence documents about the decision to prosecute Mr Clive Ponting.

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour party leader, released the text of a letter which challenged her earlier assertion that Ministers had not been involved in the decision to bring an Official Secrets Act prosecution against Mr Ponting for allegedly leaking documents about the Belgrano affair.

Mrs Thatcher yesterday delivered a sharp rebuke to Dr David Owen, the Social Democratic Party leader, for urging her to drop the prosecution of Mr Ponting.

In a letter to Dr Owen she said it would be improper for

the Government to intervene, and said she was "astonished" that he should expect her to comment on the Attorney General's decision to bring the case.

The Prime Minister also stated that neither she nor other Ministers had interfered in the Attorney General's decision. The Law Officers did not consult any of their ministerial colleagues, she said.

But hours after No 10 released the text of the letter to Dr Owen, Mr Kinnock authorised the publication of his letter to the Prime Minister, which was delivered late on Friday.

Mr Kinnock's letter, based on internal Ministry of Defence minutes, claimed that Mr Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, overruled his own officials' advice that Mr Ponting should not be charged.

Mr Kinnock said there was reason to believe that when inquiries into the disclosure of the documents involved had

been completed, "it was decided that the action involved was a breach of trust and not of a criminal nature." That followed a long-established convention.

Despite this convention and the fact that senior civil servants intended to follow it, Mr Heseltine "overruled that Mr Ponting be prosecuted."

These latest disclosures will undoubtedly embarrass the Government, and intensify demands for a full explanation from Mrs Thatcher over the Belgrano affair.

Although few MPs share Dr Owen's view that it is the "early stages of a Watergate," Mr Kinnock's intervention means that it is assuming a greater political importance.

In her letter to Dr Owen, Mrs Thatcher rejected his demand that the Government should publish a White Paper setting out the full circumstances surrounding the sinking

of the Belgrano at the start of the Falklands war.

Mrs Thatcher also refused to be drawn into criticism of Mr Bernard Ingham, the No 10 Press Secretary, who is alleged to have voiced Government hopes that an appropriately severe member of the judiciary would be on hand to hear the Ponting case.

She accused the *Guardian* newspaper of having "entirely misrepresented" Mr Ingham's remarks, made at a private meeting of Government information officers last week.

Mrs Thatcher is expected to send a further letter this week about the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano to Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley.

This will attempt to answer some of the questions about the affair, particularly the amount of information available to the Falklands War Cabinet on the

movements of the Belgrano before it was torpedoed by a British submarine.

But the Prime Minister is understood to have blocked the disclosure of secret intelligence reports on the Belgrano's intentions.

Last April Mrs Thatcher told Mr Denzil Davies, a Labour defence spokesman: "Because of the indications that the Belgrano posed a threat to the Task Force, her precise position and course at the time she was sunk were irrelevant."

Members of the War Cabinet contacted last night insisted that, despite claims that the cruiser was heading away from the Task Force, it was a threat and had to be "taken out" to ensure the success of the British mission.

However, Mrs Thatcher is under mounting pressure to explain some of the apparent inconsistencies in official accounts of the episode.

What price the crown jewels ?

Mr Michael Heseltine was neither Secretary of State for Defence nor even a member of the war cabinet when the Argentinian cruiser *Belgrano* was sunk, with the loss of 368 lives, on May 2, 1982. He bears no responsibility for anything that happened on that day. But, this spring, he did commission a definitive and "top secret" Whitehall history of the affair. It is known in the MoD as the "crown jewels." So Mr Heseltine is not just right to decide to talk to the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs about the *Belgrano*: he is also ideally placed to lay the entire mystery to rest. He can tell the MPs precisely who ordered what and who did what through two tumultuous days in the South Atlantic. And — since the story is history and only some details genuinely secret — the MPs can then tell the House of Commons (which may wish a debate) and the public (who may wish to listen).

It is the interminable saga of ministerial evasion and half truth which has made such a course necessary. The issue is not whether the *Belgrano* should or shouldn't have been torpedoed. Far more simply, it is why so many fibs had to be told. Leak and admission have tardily brought us most of the crucial facts. It is May 1 and Britain and Argentina have not yet moved beyond the tiny exchanges which accompanied General Galtieri's Falklands invasion. Britain is still theoretically striving for peace and helping General Haig. Upright chaps in MCC blazers (metaphorically) we have publically told Buenos Aires that Argentine ships inside the 200-mile total exclusion zone will be attacked. At 11 pm London time, the submarine *Conqueror* finds the *Belgrano* and two sister destroyers cruising outside the TEZ. It tells Northwood. At 9 am on May 2 the *Belgrano* changes course. The *Conqueror* tells London so at 2 pm. Simultaneously, however, Northwood is busy transmitting to *Conqueror* the war cabinet's decision to attack the *Belgrano*. Northwood repeats that order at 4 pm and 6 pm. Bang go 368 lives. At which point Mr Heseltine can help with some questions. Did the war cabinet know that the *Belgrano* was steaming homewards when the order to sink was given? Did Northwood tell the war cabinet — between 2 pm and 6 pm — of the cruiser's change of course? (And, more technically, which messages got through and which were garbled?) Either Mrs Thatcher and her senior ministers decided that, come TEZ, high water or rules of cricket, this plum target was going to be destroyed — whatever that did to the peace process. Or the military at Northwood kept the politicians in the dark and took their own sweet decisions. A reasoned defence of either decision may yet be mounted. But it is not the defence provided in the Commons of May 4 by the then Mr John Nott: that the *Belgrano* was "steaming into" TEZ waters. The first of many fibs.

The whole business of the exclusion zone, meanwhile, has come to seem a trifle tawdry. We now know that on April 30, 1982 the Navy sought political permission to sink the 1,500-man aircraft carrier, the 25th of May, outside the zone and that Francis Pym, as Foreign Secretary, dissented because he felt that would flout international law. But we also know that on May 2 — with Pym in America, looking for peace — the war cabinet decided that any Argentine ship outside the TEZ could be attacked (though Buenos Aires weren't told that our public rules of the game had been privately changed for five more days). In a war and in a crisis, of course, such politesses may be perforce, blown away. But if that was the case, why not say so openly, long since — and then do your best to explain how the peace process was helped by such actions? Detail after detail, leak after leak, seems to put the boot on a rather different foot. That of Northwood and the admirals running the show and the politicians — if at all informed — damply letting them get on with it and twisting away about their own non-control of events. That obviously constitutes a continuing issue with many ramifications: in times of trouble, who runs Britain? A problem, now, for Mr Heseltine. And after that?

Daily Mail
15.9.84

'No panic' over Belgrano probe

By ROBERT PORTER
Political Correspondent

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Heseltine acted yesterday to dispel rumours that he had been panicked by Whitehall leaks into talking to a Commons committee about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano.

Mr Heseltine is due to appear before the Commons foreign affairs committee next month. He made it clear in a statement that the invitation to talk to the committee came from its chairman, Tory MP Sir Anthony Kershaw, on July 25. 'I replied on July 26 confirming that it was my intention to attend myself,' Mr Heseltine said.

His response was intended to show that the Government was not being hustled into any premature statement because of the leaks, which helped fuel rumours that the Belgrano was sunk deliberately to sabotage an Argentine peace initiative.

Labour's Foreign Affairs spokesman, Mr Denis Healey last night joined in the attack on the government's handling of the sinking, after SDP leader Dr David Owen claimed that the government had been involved in a systematic cover-up.

Mr Healey said that the affair had been bungled by the government.

Mail on Sunday
16.9.84

Belgrano: Another rebuff by Maggie

MRS THATCHER has refused demands by SDP leader Dr David Owen for a Government White Paper on the sinking of the Belgrano.

'I see no need for such a paper,' was her curt reply.

The Prime Minister also denied there had been any Ministerial interference in the decision to bring charges against Clive Ponting, a Ministry of Defence official who is accused of leaking secret documents on the Belgrano.

'The Attorney-General acts in a totally independent and non-political capacity in making decisions on prosecutions,' she said.

Infuriated

The way the affair has been allowed to escalate into a major political row has infuriated Britain's admirals.

They blame Whitehall for not insisting from the start that it had nothing to hide.

Though the Belgrano was sailing away from the Falklands when it was torpedoed on May 2, 1982, Navy chiefs are convinced it was poised to attack the British aircraft carriers Hermes and Invincible.

● Opposition Leader Neil Kinnock claimed last night Mr Heseltine had over-ruled Whitehall advice not to prosecute Mr Ponting.

Argentines' land grab

A PLAN has been put before the provincial government of Santa Cruz to expropriate 1.5 million acres of British-owned land in Argentina.

Deputy Raul de Antoni claims that 11 ranches managed by Argentinians are owned by British companies. 'As the land is on the border with Chile it is strategically important,' he says.

SDP and the Falklands

From Mr Alan Lee Williams

Sir, Professor Regan is right (September 12). The Social Democratic Party's stand on the Falkland Islands is surprising and foolish. It certainly appears to reek of appeasement as well as a (almost) total disregard of the legitimate interests of the Falkland Islands.

To concede sovereignty to Argentina after 150 years would be to concede too much to short-term advantage. The islands have obvious value to Britain vis-a-vis the British Antarctic Territories which lie only just 800 miles to the South. My colleagues on the Council for Social Democracy have ignored the wider geopolitical aspects of Britain's defence of the islands.

International activity in Antarctica is regulated by the Antarctic Treaty of 1959. There is manifest pressure for this to be revised in the early 1990s to take account of the interests of nations which were not part of the original agreement. Also there are discussions in progress to find an agreement for regulating mineral extraction. Therefore possession of the Falklands, and including South Georgia, will do much to underpin the long-term credibility of British activity further south.

Finally the military value of the Falklands must be recognised in a situation where, for whatever reason, the Panama Canal were closed to shipping, thus forcing shipping to use the route round Cape Horn. Given the world-wide expansion of the Soviet navy, the strategic significance of the Falklands should be given a higher profile than my SDP colleagues have yet recognised.

I believe Dr David Owen's principled stand during the Falklands war contrasts sadly with the expedient position his party has now adopted.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN LEE WILLIAMS.
Reform Club,
Pall Mall, SW1.
September 12.

Belgrano attacker 'returned next day'

By Julian Haviland
Political Editor

The argument between ministers and Opposition MPs about whether there was a political as well as an operational motive for sinking the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was yesterday revived by fresh evidence about the orders given to the nuclear submarine HMS Conqueror.

A diary kept by an officer serving in the boat records that, on the day after she torpedoed the Belgrano, she returned to the scene of the engagement under orders to attack the cruiser's two escorting destroyers.

The diary also shows that, although the Belgrano sank about an hour after being hit, at 4 p.m. local time on May 2, 1982, the Conqueror's crew believed their target to be still floating the following day.

Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, who has agreed to be examined about the circumstances of the sinking by the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, is likely to be asked whether the Conqueror was ordered back by the Prime Minister and the "war Cabinet" to complete the destruction of the Belgrano and her escort.

The material in the diary is sensitive because of the charge by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, and denied by ministers, that the sinking of the Belgrano was ordered to ensure the failure of Peruvian efforts to secure a settlement between Britain and Argentina.

Any such settlement would have forestalled the British reconquest of the Falklands, while denying Britain outright victory.

The Times 15/9/84

To the Government's critics the diary is the first evidence that the attack was pressed and intensified after the Government by its own admission, was made aware of the Peruvian proposals.

The relevant entries in the diary include one for May 3, the day after the sinking, which reads: "We headed west, and at 2000 started edging back towards the datum (viz, the scene of the engagement), the aim now being to have a go at the destroyers, Bouchard and Bueno. The news today is that Belgrano is still floating, but drifting without steerage."

Mr Heseltine went out of his way yesterday to deny that his appearance before the committee was a response to critical reports in the press (Rodney Cowton writes).

In a statement he said that on July 25 he received a letter from the committee chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw, inviting him or such other ministers as he thought appropriate, to give evidence in private soon after the Commons reassembled in autumn.

"I replied on July 26, confirming that it would be my intention to attend myself on the basis proposed."

New Statesman
14th September 1984

Belgrano sinking 'was justified'

Michael Hirst, Lecturer in Law, University College of Wales

Was the *Belgrano* sinking a needless breach of international law? Would the sinking of the *25 de Mayo* have been? I suggest not. In truth, operations against the Argentine Navy were an integral and necessary part of the overall British action to recover the Falkland Islands. Only if that entire operation violated the UN Charter would the *Belgrano* sinking do the same.

By the end of April the Argentine Navy was at sea in force — clearly and avowedly for the purpose of resisting any British attempt to recover the Falklands. It was obvious that, once that attempt began, their fleet, and the *25 de Mayo* in particular, would be ordered into action. Military logic dictated that, if possible, such intervention should be pre-empted.

It has long been known that *HMS Splendid* was sent to hunt down the *25 de Mayo* (see Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, p 174). It is less widely known that 'Tracker' aircraft from the *25 de Mayo* located the British fleet on the evening of 1 May, and that on the morning of 2 May eight bomb-laden Skyhawks waited in vain on her deck for sufficient wind to launch into. *25 de Mayo* was then 170 miles outside the total exclusion zone (TEZ). The signal temporarily recalling the fleet to 'safer' waters (not to port) clearly came after this, at about the time the *Belgrano* is known to have reversed course. Having attempted to attack and failed, the Argentine Admirals could not — and, it seems, do not — blame the British for attempting to deny them a second chance. *Belgrano* was probably sunk in order to discourage her more dangerous and elusive consort, but only when hopes of finding the latter had failed.

As for the TEZ, this was declared 'without prejudice' to any possible need to act outside it under Article 51 of the UN Charter (see *Keesings Archives* p 31709). The entire Falklands operation was avowedly waged under Article 51, and thus any military obstacle to it, in or out of the TEZ, was likely to invite attack. Argentine admirals realised this — hence the 'recall' to safer waters — and have said that, in Britain's position, they would have acted similarly. True, there was no declaration of war — there hardly ever is nowadays, however bloody the fighting — but such a declaration would primarily be relevant only to peripheral matters such as foreign neutrality and the status of Argentine citizens in the UK. There was a state of hostilities, which is what matters.

And what, finally, of UN Resolution 502? Did it curtail the UK's inherent rights under Article 51? The answer, as Sir Anthony Parsons explained at the UN, is that it could do so only if Argentina complied with it. Otherwise, it would work only to Argentina's advantage, which would hardly make sense.

Mr Ponting: Faces 'old style' committal proceedings
(Photograph: Murray Job)

Official in Belgrano case to stand trial

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Reporter

Mr Clive Ponting, the senior Minister of Defence official accused under the Official Secrets Act of passing documents on the Belgrano affair to an MP, is to face committal proceedings next month for a trial at the Central Criminal Court in London.

Yesterday, during a brief remand hearing at Bow Street Magistrates Court, reporting restrictions on the case were lifted after an application on behalf of Mr Ponting. The committal on October 9 will be in the "old style" form which means all the evidence will be reviewed publically.

Two witnesses from the Ministry of Defence are expected to be called during proceedings which will probably last an afternoon.

Yesterday Mr Brian Raymond, appearing for Mr Ponting, drew the attention of Mr David Hopkin, the Chief Specially Magistrate, to an item in the Diary of *The Guardian* yesterday which re-

ferred to a meeting of Whitehall information officers earlier this week.

Mr Raymond said that if the item were true "and the Prime Minister's press secretary has asked for this matter to be listed before a severe judge it constitutes a severe interference with the course of justice."

According to the newspaper report, Mr Bernard Ingham, the press secretary, told his colleagues that the Government was set on prosecution. "Indeed, it was hoped that an appropriately severe member of the judiciary would be on hand to hear the case. Mr Ingham", the report added, "named a couple of judges he thought suitable."

Mr Hopkin told Mr Raymond that if Mr Ponting were committed to trial he could raise the matter in court. If there were objections to himself he would hear them. Mr

Continued on back page, col 1

Continued from page 1

Raymond said there were no objections to Mr Hopkin.

Mr Ponting, aged 38, of Islington, North London, was remanded on unconditional bail. He is charged under section two of the Official Secrets Act with communicating information to an unauthorized person in the City of Westminster on or about July 16 this year.

The information at the centre of the charges concerns two documents on the Falklands War. One was an internal memorandum about the circumstances surrounding the

sinking of the Belgrano and the other was a letter drafted for Mr Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of State for Defence.

The letter recommended how information about the sinking of the Belgrano should be withheld from the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. The letter dealt with a change of rules of engagement for the Royal Navy in the South Atlantic.

The documents were sent to Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, who has said he is prepared to give evidence in the case.

Heseltine agrees to be questioned on Belgrano loss

By Anthony Bevins, Political Correspondent

Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, has agreed to be questioned by the Commons all-party Select Committee on Foreign Affairs about the sinking of the General Belgrano.

Sir Anthony Kershaw, Conservative chairman of the committee, said last night that it had decided to make a separate report on the destruction on May 2, 1982, of the Argentine cruiser, which went down with the loss of 368 lives during the Falklands conflict.

He said that the committee expected to see Mr Heseltine soon after the Commons returns on October 22. He would be questioned in secret session, and a report could be expected by Christmas.

Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP who has led the Belgrano inquiry, said last night: "I am delighted. This is the proper way to proceed."

Meanwhile, Whitehall sources said yesterday that the Government was actively considering issuing a much fuller statement than before over the circumstances surrounding the attack on the ship.

It was said that the Prime Minister herself might issue a statement in the next week or two, in the hope of clearing the air ahead of the Labour and Conservative conferences.

However, it emerged last night that the Prime Minister was not considering a full statement about the Belgrano. Instead, she was expected to reply to a letter sent by Mr George Foulkes, a Labour front bench spokesman, on August 23.

Mr Foulkes asked five questions raised by the documents sent to Mr Dalyell.

The questions related to an order to attack the Argentine aircraft carrier, *Vientecinco de Mayo*; whether that order had been opposed by Mr Francis Pym, then Foreign Secretary, and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney General; and whether a *Polaris* submarine had been deployed as far south as Ascension Island.

Mr Foulkes said last night that he would be writing to the Prime Minister today to ask a further question, specifically about the Belgrano: what happened to the message sent by the nuclear submarine, HMS *Conqueror*, at 2 pm on May 2, that the Belgrano had changed course away from the task force five hours earlier.

According to last Sunday's *Observer*, the order to sink the Belgrano crossed with that signal. But as the Belgrano was not torpedoed until 8 pm, six hours later, there had been an

opportunity for the "war cabinet" to be told that the cruiser no longer posed a threat, and to reverse the initial order.

Mr Dalyell, Mr Foulkes and the select committee will want to know what happened to the *Conqueror* message, and whether it reached the "war cabinet" on May 2. If not, the question is raised: why not?

Sir Anthony said last night: "It will obviously be one of the questions we'll go into, I suppose, yes".

The fact that the select committee has decided to investigate the Belgrano sinking will surprise many MPs, and delight Mr Dalyell. Sir Anthony said: "The Belgrano we thought was a sort of one-off job that we thought we would like to put in by itself".

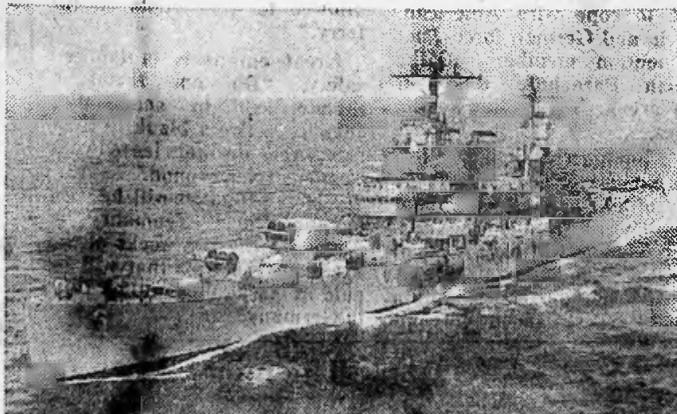
It appears that the investigation has been prompted by the documents leaked to Mr Dalyell.

Sir Anthony said: "We had a meeting about them and we decided we should call the attention of the ministry to them, and we also went on to say that we'd like a further explanation about the matters revealed in them, so Michael Heseltine said he'd come along".

Another matter bound to be raised with Mr Heseltine is the confidential Ministry of Defence paper, also leaked to Mr Dalyell, suggesting that the select committee should not be given information it had requested on changes in the Falklands rules of engagements.

The minute said: "A full list of changes would provide more information than ministers have been prepared to reveal so far about the Belgrano affair".

Dr David Owen, leader of the Social Democratic Party, said at his party conference this week that the Government had locked itself into a depressing cycle of error, half truths and deliberate falsehood. He spoke of the beginnings of a Watergate.



The General Belgrano, sunk on May 2, 1982.

By Michael White

The political controversy surrounding the decision to prosecute a senior civil servant, Mr Clive Ponting, under the Official Secrets Act intensified yesterday when the SDP leader, Dr David Owen, challenged the Prime Minister to say whether ministers other than the Attorney-General were involved in the discussions.

Dr Owen asked the Prime Minister a series of questions in a letter which also included the text of his speech to the SDP conference in Buxton this week in which he demanded publication of a white paper explaining the exact circumstances of the sinking of the Argentine cruiser the General Belgrano — to prevent the development of what he called a British Watergate.

Quite separately yesterday the belief emerged in senior Labour circles at Westminster that a similar view about the Belgrano affair is being advanced by officials in the Foreign Office, who are arguing that the Government has nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to lose by laying out the exact chronology of events surrounding the sinking.

Foreign Office ministers, so the belief goes, are considering this advice. It is even argued that Dr Owen may have been encouraged to make his speech in Buxton in the belief that he was pushing on a half-open door.

Dr Owen's ostensible reason yesterday for making a direct challenge to the Prime Minister was a report in yesterday's Guardian Diary that at a private meeting of information officers on Tuesday Mrs Thatcher's own spokesman, Mr Bernard Ingham, had expressed the hope that Mr Ponting would be severely punished. He had suggested a couple of judges who might do the job.

There was a robust "no comment" to inquiries yesterday from Mr Ingham, whose view of Civil Service colleagues who leak unauthorised information to the press has always been contemptuous. But various versions of the incident appeared to suggest that the Guardian report, though not accurate in every detail, was factually based, albeit that the facts in question were meant as a characteristically boisterous joke made in private.

But Dr Owen is an old adversary of Mr Ingham, whose forthright style he has criticised in the past on the grounds that it exceeds his Civil Service remit. Mrs

Thatcher in turn has vigorously defended Mr Ingham to Dr Owen, and the indications last night were that she will rapidly do so this time.

As for the involvement of non-legal ministers in the decision to prosecute Mr Ponting, an official at the Ministry of Defence, under section two, Dr Owen spoke of the widespread belief that the Government as a whole was deeply involved, and argued that Mr Ingham's reported remarks demonstrated as much.

The official guidance remains that prosecutions under the Official Secrets Act are a matter for the Attorney-General, and that Sir Michael Havers, though on holiday, took this one in the normal way after consultations with his department.

A white paper to clear up the issue once and for all has little appeal to the Prime Minister or her associates, on the grounds that in the present political atmosphere those who wish to pursue campaigns of this kind will not be satisfied but rather be spurred onwards by the production of more pieces of paper.

The signs are that there may be differences of opinion between ministers and officials and between different departments, with Downing Street and the Ministry of Defence being more bullish than the Foreign Office.

But the tensions which evidently exist within Whitehall over the Belgrano affair and other aspects of public policy are such that experienced politicians like Dr Owen feel that they can comment publicly on matters relating to a case before the courts.

In his letter yesterday Dr Owen appeared to be inviting Mrs Thatcher to let it be known that the Ponting case should be dropped.

Richard Norton-Taylor adds: The Freedom of Information Campaign, which yesterday announced that six former top Whitehall civil servants had joined its call for the repeal of section two of the Official Secrets Act, has described the use of the act against Mr Ponting as unnecessary and cynical.

In a letter to the Attorney-General the campaign's chairman, Mr Des Wilson, says that section two is wholly discredited, and was criticised by Sir Michael when in opposition.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, yesterday demanded a statement from the Home Secretary, Mr Leon Brittan, about the Government's attitude to the Official Secrets Act as soon as Parliament returns next month.

SDP leader may be knocking

at a partly-open door

Owen challenge to Thatcher on Ponting and the Belgrano

SECRETS CASE ALLEGATION

Downing Street 'tried to interfere in choice of judge'

THE SOLICITOR representing secrets charge Civil Servant Clive Ponting expressed concern yesterday over alleged political interference in the choice of the trial judge.

Heseltine to speak out over Belgrano

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Heseltine is to appear before a Commons Select Committee to explain in detail the reasons for the sinking of the Argentine warship the General Belgrano.

He is expected to scotch allegations by Labour MP Tam Dalyell that the sinking during the Falklands conflict was a deliberate attempt to sabotage peace talks.

Argentine fighters equipped with Exocet missiles were preparing to attack the British Task Force two days before the Belgrano was sunk, Mr Heseltine is expected to point out.

His evidence to the all-party Foreign Affairs Committee is expected to be given privately soon after the House resumes in late October.

At a remand hearing a magistrate was shown a newspaper report claiming the Government was determined to prosecute, and that the Prime Minister's Press Secretary, Bernard Ingham, had said it was hoped 'an appropriately severe' judge would hear the case.

Solicitor Mr Brian Raymond, appearing for Ponting, said: 'If what it says is correct, and the Prime Minister's personal Press Secretary has asked for this matter to be listed before a severe judge, it constitutes a serious interference with the process of justice.'

Ponting, 38, of Cloudesley Road, Islington, London, N., was given unconditional bail by Bow Street magistrate Mr David Hopkin until October 9, when committal proceedings are to begin.

Defence official Ponting is accused of communicating information to an unauthorised person. It is said to involve leaking of documents about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser Belgrano to Labour MP Tam Dalyell.

SDP Conference

OWEN SAYS BELGRANO COULD BECOME BRITISH 'WATERGATE'

By *GRAHAM PATERSON Political Staff*

THE Commons had not been told the truth about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the Belgrano, and the cover-up threatened to become a British "Watergate," Dr Owen, the SDP leader, claimed yesterday during the party's conference at Buxton.

The former Foreign Secretary called upon Mrs Thatcher to tell the unvarnished truth about the sinking, which cost more than 300 lives on May 2, 1982, after the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands.

He alleged that there was "a campaign of misinformation which is beginning to reach into the heart of democratic government."

Dr Owen went on: "The Government, in relation to the sinking of the Belgrano, has locked itself into a depressing cycle of error, half-truths and deliberate falsehood."

"The truth is not discreditable. It simply needs to be told."

SDP members

Dr Owen, who supported the Government's pursuit of the war throughout the hostilities, also called on Mrs Thatcher to drop the prosecution under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act of Mr Clive Ponting, a civil servant, who is alleged to have leaked secret documents on the sinking.

Dr Owen revealed that Mr

what did or did not happen in the fog of war.

But, he declared: "The record must be set straight and Parliament must be told the truth."

He went on: "The message to Mrs Thatcher is a clear one. Tell the truth, drop the prosecution and the vast majority of this country will breathe a sigh of relief and turn to more important business."

The Labour party policy is that a full-scale inquiry into the full circumstances surrounding the sinking should be held.

But Dr Owen made it clear that he would favour a White Paper which would correct any mis-statements made to the Commons.

Ponting was a member of the SDP.

He said that it would be a grave political error to go ahead with the prosecution. "We believe civil servants should not be placed by any government in a position where they are made a party to false information being given to Parliament."

Emergency motion

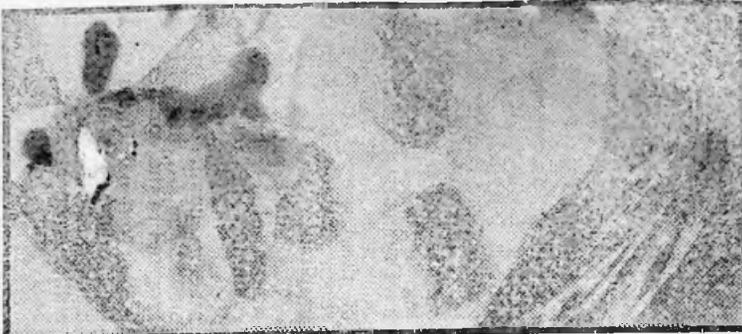
In response to an emergency motion on the sinking, Dr Owen reminded the Conference delegates: "We did not flinch when the necessity came to endorse the brilliant and brave military action taken to remove the Argentines."

Dr Owen argued that in words to the House of Commons on May 4, 1982, Sir John Nott, then Defence Secretary, and Mrs Thatcher made claims which had since been shown to be untrue.

Dr Owen stressed that he did not believe in too much retrospective judgment about exactly

SDP AT BUXTON

Put record straight on Belgrano says Owen



Dr Owen — 'Watergate' year

THE SDP leader, Dr David Owen, claimed yesterday that we could be in the early stages of a Watergate over the sinking of the Argentinian warship, the Belgrano.

Speaking to an emergency motion at the conference, he claimed that the Government "has locked itself into a depressing cycle of error, half-truths and deliberate falsehoods."

"The truth is not discernible," he added. It simply needs to be told. Instead, a campaign of misinformation is beginning to reach into the heart of democratic government—the integrity of the Civil Service is being brought into question. We are in the early stages of a Watergate.

Unless the Government and, in particular, the Prime Minister, steps forward promptly and tells the plain unvarnished truth the situation will get "worse and worse." This had a quite different dimension from the Onan affair.

Dr Owen said: "The core of the problem that we face over the Belgrano is that the House of Commons has not been told the truth. Words

have been used that have not only been misleading but have been false. Whatever else happens, this is a threshold in our democracy which we cannot tolerate being crossed.

"Nor can the Civil Service tolerate their members being made a party to false information being given to individual MPs, or even more serious deliberate misleading information being given to the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, when they were actually investigating the Belgrano incident."

Dr Owen said: "This is not a debate about whether or not on May 2, 1982 the British Government should have organised the sinking of the Belgrano. I doubt any of us can say accurately what we might have done in such circumstances, even if we now had in front of us every piece of information that was then available. I have never criticised or endorsed the decision to sink the Belgrano and I have no intention of doing so now." Going over the background to the affair, Dr Owen said: "On May 2, 1982, at a period of great danger, when

Argentinian Seahawks had the day before attacked HMS Glamorgan, Admiral Woodward requested permission to sink the Belgrano.

"In justifying that decision in the House of Commons on May 4, 1982, Sir John Nott and the Prime Minister used words which have since shown to be untrue. That is not of itself an issue for censure. It may be that they did so deliberately

Reports by Michael Morris and Tom Sharrott. Pictures: Denis Thorpe

and — we have to face it — it is sometimes necessary in times of crisis, not only of war but, for example, at times of devaluation, for the House of Commons not to be told the total truth.

"It may be that in part the information was misleading because they did not have at that moment all the facts. But nevertheless the facts are now clear. "The Belgrano was not detected on May 2, 1982,"

but detected on April 30, 1982 and sighted on May 1. The Belgrano was not "closing on elements of our task force" and "only hours away" at the time of its sinking. In fact it had been sailing in the opposite direction for 11 hours. The Belgrano had not been making frequent changes of course. Indeed during that 11 hours it had only made two changes of course—the first to reverse its direction and then six hours later—before its sinking—it made a marginal change of course from 270 degrees to 280 degrees. Also it is now known that three torpedoes were fired—two at the Belgrano and one at an escorting destroyer which was hit, but the warhead did not explode.

It is known also that on April 30, 1982, permission had been given to sink the Argentinian aircraft carrier outside the Exclusion Zone without warning. That aircraft carrier, which was initially traced, was lost and no engagement took place.

It is also known that on May 2, 1982, discretion was given by the War Cabinet not just to sink the Belgrano

but to consider as hostile any Argentinian ship outside the territorial waters. But that warning was not published to shipping until May 7.

Dr Owen said that there is "still some doubt as to what information the Government had about the orders given to the Belgrano and other ships prior to their own decisions and the exact times when that information was received. Also about the Peruvian peace initiative, though I doubt its relevance to the Belgrano.

He said that the Government should issue a White Paper immediately correcting the record.... To put the full facts before the country and the world will not bring discredit, it will restore honour. In particular, they should correct any misstatement made to the House of Commons and they should answer any follow-up questions, put to them by the Select Committee.

Dr Owen also urged that any proceedings against civil servant Mr Clive Ponting, an SDP member, should be dropped.

12.9.84

Belgrano appeal by Owen

By Julian Haviland
Political Editor

An appeal to the Prime Minister to tell Parliament the truth about the orders to sink the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano and to publish a White Paper to correct the record was made yesterday by Dr David Owen, leader of the Social Democrats, when he spoke of "the early stages of a Watergate."

Speaking in an emergency debate at the SDP conference at Buxton, Dr Owen also asked Mrs Margaret Thatcher to do something not within her power, to stop the prosecution under the Official Secrets Act of Mr Clive Ponting. Mr Ponting is the senior Ministry of Defence official charged with passing confidential information to a Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell.

Prosecutions under the Act require the consent of the Attorney General.

Dr Owen said that the truth was not discreditable but needed to be told. The Prime Minister and Sir John Nott, former Secretary of State for Defence, had used words which had since been shown to be untrue. That was sometimes necessary in war, but unless mis-statements were corrected and questions answered the situation would get worse.

The conference unanimously condemned ministers for denying the Commons the facts.

Civil servants sometimes had a higher responsibility to Parliament than to the Government, Dr Owen said last night, on *Channel Four News*. "In fact it is recognized that they are not meant to be a part of a political arrangement to withhold or particularly mislead or indeed tell lies to Parliament."

"Of course I believe you must have trust and civil servants must preserve security. What I'm saying is quite separate. It is that they should not be a party to misleading or lying to the House of Commons and the facts of the matter are that this has been done."

But Dr Owen said that he did not believe that Miss Sarah Tisdall, the former Foreign Office clerk, was correct to leak papers to *The Guardian*.

Conference report, page 4
Leading article, page 11

SDP and the Falklands

From Professor D. E. Regan

Sir, The debate on the Falkland Islands at the Social Democratic Party's annual conference was depressing to read (report, September 10) with the exception of Mr Eric Ogden's brave contribution. The display of unprincipled expediency towards the Argentines and bullying impatience towards the Falkland islanders made a nauseating combination.

Perhaps most objectionable of all was the debasement of the word "magnanimous." The majority of SDP delegates appear to believe that a "magnanimous" approach by Britain would be to give Argentina peacefully what it failed to secure by military force - namely sovereignty over the Falkland Islands.

In his memoirs, *The Second World War*, Sir Winston Churchill prefaced each volume with the moral of the work, including the noble words "In Victory: Magnanimity". Such magnanimity did *not*, however, entail giving back to Germany after its military defeat the various territories it had conquered,

against the wishes of their inhabitants.

Instead, magnanimity meant welcoming Germany back into the comity of nations. And the Federal Republic is now, of course, a major ally and trading partner.

In the same way the Government has *already* demonstrated magnanimity towards Argentina. The Government has expressed willingness to resume normal relations. With great generosity the Government has even offered to allow Argentina to restore its transport links with the Falkland Islands and to participate in the development of their maritime economic zone.

But to give Argentina sovereignty over territory which has certainly not been its for 150 years, and dubiously even before that, contrary to the frequently expressed wishes of the inhabitants, would be an act not of magnanimity but of poltroonery.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID REGAN

The University of Nottingham,
Department of Politics,
University Park,
Nottingham.
September 10.

Basic issues on the Belgrano

Some, even amongst his own party faithful, may think Dr David Owen potty to go on again about the Belgrano. It raises issues of complex detail which absorb aficionados, to be sure. But it has never brought a tremor on opinion poll graphs. Most ordinary voters are inclined to say that there was a war on at the time, that the sinking of the Argentine warship, with horrifying loss of life, was just one of those messy things which happen in a war.

That has never been The Guardian's view: for precisely the reasons that Dr Owen laid out so pungently in Buxton yesterday. The point, over two years, has not

been whether the decision to sink the Belgrano was right or wrong; the point has been the endless series of Governmental trims and evasions and corrections and recorections of the facts of the matter. "We are," says Dr Owen, "in the early stages of a Watergate." That may or may not be true, for we still lack the full story of why Sir John Nott and his heirs, superiors and successors so repeatedly misled the House of Commons and the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. There could be base reasons for the tactics; there could be more benign reasons of shame or error or ignorance. But the SDP leader is right, nonetheless, to pinpoint the frayed efforts, at cover-up and to demand that now, at last (the war long over) we reach the bottom line of truth in the affair. He wants a white paper. He should get one; for there is—as he rigorously stresses—something seedy about the plight of Mr Clive Ponting (one of the doctor's own members). Mr Ponting awaits trial under Section Two of the Official Secrets Act for allegedly leaking the facts of the cover-up to Mr Tam Dalyell, MP. He faced a choice, seemingly, between giving mendacious answers week after week to members of Parliament, or letting the truth slide out. Dr Owen wonders whether Section Two is designed to make civil servants tell repeated lies to MPs. It is a separate and deadly serious question. And it cannot be addressed in any practical circumstances whilst the web of Whitehall evasion remains flimsily, shabbily intact.

Owen calls for 'plain truth' about Belgrano

The Government should correct any misstatements made to the House of Commons about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser the General Belgrano and drop the prosecution of Mr Clive Ponting under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act. Dr David Owen, leader of the SDP said in reply to an emergency motion which was carried unanimously.

"Tell the truth. Drop the prosecution and the vast majority of this country will breathe a sigh of relief and turn to other business", he advised Mrs Thatcher. Dr Owen said that the Government had locked itself into a depressing cycle of error, half-truths and deliberate falsehood. The truth was not discreditable; it simply needed to be told.

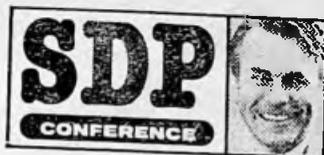
"Instead we have a campaign of misinformation beginning to reach into the heart of democratic government. The integrity of the Civil Service is being brought into question. We are in the early stages of a Watergate."

He recounted the events of April and May 1982 and said that in a television programme during the general election Mrs Thatcher had said the Belgrano was not steaming away from the Falklands when it was sunk, although it had been.

"The crux is that the record must be set straight and Parliament must be told the truth. The alleged actions of a civil servant, Mr Clive Ponting, who is a member of this party, have made disclosure inevitable."

The emergency motion, condemning the denial of full and accurate information to the Commons and the select committee on all the events leading up to the sinking of the Belgrano, which undermined the ability of the Commons to reach a balanced and proper judgment on the actions of the Government, was passed unanimously.

Daily Mail
12.9.84



Belgrano 'cover-up'

DR OWEN accused Mrs Thatcher of a 'cover-up' over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser Belgrano.

He called on the Prime Minister to drop the 'campaign of misinformation' and tell the 'unvarnished truth' about the incident. 'We are in the early stages of a Watergate,' he said.

Dr Owen urged the Government to drop charges against Civil Servant Clive Ponting — an SDP member — whose alleged leaks have fuelled the latest speculation

Daily Telegraph
12th September 1984

RENTON FILLS POST AT FOREIGN OFFICE

By Our Political Staff

Mr Timothy Renton, 52, was yesterday appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, filling the one Ministerial post left vacant by Mrs Thatcher in Monday's reshuffle.

He replaces Mr Raymond Whitney, who has been moved to a post of similar rank in the Department of Health and Social Security.

Mr Renton has been Conservative MP for Mid-Sussex since 1974. He has been Parliamentary Private Secretary to Mr John Biffen and Sir Geoffrey Howe, whose Ministerial team he now joins.

PROTESTORS BAR U.S. WARSHIPS

By Our Buenos Aires
Correspondent

More than 2,000 demonstrators have prevented five United States warships completing naval manoeuvres from mooring at Puerto Madryn, Argentina. The protest is over American support for Britain in the Falkland conflict.

Argentine coastguards reported that the four surface vessels and one submarine had left for an unknown destination yesterday afternoon after some time anchored off the port.

BBC RADIO FOUR

PM

SEPTEMBER 10, 1984

17.00

PRESENTER:

Allegations that the British Government isn't doing enough for the Falkland Islands have prompted one of the community's leading councillors to resign and settle in Scotland. Mr Terry Peck says he has become disillusioned and is increasingly pessimistic about the future of the islands. From Port Stanley he told Peter Biles, on unfortunately, a

rather bad telephone line, why he had decided to leave.

TERRY PECK:

The thing is that, though there is money from the thirty-one million, this is not being wholly directed towards the island people themselves. But, as far as the islanders are concerned, I see a pretty bleak future ahead of them...

PETER BILES:

But do you not think that there would be more to be gained for the Falkland Islands by staying there and trying to sort these problems out, as you have done over the past few years?

TERRY PECK:

But, I have gave this a great deal of thought, it's not an easy decision which I have made (sic). I've, as I've said, served on the Government and nothing that the British Government have done up to today has inspired

me to stay and carry on fighting for the island people. I have certainly done quite a lot as far as that goes.

PETER BILES:

Well if we can go back to the war, surely that was fought to protect the sovereignty of the islanders and maintain some kind of future for them?

TERRY PECK:

Well I'm speaking personally, and I do not believe that it was solely for the eighteen hundred of islanders that Britain went to war on our behalf in (unclear).

PETER BILES:

To what extent are your feelings shared by the other people on the islands?

TERRY PECK:

There's a quite large number of islanders here who, are very, very upset with the way that monies have been wasted in this island,

-4-

not by the people of the islands, but by the British Government, on projects which we cannot afford to maintain thereafter and unless we get the two hundred mile fishing exclusion zone, then, there is very, very little future for these islands.

PRESENTER:

Terry Peck, on Port Stanley, in Port Stanley, talking to Peter Biles.

END

A SOVEREIGNTY DEAL IS URGED FOR THE FALKLANDS

By WILLIAM WEEKES

TALKS should be held with Argentina aimed at relieving Britain of the heavy cost of "Fortress Falklands," the Social Democratic party decided yesterday when its four-day conference began at Buxton, Derbyshire.

A motion from the party's policy committee stated that the views of the Falkland islanders, while being fully considered, could not be paramount in any settlement.

There was dissent from Mr ERIC OGDEN, the former MP for Liverpool W. Derby, who condemned the motion as "dangerous and misguided."

Paramountcy had been offered by successive British governments. Mr Ogden declared, "Those who accepted that should not lightly reject in opposition what we supported in government."

Stable settlement

The motion carried overwhelmingly on a show of hands, said it was essential for the Government to open talks with Argentina to reach a stable settlement in the South Atlantic.

Such a settlement should contain arrangements for vesting

sovereignty of the Falkland Islands initially in the United Nations or the Organisation of American States, or have satisfactory arrangements for joint sovereignty.

Moving the motion on behalf of the policy committee, Mr JOHN ROPER urged the need for imaginative proposals to end the long-standing quarrel between Britain and Argentina.

More than £500 million would be spent on "Fortress Falklands" in the coming year, causing a serious distortion in defence priorities, Mr Roper said.

There should be discussions on a range of options which would protect the islanders' interest while indicating flexibility in the British position over sovereignty.

'Personal friend'

Mr DAVID STEPHEN (Lambeth), who said he was a personal friend of President Alfonsín, said a "negative" attitude by Britain could endanger the fragile bloom of democracy in Argentina.

Mr MARTIN DENT (N. Staffs) said aggression had to be resisted, but added that was only half the policy of the SDP leaders.

"The next part is to go on to the business of practical peace-making," he said.

Rejecting the motion as misguided, Mr OGDEN said responsibility for the breakdown in the latest talks rested firmly with the Argentines, who deluded themselves that they could play poker with the British representatives and force Britain to put sovereignty back on to the agenda.

Britain 'could endanger Argentine democracy'

Reports from John Winder, Sheila Beardall, and Barbara Day

A friend of President Raoul Alfonsín of Argentina warned the SDP Assembly yesterday that the President's standing, as a democrat and a man of the centre-left, could be endangered, as could the fragile bloom of democracy in Argentina by a negative British attitude on the Falkland Islands.

Mr David Stephen, Lambeth, prospective parliamentary candidate for Luton North, was speaking in a brief debate on the Falklands on the first day of the assembly at Buxton, Derbyshire.

The assembly passed, unamended, a motion stating that, while the view of the Falkland islanders should be given the fullest consideration, they could not be paramount.

The motion continued that it was essential for the Government to open discussions with the Argentinians to reach a settlement in the South Atlantic allowing Britain to abandon the heavy cost of "Fortress Falklands". It added that any settlement should include an arrangement whereby "sovereignty of the Falkland Islands is vested initially either in the United Nations under the provisions for trusteeship or under the auspices of the Organization of American States, or under satisfactory arrangements for joint sovereignty".

The motion also said that any settlement should ensure that Britain maintained undisputed

sovereignty over South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

Mr John Roper, former SDP whip in the House of Commons, said in moving the motion that the SDP in 1982 had supported the response to aggression with an ultimate use of force and believed that the situation now demanded that they should look imaginatively for a solution to the problem.

Their first concern was that the Falkland islanders should go on living in a stable situation, but they should not have an ultimate veto. The cost of "fortress Falklands" was a distortion of defence policies.

There should be discussion on a range of options that would protect the islanders' interests but indicate a flexibility of British position over sovereignty. They were entitled to argue for a more magnanimous and intelligent position by Britain to find a solution in the long-term interests of Britain and the Falkland Islands.

Mr David Stephen said he had for some years been a personal friend and admirer of the President of Argentina and knew how well he was regarded by his own people. "He is a democrat and is after our own hearts, a man of the centre-left."

A negative attitude in Britain encouraged a negative attitude in the dictatorships of South America as well as in Argentina. In Chile, democrats had been disappointed by the failure of the Argentine and British governments to talk.

Mr Martin Dent, North Staffordshire, said: "What is the point of winning a victory unless you go on to make it secure by making your enemy into your friend (applause)?"

Mr Dent said that he had written that to *The Times* when he had been attacked by ministers for daring to suggest that the Lord's Prayer should be said in Spanish at a Falklands service.

Mr Eric Odgen, former SDP MP for Liverpool, West Derby, asked the conference to read the motion line by line and clause by clause and then to reject it.

Paramouncy had not been sought by the Falkland islanders but offered to them by successive governments, foreign secretaries, and by Parliament. Those who had supported it in government should not lightly reject it in opposition.

The responsibility for the breakdown of the negotiations between Britain and the Argentine in Berne rested firmly with Argentina because it had deluded itself that it could play poker with the British negotiators and put sovereignty on the agenda again. The resolution was misguided.

Mr Roper, replying to the debate, said that neither Dr David Owen nor the late Mr Anthony Crosland, former Foreign Secretary, had taken the position of paramouncy. They should not hold the rigid position that the British Government was holding.

The motion was agreed.

Views of islanders 'cannot be paramount'

THE FALKLANDS

THE SDP called yesterday for fresh talks with Argentina over the future of the Falkland Islands and said that the islanders could not have an ultimate veto.

A motion calling for the talks to achieve a stable settlement was carried overwhelmingly, despite reservations about its proposals on sovereignty and a complaint that the debate—it lasted

for half an hour, squeezed between the third world and lunch—was too short for such an important subject.

The motion, from the policy committee, said that the islanders' views "could not be paramount" although they should be given the "fullest consideration" that a settlement was essential to end the heavy cost of maintaining the Fortress Falklands' policy; and that sovereignty should go initially either to the United Nations or the Organisation of Amer-

ican States or should be joint. Britain should maintain undisputed sovereignty over South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

Proposing, Mr. John Roper, a former MP, said that the situation now demanded an imaginative look at solutions.

There was concern that the islanders should go on living in a stable situation. "But, having said that we equally feel that they themselves see the situation perhaps in a particular way

should not have an ultimate veto on the solutions, provided that any British Government negotiating did so with the full interest of these people at heart."

Mr David Stephen (Lambeth) said a settlement was vital in the interest of world economy and the future of democracy in the Argentine. The standing of President Alfonsín remained high in the Argentine despite all the problems he faced. "To endanger his standing is to endanger the fragile bloom of

democracy in Argentina."

Mr Eric Ogden, former MP for Liverpool West Derby, urged rejection of the motion, saying it ignored the wishes of the Falkland Islanders. He added that out of every pound spent on defending the Falklands, 90p went on British jobs and services.

Central Essex representative, Mr Alan Good, also protested: "The Falkland Islanders are not people to be traded between two other nations as pawns in a game."

Daily Mail
10th September 1984

No veto for the Falkland islanders

THE Social Democrats have voted to strip the Falkland Islanders of their veto in any British-Argentina deal.

The party's policy-making Council for Social Democracy agreed a motion that the islanders' views should be given 'fullest consideration but cannot be paramount'.

The conference called for fresh talks with Argentina to try to reach a stable settlement in the South Atlantic.

The Social Democrats offered three options on the vexed issue of sovereignty: it could be vested with the UN under trusteeship; with the Organisation of American States; or jointly with Britain and Argentina.

The SDP's former parliamentary whip John Roper said a deal was vital because the massive cost of the Fortress Falklands policy threatened to distort Britain's entire defence strategy.

Outspoken councillor quits the Falklands

TERRY PECK, the Falklands' most outspoken Councillor, will resign this month from the Legislative Council. He plans to start a new life in Scotland.

The 46-year-old former Chief of Police explained yesterday that he was disillusioned, and had become increasingly pessimistic about the future of the Islands.

Often a lone crusader on the Council for the rights of Islanders, he has spoken strongly against the alleged waste of development aid and post-war rehabilitation funds.

He has never missed an opportunity to express his profound opposition to any suggestion of an accommodation with Argentina, and has maintained that the Foreign Office is working against the interests of Islanders.

MBE after battle

During the South Atlantic conflict, he picked up a helmet and a rifle to help 3 Bn. The Parachute Regiment, into Stanley from San Carlos. He went into battle with them at Mount Longden, and for his help was made an MBE.

Listing his reasons at the weekend for wanting to leave the Falklands, Mr Peck raised the spectre of Argentina. He thinks an agreement will be reached with Buenos Aires.

"I am absolutely sure of it happening in the not too distant future. I couldn't live in that situation," he said.

There is criticism, too, for the Islanders, among whom, said the councillor, there is a certain amount of apathy. "People will not get up and fight for themselves."

The quixotic Mr Peck gave examples yesterday of the problems facing him, and which he has now decided are beyond his ability to solve.

Insufficient funds, he claims, are going towards development. "There has been nothing to show for it, and progress is so slow." He adds that £15 million "post-war rehabilitation aid" has been ill-spent.

Roads in Stanley have had to be dug up for services, while half the Swedish pre-fab houses imported shortly after the conflict are still not ready for occupation.

"The Overseas Development Administration just can't seem to get their act together," he said.

He feels intense anger at the Foreign Office's reluctance to authorise the creation of a 200-mile fishery zone around the Falklands, to safeguard what he believes is the only industry capable of saving the Islands.

"Every month we voice our anger at not having the Constitution, but nobody can give us a satisfactory reason why there is a delay," he adds.

Falklands battle to set up new town

By GRAHAM BOUND
in Port Stanley

THE Falklands Development Corporation, with its budget of £1½ million and a few determined men and women are attempting to establish a new town at Fox Bay on West Falkland.

The little village of nine houses has been bought by the Falklands Government from a British-based company which until recently farmed the area, and it has become the locus of a development initiative which could become the first success in the drive towards social and economic progress.

All the houses are now occupied or will be shortly, many having been bought by the settlers. Four new dwellings are to be constructed soon and the Falklands consultant architect has drawn a plan of the village as it should be developed.

The residents have formed a town council and a co-operative store is to be opened there. The "bunkhouse" which formerly housed the single labourers of the company has now been refurbished and is to be leased to an individual who will run it as a guest house.

The ex-farm workshops have been taken over by a young mechanic who will hire his services to the villagers and the nearby small farmers.

Sheep ranch

Fox Bay's major significance is that it will be the first settlement other than Port Stanley which does not belong to a company or exist solely to support a sheep ranch.

Other settlements, such as Goose Green, are completely owned by British based concerns, and houses are tied to employment on the farms. At Fox Bay the make-up of the community will be much more diverse, and it will become an alternative to overburdened Port Stanley as a home for those seeking a living and an independent rural existence.

The development corpora-

tion general manager, Mr Simon Armstrong, said: "The opportunity to start from scratch and develop self confidence and self reliance is rather special."

Several labour-creating enterprises are planned for Fox Bay including a pilot inshore fishing industry, by the Grimsby firm Portoscor, which may export crabs and other shell fish to Europe. There is also to be a programme of grassland research.

But the most important enterprise will be the Fox Bay mill, a small wool processing plant which hopes to begin production before the end of 1984.

Financial assistance

Mr Richard Cockwell, who is the town council's spokesman (chairman "sounds too bureaucratic") and who managed the large sheep ranch until it was sold in small packages to islanders, has been working on the project with his wife, Grizelda, for several years.

They have sunk much of their capital into the project, and have received financial assistance and encouragement from the development corporation. Much of the reconditioned, second-hand machinery is now in the Falklands, and the Cockwells hope to complete the mill building this month.

A team of advisors from the Scottish college of textiles, in Galashiels, will arrive soon to help during the initial stages of the new industry, and two young immigrants from the Cotswolds, Carol and Martin Cant, are already employed on the staff.

Mrs Cockwell said yesterday they will be recruiting a few more local people soon, and will look to the Falklands government office in London for more British immigrants.

She predicted there would be a good market for yarn and knitting kits, and hoped that the military would take finished items of clothing from her factory.

JIM'S ONE OF THE LADS



IT IS EASY to see why comedian Jim Davidson is popular with soldiers: he is young, lively, down-to-earth — and blue. He also has a lot of time for them.

This son of a former Gunner is, in fact, Army barmy. His military friends span all ranks and all arms and he is prepared to travel thousands of miles to entertain them. He visits units world-wide — in UK, including Northern Ireland seven times, Germany, Cyprus, Belize, twice to the Falklands and he hopes to make it a hat-trick later in the year.

It was as an artiste with Combined Services Entertainment, that, as he put it, he 'first got into soldiers — if you'll pardon the expression!' He was so impressed by the troops when he first went to Northern Ireland that he wanted to know more about Forces personnel and matters military. The more he learned, the more his interest grew and his knowledge of ranks, regiments, corps, vehicles and hardware is probably more than that of many people actually in the Army.

He followed the fortunes of the Task Force avidly during the Falklands War and what he doesn't know about the battles at Bluff Cove and Mt Tumbledown — a picture of which hangs in his hallway at home — wouldn't even interest the experts.

"I'd even thought of applying to go on Mastermind" he told me, laughing. "The only trouble is, I'd look a right twit when they ask me

the general knowledge questions!"

For his part in the multi-national peace-keeping force in Beirut, Jim was made an honorary member of the 16th/5th Lancers when he visited them for three days. His kids were not impressed, though: "They say, what a crappy soldier you are — you only lasted three days!"

The story about Jim's bit of trouble in Belize is now legend but he could not resist telling it just once more. It concerned a fight he got involved in after he and a few pals had been visiting a certain house in Punta Gorda where the lady occupant is, he says, 'more famous in the British Army than Churchill'. Somebody pulled a knife on him and being a self-confessed coward he made a run for it back to camp hotly pursued, or so he thought, by someone else who was only making his own timely escape from the fray.

"I've told that story so many times" he said, "and other people have exaggerated it so much that instead of knife I'm up to a Phantom jet now!"

Jim is always one to do a favour for the Army and as such, is a bit of a soft touch when it comes to putting on a show. Once when visiting Cyprus on holiday with his wife, he was spotted and asked if he would perform for the troops. He ended up doing two performances, one for the British contingent of the United Nations peace-keeping force and raised £500 for the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association

(BLESMA) for whom he says he would like to do more.

"I try not to charge for the shows I do for the Forces. I don't know why, really, but I suppose it's a bit hypocritical saying 'well done, lads, you're doing a great job' and then asking them to pay for it."

**Story by:
Sally Daniell**

Once in Germany, the Cockney comic was playing to a 8,000-seat theatre where the two front rows had been reserved for senior officers. "Only they all came in late, didn't they, and I didn't 'alf take the piss as they sat down. Everyone else thought it was great and I reckon that's the biggest laugh I've had from the Army!"

Anyone who saw Jim's *This is Your Life* will have seen Eamonn Andrews present him with the red book while a band of the Royal Irish Rangers serenaded him on his doorstep. He first met the Rangers down in the Falklands and was very quickly taken to their hearts.

The most moving Forces show for the East-end entertainer was when he performed for the crew of HMS Sheffield exactly one year after the ship was hit by an Argentine Exocet missile. "It really was sad and I felt very touched when the Captain presented me with a plaque and book from all of them.

"But I suppose the best one I've

Jim shares a joke with friends from 16th/5th Lancers.

done for the Army was in Belize during a hurricane. I'd been at the Junior Ranks Mess and by the time we got back to the Sergeants' Mess, dinner was finished and we were told we couldn't get anything to eat. Well, there was this bloke who said 'Don't worry, leave it to me' and he disappeared somewhere. He came back five minutes later, poked his head round the door and said 'steak or pork chops?' Now that's initiative!

"I don't know why soldiers like me — and it's not for me to say — but perhaps it's because I can talk to them on their level and I'm open and honest with them. I love doing shows for the Army 'cos they look after you so well. I suppose it's the discipline that makes them do their best for you and they treat you like a human being.

"I don't get barracking from an Army audience. I don't allow it! Anyway, if they start barracking, I just barrack them back. No, but seriously, if they start any of that, it means there's something wrong with the act and that's down to me."

And with that he signalled the interview was over by stripping off his shirt to get changed for a show at Winchester's Theatre Royal. Not particularly wishing to see the trousers come down as well, I made my excuses and left saying I looked forward to seeing him in Aldershot — one place at least, he is guaranteed a full house. ■

A peaceful wariness, a changed way of life

By Jane P. Shoemaker
Inquirer Staff Writer

STANLEY, Falkland Islands — Don Bonner has a bullet hole through his house, two bullet holes in his jeep — and total confidence that Britain will protect him and his neighbors from the men who pulled the triggers.

"We're counting on Mrs. Thatcher," Bonner said on a recent Sunday over a steaming mug of tea in his cozy living room.

The Bonners live next door to Government House, the Falkland Islands' version of mission control, and thus were in the thick of action in April 1982, when Argentine troops invaded and declared the Falklands — *Las Malvinas* in their history books — sovereign Argentine territory.

Ten weeks later, Maj. Gen. Mario Menendez signed a surrender, and exhausted but exultant British troops marched into Stanley. The islanders who were abruptly jolted into war began the slow process of returning to peace.

That peace still eludes them — and may for years to come. In place of an armed Argentine military occupation, the Falkland Is-

Fortress Falklands

Last of two parts

lands now have an armed British one. To be sure, these soldiers are welcome, and the grateful people of Stanley rarely complain about the noise and traffic and disruption now part of everyday life.

But the stark fact is that the placid, simple way of life these troops came to protect — the British way of life — has been profoundly and permanently changed.

Each day, the local radio announcer reports engagements and hospital admissions just like before. He also reads out the list of firing ranges, where live ammunition will be used by troops on training exercises.

At the elementary school, the formal wedding portrait of Prince Charles and Princess Diana and a big photo of Prince William brighten the hall. There is another poster identi-

(See FALKLANDS on 8-A)



The Philadelphia Inquirer / NICK KELSH

British soldiers take a lunch break after going through a daily readiness drill

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FALKLANDS, from 1-A
fying nine types of land mines and next to it a hand-lettered sign:

"Remember,
if you find bullets,
grenades,
anything dangerous,
Do not touch.
Go and report to your
parents or Bomb Disposal."

The penguins — six million of them by official estimate — still waddle up from the ocean and sun themselves on the white sand. But Argentine troops mined many of those beaches, and humans dare not walk there lest they trip off the insidious devices.

"People are heavier than penguins," explained Royal Engineers Capt. Ian Law, whose bomb-disposal teams are responsible for cleaning up war debris.

There are an estimated 19,000 plastic mines in 115 mine fields, most of them around Stanley. By international convention, each of those should have a metal piece that can be detected.

The Argentines did not follow that convention, Law said, and after two men stepped on mines and lost legs, a decision was made to abandon the search.

Until new technology provides a way to detect the plastic mines, the mine fields will remain fenced off with red signs warning people to keep away.

And until Argentina and Britain settle their diplomatic differences over the Falklands, a vast military machine will keep this once-quiet village under cultural seige.

It was not easy for either side in the first year after the fighting ended. There was no housing for the British forces, and 1,000 of them were billeted with local families.

After playing unwilling host to Argentine officers, Des King found his hotel, the Upland Goose, full of British troops. Not only did they fill every bedroom, but they also slept in the dining room, entrance room, lounge and bar.

"We had them stacked up along the walls," King recalled. "You never saw anything like it."

By the time the three huge floating dormitories dubbed "coastels" arrived early this year, most families were only too grateful to bid their guests farewell.

But not wanting a soldier underfoot and having him in the neighborhood are two entirely different matters.

"We'll never have trouble with the Argies as long as the boys are here," said Lorie Butler, who talked as he coaxed two horses out to pasture on the outskirts of Stanley. "These guys would bomb them straight out."

Because of misleading — and, in some cases, downright inaccurate — reports published in Britain's big-selling tabloid newspapers, there is a general impression that the 1,850 islanders resent the intrusion of their military protectors.

Inquirer photos

by Nick Kelsh

According to the papers, troops call the locals "Bennies" after a dimwitted character on a television soap opera in Britain. Locals call the forces "When-Is" for their constant references to other postings — "When I was in Cyprus..." "When I was in Belfast..."

What the British taxpayers, who are pouring \$2.6 million a day into the defense effort, do not learn is that much of it is good-natured ribbing.

And that infuriates kelpers, the nickname of Falkland Islands natives, taken from the rich seaweed beds just offshore. Every other day, kelper Dora Ford spends the morning baking fresh pastries for the troops she calls simply "my boys."

Hardly a morning passes that soldiers are not gathered in her tiny house, wolfing down the sweets and enjoying the big-hearted hospitality of the lady they call simply "Mom."

"I'd like to know where that rubbish comes from," Ford said of the news reports one recent lunchtime as she pulled a steaming mutton casserole from the oven. "It isn't here, I can tell you that."

Hundreds of troops who have signed her guest book would agree. The page for July 12 includes Ken Leak's signature and a confession of sorts:

"This is the first sofa in the first living room I've been in for three months. Wow!"

Such small comforts take on exaggerated importance for the 4,000 British soldiers who do four-month tours of duty here. Their lives consist of work, food, sleep and little else. There is no entertainment, nowhere to go and nothing to fill the time off.

The weather is often harsh, with bitter Antarctic winds blowing up gales on the average of once a week. At this time of year, late winter on the opposite side of the equator, it is cold and gray much of the time.

But the greatest hardship, say the soldiers, is the shortage of women. There are only a handful of women among the troops and, by local count, no more than about a dozen eligible women in Stanley.

"Just give me one to look at from a distance and I won't complain," sighed a strapping young Scotsman midway through his stint.

Maj. Gen. Peter de la Billiere's solution is to keep his force busy, either with work or what leisure activities can be organized. For example, a boat race was organized for one recent Sunday, but bad weather interfered.

"You've got to make the best you can of unpleasant circumstances," said de la Billiere.

"I'd like people to understand that we are not here as an occupying garrison," he said. "We're here to protect the people, not the real estate. So long as the islanders want to

cont../

when there is room.
To be accurate, it is not a seat they purchase, but 18 inches of space on one of the canvas benches that stretch from the cockpit halfway back in the cavernous plane. The knees of passengers touch across the nonexistent aisle, so moving about involves a monkeylike swinging action using webbing on the bench backs for support.

There is no soundproofing to mute the deafening roar, so passengers wear earplugs and give up conversation for the 13-hour flight to Ascension Island just below the equator in the South Atlantic Ocean. Food service consists of a Thermos of coffee and box lunches compliments of the Army cooks. There is no lavatory, just a toilet bowl modestly encircled by a curtain.

But for those who can get seats, it beats two weeks at sea.
A third and more civilized choice will become available in the spring, when the first runway at the new Falklands airport opens.

The existing runways are short and positioned crosswise to the prevailing strong wind, meaning that planes cannot land in high winds and wide-body jets cannot land at all. The new ones will allow jumbo jets to fly all the way from Ascension Island without refueling, cutting travel time and offering comfortable passage.

More importantly, it will make rapid deployment of troops possible and allow a reduction in the number posted here.

The \$280 million airport also will open the Falklands to commercial airliners, and there is talk of developing a tourist industry based on the unique wildlife here. Already, groups traveling by ship stop here to inspect the penguin colonies and rare species of birds.

subject of a 150-year running dispute with Argentina.

For most of this century, the only contact residents had with the outside world was a supply ship that called four times a year.

The result is that islanders are an extraordinarily independent and versatile lot. They can grow their own food, fix their own cars — they even go into the countryside, or "camp" as it is known here, and collect their own peat to burn in stoves and fireplaces.

"In Britain, you toss some seeds out the door and everything grows. Things seem to take care of themselves," said Des King, who runs the Upland Goose hotel with the help of his wife and three daughters.

"But here you have to tend to everything — your flowers, your vegetables, and especially your friend-ships."

New York native Leonard describes his adopted homeland as "a do-it-yourself sort of place."

"No one can afford to make an enemy here," he said. "Next week, he may have the part you need."

Conditions eased, at least for air travelers, in the 1970s when regular flights began between Stanley and Buenos Aires. No longer did islanders have to wait for a ship, then spend a month at sea. A quick flight to Argentina put them back in circulation, and connecting flights quite literally opened up the world.

Those flights were suspended when diplomatic relations between Britain and Argentina were broken in the spring of 1982. This fall, the diplomatic rift still is not healed, and islanders are back to taking the slow boat to Britain.

There is one new way to escape. Hercules transport planes depart five days a week filled with military cargo. Some of that cargo is human, and islanders can purchase seats

Vera Bonner with laughter.

Few islanders seem to hold grudges against the conscripts. But fewer still have faith that Argentina will not make another attempt to secure their islands.

Again and again, that nation's history of military coups and political murders comes up.

"We've got no quarrel with (Raul) Alfonsin," said Walter Felton, referring to the man the Argentines elected as their president in December. "I personally wish him well. But the military, they're a dagger in his back. They could get rid of him anytime."

From London, politicians reply that the record of instability is the most compelling reason of all to take advantage of Alfonsin's present popularity.

"If one thinks democracy is a bit fragile, perhaps we ought to be waffering roots a bit, trying to encourage them along," said Cyril Townsend, a Conservative member of Parliament. "It's not good enough to sit back and say, 'They have a poor record on democracy so that's that.'"

Speaking for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in a House of Commons debate on the Falklands' defense, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Raymond Whitney also stressed the importance of nurturing democracy. But he assured the House — and the 1,850 islanders at the other end of the world — that preserving democracy in the Falkland Islands took precedence.

"We stand by our commitment to the Falkland Islanders," he said. "We recognize that there are costs, but we are prepared to bear them because the Falkland Islanders are as important now as they were in April 1982."

Until the war, it is safe to say, most Britons did not know this archipelago existed, let alone that it was the

remain, we will remain."

The last force that visited Stanley came with a vastly different mission. It was April 2, 1982, when the people of Stanley saw Argentine soldiers pouring into town, some lobbing grenades and firing rifles along the way.

Like so many islanders who lived through the occupation, Don Bonner, who works as chauffeur to Civil Commissioner Rex Hunt, bears no grudge against the Argentine people, or even the young soldiers who turned their isolated village into a temporary war camp.

"I felt sorry for them," he said. "They didn't know where they were or what they were supposed to be doing. They seemed embarrassed to be here."

John and Margaret Leonard also found the Argentines "doing their best to make life as bearable as they could," said Leonard, a New Yorker who moved here 30 years ago. "Considering that there was a war here, things could have been much, much worse."

As Stanley residents recall, the invaders were rudely shocked to discover that Falkland Islanders were not glad to see them.

Conscripts who talked to islanders said they had been told they were freeing the Falklands from the chains of British colonial oppression. Even many officers expected to be welcomed as liberators and were unprepared to deal with a population that spoke no Spanish, drove on the left and followed British football with typical British fervor.

The irony in the blue-and-white stickers that were pasted on house windows was unintended: *Usted tiene derecho a vivir en libertad* — You have the right to live in freedom.

"I think the Argies got the surprise of their lives when they met us," said



Dora Ford, a surrogate mother for the soldiers, serves tea and pastries at her home every day

There is talk of developing a local fishing industry. While trawlers from Europe, the Far East and the Eastern bloc all ply Falkland waters, there are no Falklands-based fishing vessels.

There is a great deal of talk about development. But turning that into action will be difficult.

"You have to accept that this is a place with very substantial limitations," said David Taylor, the London consultant now serving as chief executive for the Falklands.

He ticked off those limitations: Lack of manpower, lack of previous development, excessive dependence on the wool industry and its distance from both markets.

Those formidable obstacles mitigate against development, but Taylor said they would not keep him from trying.

"There is a political feeling in Britain that we owe it to the place to develop it," he said. "The feeling is, if you've made such a sacrifice to keep the place, you ought to do something with it."

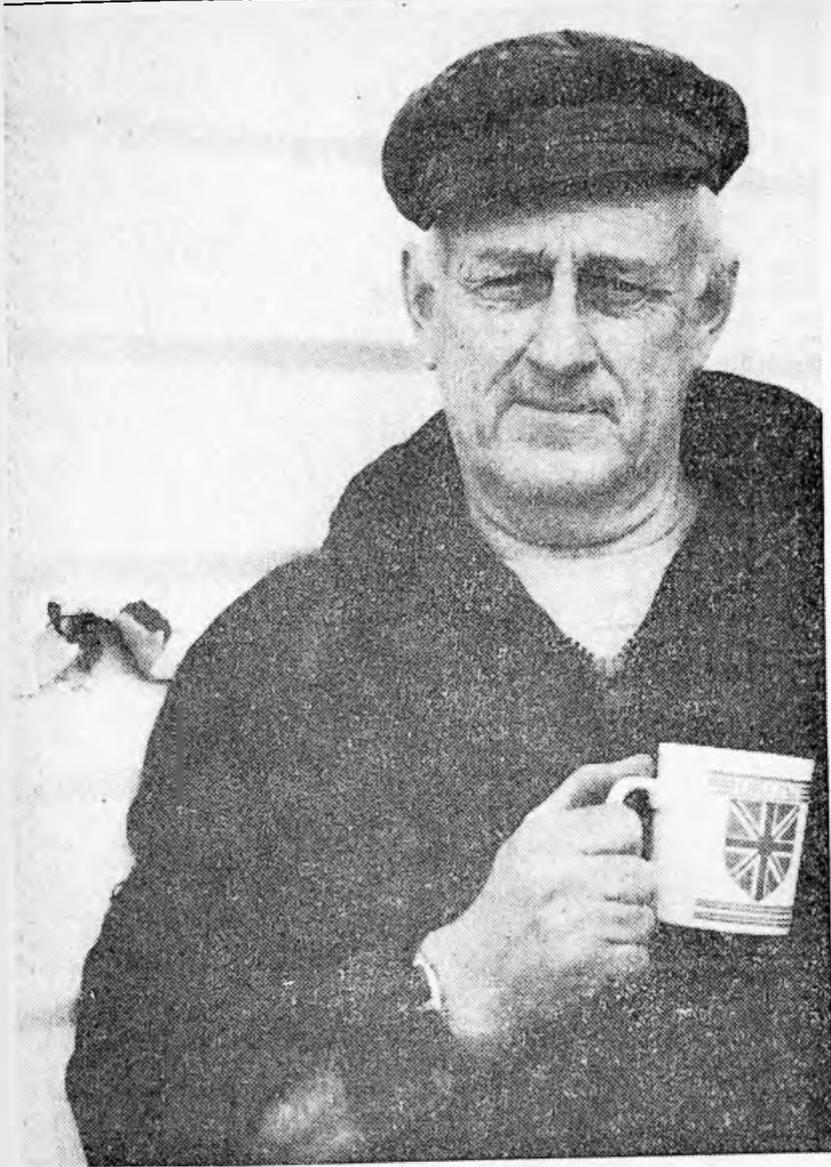
The House of Commons appropriated \$50 million in development aid for such projects as upgrading the slaughterhouse in Stanley and building a woolen mill in the distant settlement of Fox Bay East. Those are in the works.

But the undeniable truth is that big-money industries such as oil and fishing cannot thrive without links to South America. In an economic study undertaken after the 1982 conflict, a royal commission concluded that political settlement with Argentina was crucial to economic development.

That is not what Falkland Islanders want to hear. Not now, when war memories are fresh. Perhaps not ever.

"We don't have to pay the price for liberty," said Des Peck, 77, whose grandfather arrived in the Falklands in 1886. "We have no intention of being bartered away."

"They want us to make friends? We'll make friends with Uruguay and Chile tomorrow. We want to make friends in South America. But Argentina? Never again, not trade-wise or anything else. "They came, we got them out, and we want them kept out — for good."

FORTRESS FALKLANDS

Secure for now, Bonner says, 'We're counting on Mrs. Thatcher'

*After the war, a changed way of
life for Falklanders*



A sign warns of mines at a Stanley beach, where penguins play; officers say the birds will not trigger a detonation — humans will

Entrepreneur offers a taste of home by spicing up local fare

By Jane P. Shoemaker
Inquirer Staff Writer

STANLEY, Falkland Islands — Simon Powell could not provide lonely soldiers 8,000 miles from home with the one comfort they missed most. Romance is hardly an option on these islands, where the ratio of men to women has become 200-1.

But Powell could offer the "squads" a second choice — food. The enterprising young Englishman has made a comfortable life for himself in the Falklands running the island version of MacDonald's.

From behind the counter of what used to be a small shop, Powell serves up burgers with all the trimmings and beer. The Goose Green comes topped with cole slaw, the Port Stanley smothered in onions. A

fat burger with chili sells for \$2.25. The spicy carryouts offer a welcome change from mess hall food and the bland mutton nicknamed "365" because it is served in local homes every day.

In fact, Powell's burgers are the same old sheep — but in beef's clothing. Dressed up with cheese, drowned in pickle relish and spiced with garlic, muttonburgers are downright edible.

"The big test was whether the soldiers would eat mutton," Powell said as a local woman tended to a sizzling griddle. "The secret was providing plenty of relish."

The entrepreneur contacted the Falkland Islands' government after a friend in the army lamented the lack of fast food in Stanley. With govern-

ment backing, Powell, then a London decorator, came down to investigate what might appeal to the troops.

"After the obvious reply, the second thing they wanted was a Chinese takeaway," he said. But Chinese food must be cooked over a hot flame, and there was no practical way to obtain fuel.

He settled on muttonburgers, returned to England to experiment with mixtures of seasonings that would make them appealing, and opened his shop 17 months ago.

If anything, business was too good in those first few months as he and two harried friends worked 13-hour days six days a week.

But that was before troops were moved to their floating "coastal" barracks two miles from Stanley. Now

that there is a bit of geography between customer and counter, Powell said, he has had time to plan for the future.

Already, he has opened the islands' first bakery at the back of the shop, providing bread to Stanley families and pizzas and meat rolls to the British version of the NCO club.

He also has a stable of 22 motorcycles that soldiers interested in exploring the countryside, known here as the "camp," can rent for \$20 a day.

When all the enterprises are put together, Powell brings in \$2,600 a week. He will not discuss how much profit is left after all the bills are paid.

"If anyone wants to know if this is the place to make a great deal of

money, I'd say no," said Powell, 30.

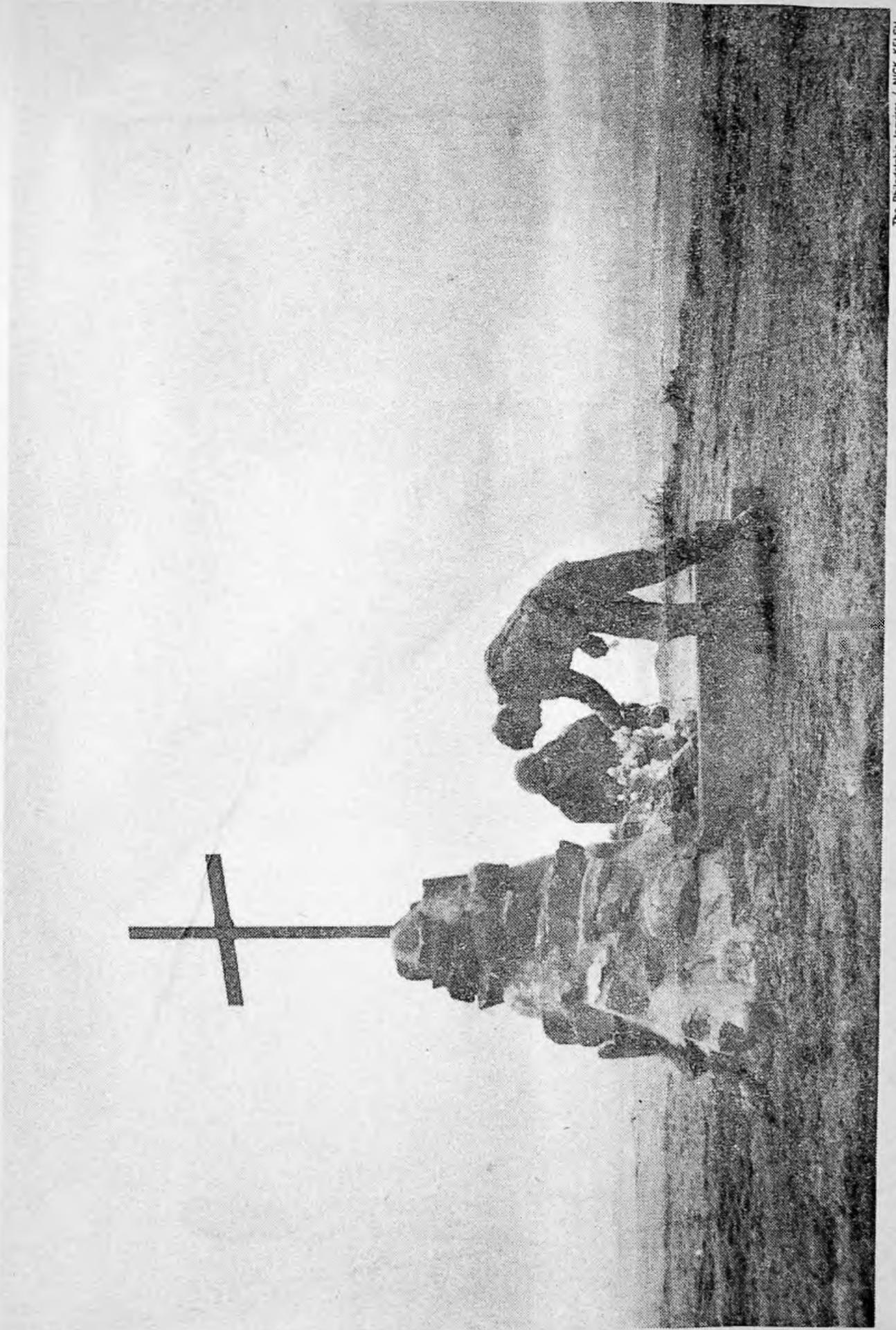
On the other hand, he added, there are few spots in the world where you have to ship pepper from 8,000 miles away but can see sea lions and penguins at the beach just a few minutes away.

In the years preceding the Argentine invasion in April 1982, both the population and the economic fortunes of the Falkland Islands were dropping steadily. Declining profits in the wool trade, the islands' economic underpinning, led to a 25 percent drop in the domestic economy between 1974 and 1980. The infusion of military personnel and money halted that decline, but doubts remain about whether the Falklands can be restored to permanent economic health.

Fortress Falklands

The guns are silent now on the Falkland Islands, but more than two years after Britain's military victory, the cost of peace

may be too high half a world away from London. This is the first in a two-part series on the price of glory.



Honoring 20 countrymen who died at the site, British officers replace plastic flowers that the wind blew from a monument in the Falklands

The Philadelphia Inquirer / NICK KELSH

A proud moment, a humbling burden

By Jane P. Shoemaker
Inquirer Staff Writer

STANLEY, Falkland Islands — In the chill of a South Atlantic winter night, the Union Jack once again could be hoisted over Stanley. It was June 14, 1982, 73 days after Argentine troops had landed and occupied this remote colonial outpost.

Eight thousand miles away in London — quite literally at the other end of the Earth — exuberant crowds toasted the British forces with strong ale and serenaded the prime minister with patriotic songs.

But now, scarcely two years later, Britain's shining moment has taken on an

unsightly tarnish. Though the gunfire ceased, political peace never followed, and Britain and Argentina remain locked in diplomatic conflict over who owns what one side calls the Falkland Islands, the other *Las Malvinas*.

It is only a war of words, but it carries a heavy price: Britain is spending \$2.6 million a day to feed, house and equip a 4,000-strong garrison as far away as Australia is from the United States. Put another way, that comes to more than \$7,400 a day for each of the islands' 350 families.

No one brought up the cost when British and Argentine soldiers were in combat. It

was a matter of pride then, of not being bullied, of showing backbone. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher spoke the thoughts of a nation when she vowed to "put the Great back in Britain."

To be sure, she still speaks for the 1,850 inhabitants of the Falklands. A pioneering people accustomed to doing things for themselves, they are immensely grateful for the guns and ships and fighter planes and soldiers Thatcher has dispatched here on their behalf.

"She's been terrific, a real Churchill," Walter Felton, 63, said on an August afternoon — winter in the Southern Hemi-

sphere. Felton, a fifth-generation islander and a descendant of one of the first settlers, feels guilty about the cost of defending his home but points out that it wasn't the Falklanders who started it.

But the taxpayers back in Britain who must underwrite the operation are growing increasingly impatient. With the government raising taxes, cutting back on social services and closing hospitals, polls indicate that Britons are fed up with spending so much money on their expensive and distant relations. Three-fourths of the populace say they want Thatcher to negotiate (See FALKLANDS on 16-A)

A persistent critic insists there

By Jane P. Shoemaker
Inquirer Staff Writer

As British politicians discuss and debate the Falkland Islands and their future, two names come up over and over again.

The first is General Belgrano, the Argentine cruiser torpedoed during the 1982 conflict. The second is Tam Dalyell, a House of Commons member who is waging a one-man crusade to rewrite the official record on that sinking.

By the official record, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her war cabinet ordered an attack on the vessel out of concern that British ships were under threat.

A submarine tracked the Belgrano for more than 30 hours and then fired two Mark 8 torpedoes that sent the 10,650-ton cruiser down within minutes.

Dalyell maintains that Britain attacked, and thus sacrificed the lives of 368 Argentine sailors, solely in order to prolong the conflict and boost Thatcher's political stature. He argues that the ship was 250 miles from the Falklands, heading for Argentina and posing no threat whatsoever.

"I just think these people are absolute liars," he said in an interview.

Dalyell's kinder critics dismiss him as a misguided eccentric. Others

accuse him of being mentally unbalanced; some say he is a traitor. His campaign has gone on so long that he now draws little attention.

By his background, Dalyell, 52, seems an unlikely adversary to the Conservative prime minister. His credentials are typically Tory — member of an aristocratic Scottish family, son of a much-decorated Army officer, graduate of the elite Eton boys' school and Cambridge University.

But Dalyell is a committed member of the Labor Party who regularly takes up working-class causes and shrugs off all the personal abuse.

"When you do what I do, you'd

was a dark side to Britain's motives

better be a pretty tough egg," he said. "I'm a very serious politician. I'm not a nut. And in this case, I know that they are dead wrong."

The Labor Party politician makes that point at every opportunity. When investment in the islands is brought up, he brings up the Belgrano. When the foreign secretary reports on diplomatic negotiations with Argentina, Dalyell reports on the Belgrano.

Three weeks ago, the left-wing magazine *New Statesman* published an article based on documents purportedly leaked to Dalyell by a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Defense.

The official, Clive Ponting, 38, who has been formally charged with violating the Official Secrets Act, emerged last month from a self-imposed seclusion. He denied guilt but admits passing information to Dalyell.

One of those documents indicates that Thatcher's government made a hasty change in the rules of naval engagement to allow the torpedo attack on the Belgrano. The Argentine cruiser was outside a 200-mile "exclusion zone" declared by Britain and would have been safe from attack without the change, the magazine said.

The magazine also reported that

the war cabinet deployed a Polaris nuclear submarine to the South Atlantic and might have attacked the Argentine mainland if the war had gone badly.

Military and government officials vehemently denied that portion of the magazine report. Retired Adm. Lord Lewin, who was a member of the special war cabinet, said the use of nuclear weapons "never entered our remotest thoughts."

The head of naval operations during the war, retired Adm. Henry Leach, called the report "complete and utter nonsense."

But those disclaimers have done nothing to dissuade Dalyell.

A proud moment brings Britain a heavy burden

FALKLANDS, from 1-A
with Argentina on whether to give the islands to Argentina.

Further, military strategists warn that Fortress Falklands, as the operation is known, is sapping military strength from where it is needed, closer to home in the North Atlantic. And politicians, even members of Thatcher's Conservative Party, say that they are under pressure to meet voters' needs at home.

"Fortress Falklands has opened a vast new area of public expenditure when restraint and cuts have been the order of the day," Tory Cyril Townsend said during a recent House of Commons debate on the islands.

The Labor Party case was stated by Bruce George, who pressed for an agreement with Argentina whereby that nation would own the islands but Britain would retain control for at least a generation.

"We should never sell the Falkland Islanders down the river. That would be unwise and immoral," he said. "But while the wishes of a handful of islanders are important, they should not be paramount. Our interests are important as well as theirs."

Maj. Gen. Peter de la Billiere, commander of the British forces in the Falklands, stressed in an interview that Falklanders were every bit as important as people living in the United Kingdom.

"If we're not prepared to defend 1,850 British citizens," he said, "what is the minimum number we're prepared to protect — 2,000? 5,000? 10,000? If you're one of those 1,850, that becomes a rather important question."

The elected government that succeeded a military junta in Buenos Aires late last year has displayed none of the aggressiveness that led to the 1982 invasion. Neither does President Raul Alfonsin show any sign of giving in on Argentina's historical claim to the islands, which lie about 300 miles off its coast.

"Our way is not war," he said on the second anniversary of the surrender. "But in the name of our dead, we must commit ourselves not to cease our claims for a single moment."

At first inspection, it is difficult to understand why either nation would fight a war over the 200 oversized hunks of peat moss known collectively as the Falkland Islands.

There are no trees, just a rolling terrain of rock and spongy peat that squishes under the weight of a soldier's boot. For every day of sunshine, there are two days of clouds. The average wind speed, day and night, year-round, is 20 miles an hour.

An estimated six million penguins consider its sandy beaches home. Half a million sheep provide its one and only industry, wool.

The total land area of the islands is almost two-thirds that of New Jersey, but there are just 17 miles of road — and most of it is grooved and potholed.

There is no fruit. There is no fresh milk. There is no yogurt or cottage cheese or ice cream. Mutton, the tough byproduct of the wool trade, is the dietary staple and is served in almost every home almost every day.

There is no place to buy a newspaper. There are no restaurants, no auto repair shop, no dry cleaner. What few things the islanders cannot do themselves, they do without.

An army officer winding up his first — and he hopes last — four-month tour here was asked his thoughts on settling into this isolated culture.

"We all think the same thing," he replied. "Queen Victoria has a lot to answer for."

It was under her reign that the first 26 permanent British settlers arrived here in 1842. By then, the argument over whose territory they were settling — that of Britain, Spain or France — had been going on for more than a century.

France eventually dropped out, as did Spain after the territory later named Argentina declared independence in 1816. Argentina and Britain carried on the dispute, and the were-here-first arguments that divided them 150 years ago divide them today.

The latest and most deadly round in the long-running dispute began as a trivial incident on a crescent-shaped patch of land even more remote than the Falklands.

Argentine scrapmen landed on the Antarctic island of South Georgia in March 1982 and raised their national flag.

The group was spotted on March 19

by scientists from the British Antarctic Survey, who informed the intruders that they could not land, let alone raise a flag, on the British-owned island without official permission.

Though it is more than 800 miles from the Falklands, South Georgia is administered from Stanley and thus the official demand that the Argentines leave came from here.

The stated mission of the scrapmen was to salvage metal from abandoned whaling stations. The true intent became clear on March 25, when marine commandoes who had remained aboard the Argentine vessel came ashore. The next day, a second ship arrived, bringing reinforcement troops, equipment and supplies.

For the next week, diplomatic and intelligence cables were frantically passed between London and Buenos Aires. As it became apparent that the South Georgia landing was only a prelude to a full-scale invasion of the Falklands, Thatcher called on her good friend in Washington, President Reagan, to intercede directly with Argentina's ruler, Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri.

That personal appeal was ignored, and on April 2, Argentine troops landed and opened fire on Stanley.

Three days later, the first two ships in a task force that eventually numbered more than 100 vessels sailed from Portsmouth on the morning tide.

On May 2, the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was sunk, taking 368 crew members' lives. The decision to torpedo the ship, which was 250 miles from Stanley and headed toward Argentina, remains a front-page political issue in Britain today.

Two days later, the British ship Sheffield was hit by an Exocet missile. A pilot and 20 sailors died.

The war games were no longer. This was a war.

Cont../5

Philadelphia Inquirer
9th September 1984



A lifeboat deserted after the fighting is now a place to play

The people living in the Falkland Islands had been aware of that fact for some time. In Stanley, the Argentine military had taken over the government, the post office, the radio station. Officers moved into unoccupied houses and filled the Upland Goose Hotel.

Armed patrols walked the streets and guarded official buildings. Cold and hungry conscripts foraged for fuel and food in yards, gardens and empty houses. The Argentines commandeered private cars and jeeps and tried, with only limited success, to confiscate all radios.

Houses shook as British bombers made passes over the airport. Tracer bullets lit the night air.

"If someone asked me four years ago if that kind of thing could happen, I would have sworn on a Bible that it couldn't," Margaret Leonard, arms thrust wide to embrace the improbability of the whole scene, said in an interview in her home.

"This is where people come to live in peace and quiet."

The first wave of British marines and paratroopers established a bridgehead on May 21 — not at Stanley as the Argentine strategists had expected, but on the other side of the main island, 50 miles to the west.

They fanned out from there and, in comparatively short order, retook the tiny settlements with quaint names that now are etched in British military history: Goose Green, Darwin, Fitzroy, Bluff Cove, Teal Inlet.

As they closed in on Stanley, the most ferocious battles of the conflict

were waged for control of the high ground overlooking the settlement. One by one, Mount Longdon, Mount Harriet, Two Sisters, Wireless Ridge, and, finally, Mount Tumbledown.

Ten weeks to the day after the task force sailed, 24 days after the marines landed, Maj. Gen. Mario Menendez signed the surrender. Three civilians, 258 British soldiers and more than 700 Argentine soldiers had died.

Some days after the surrender, when 11,000 Argentine troops, now prisoners of war, were awaiting repatriation, British officers invited Argentine officers in for drinks and a chat. The two sides exchanged war stories and reviewed strategy. Lt. Col. Tony Welch, who had been responsible for supplying British troops as they made their way across the island, remembers no hostility, only the camaraderie so common among men in uniform.

"When it's over, it's over," he said.

Governments do not so easily make up.

Britain and Argentina broke diplomatic relations at the start of the conflict and still have not found enough common ground to reopen normal diplomatic channels. Britain is demanding that Argentina declare an end to hostilities; Argentina is

refusing to do so as long as Britain keeps such a large garrison so close to its shoreline.

There was hope for some sort of breakthrough in December, when Alfonsin took office as Argentina's first elected president in a decade. Twice jailed by the military for his outspoken political protests during the 1960s, Alfonsin opposed the military junta's decision to invade the Falklands and said so during his election campaign.

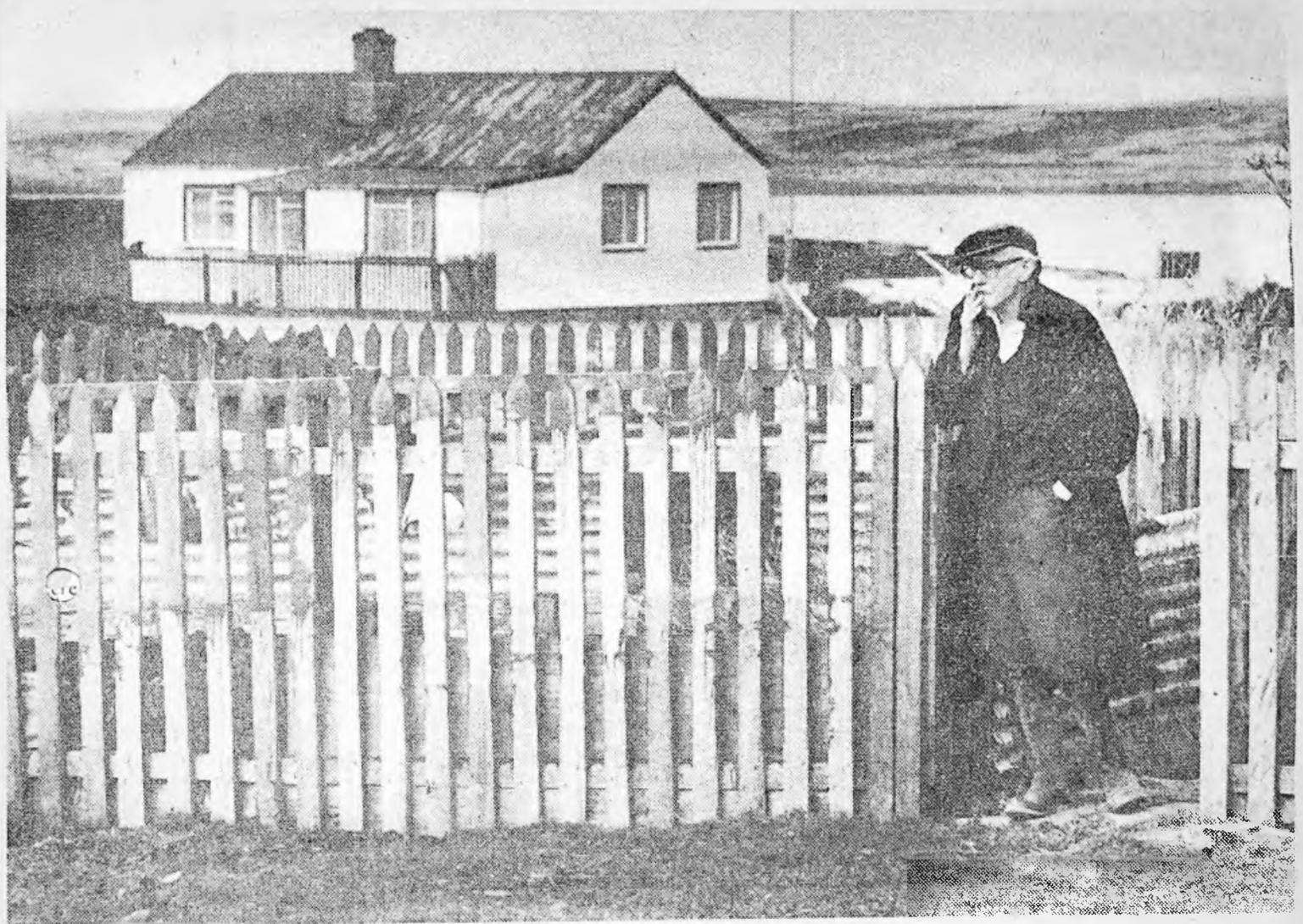
Thatcher sent him a congratulatory message and, according to diplomatic sources, quietly dropped her insistence that Argentina declare an end to hostilities in any formal, face-losing sort of way.

But nothing came of the Christmastime message. The second anniversary of the surrender in June provided new impetus — if not for negotiation, at least for reflection in both nations.

In Britain, the former chief of the defense staff, retired Adm. Terence Lewin, concluded that the conflict was "the classic failure of deterrence. . . . It was a fault of the politicians, not a military failing, to allow the Argentines to think that their aggression would succeed."

Alfonsin marked the second anniversary with an emotional pledge to continue a peaceful political fight to

cont../



Leo Dearling, 64, lives in the settlement of Fitzroy; a second-generation Falklander, he still calls England home

gain sovereignty over Las Malvinas. "We have to eliminate once and for all these remnants of colonialism," he said.

As a result of the continuing diplomatic break, all communication must be through intermediaries — the British through the Swiss, the Argentines through the Brazilians.

Even the most ordinary message passes from London to Bern, Bern to Sao Paulo, and Sao Paulo to Buenos Aires. A simple yes-or-no reply wends its way back along the same circuitous route.

Amid all the differences, both sides at least can agree on one point: That not talking directly makes an agreement on talking directly all the more difficult.

After months of only indirect contact, Britain and Argentina announced on July 18 that their representatives would meet face to face in Bern that night.

But in 24 hours, all the months of planning and the quiet, if indirect, negotiation had gone down the drain — over the translation of a single word from English to Spanish.

The sticking point has always been Argentina's insistence that the question of Falklands sovereignty be included in talks on British-Argentine diplomatic relations. Thatcher contends that the two are separate.

As British government sources tell

it, Argentina wanted the agenda to include a variety of issues, among them the Argentine claim to sovereignty over the Falklands. Britain agreed to discuss all subjects — except the sovereignty of the islands.

A preliminary agreement was worked out that the Argentine delegation leader would make the sovereignty claim and that the British leader would acknowledge the statement but decline to discuss it further.

In effect, the arrangement was to give both governments positive news to take home to the electorate. Alfonsin could say that Argentina brought up its claim to the territory; Thatcher could say that sovereignty was not discussed.

In the meantime, the two sides could set about mending less controversial splits in the tattered diplomatic fabric. Among other questions on the agenda were whether the bodies of 230 Argentine soldiers buried at Goose Green would be sent home.

Inquirer photos by Nick Kelsh

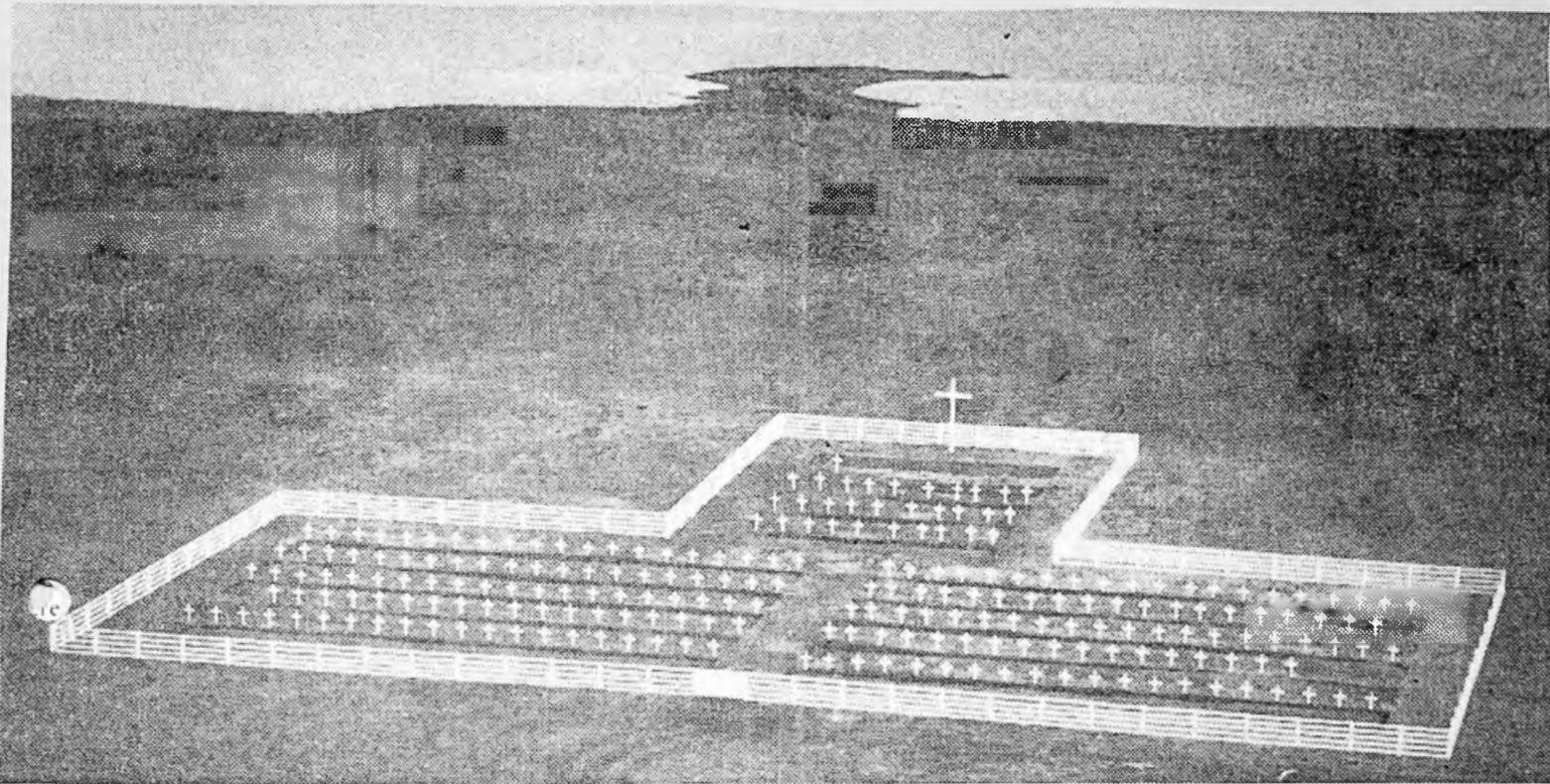
The arrangement fell apart on the translation into Spanish of the British sovereignty response. Argentine diplomats say they expected the British to say they were not ready to talk about it — *No estamos en condiciones de discutir*. The British in fact said that they were not prepared to discuss sovereignty — *No estamos dispuestos a discutir*.

The British insist that there was no last-minute misunderstanding but that the Alfonsin government "got cold feet" about compromising. As the British tell it, Argentina feared that a conciliatory tone might send the wrong signals to neighboring Chile, with whom it has a separate territorial dispute.

Wherever the truth lay, the reality today is that the two governments are not talking even indirectly, and have no plans to do so in the foreseeable future.

Cont../7

Philadelphia Inquirer
9th September 1984



After a battle near Goose Green, the British buried Argentines in this graveyard; some graves contain more than one body

For both national leaders, the stakes in this showdown are high, indeed.

Margaret Thatcher's political career was saved by the conflict. Before Argentine troops shot their way into Port Stanley, Thatcher's government was in deep political trouble. Opinion polls rated her as the most unpopular prime minister to serve since World War II.

Her quick and decisive response to the invasion gave Britons something they desperately wanted: A reason to feel proud.

From her historic low, Thatcher soared in the public's esteem and rode that crest to a landslide reelection last summer.

In the preface to a book written by an islander, she describes the House of Commons session in which she announced the surrender as the proudest moment of her life.

That surrender put Alfonsín into office. Galtieri had staked his political future on victory and was ousted as national leader during the wave of angry recriminations that followed defeat.

A committed reformer, Alfonsín won election in December on a platform of fiscal responsibility, no small commitment in a country suffering a 600 percent inflation rate and a \$45 billion international debt.

That part of his policy is the stick. The carrot is his unswerving pledge to pressure Britain into giving up sovereignty over the Falkland Islands.

Three British politicians made a private visit to Buenos Aires in July to discuss the continuing diplomatic stalemate. They returned convinced that Argentina would not be the first to back down.

After all, it costs Argentina nothing to demand sovereignty; Britain is spending \$2.6 million a day to refuse.

Argentina's former foreign minister, Angel Robledo, put the situation plainly to the trio.

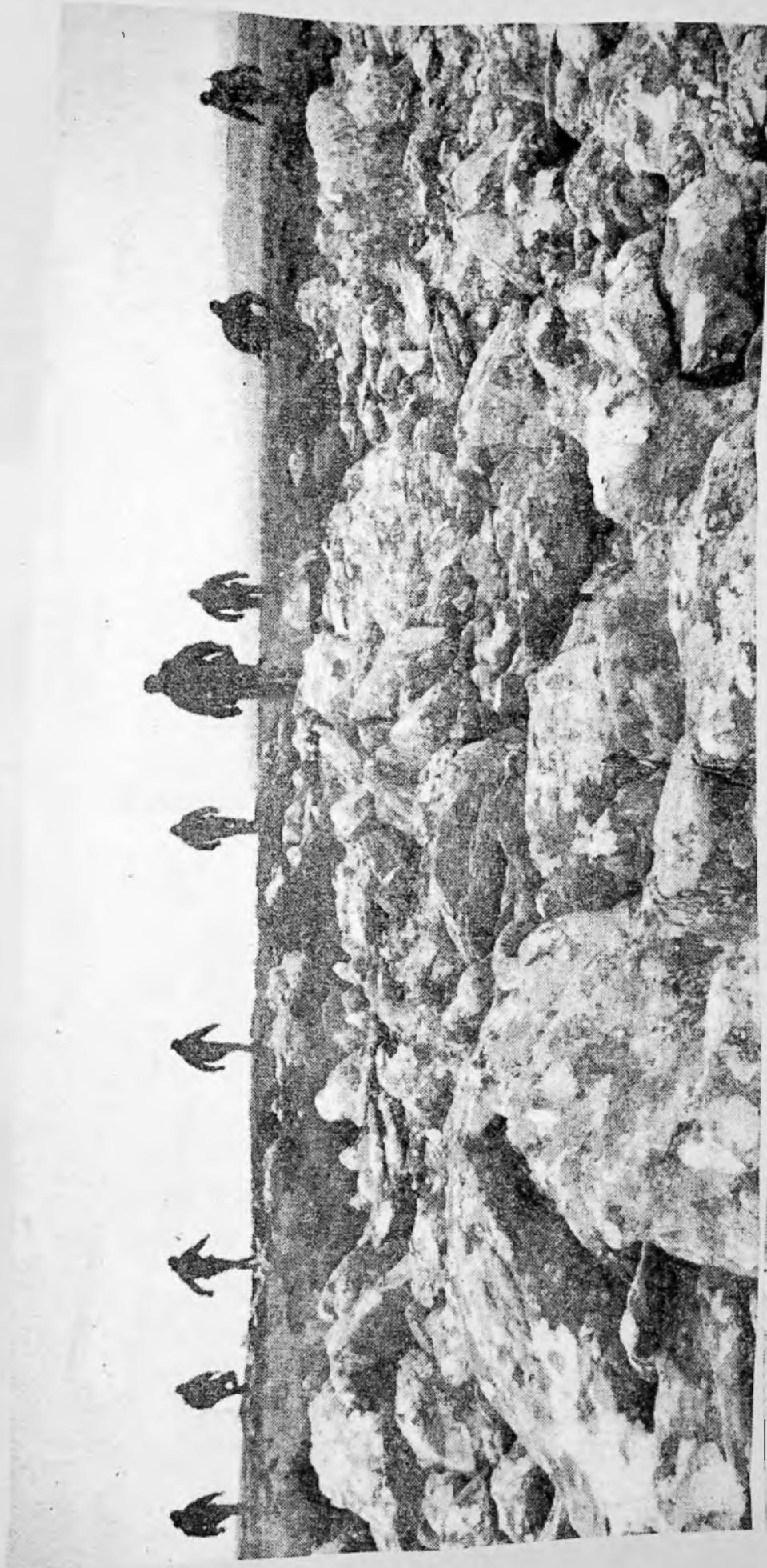
"He told us that sitting back and waiting is comfortable and convenient for Argentina," House member George Foulkes said when he returned to London.

"The increasing cost of support and development of Fortress Falklands falls on the UK," Foulkes argued, "and increases public pressure on Mrs. Thatcher to find a way out."

TOMORROW: How the British garrison on the Falklands has changed life for the islands' 1,850 residents.

◆ Sunday, Sept. 9, 1984 Philadelphia Inquirer

FORTRESS FALKLANDS



Combing the countryside for unexploded ammunition, an engineer regiment crosses desolate terrain; officers say that the Falklands mission offers unprecedented opportunities for training

Cont../2

Philadelphia Inquirer
9th September 1984

For the 'squaddies,' it's a constant fight — against boredom

By Jane P. Shoemaker
Inquirer Staff Writer

STANLEY, Falkland Islands — A four-month posting in this wind-swept and barren territory may be the soldier's nightmare. But officers responsible for keeping the British troops in fighting form consider it a training dream come true.

Phantom jet pilots can skim low over the landscape — 250 feet is the wartime standard — without scaring people or tangling with power lines. The 350 families spread across 30 settlements have become nonchalant about the daring aerial exercises.

"The trouble in Europe is you can't fly in a straight line for long without coming onto a town," said Flight Lt. Ian Hartley. "Here the airspace is unrestricted. We leave this place much, much, much more competent."

On the ground, units wage mock battles over vast acreage populated only by sheep. Soldiers can practice with live weapons and ammunition on 30 firing ranges offering a variety of terrain.

And the Royal Engineers' Explosive Ordnance Demolition detachment — the bomb squad — combs cratered fields still littered with debris from the 1982 Anglo-Argentine conflict. It is a vastly more challenging task than the usual tidying up of firing ranges at home.

"This is the finest on-the-job training they can get," said Capt. Ian Law. "Call it turning personal adversity into military advantage. Call it keeping the troops too busy to think about the 8,000-mile distance between here and home."

Whatever the label, the Falkland Islands clearly are providing British forces with the best training ground they have had since World War II, and officers are putting their charges to work in ways never before possible in peacetime.

A 4,000-strong garrison is here protecting islanders from possible attack by Argentina, just a 300-mile air hop away. A military assault seems improbable now — but then it seemed improbable in April 1982 when islanders found themselves dodging bullets that pierced their front doors.

Because Argentina has not declared an end to hostilities, the force stands ready to shift into a wartime posture at a moment's notice. Two Phantom jets are warmed up and ready for take-off at all times, and pilots remain in full flight paraphernalia while on emergency standby.

There have been incursions — no one will say how many — by Argentine aircraft and ships into the 150-mile "protection zone" around the Falklands.

But if there is an emotion that prevails among the "squaddies," it is not fear, but boredom. For that reason, training exercises are elaborate and time-consuming, workdays long, and leisure time limited.

"People are bloody tired when they leave here," said Lt. Col. Tony Welch, commanding officer of the Logistics Battalion.

It is Welch's department, responsible for supplying the Falklands force with everything from laundry soap to mortars, that perhaps has been put to the greatest test.

Everything the troops eat, drink and smoke, everything they wear, everything they use or read must make its way through an 8,000-mile supply line that links Britain with its soldiers in the Falklands.

The job of logistics experts is to see that supplies move along that pipeline at precisely the right speed to keep the garrison comfortable — or as comfortable as the troops can be this far from home. It is a task that leaves little room for error: What is not here probably cannot get here from Britain for at least a month.



A letter from home brightens a soldier's day in the field

Trauma of war lingers on in Malvinas

by Jimmy Burns

ALONG the waterfront of Port Stanley the Malvinas Islands' only two major monuments in remembrance of the two World Wars have been joined by a third. The Liberation Statue, paid for by the islanders as tribute to the British task force has become the most striking symbol of "Kelper" feelings and the most poignant local reminder of those three months in 1982 that shook the world.

Islanders now like to coin the phrase "Falkland heritage" to describe the symbiosis between the British military and local civilian population produced by history. For a community that has always lacked a deeply entrenched "local culture", war has brought in its wake a wealth of experience, legend, and folklore capable of binding this small civilian community in a sense of common identity.

I have just returned from a ten-day stay on the islands. I tried to maintain an open mind by talking to people both inside and outside government and by taking the trouble to travel fairly extensively rather than allow myself to get stuck in Stanley. Rereading my notes it is difficult to find an islander that did not have his own story to tell about the disruption caused by the Argentine occupation.

There was no rape or widespread looting

"...Major General Peter de la Billiere, the new military commander is insistent that the threat from Buenos Aires should not be underestimated as long as there is no real progress on the diplomatic front..."

and the only three islanders who died during the conflict were accidentally shelled by the British, not by the Argentines.

Nevertheless there was an invasion and then there was a war and for the majority of islanders the peace that was shattered on April 2 was in itself unforgivable. To the outside world, the lack of bloodshed compared to the atrocities in the Lebanon may have seemed small fry indeed. But that is to lose sight of the size and nature of the community which existed before the Argentine landing. Within the context of the islands' history what occurred was perhaps no less tragic than what happened in Beirut.

Some islanders suffered less than others: one family for instance told me how their dog had had its front teeth knocked out by falling masonry. Some islanders hardly suffered at all: one family who live in an isolated farm off West Falkland didn't even see an Argentine. And yet there were many who had a very bad time of it indeed: sheep were shelled, fences were torn down, some houses ended in ruins, the rough grass and the gorse turned black and crumpled in the destruction of battle. One farmer had his horses and pigs hacked to death.

In Stanley the islanders watched themselves incredulously as if they had become characters in Wonderland against their will. In the first days after the invasion they were made to drive on the right hand side of the road when they had lived all their lives on the left. Public buildings had heavily armed sentries placed around them as if Stanley Post Office was Palermo barracks. Government house, emptied of Rex Hunt, had the blue and white Argentine flag hoisted up. The only problem was that the flag was much too big and heavy for the flag pole so that it was sometimes difficult to keep it up. Some of the islanders took this as a sign from the heavens.

Some islanders were a great deal luckier than some Argentines. Each "Kelper" knew a "chico de la guerra".

"I remember one conscript. He was just outside our home going round in circles and repeating over and over again "Tengo hambre, tengo hambre", recalled one witness." At night sometimes we could hear a single shot go out from the direction of the Argentine camp. We thought they were shooting each other," said another witness.

In Stanley cemetery ancient mariners and old age pensioners lie by old moss covered stone crosses; their tomb stones with their tales of heavy storms and natural deaths are like the chapters of a history book. They are perched on a hill overlooking the bay and the scene is as peaceful as that of any village graveyard in Britain.

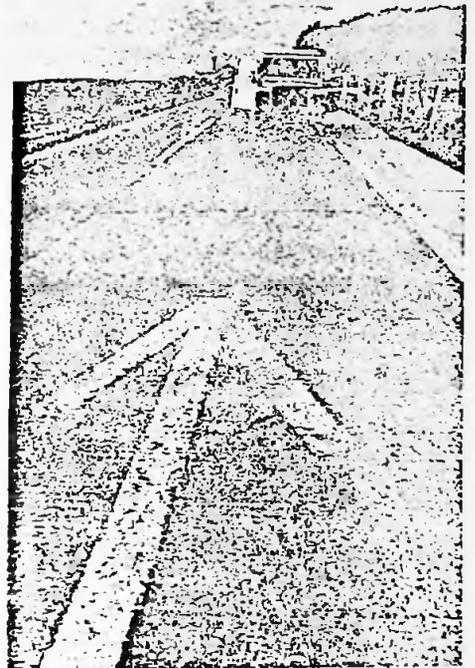
But when they talk of the cemetery today, the islanders only recall the mass grave into which the Argentines bundled their dead. (After the war the bodies were dug up by the British and taken to Goose Green, to join other conscripts and officers who had fallen. 215 bodies now lie between perfect lines of white crosses — a sight as moving as the graves of the British at San Carlos.)

Death too reemerges in conversation with reference to the "Old Beaver Hangar", a shell-ridden building which the Argentines once used as their morgue. One islander told how in the evenings a boat would set out from the hangar's makeshift jetty and move out towards the open sea.

For a community that had scarcely known violence such images have had a traumatic effect. The experience of the war has entrenched itself deeply in the collective psyche and continues to mould attitudes, making the whole islands question seem at times even more intractable than it was before the war.

The legacy of battle moreover is felt on the practical as well as on the psychological level. The islands today remain littered with unexploded mines. These were the ones that were laid in a hurry in the last days of the war; they are without metal rings so they cannot be detected or defused. Whole areas around Stanley have therefore been declared red zones or "no-go" areas, out of bounds to civilians and soldiers alike. Some islanders now have to do

Malvinas



• Flashback to April 1982. Arrow, painted by Argentine Army conscripts, pointing the "wrong way". (File photo)

B. A. Herald
9 Sept. 1984

without their favourite picnic sight. To go fishing in certain areas means getting blown to bits.

This report would distort the past if it did not also mention the good words that a number of islanders had for some individuals in the Argentine armed forces. Humanity clearly shone through in some of the personal relationships that were struck between the conscripts and some of the Kelpers. At officer level, the Argentines seem to have divided themselves into "hawks" and doves in their attitude towards the islanders.

Bill and Pat Luxton still tremble in their recollection of the day, soon after the invasion, when a Major Dowling of army intelligence ordered their deportation from the islands, on the grounds that they were firmly pro British and a threat to internal security. "At the time I didn't know what was going to happen to us. I just thought of the "disappeared, and I was terrified", Bill recalled.

Such stories however are outnumbered by the general appreciation felt for the courtesousness of General Mario Benjamin Menéndez, the Argentine military governor, and his senior team of advisers. Monsignor Spraggon, the Catholic bishop



• View of Stanley. For all the talk of development, the town is still a small, backward community.

fondly remembered the tact and patience with which Captain Hussey and Brigadier Bloomer-Reeve treated the inhabitants in an attempt to honour their "interests". With the evidence of hindsight such behaviour among Argentine officers signalled the dawning of a new relationship between democratic government and armed forces. Both Hussey and Bloomer-Reeve were promoted by Alfonsín.

On balance however, it is the bad memories and the present day discomforts of the mines that outbalance the more positive aspects of the Argentine occupation and which thus influence the degree with which the islanders wish to reach an accommodation with Buenos Aires.

"When you've been made to look down the barrel of a gun you are in no hurry to shake hands", commented one islander echoing many others.

By contrast relations between the civilian population and the 4000-odd British troops on the islands are on the whole good.

Disciplinary action against servicemen over the last year has averaged five cases a

Troop morale has been maintained thanks to a carefully orchestrated "hearts and minds" campaign involving the local population. Troops are encouraged to build up friendships with islanders by offering occasional free rides on patrol boats or in helicopters and by joining in communal parties. Troops and civilians share also in the tours of the battle sites.

Three Sisters and Mount Longdon are resurrected as part of the "island heritage". There are abandoned trenches littered with Argentine toothpaste tubes and morphine bottles, and there are nearby arms "cemeteries" with everything from an empty bullet to a wrecked Pucará.

The "battle tours" conducted every other Sunday serve a preeminently psychological purpose. They are partly a form of entertainment. The tour I was on had the soldiers picking among the debris like excited schoolboys at some prehistoric

"...Local opinion has generally welcomed the advent of a committed democrat to the Argentine political stage in the person of Raúl Alfonsín. Nevertheless, most islanders hear bad news from Buenos Aires as well: 615 percent inflation, troubles with the military over the human rights issue and last but not least what is perceived as an unrelenting resolve of the Argentines to claim sovereignty without regard for the wishes of the islanders..."

week. This is a smaller number proportionally than that in any other theatre in the British services. Offences so far have generally been no graver than wrongful parking and drunkenness. There has been no rape or murder.

"I consider Stanley to be like a country 'beat' where the "bobby" still knows his parishioners", said Sergeant Russell Parke, a member of the 28 man civilian-military police force.

mausoleum. They also reinforce training: the tour operator, usually a senior officer, makes a point of emphasizing the courage, qualities of leadership, and general military preparedness which helped defeat the Argentines, (although they also point out the extreme bravery of some Argentine troops). For boredom and a potential for losing sight of objectives are the two interconnecting pitfalls for the British armed forces on the islands.

Officially the troops are in a permanent "state of alert". They could rapidly deploy around the islands if there was any fresh attempt by the Argentines to move in militarily.

But since Raúl Alfonsín took over as President there have been no incursions by the Argentines into the 150-mile exclusion zone. The absence of any more tangible threat has meant an intensification of troop training to keep the adrenalin going and to placate those critics within the British military establishment who argue privately that resources would be better spent in Europe.

Major General Peter de la Billiere, the new military commander is insistent that the threat from Buenos Aires should not be underestimated as long as there is no real progress on the diplomatic front. "Argentina is in a state of hostility with the British and has a reputation for unexpected changes of policy," he said in a recent interview.

Nevertheless the term Fortress Falklands is an exaggeration. There are less than half the number of troops there were on the islands immediately after the war and the majority of soldiers are no longer billeted in Stanley. The number of troops are likely, to be reduced even further once the new airport at Mount Pleasant is completed.

In the meantime the three billion pounds earmarked over a five year period for the garrison and for the replacement of equipment lost during the war remains in striking contrast to the 30 million pounds set aside by the British government for the development of the islands.

A key part of the development strategy is to improve the productivity of sheep farming through grasslands improvement and the subdivision of land. A woollen mill and an inshore fishing project capable of developing West Falklands are also high priorities.

Nevertheless, local officials admit that the 30 million pounds will not be sufficient to bring about a major transformation of the economy. At best the money is likely to be adequate only to keep the islands going and to arrest the depopulation that was taking place before the war. Last year 30 islanders who left for the UK during the conflict returned and there were 40 new immigrants. There has also been a trickle of disillusioned islanders who have left Stanley in recent months.

Such coming and going reflects the mixed feelings many islanders have with regards their future. For while numerous Kelpers like to see the new airport as the most visible proof of Mrs Thatcher's determination to retain sovereignty, many others remain suspicious of Britain's real commitment to the islands.

For all the talk of development, one of the lasting impressions of Stanley today is still essentially of a small backward community not so different from an isolated township in the wilds of Scotland with an indigenous population of less than 1500. What few roads there are remain filled with potholes. The local school is small and there are not enough teachers to

go round the islands. But perhaps the most glaring symbol of abandonment is the local health service. An official enquiry into the fire last April which left the King Edward Hospital completely gutted and led to the death of eight civilians revealed how the main hoses had not worked because the local authorities had not bothered to link them to the town's water supply. Five months after the fire, civilian patients are housed in a temporary hospital; a prefabricated wooden building which according to some islanders falls well short of British fire safety standards. In theory there is no stopping a similar tragedy repeating itself.

Local opinion has generally welcomed the advent of a committed democrat to the Argentine political stage in the person of Raúl Alfonsín. Nevertheless, most islanders hear bad news from Buenos Aires as well: 615 percent inflation, troubles with the military over the human rights issue and last but by no means least what is perceived as an unrelenting resolve of the Argentines to claim sovereignty without regard for the wishes of the inhabitants. "If Alfonsín is the democrat he says he is why doesn't he have more respect for our

rights?" was the question I found constantly thrown back at me.

This arguably somewhat distorted view of the political and social realities of Argentina today is still to some extent stimulated by the traditional nature of local politics. These were conducted before the war in a glassbowl atmosphere of rumour and personal friendships which left very little room for detailed and dispassionate public debate. Since the war at least one islander who defends Argentine sovereignty has been virtually ostracized as a traitor and forced into permanent self exile on the Argentine mainland.

In Stanley itself even the few individuals who even now are still prepared to admit privately that they would like to see a much firmer accommodation with Buenos Aires are reluctant to echo these thoughts publicly.

Nevertheless times are changing... the appointment by London of Mr David Taylor, an energetic former director of Booker McConnell to the post of "chief executive" to work alongside the civil commissioner Sir Rex Hunt forms part of a general revamping of the island administration. Changes to the islands' constitution are also being drafted to

ensure greater accountability of local officials. It is likely that Sir Rex's eventual replacement could prove to be less of a hawk, although no successor has yet been named.

A more open local administration is likely to discover that there are many islanders who would welcome a resumption of trade links with the Argentine mainland, not only as a way of reducing their isolation from the outside world but also as a sine qua non of more substantial economic development.

Thus the islands' history has turned almost full circle with some room to manoeuvre in the direction of an eventual communications agreement but with the majority of Kelpers resolutely against accepting Argentine sovereignty. It could take many years for the "trauma" of the war to fade; for emotion to give way to the reality that is Argentina just 560 kilometres away; for democracy in Buenos Aires to become firm and unbreakable; for Mrs Thatcher to be replaced by a more magnanimous prime minister. Now, much more than then, time seems to be the essence of the Malvinas debate. (*Jimmy Burns is the Buenos Aires correspondent of the Financial Times*)

Observer
9th September 1984

Hospital safety

In the interests of accuracy over an issue of much concern to Falkland Islanders, I would like to comment briefly on some aspects of Jimmy Burns' article, last week, about the 'make-do' hospital in the Falklands.

The temporary hospital building was the only one which could conceivably have been used for that purpose and for which it was converted at very short notice and at great speed. The idea that the old hospital building which remained after the fire could be converted into a temporary hospital was never seriously considered because it would have taken far too long with the scarce human resources available.

All those recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry into the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital fire which applied to the temporary hospital have been implemented. When the temporary hospital opened in May, the Forces Fire Officer stated that the 'actions taken so far would provide a reasonable standard of protection to patients.'

Notwithstanding this assurance, on 13 June the Executive Council of the Islands considered what steps could be taken to improve still further the degree of protection afforded. With the concurrence of the Senior Medical Officer, they decided that since the hospital was temporary, emphasis should be placed on fire alarm systems and rapid

evacuation facilities rather than the protection of the building itself. Orders were placed with British manufacturers for fire fighting protection equipment, including an alarm system and emergency lighting, to the value of £100,000.

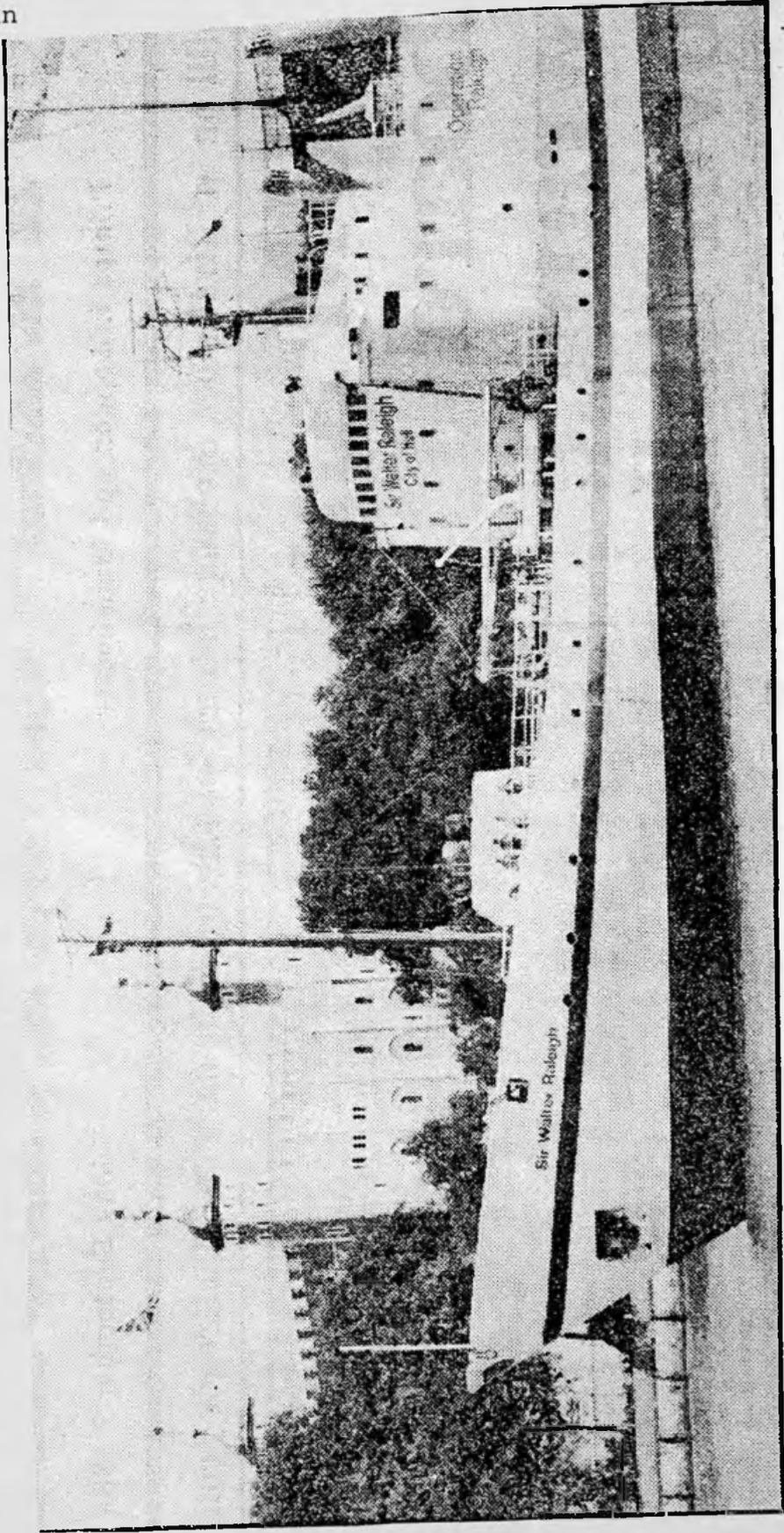
A comprehensive range of medicines and medical supplies together with pathology and X-Ray facilities, are provided with great efficiency by the military medical authorities. It is quite untrue to say that medicines are in short supply or unavailable. The facilities of the temporary British Military Hospital are open to civilians, as and when required, and if necessary evacuation by airbridge to the United Kingdom can be quickly arranged.

The hospital accommodates 13 patients, there is an operating theatre, a modern kitchen, and laundry room. In addition to the bathroom there are three shower units. The staff consists of three doctors and 15 nurses of whom four (including the Chief Nursing Officer) are on secondment from the Westminster Hospital.

The hospital has successfully treated Islanders, contract labourers and fishermen from foreign fleets, and two babies have been born. Contrary to the impression given by the article, it is well thought of in the community pending the construction of a new hospital for which plans are already well advanced.

Alastair Cameron,
Falkland Islands Government
Representative.

Guardian
7.9.84



Sir Walter Raleigh, Operation Raleigh's newly commissioned flagship, passes -- appropriately enough -- the Tower of London before mooring next to HMS Belfast on the Thames yesterday. The 1,900-ton vessel has been donated by Hull city council for a four-year round the world expedition for young people
Picture by Graham Turner

The Guardian
7.9.84

Galahad order for Tyneside

SWAN Hunter yesterday won a £40 million contract to build a replacement for the logistics ship Sir Galahad, which was destroyed in the Falklands war. Back page.

The Guardian
7.9.84

Tyneside yard to build new Sir Galahad

By David Simpson,
Business Correspondent

The Tyneside shipbuilding yard of Swan Hunter was yesterday awarded a £40 million contract by the Ministry of Defence to build a replacement vessel for the logistics ship Sir Galahad, destroyed with the loss of 51 men at the Bluff Cove landing during the Falklands war.

The decision was announced by the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, during an unofficial tour of local industry.

Swan Hunter is one of the British Shipbuilders yards which the Government has stated will be sold to the public within the next 18 months, but a spokesman denied that the privatisation plans had influenced the decision to award the Sir Galahad contract to the yard.

Mr Heseltine, while defending the policy of selling off BS warship yards, warned of more redundancies in the shipbuilding industry. "There is not enough work for yards to continue at their present levels of employment, so whoever wins contracts, sadly there will be some losers," he said.

Welcoming the contract, Swan Hunter's managing director, Mr Alex Marsh, said that the Sir Galahad replacement would guarantee employment for 700 of the yard's 7,500 workforce, although no new jobs would be created.

The yard won the order in direct competition with Harland and Wolff, in Belfast, which is not listed for privatisation.

Swan Hunter last year incurred a £7.4 million trading loss, but earned £3.4 million from its warship activities. Its workload includes replacements for two other Falklands Royal Navy casualties, HMS Sheffield and HMS Coventry, and it is putting the finishing touches to a replacement for the container ship Atlantic Conveyor, also sunk in the Falklands.

The stricken Sir Galahad was towed out to sea and sunk as a war grave, and Mr Heseltine said yesterday: "This is a fitting moment to pay tribute to those who made such a great contribution and lost their lives on that ship."

The replacement vessel will have a steel superstructure, in line with the MoD's policy of abandoning aluminium, and is scheduled for completion early in 1987.

Social Democratic Party
"The Social Democrat"
7.9.84 -Party Conference
Agenda
Sunday 9.9.84

12.10 pm — 12.30 pm.

Council debate on the Falkland Islands
Motion 4 — from the Policy Committee

● This Council believes that while the views of the Falkland Islanders should be given the fullest consideration they cannot be paramount, that it is essential for the British Government to open discussions with the Argentinians to reach a

stable settlement in the South Atlantic that would allow Britain to abandon the heavy cost of maintaining "Fortress Falklands", and that any settlement should come forward with an arrangement whereby sovereignty of the Falklands Islands is vested initially either in the UN under the provisions for trusteeship or under the auspices of the Organisation of American States (of which the US is a member) or under satisfactory arrangements for joint sovereignty, and that any settlement should ensure that Britain maintains undisputed sovereignty over South Georgia and the Sandwich Islands.

The Guardian, 7th September 1984.

Tyneside yard to build new Sir Galahad

By David Simpson,
Business Correspondent

The Tyneside shipbuilding yard of Swan Hunter was yesterday awarded a £40 million contract by the Ministry of Defence to build a replacement vessel for the logistics ship Sir Galahad, destroyed with the loss of 51 men at the Bluff Cove landing during the Falklands war.

The decision was announced by the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, during an unofficial tour of the local industry.

Swan Hunter is one of the British Shipbuilders yards which the Government has stated will be sold to the public within the next 18 months, but a spokesman denied that the privatisation plans had influenced the decision to award the Sir Galahad contract to the yard.

Mr Heseltine, while defending the policy of selling off BS warship yards, warned of more redundancies in the shipbuilding industry. "There is not enough work for yards to continue at their present levels of employment, so whoever wins contracts, sadly there will be some losers," he said.

Welcoming the contract, Swan Hunter's managing director, Mr Alex Marsh, said that the Sir Galahad replacement would guarantee employment for 700 of the yard's 7,500 workforce, although no new jobs would be created.

The yard won the order in direct competition with Harland and Wolff in Belfast, which is not listed for privatisation.

Swan Hunter last year incurred a £7.2 million trading loss, but earned £2.4 million from its warship activities. Its workload includes replacements for two other Falklands Royal Navy casualties, HMS Sheffield and HMS Coventry, and it is putting the finishing touches to a replacement for the container ship Atlantic Conveyor, also sunk in the Falklands.

The stricken Sir Galahad was towed out to sea and sunk as a war grave, and Mr Heseltine said yesterday: "This is a fitting moment to pay tribute to those who made such a great contribution and lost their lives on that ship."

The replacement vessel will have a steel superstructure, in line with the MoD's policy of abandoning aluminium, and is scheduled for completion early in 1987.

Tory agreed to Belgrano cover-up

BY CHRIS McLAUGHLIN

FOREIGN office minister John Stanley has accepted civil service advice to cover up details of secret orders which led to the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano.

Documents leaked this week show that Stanley followed the letter recommendations that information should be withheld from MPs on the commons foreign affairs select committee.

The recommendations caused embarrassment to the government when they were leaked last week because they showed clearly that ministers were being urged to deceive MPs.

But the Stanley memorandum is even more embarrassing because it shows that he enthusiastically followed the advice.

The memo is a covering letter to a sheaf of evidence compiled by ministry of defence officials for submission to the foreign affairs select committee.

Both documents were leaked to the New Statesman this week.

In the original advice to withhold information from the MPs, J M Legge, the civil servant who heads DS11 section of the MoD, says that a full list of the changes in the piles of engagement in the South Atlan-

tic before the Belgrano was hit should not be revealed. He goes on: "I therefore recommend that we should avoid these difficulties by providing the committee with a more general narrative."

And that is just what Stanley approved. The submission to the committee refers to the rules of engagement being updated "frequently and continuously".

Precise details of the changes ordered by prime minister Margaret Thatcher and the war cabinet show that all Argentine ships, including those outside the maritime exclusion zone, were considered justifiable targets.

There is no reference in the Stanley document as to the process by which, through the political command structure, the rules of engagement came to be changed.

Tam Dalyell, the Linlithgow MP, said: "It is one thing for civil servants to proffer the suggestion that ministers should deceive the house of commons."

"But it is quite another for a minister to accept that advice enthusiastically. It is an insult to the commons."

Make-do hospital may be Falklands fire risk

JIMMY BURNS in Port Stanley reveals fears for patients

FIVE months after the blaze at Port Stanley hospital, the Falklands capital is waiting for a decision on a replacement while patients are housed in a building which could be a fire risk.

Eight people, including a British nurse, died in the fire at the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital last April.

Three days later, Mrs Thatcher promised a new hospital, but a Foreign Office official said last week that a new building would cost between £6 million and £10 million in addition to the £30 million set aside for development.

The temporary hospital is a prefabricated wooden building previously used as a hostel for construction workers. It was built by James Brewster and Associates, which says it meets UK fire regulations and has been modified further in line with recommendations by local fire officials and the Crown Agents.

Senior doctors and construction experts in the Falklands, however, say the building is not

suitable and recommendations made by the official inquiry into the April fire have not all been followed. One official who investigated the blaze said: 'I would hate to think what would happen if a fire broke out again.'

Some officials recommended that the main ward of the King Edward hospital should be rebuilt immediately and made operational within four weeks of the fire.

Converted

The island authorities, however, in consultation with the Crown Agents, accepted an offer by Brewster to use a Swedish prefabricated building, which was converted for about £30,000, according to officials.

Mr James Brewster told *The Observer* last week: 'Our buildings fulfill every UK fire regulation, more so in fact, and this one did even before it was converted into a hospital. We handed the building over and made a number of alterations at the Falkland Island government's request.'

But according to the sources in the Falklands, the alterations still leave patients dangerously exposed in the event of another serious fire.

They question a number of features which they allege make the building particularly vulnerable.

The roof has not been compartmentalised and the ground-floor rooms, passages and doorways are loose-fitting, increasing the speed with which flames and smoke could spread throughout the building.

Large areas of the building, which would in an emergency be used by patients and staff as an escape route, have not been reinforced with fireproof paint.

Brewster has added fire exits and a special verandah which can be used in an emergency. But it is said that the fire ramps are at a sharp angle, the main staircase has an inadequate banister, and the windows are made of a single pane which opens out and obstructs the verandah.

Finally, the sources say, the

main corridor is not wide enough to allow more than one stretcher at a time.

Asked about fireproof paint, Mr Brewster said: 'Our walls are fibreglass and have a flame control of 30 minutes.'

Doctors have underlined other aspects which they regard as inadequate to serve the island's 1,800 population. There is no X-ray or pathology department, medicines are in short supply or not available and the 13 patients have to share one bath.

The capacity of the hospital is less than half of the King Edward, which has meant several old people have been sent home and emergencies are passed on to the military hospital.

The temporary hospital has gained such a bad reputation among short-contract labourers that many insist on being flown immediately to Britain, at considerable cost, for treatment.

Mr George Webster, director of the Falkland Islands public works department, confirmed that local fire officers had made several recommendations urging that the hospital be brought up to British safety standards. He said that one officer had reported that building was fit for immediate evacuation only.

Bradford Bulletin
(The staff newspaper of Bradford Telephone area)
September 1984 Editor David Dennis Lieutenant RNR

FALKLANDS CALLING



DP Falklands style.

First, my apologies for writing about myself but with a Bulletin to produce each month amongst my other work, any time off not only adds to printer's deadline pressures but also of course gives me less time to find articles. I have just returned from the Falkland Islands where I went in my role as a Royal Naval Reservist - you may recall an article on Reg Horner RNR in a Bulletin last year. Well mine is a similar background except whereas Reg seems to go East to West with the Navy, to Canada and Hong Kong probably taking a few pairs of shorts, sun-tan lotion with him, I tend to go North to South, Iceland and now the South Atlantic, my clothing being foul-weather gear and all the Damart I can get under my uniform. However, the theme of the article you will be relieved to hear is Communications in the Falklands.

But first you may be interested in how I got there. Being Navy, I flew down, RAF VC10 to Ascension Island with a stop-off in Senegal, West Africa, an 11 hour journey but relatively pleasant, then the crunch, Ascension to Falklands in a Hercules aircraft fitted out for paratroopers, freight. The non-stop journey took 16 hours, seats made of webbing, knees interlocked with the man sat opposite, no windows as such, very noisy (couldn't speak), very draughty, and then a dramatic half-hour whilst the aircraft refuelling in mid-air.

On arrival in Port Stanley, we were met by the height of the South Atlantic winter.

However, back to the theme, Port Stanley, the only "town" has a manual telephone system, users having to wind a handle to attract the operator. Subscribers pay an annual rental but there are no call charges. However, contact to the remote areas of the islands is by Radio Telephone.

Fifty years ago there was a circular system of telephone communications with each settlement having its own number of rings.

Overseas calls are however very modern, Cable and Wireless recently opened a direct telecommunications link to the UK, prior to that calls were

cont.../



Pretending to be warm outside Port Stanley Cathedral and the Whalebone Arch.

carried by HF radio, a very outdated method, providing only limited capability of subscriber access. Users had to book a call often several hours ahead and between certain times when the link was open, the quality was variable and if you were too low on the waiting list or previous callers spoke too long you had to

start again next day. Now with the large garrison and a growing expatriate work force communication demand is tremendous. An INTELSAT satellite earth station is now on the Falklands.

IDD is available either by going through the Cabled and Wireless office or from a special public payphone, there are a few about and several in the military camp. The cost is £1.50 per minute to the UK. The Forces buy a phonecard at £15 a time used like our own "Cardphones". As yet the UK cannot dial direct to the Falklands.

A telephonist in Port Stanley, Mrs. Betty Ford was one of three local ladies who raised funds to buy each of the 777 servicemen wounded in the conflict, a special minted crown commemorating the liberation of the islands. I noticed some Bradford Area links with the Falklands, the Government Secretariat had two printing machines made by Dawson Payne and Elliot of Otley, the Master Printer acutally staying in Otley 31 years ago, and also some wool processing equipment from David Firth Ltd. of Cleckheaton. Traditionally, Falklands wool-clip has been exported to the UK (in fact to Bradford) in the raw state without any processing, they now intend using Firth's second-hand machines to do some of their own.

Lasting impressions of the Falklands - biting winds, continuously changing sky, the pastel colours, friendliness of the people and the abundance of wild-life - seals, penguins, geese, other birds are so unafraid of people, they tend to come to have a look at you rather than the other way around.

Reader's Digest

ADVANCE COP
September 1984

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Book Choice

Good Morning, Merry Sunshine
Diary of a new-born baby
by BOB GREENE
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£100 for Your Letter, 1; It Pays to Enrich Your Word Power, 7; Laughter, the Best Medicine, 13; Press Section, 33

World's most read magazine
31 million copies - 41 editions - 17 languages
British edition - 1.5 million copies

Farm Animals from Britain's Past

BY ALAN LLOYD

Dorking chickens. Tamworth pigs, Soay sheep and Gloucester cattle—the Rare Breeds Survival Trust is saving them all to enrich tomorrow's world

AMONG other animals given by British farmers to replace those killed during the Argentinian occupation of the Falkland Islands were five in-calf cows and a bull of the Shetland breed. Specially picked for their ability to thrive on rough grazing in harsh conditions, these hardy, stumpy-horned cattle were unloaded at Port Stanley last October. "The calves have now been born," reports Tom Davies, head of the Falkland Islands Agricultural Research and Development Centre, "and all the cattle are doing well."

Ironically, a decade ago the same Shetland breed, no longer considered useful, was facing extinction. According to the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, the organization which donated the beasts to the Falklands, only 12 pure-breeding examples survived in the Shetland Islands.

"We had to do something quickly," says Joe Henson, a founder of the Trust, "before the breed was lost beyond recall." By making grants to island breeders and encouraging mainland interest, the Trust nursed the Shetland cattle off the danger

list. Today there are 168 on farms all over the country. A charity dedicated to preserving rare breeds on British farms, the Trust has 5,000 members, from dukes and earls to school groups whose children keep one or two sheep and pigs. It operates by supervising herd records, running shows for neglected breeds, funding research and, above all, persuading farmers to include some of the animals in their own stocks.

"Once every county had its own breeds of livestock with special qualities," says Henson, a loquacious Cotswold farmer in his fifties. "Now, most have been dominated by a few highly commercial strains. But we can't predict what the future holds. Like the Falkland Islanders, we may be glad one day of the old attributes."

The Trust's success has been dramatic. While more than 20 breeds became extinct in the preceding half-century—the last, the Lincolnshire Curly Coat pig, died out in 1972—none has succumbed in the 11 years

Joe Henson (top) with a Loughorn draught ox. Other Trust rarities: Soay sheep, Tamworth piglets, Golden Guernsey goats



since the Trust was formed. Some, including miniature Dexter cattle, multi-horned Jacob's sheep and the Cleveland Bay horse, have been re-established beyond any danger.

But 40 breeds, Henson reckons, still call for intensive care. Several have less than 200 breeding females, among them Middle White pigs; Gloucester cattle, whose milk was the original basis of Double Gloucester cheese; and Portland sheep, famed for the delicacy of their meat.

Flocking In. Many of the endangered breeds are on display to an enthusiastic public at the Cotswold Farm Park, the rare breeds survival centre established by Henson at Guiting Power, Gloucestershire. "Interest is staggering," says Henson's daughter Elizabeth, a geneticist and rare breeds specialist. Last summer 120,000 people visited the park—a kind of verdant time machine where the beasts of our history stare back at you: Shire-horses, long-horned Manx Loaghtan sheep of Viking origin, Bagot goats whose shaggy ancestors formed King Richard II's herd.

Strolling its rolling acres I saw working oxen, big blotchy Gloucester Old Spot pigs that rootled the Vale of Evesham orchards in Shakespeare's time, and White Park cattle whose snowy bulls inspired Sir Walter Scott to verse. Vintage poultry—rosy-combed Dorking and Sussex chickens—recalled an era when all eggs were "free range." "Many of our visitors are familiar with little more than Friesian cows and broiler

chickens," says Elizabeth Henson. "They are thrilled to see so many different types of farm animal."

The old strains are traffic-stoppers everywhere. When Scottish farmer David Wathen decided to keep Tamworth pigs, a red-skinned variety of medieval ancestry, he became accustomed to drivers parking in half-dozens beside his fields on the isle of Mull. Eager photographers stalked the hogs as he was feeding them.

Tamworths, reduced to three male breeding-lines in this country until the Trust brought three unrelated boars from Australia in 1976, need less cossetting than our commercial pigs. Modern commercial sows are confined in metal-framed "crates" while farrowing to stop them trampling or rolling on their piglets, which are heated artificially in their early days. Tamworths farrow outside without trouble, often building grassy nests as nurseries. They can also stand fierce sun, unlike other pigs, whose skin burns easily.

"Although Tamworths take longer to reach bacon weight, they are cheaper to fatten than conventional breeds," comments Wathen. "A decade ago, when most pig farmers were losing money, I was showing a modest profit on my Tamworths—and they were clearing unwanted bracken from my ground by uncovering the roots and eating them."

Self-sufficiency is generally high in the old breeds. Primitive animals have wider pelvic openings and so give birth more easily than strains

now fashionable; in 1982 a Hebridean ewe, a type dating back to the Norse sagas, gave birth to triplets at the astonishing age for a sheep of 22. Other "oldies" have remarkable survival powers. Shetland sheep can live on amazingly low levels of nourishment. One, buried for ten days under heavy snow, ran off so strongly when dug out that it could not be caught.

North Ronaldsay sheep, long confined to the shores of the island, feed almost wholly on seaweed. Fearful this unique breed could perish at a stroke from foot and mouth disease, or an oil slick, the Rare Breeds Survival Trust bought a neighbouring island, 210-acre Linga Holm, and in 1974 moved some of the sheep to it.

"It cost every penny we had at that time," says Henson. "But now the breed is safe. A productive animal that can live on what the sea washes up must be valuable."

No one knows when an old strain may prove its worth. The Exmoor pony, a small sturdy type used by the ancient Britons, carried grown men for centuries. Then, when adult riders demanded larger horses, the Exmoor, too broad-backed for many children, became neglected. Today, it is prized again.

"Riding has become a widely used therapy for the disabled," explained Elizabeth Henson, as we admired a perky Exmoor foal at Guiting Power. "What is needed is an animal strong enough to carry a heavy teenager, yet low enough for someone on foot to



A Portland ram. Top: Making friends with "Iron Age" piglets, revived from wild and domestic strains, and a black Berkshire

give assistance. The Exmoor suits perfectly."

Other "oldies" may hold clues of great value to modern stockbreeders. Four thousand years before the Iron Age, Neolithic Man kept tough little sheep with uneven horns. On mainland Britain bigger breeds made them obsolete, but some survived in the isle of Soay, to the west of the Outer Hebrides. Now they are acutely interesting to breeders, for they are immune to foot-rot, a scourge which cripples modern flocks. Says Henson, "If we can discover the secret of their immunity and introduce it to commercial breeds, the saving to sheep farmers would be inestimable."

Meanwhile, Soay sheep are earning their keep on the spoil dumps of Cornwall's china-clay pits. Only the

foot-sure little primitives are light enough to graze the newly seeded mounds without eroding them.

The first planned step to preserve the breeds of our farming heritage came in the 1960s, following the post-war rush into high-yielding animals—Friesian dairy cows, Hereford bullocks, commercial bacon pigs. "It became evident," Elizabeth Henson elucidates, "that such types, costly to feed and extremely people-dependent, could themselves in time become unfashionable." Tomorrow's world, crowded, almost certainly short of feed concentrates, might cry out for a rough-grazing cow, a sea-weed-eating sheep.

So, in August 1968, representatives of the Royal Agricultural Society of England and the Zoological Society of London, which already kept some of the old breeds at its Whipsnade Zoo, met to organize the establishment of breeding centres at Reading and Kenilworth to save the assets of the past for the future's benefit.

Five years later the notion, evolving as the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, was launched nationally with Henson as the first chairman. "We had few funds," he recalls, "but a wealth of approval from the British public. It was quickly evident that the animals were money-raisers in their own right."

Support mushroomed. Today, the Trust has an annual income of £173,000. It publishes its own glossy monthly, *The Ark*; counts some of the

country's largest businesses as corporate members, and promotes rare breeds on such fund-raising articles as tea-cloths, hand-painted thimbles and whisky glasses. Enthusiastic children sport badges urging "Cuddle a Cotswold" and "Love a Lincoln."

"Rare breeds are now being kept at more than a thousand locations in the British Isles," says the Trust's director, Michael Rosenberg, a quiet American who retired from Wall Street stockbroking to farm in Devon. His own 300-acre farm is stocked with rare sheep. Like most things he handles, they show a profit. "It would be larger," he asserts, "if I didn't pay researchers to study them."

Missing Links. Research is high on the Trust's priorities. With the records of old breeds often lacking, studies of the merits and defects in blood lines are critical. The Trust uses a computer to calculate the genetic complexity of pedigrees. It has also employed cross-breeding where a dwindling strain has become too inbred—like the Norfolk Horn sheep. In poor shape by 1969, it was revived by last-minute crossing with another breed, the Suffolk, and now survives, fifteen-sixteenths its old self, with new vigour.

One sound insurance for the future of rare breeds is the storage of semen for use in artificial insemination, standard practice in commercial breeding. In 1905, before semen stocks existed, a precious herd of White Park cattle was being moved by rail from Chartley Park in Staffordshire to Woburn

Abbey, home of the Duke of Bedford, when the train caught fire. All the bulls perished.

"That could have been catastrophic," says Elizabeth Henson, "had not one of the cows to survive produced a bull calf. Today, with semen in store for almost all the minor strains, we can surmount the loss of male animals."

The Trust's lead in preserving rare breeds has been followed abroad. A US counterpart, the American Minor Breeds Conservancy, is working to preserve such transatlantic strains as the rare Mule-footed Hog and the Navajo sheep, which can endure searing heat and aridity. And breed conservationists from Western and Eastern-bloc countries pool knowledge at international conferences.

There is already a commercial resurgence of some "oldies." In America, the Texas Longhorn is back in tens of thousands on marginal grazing lands, where it does well, after being in the doldrums most of this century. In Finland, the Finnish Landrace sheep, facing extinction in 1960, is on the up again. Its high fertility—the ewes give birth to four or five lambs at a time—is used to boost

reproduction in commercial flocks.

In Hungary, breeders have rediscovered the Curly Feathered Goose, feared lost in the last war. One of farming's rarest birds, it has proved much more resistant to disease than modern breeds, even when reared in intensive systems.

Our children may well see old faces on tomorrow's farms. The rare breeds are already part of some school programmes; pupils at York's Joseph Rowntree School, for example, have kept Soay and Wensleydale sheep, and Middle White pigs. The Trust's latest three-yearly census shows an encouraging upward trend in virtually all the breeds it is working to preserve. And six more rare breed centres, approved by the Trust, are now open to the public.

"Final success," says Joe Henson, "will come when every rare breed is assured a future. Not long back, that was a dream. Now it is an aim we could well achieve this decade."

The Cotswold Farm Park, Guiting Power, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, is open daily May 1-September 30, 10.30am-6pm. Admission £1.25. Children 60p.

PHOTOGRAPHS: MIKE PETERS