

Falklands fisheries

From Mr M. B. F. Ranken

Sir, Simon Lyster (feature, February 18) really should reflect on why fisheries were never developed around the Falklands or even South Georgia before the recent war, especially so as world fish catches trebled over 20 years and have only crept up slowly in the past decade or so. But little of that catch ever came from these waters.

One British skipper described the southern part of the Patagonian continental shelf as a desert and that is certainly true in various seasons and years.

British and European companies showed no interest, although the Spanish, with Argentine licences, have long fished farther north, occasionally as far south as Comodoro Rivadavia; so have Greeks and Portuguese.

Few Argentine vessels ever

venture farther south than Chubut Province, although Argentina claims a 200-mile limit and more. The Japanese have also been active for certain species. But only the Russians and Poles have been major exploiters of these waters and those around South Georgia, in certain years and certain seasons, with often long gaps between.

All these countries have had ready markets for their frozen products, too often of poor quality because of serious processing and freezing difficulties, prior to the long transit north to major markets, mainly in the Northern Hemisphere.

The Falklands themselves have not been enthusiastic fish eaters and British fishing companies have not been sanguine about the likely profitability of a major investment so far from home to exploit unfamiliar difficult species.

Krill off South Georgia is another

matter, but here again massive investment is involved and reliable technology still lacking.

Declaration of fishing limits to 200 miles or median lines could be a source of royalties and, if properly enforced, might assist resource management and environmental protection. But enforcement also involves the heavy expense of patrol vessels and aircraft, shore administration and, eventually, scientific and statistical support.

South-west Atlantic fish have not had a reliable reputation in world markets and cannot be assured of a high enough price to justify a major investment of capital, management and manpower, all of it imported over great distances.

Yours faithfully,
M. B. F. RANKEN,
28 Clare Lawn Avenue, SW14,
February 20.

Hong Kong pact may be ready by spring

By Robert Cottrell in Hong Kong

SPECULATION is mounting in Hong Kong that Britain and China may be ready in spring or early summer to announce a preliminary agreement about the future of the Colony.

The signs of rapid progress include the current three-day visit to the Territory of Mr Richard Luce, British Foreign Office Minister responsible for Hong Kong, and an expected—but unconfirmed—visit to the territory in spring by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Britain's Foreign Secretary.

Hong Kong's Legislative Council, which normally debates new laws, is meanwhile staking a hurried claim to debate any proposals for Hong Kong's future prior to a final agreement being reached. The "unofficial" members of the council who are appointees from the private sector, said on Friday that they will propose on March 14 that the council deem such a prior debate to be "essential" council business.

Financial analysts say the debate call contributed to weakness yesterday on the Hong Kong stock markets. The Hang Seng index fell 25.91 points to close at 1,022.85. Investors' concern is that the debate may irritate China, which regards the negotiating of Hong Kong's future as strictly bipartisan issue with Britain.

Mr Luce yesterday met privately with the Executive Council, which is the Governor's 16-member inner "cabinet" of advisers. Direct consultations between the Executive Council and British Government ministers have taken place over the past 18 months in London and Hong Kong at critical times in the Sino-British negotiations. Such consultations appear to be Britain's preferred way of testing whether proposals for Hong Kong's future are acceptable to Hong Kong's people.

● Sir John Bremridge, Hong Kong's Financial Secretary, will deliver his 1984-85 budget tomorrow. Analysts expect Sir John to raise direct taxes and announce a bond issue to cover what may prove to be a third successive forecast budget deficit.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

27.2.84

Filial flypast

GREGOR BROOKER, a loadmaster with Bristow Helicopters based in the Falklands, fulfilled a lifetime ambition the other day when he was the guest of 1312 Flight, R A F Stanley, on a Hercules mail drop over South Georgia.

Gregor flew over the 8,000-foot mountain of which his father, Dr Ian Brooker, made the first ascent on the day his son was born, Jan. 30, 1955, and which was subsequently named Brooker peak by the Royal Geographical Society.

Serving at the time with the Royal Air Force as a medical officer and squadron leader, Dr Brooker, now a Shetlands G P, led a team on the mountain during a stop-over on South Georgia while a member of the 1954-55 British Antarctic Expedition. Twenty-nine years on, Gregor Brooker described the flypast during the 1,600-mile round trip from Stanley as "a wonderful experience."

McMillan-Scott Associates *Public Affairs*

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Plea for time by Falklanders

From the Representative of the Falkland Islands Government

Sir, Whilst it is desirable that there be improved diplomatic and commercial relations between Great Britain and Argentina, it is too early to talk of opening links between the Falkland Islands and Argentina and we feel strongly that the Falkland Islands should not be used as a pawn in any bilateral negotiations.

We would welcome the opportunity of re-establishing communications and trading links with Chile and Uruguay. It is important, of course, that the Falkland Islands Government is as far as possible kept continuously advised of all developments in this area.

When the Falkland Islands have had a period of peaceful reconstruction and development the Government and people will be able more clearly to assess their position and decide how they wish their political future to develop, in other words, exercise their right of self-determination.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN MONK, Representative,
Falkland Islands Government,
29 Tufton Street,
Westminster, SW1.
February 22.

THE
TIMES
24.2.84

Argentina's former air chief faces arrest

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

Brigadier Basilio Lami Dozo, the former commander of the Argentine Air Force, faced probable arrest yesterday as he went before the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to give evidence on his role in the Falklands War.

His arrest would complete the detention of the members of the military junta which ordered the invasion of the Falklands on April 2, 1982 and set off the 14-week war which left more than 800 Argentine soldiers dead.

On Wednesday the Supreme Council ordered the arrest of Admiral Jorge Anaya, the former Navy commander, who was one of the early advocates of the invasion, but kept virtually all the Navy's ships out of action for fear of attack by British nuclear-powered submarines after the sinking of the cruiser, General Belgrano.

Admiral Anaya was being held yesterday at the Navy Mechanics' School in Buenos Aires, a site believed to have been used as a secret detention centre by the Navy during the military's campaign to exterminate left-wing dissidents in the 1970s.

The former President, General Leopoldo Galtieri, the third member of the junta which ordered the invasion, was arrested by the same military court on Tuesday, and is being held at the Campo de Mayo Army base on the outskirts of Buenos Aires.

The Supreme Council is court-martialing General Galtieri, Admiral Anaya, Brigadier Lami Dozo and 11 other officers for their part in the ill-fated war, after a special military commission accused them of negligent planning, inadequate preparation and military and diplomatic bungling once the fighting began.

Although the court's proceedings are secret, a military source said it could reach a verdict in the cases of the three junta members between two weeks and a month from now.

The arrest of General Galtieri and his top commanders is simply a "preventive measure", the source said, based on a presumption that they are guilty of at least some of the crimes of which they are accused.

Possible delays in the Falklands War trials could arise from the fact that the Supreme Council, made up of three representatives each from the Army, Navy and Air Force, is already trying 10 senior military officers accused by President Raúl Alfonsín of responsibility for human rights atrocities under the military regime which stepped down last December.

Proceedings have already begun in the human rights trial, and the nine members of the first three military juntas to hold power (including General Galtieri's) have been notified of the charges against them.

Hongkong date

Peking (AFP) - Chinese and British negotiators wound up their latest round of talks here on the future of Hongkong with a joint statement that the session has been "useful and constructive." The next round will be on March 16 and 17 in Peking.

● Mr Eric Varley, whose resignation as MP caused the Chesterfield by-election, set off for the Falklands yesterday and will miss polling day on March 1.

"I am going on a fact-finding tour and will meet members of the island's government and the civil commissioner, Sir Rex Hunt", Mr Varley, who is deputy chairman of the Coalite group which owns most of the Falklands, said.

Three shipyards bid to replace Sir Galahad

Three British state-owned shipyards, Cammell Laird at Birkenhead, Swan Hunter on the Tyne and Harland and Wolff in Belfast are lining up to win what, in emotional terms, will be the most important contract for years - the replacement for the 5,600-ton Sir Galahad landing ship. The vessel will cost between £30m and £40m.

Sir Galahad, one of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's logistic landing ships, was bombed by Argentine forces on June 8, 1982, in Bluff Cove in the Falklands. Thirty-three Welsh guardsmen lost their lives.

Arrest of third Argentine junta member ordered

THE Supreme Council of the Armed Forces yesterday ordered the arrest of former Air Force chief Basilio Lami Dozo, the last of Argentina's defunct three-man military junta to be detained.

The council, Argentina's highest military court, placed Brigadier Lami Dozo in preventive custody after interrogating him for over three hours this morning.

On Tuesday the six-man court arrested the former president and army commander, Leopoldo Galtieri, and on Wednesday it detained ex-navy chief Jorge Anaya.

The three men are being court-martialled for their role in the 1982 Falklands war.

Gen Galtieri and Admiral Anaya both face possible death penalties on a charge of refusing a reasonable request for help from a military unit in distress in time of war.

Along with Brig Lami Dozo, they also risk long prison terms for several other alleged contraventions of the military code.

An official inquiry into the Falklands conflict also recommended the court-martial of 11 field commanders for their alleged misconduct in the fighting.

Gen Galtieri, Admiral Anaya and Gen Lami Dozo also face court-martial by the Supreme Council on separate charges of authorising the widespread abuse of human rights. *Reuter*

GUARDIAN

24.2.84

Lami Dozo questioned

Buenos Aires: The highest military court yesterday interrogated the former air force chief, General Lami Dozo, after ordering the arrest of his two former colleagues on the military junta which led the country to defeat in the Falklands.

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces placed the former navy commander, General Jorge Anaya, in preventive custody after several hours of questioning on Monday, it ordered the arrest of the former president and army commander, General Galtieri.

Unlike his colleagues, General Lami Dozo has not been charged with contraventions of the military code which carry a possible death penalty.

A total of 14 military officers are being court-martialled for their alleged misconduct in the Falklands conflict on the recommendation of an official inquiry.—*Reuter*.

A TERRIBLE tremor runs through the penguins and kelpers. A rumour has reached them concerning the possible successor to Sir Rex Hunt. Better Mr Tam Dalyell or Leopoldo Galtieri, they are thinking, than Lord Buxton of Alsa.

And yet. And yet. Lord B of A undeniably has certain attractions for those responsible for the choice. The Cindy connection, the local knowledge, a hard man willing to carry out instructions, however unpalatable.

Interestingly, Lord B has been circulating a memo containing his views on the situation. It is somewhat dismissive of Fort Stanley ("no more than a village") and the thinking of the Falklanders there ("comparably narrow"), but suggests that leadership is what is needed. What calibre of leadership? "A Beaverbrook or Woolton approach . . . immense qualities of leadership . . . impressive leadership."

Come the hour, come the man?

Key MP joins call for Belgrano inquiry

By John Ezard

Mr Merlyn Rees, a former member of the Franks inquiry team into the Falklands affair, lent his support yesterday to arguments behind the campaign for a judicial inquiry into suspicions about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano.

Mr Rees, a former Labour Home Secretary, was among seven MPs who signed a motion drawing attention to evidence that the submarine which torpedoed the cruiser was shadowing it for longer than admitted by the Defence Secretary during the conflict, Sir John Nott.

The motion's sponsor, Mr Tam Dalyell, asked an oral question in the Commons yesterday accusing the Government of misleading the House. The Leader of the House, Mr John Biffen, said he would draw the issue to Mrs Thatcher's attention.

The motion recalls that Sir John's report in December 1982 to the Commons on the lessons of the Falklands stated that the submarine HMS Conqueror detected the Belgrano on May 2 1982. But it points out that in a book published last year the submarine commander, Christopher Wrexford-Brown, said he had located the cruiser on May 1 and followed her for 30 hours before firing the torpedo.

The motion demands that Mrs Thatcher explain the discrepancy to Parliament or appoints an Appeal Court judge to establish the truth.

Mr Rees was one of five senior Privy Counsellors who formed Lord Franks's team. Although the Franks inquiry's terms of reference covered the period before the 1982 conflict, Mr Rees's support for the motion has encouraged its other supporters.

Mr Rees served in the RAF, supporting naval convoys, during the second world war. He said last night: "What moved me to sign the motion was that Tam has found a discrepancy and it ought to be cleared up. It is strange that we have not heard anything about the captain's evidence in the Commons."

THE TIMES

27.2.84

Time for talks on Falklands

From Lord Chelwood

Sir, Mr Monk (February 24) says, on behalf of the Falkland Islands Government, that it is "too early" for talks even about "links" between the islands and Argentina.

The islanders' intransigence when British governments, Labour and Tory, sought an agreement with Argentina that preserved in essence their right to self-determination was a major cause of the spilling of so much blood.

It would be a tragedy if both governments had learned their lesson and the islanders had not.

It is time to talk.

Yours sincerely,
CHELWOOD,
House of Lords.
February 24.

Hopes rise in Hongkong as British officials meet

From David Bonavia, Hongkong

Sir Edward Youde, the Governor of Hongkong, conferred here yesterday with senior British officials amid signs that negotiations with China over the territory's future were going better than expected.

Sir Richard Evans, the British ambassador to China, and Mr Richard Luce, Minister of State at the Foreign Office with responsibility for Hongkong affairs, had confidential talks with Sir Edward yesterday morning. Several Hongkong government officials, including Sir Philip Haddon-Cave, the Chief Secretary, also attended.

Asked whether this conference marked distinct progress towards an outline agreement, an informed source said: "A general agreement can be reached without necessarily being viewed as no more than an interim agreement."

The source indicated that many technical questions and matters of detail remained to be sorted out, but added: "As in commercial negotiations, the hardest bits can be left till the end."

The fundamental bargain struck by Britain and China is evidently on the lines that Britain will recognize Chinese sovereignty and right of administration of Hongkong, Kowloon and the New Territories from July 1, 1997.

China, for its part, will

guarantee to allow the territory to continue with its capitalist system, British-based laws and free-and-easy life style for 50 years from 1997 though vice and gambling may be repressed more thoroughly than at present.

This has been promised many times by high Chinese officials, though it is impossible to foresee what the Chinese Government of the twenty-first century will make of the agreements of its predecessors in the 1980s.

Influential local personalities and business leaders are largely agreed that Hongkong is being promised the best deal it could hope for, in view of the expiry of the lease on the economically vital New Territories, leased to Britain by the Manchu court in Peking in 1898.

Most controversial are likely to be the means whereby the Government of Hongkong can be gradually made more directly responsible to the population by holding elections to key bodies, especially the legislative Council. Chinese and British views on the functions of elections could easily clash.

The Chinese proposal is to give Hongkong internal autonomy, with authority wielded by elected representatives of the local people, 99 per cent of whom are Chinese, but only if they are approved by Peking.

This is the halfway to saying that elections in Hongkong after its reversion to Chinese sovereignty may be as perfunctory and irrelevant as the elections held in China for appointments to administrative organs other than the Communist Party.

Elections held in Hongkong under British supervision in the period up to 1997 would have to be more liberal than those on the mainland, if only because of Britain's own parliamentary tradition and its previous experience of the decolonization process.

The latest proposal for bringing the sovereignty issue before the general public is for an open debate in the Legislative Council about the terms of the 1997 settlement. Since no Legislative Council members are at present elected but are chosen either *Ex Officio* or at the discretion of the Governor, the debate is unlikely to be controversial.

However, if the electoral system - at present confined to the urban council and district boards dealing with low-level administrative matters - is extended to affect the Legislative Council, or even the all-powerful Executive Council, a new element of political debate could be introduced into this notoriously apolitical society.

**EXCLUSIVE: EXPRESS POLL OF THE FALKLAND ISLES
DELIVERS AN EMPHATIC VERDICT ON THEIR FUTURE**

British for Ever!

- Yes to trade talks
- No to total sell-out
- No to lease-back deal

By GEOFFREY LEVY

HANDS off, Argentina. The Falklands are as British as roast beef and always will be.

This is the blunt, uncompromising message from the proud islanders revealed today in a unique poll carried out by the Daily Express.

The flag-waving Falklanders give a clear warning that there would be a mass exodus from the islands if they are ever handed to the Argentines.

HATED JUNTA

They want **NO** compromise with Buenos Aires on sovereignty and **NO** interference from the United Nations.

But they do want to resume trading with the Argentines now that the hated junta has been booted out and a civilian government installed.

The Express poll comes at a critical moment as Britain and Argentina try for the first time since the Falklands war, to find some solution to the problems of the South Atlantic.

The findings are certain to have an impact on Mrs Thatcher as she moves slowly towards accord with the newly elected President Raul Alfonsin.

She has always pledged that the



Troops fly the flag after Falklands victory

THE HISTORIC SURVEY

THE Daily Express poll was not only unique in the Falklands, it was also a logistics triumph.

We sent out 1,200 questionnaires to every elector on the Falklands' voting list, together with a pre-paid reply envelope.

The original package had to be split into 17 parcels of under two kilograms weight to comply with the postal regulations in force on the air bridge from Ascension Island.

At Port Stanley, helpers assembled the polling package and stamped the envelopes for islanders' replies.

FULL REPORT PAGES

wishes of the islanders are "paramount" in any deal over the Falklands.

Those wishes have not before been tested statistically. *Now the message to Whitehall is plain and stark.*

The Express put vital questions to the islands' 1,200 electors.

Their answers underline how difficult it will be for Mrs Thatcher to reach any compromise with Alfonsín.

☉ Nine in 10 said they would quit if full Argentina sovereignty were ever established in the Falklands.

☉ Eight in 10 would go if Britain agreed to a "lease-

OPINION: PAGE 8

back" deal ceding sovereignty in principle but maintaining British administration.

Last night Tory MP Cyril Townsend, chairman of the all-party South Atlantic Council which seeks a wider understanding of the Falklands issues, said: "There can be no question of imposing sovereignty on the islanders."

EXPRESS OPINION

Our islands stand firm

AS Anglo-Argentine relations return to normal, talk of the future of the Falklands will be inevitable and right.

But let no one in either London or Buenos Aires claim ignorance of the opinions and aspirations of the islanders.

Our exclusive poll—the first taken since Argentina was kicked out—now precludes that.

Its outstanding finding supports Mrs Thatcher's determination that sovereignty be non-negotiable.

But it also suggests that there is a strong case for a determined diplomatic effort to get a restoration of communications and commercial links between the islands and the mainland.

The Argentinians have no grounds for delay—after all, the former links were established and maintained against the background of Buenos Aires' claim to sovereignty.

Moreover, nothing would do more to overcome the bitterness they themselves engendered on the islands by their foolish and treacherous invasion.

A HISTORIC SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE DAILY EXPRESS

The Falklands Poll

By GEOFFREY LEVY

THE Falkland Islanders have spoken, loudly and clearly. Their British heritage is NOT a matter for negotiation.

So fiercely do they reject any change that more than 90 per cent of them would quit if Britain ever handed over sovereignty to Argentina. And almost as many would leave even if the islands continued to be run by Britain in a lease-back arrangement.

More than a third of the islanders want no negotiations at all, despite the new democratically-elected Buenos Aires Government whose leader Raul Alfonsin speaks of finding a peaceful solution.

Alfonsin's words, and his apparent good will, have done nothing to placate the islanders' mood of bitterness, anxiety and determination left there by General Galtieri's ill-fated invasion two years ago.

Their feelings are revealed with startling clarity in an historic Daily Express poll of all 1,200 islanders aged 18 and over.

And they want no non-British interference either. Only three per cent support United Nations involvement.

This will dismay Alfonsin who sees the UN as a possible way out of the impasse.

The post-war attitudes of the islanders have not softened at all. Indeed they appear harder than ever.

Almost two-thirds do not believe that the change to

- Big No to any lease back on sovereignty
- 90% will leave if islands go to Argentina
- New snub for Buenos Aires on war dead

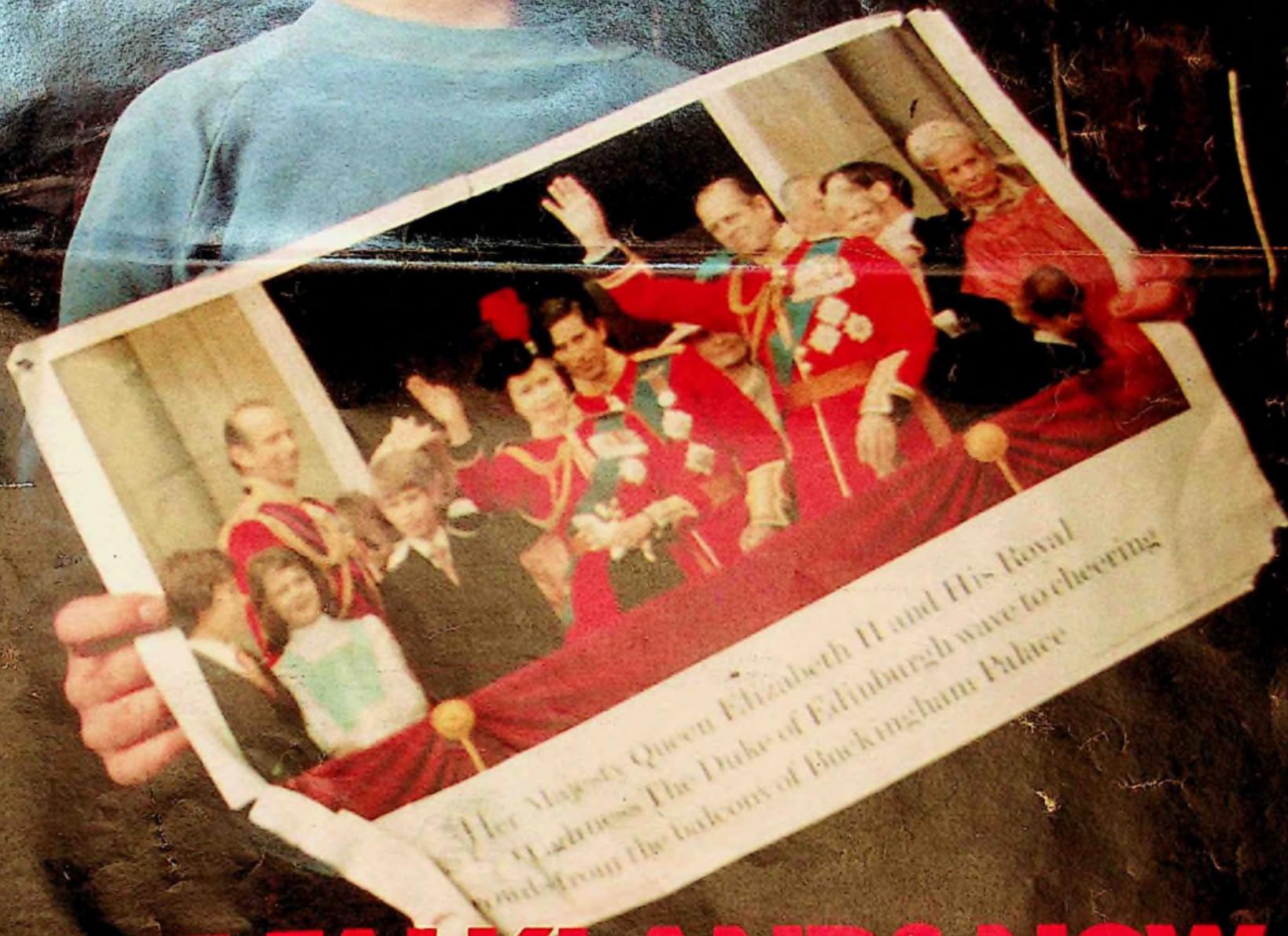


British and so proud of it... the children of Goose Green Picture: TOM SMITH

SUNDAY EXPRESS

26 FEBRUARY 1984

Magazine



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh wave to cheering crowds from the balcony of Buckingham Palace

THE FALKLANDS NOW
ANTHONY HOLDEN'S SPECIAL REPORT

HOLDEN

AT LARGE

THE FALKLANDS NOW



WHAT LIFE'S REALLY LIKE

Nearly two years after the war, Falkland Islanders are wondering if their way of life can ever be the same again. Anthony Holden found mixed feelings among the "kelpers", now outnumbered by troops, advisers and entrepreneurs. Photographs by Peter Marlow



Both in their early 20s, shepherd Gavin Marsh and his wife Deirdre have never left West Falkland. They want their children James (3) and Karen (2) to grow up there. But the future seems uncertain

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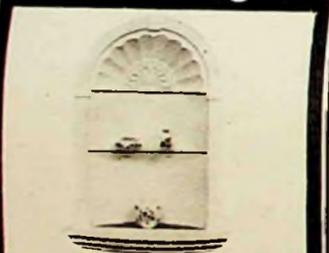
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New Island, West Falkland: 50-mph winds, sub-zero temperatures, horizontal rain turning to stinging sleet. I'm wearing an anorak designed by Chay Blyth for rounding Cape Horn, but the weather still manages to join me inside it. My companion, trying to photograph some penguins, is blown clean off his feet into a pile of their filth. So this is the Falklands' summer.

We struggle through the storm to a nearby cottage, home of the island's only residents. "This," they say, while brewing us some tea, "is the kind of weather you journalists keep saying we get in the Falklands." There's no answer to that. I'm still trying to think of one that midsummer evening, as we stay on a farm where 42 newly-shorn sheep die overnight of exposure.

The Falkland Islands have problems enough without surviving a war and facing up to its consequences. This is proving a bad summer weather-wise, but that's the least of their worries. Nearly two years after the war the 1,893 islanders are now sharing their bleak and remote fastness, two-thirds the size of Wales, with as many construction workers, development advisers, wily entrepreneurs, and sundry government, commercial and other boffins—not to mention a 4,000-strong British garrison. In less than two years, the number of people on the islands has more than trebled.

In a week I get around enough to meet fully a third of the resident population. Their current mood is summed up by Tony Blake, a sheep farmer who is also an elected councillor, and has spoken eloquently on the Falklands' behalf at the United Nations in New York. "We are," he says, "an island drowning in a sea of advice."

The only way to fly to the Falklands, since all travel via South America has become impossible, is via the RAF "airbridge" from Ascension Island: 13 hours of unmitigated hell aboard a Hercules, strapped to the throbbing wall amid long-faced squaddies. You can't speak (because of the noise), can't read (because of the dark), can't sleep (because of the crush), let alone drink, smoke, or watch movies. You eat stale pork pies and soggy Bovril crisps out of an Army-issue "white box". The only diversion, viewed by special permission over the pilot's shoulder, is the mid-air refuelling: a tense 300-mph airborne ballet.

The airbridge flies five days a week, at around £100,000 a trip. Our travelling companions today include the Foreign Office Minister with responsibility for the Falklands, Baroness Young and her three FO staff, the court of inquiry into a fatal helicopter

crash, a brigadier going down "to sort out a few problems", a contractor heading for the new airfield, some housing workers, some development "scrutinisers", an official from the new bank—and officers and men from all three services, who glumly face a four-month tour "down there".

It's not untypical of the daily load disgorged, with bleary eyes and ringing ears, at Stanley airport—now rechristened RAF Stanley (without the locals' permission, and somewhat to their annoyance). A fleet of cross-country vehicles—the most comfortable ones, power-steering and all, being captured Argentinian Mercedes—disperses us to our billets. The three-mile dirt-track "road" into town has to be resurfaced almost weekly. Like peas on a drum, we bounce over the potholes dug by incessant military traffic.

At first sight, Stanley looks the quaint seaside town now familiar from wartime photos. Its corrugated metal roofs, painted in bright primary colours, slope down in tidy rows toward the harbour, where a dozen big ships are at anchor. In peace, it all still smacks of war, as Phantoms and Harriers screech overhead, and Chinook choppers chug by bearing cars, containers, even Portakabin "homes" on the umbilical cords beneath their bellies.

The bulk of the garrison is now leaving Stanley, withdrawing to its new floating "boatels" near the airfield, but there are still enough around to make it feel like Aldershot-on-sea. There has, Stanley folk complain, been much misreporting of their feelings: the vast majority will be sad to see them go. "Our boys" have brought the place to life a little. They've lived in people's homes, and become "part of the family". And the noise? "We don't mind the noise, so long as it's British noise."

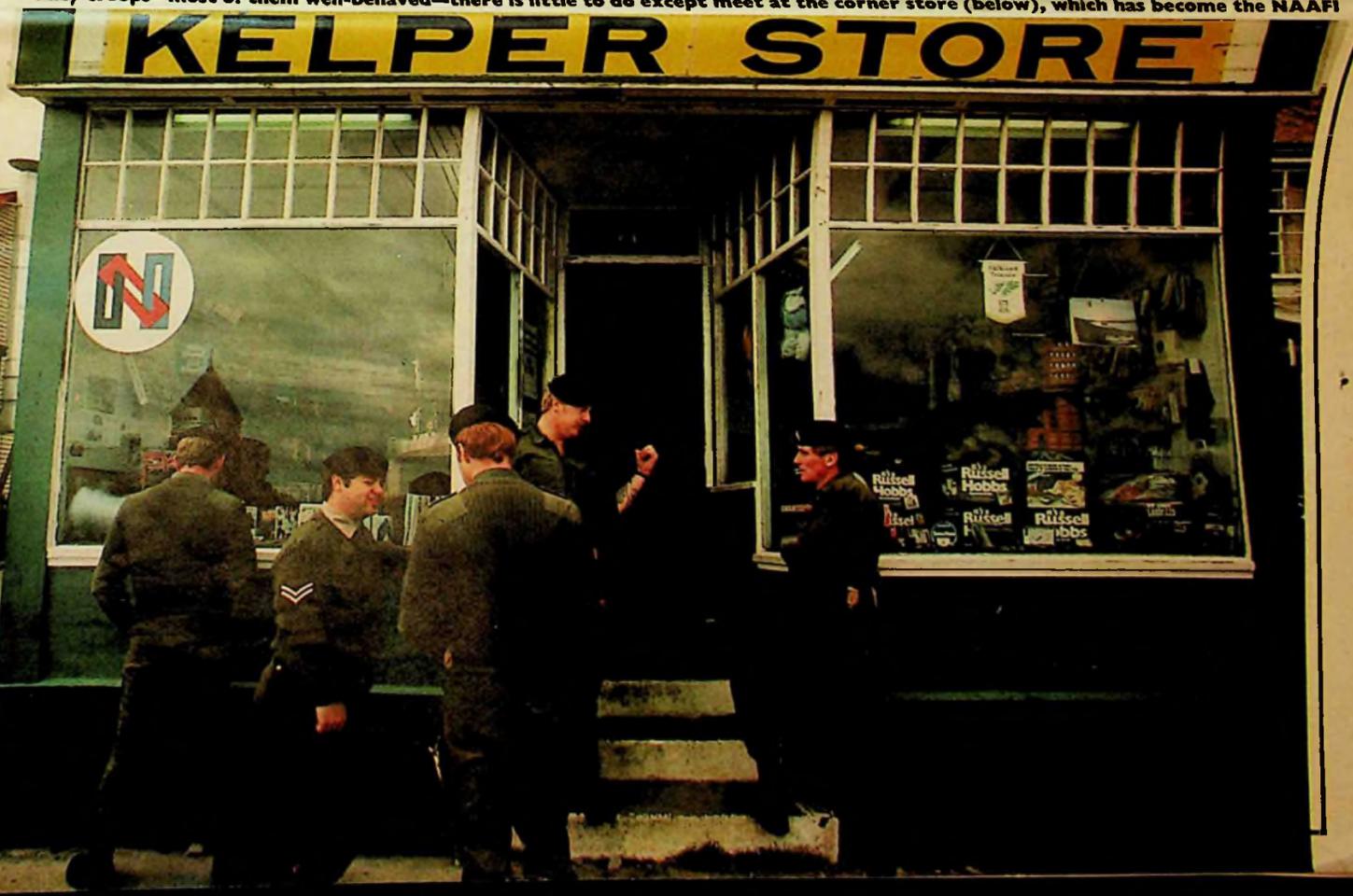
Nearly all Falklanders, especially those in Stanley, have remarkable tales to tell about life with the Argies during those two traumatic winter months of 1982. Most of their stories ring with stoic British fortitude, some with personal heroism. Nearly all have proudly preserved bullet-holes to prove it.

The town itself is now pretty much tidied up—the debris of war has gone—but, to be frank, it was a bit of a mess in the first place.

Not in terms of litter and the other dross of British urban life. If a soldier drops a beer can in the street, you can be sure a resident will make him pick it up again. It's more the shabbiness of poverty. "Before the war," says artist and shopkeeper Tony Chater, "we were going >20



In "Fortress Falklands", Army vehicles litter the streets of Stanley, where life goes on to the screech of Harriers overhead. For off-duty troops—most of them well-behaved—there is little to do except meet at the corner store (below), which has become the NAAFI



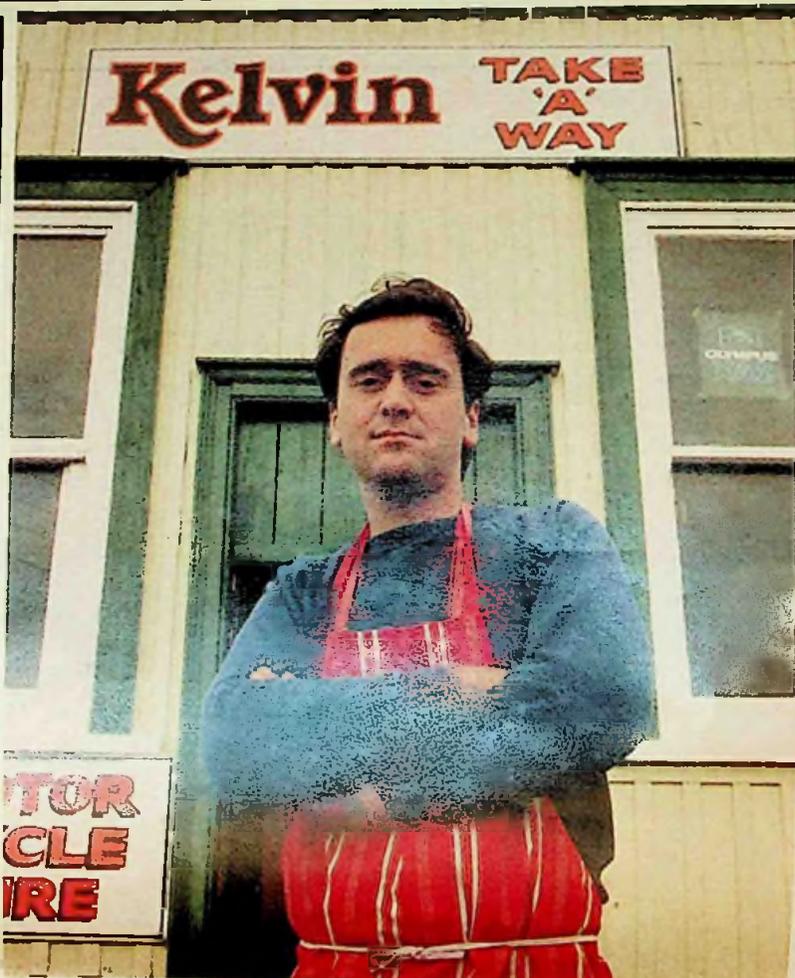
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THE FALKLANDS NOW
174 down the drain."

A few Falklanders are rich, some very rich. They have houses in "camp" (the collective name for the countryside) and in Stanley; they fly themselves to and fro in private aircraft. They host endless parties, where they smoke a lot and get drunk through sheer boredom. For the rest, however, for the taciturn majority, life is rather different.

Stanley's social elite has the twang of a Home Counties' golf club gin-and-tonic set. I attend one of their parties on my first evening, my internal organs still firmly aboard the Hercules. Our host is a senior government official, whose home just happens to be one of the 54 new Brewster houses, comfy timber-framed villas of Swedish design, built under the government's £15million rehabilitation programme (the overture to the £31million development scheme based on Lord Shackleton's report).

These houses have cost £130,000 each to build—which seems a bit steep, even allowing for the fact that all the materials, and the labour to build them, have had to be imported from the UK. Even our host can't afford that, so he rents it for a subsidised £145 a month. Either figure is way beyond the pocket



Simon Powell (left) is one of Stanley's post-war arrivals, making a mint out of mutton-burgers. Phil Middleton (above), once a Stanley teacher, now brews and sells Penguin ale

of all but a handful of islanders. Through the window, a local resident points out to me a traditional waterfront home—stone walls, tin roof—which is on the market for £12,000. A year ago, it was £7,000.

It is not only property ▶ 22



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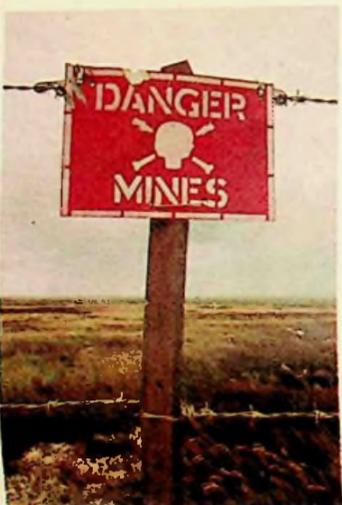
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THE FALKLANDS NOW

20 values which have zoomed, mostly to the benefit of absentee landlords. There is many a quick buck to be made here, and many a quick buccaneer arriving to make it. The idea was that the aid money should stay, for once, in the islands—but things aren't altogether working out that way.

The million-pounds-a-day being spent in "Fortress Falklands" by the British taxpayer is breeding a get-rich-quick industry which will last, with luck, another couple of years—until the new airport is built, and the garrison



Stanley Common and the nearby beaches are among "no-go" areas still peppered with Argentinian mines. No proper records were kept, so islanders may never be able to use them again

reduced. By then, however, a fortunate few should already be able to retire on the proceeds.

Take food. There are three cafés in Stanley, two of them started on their life savings by islanders, who tentatively serve fish-and-chips two days a week in converted peat sheds. The choice is such that the hungry visitor skips full guesthouse board at his peril. But the mutton on offer at mine—known as "365", after the annual days it is served—is so awful that I opt out in favour of Stanley's latest post-war attraction: the muttonburger.

A few streets away at Kelvin's café, I order a "Port-Stanley-burger" from 29-year-old Simon Powell, an ex-public schoolboy of Wiltshire military stock who fetched up here last August. The cheapest thing on his menu, it still costs me £1.60, and is really rather good. Despite his high prices, Simon is doing a booming business in takeaway "Stanley-burgers" and "Goose-Green-burgers", even the mountainous "Triple K" at a cool £3. Most of his customers, of course, are troops; few locals can afford to eat here.

Simon is a bit coy about figures,

but he must be taking a good £500 a day. After selling his London decorating business, he sailed south, bought the Kelvin building, imported his kitchen equipment from the UK and set up shop. He sells everything from postcards to model Harriers, and rents motor-bikes for £15 a day. All the raw materials for his burgers are home-made. (There is no bakery in Stanley—he is about to start one.)

Open 16 hours a day, Powell works hard and is making a fortune. He wanted, he tells me, to flee the British "rat-race". But why on earth did he come here? A knowing grin: "For adventure."

Down the road at Everards' brewery, Phil Middleton is a one-man-band, brewing, marketing, promoting and delivering Penguin real ale—launched last year amid much sympathetic publicity. The lean-to shed in



At Mount Pleasant, 30 miles south of Stanley, work on the new £215m airfield is bang on schedule. A new six-mile road connects the site (visible near horizon) with a floating dock, which receives materials by boat from the UK

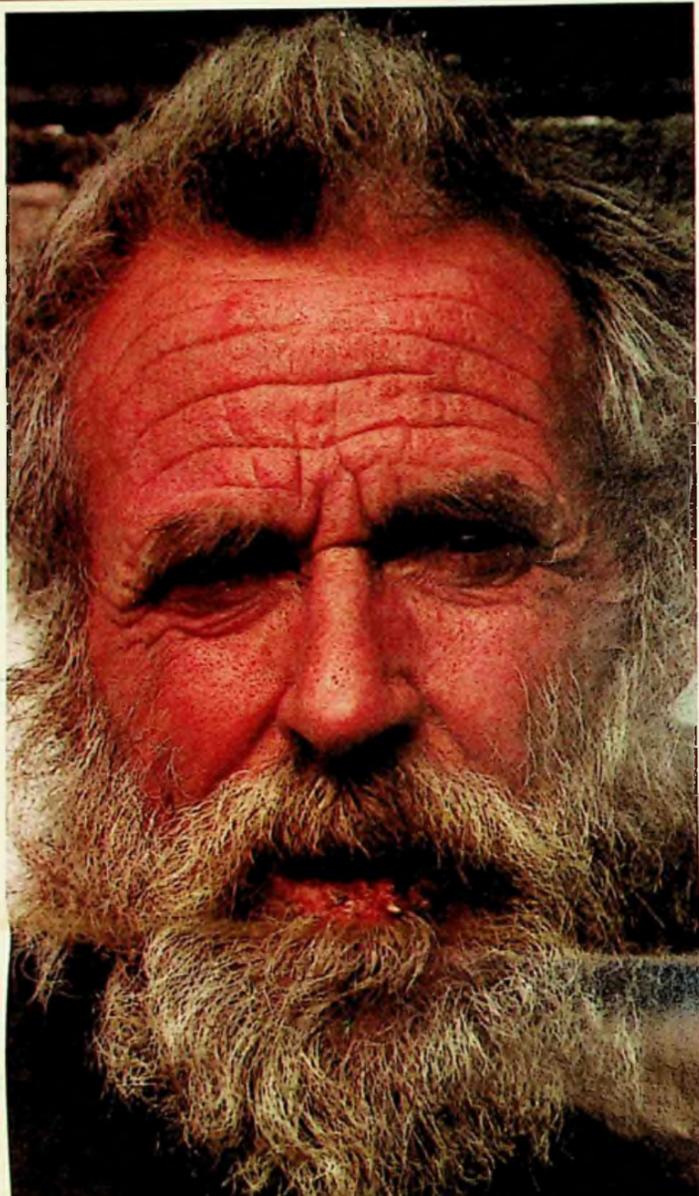
which Phil mashes and sparges was bought from the Falkland Islands Company (a subsidiary of Coalite, the UK fuels conglomerate) for a staggering £23,000. Everards then invested some £250,000 in importing a mini-brewery from Blighty.

To pay his way, Phil should be brewing three times a week (each brew producing 360 gallons). So far, after a year in business, he is brewing only once every three weeks. So what's gone wrong?

"Ferkin Phil" (as he's locally known) sells his excellent beer for 50p a pint, with a recommended retail price of 60p. His main competitor, ▶26

THE FALKLANDS NOW

The troops call them "Bennies", after the half-wit in "Crossroads" – but Falklanders are cannier than their natural reserve makes them seem. Their ruddy-cheeked complexions reflect their rugged way of life – which they want their children to inherit



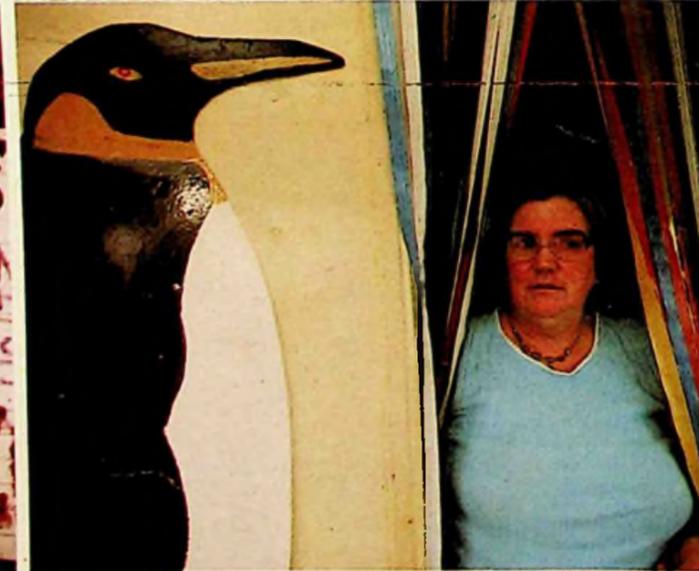
At Fox Bay East, George Stewart has been shearing sheep since 1945. Now a new wool mill will convert his fleeces into jumpers



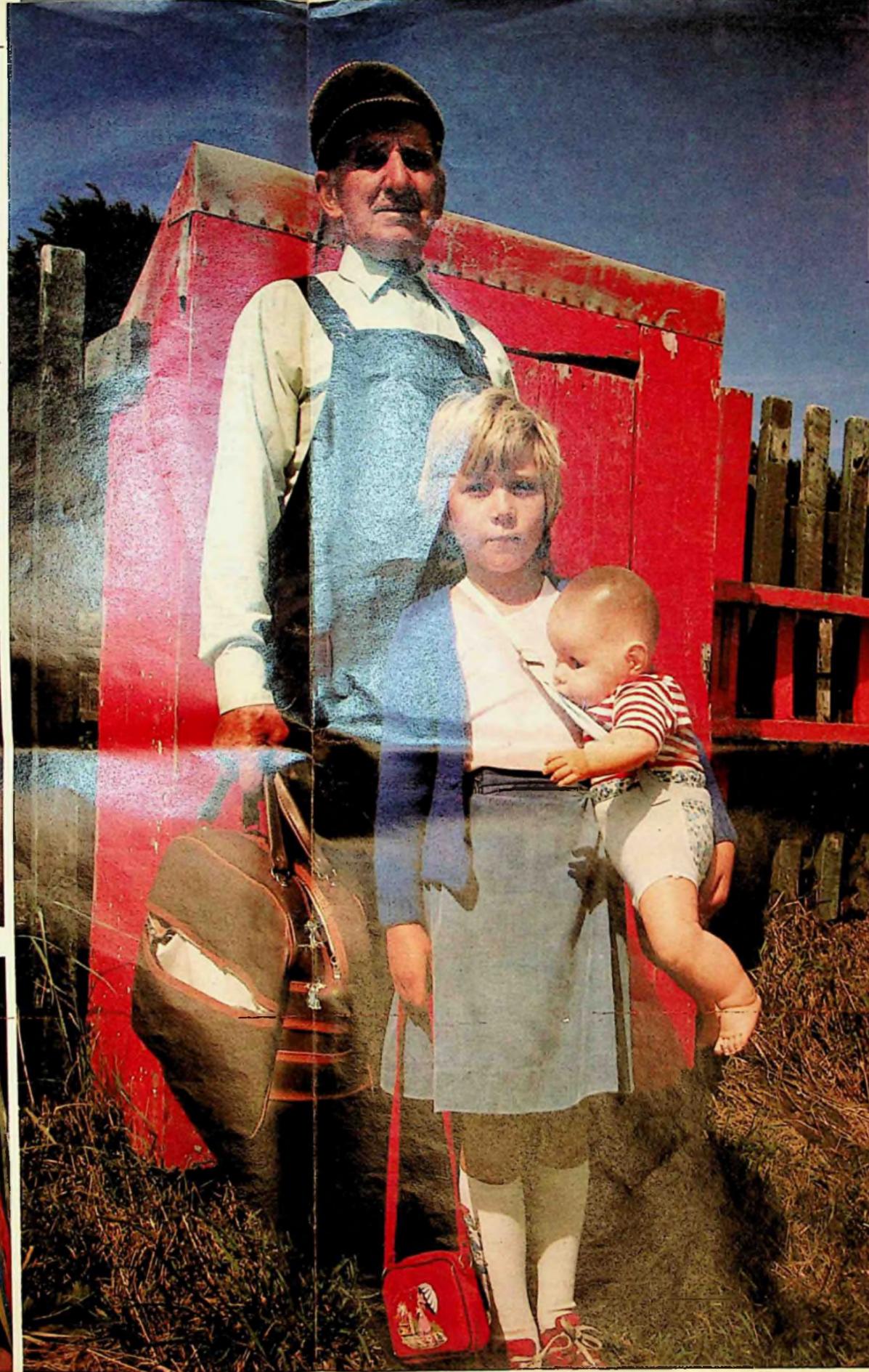
Alison Bleaney, a Stanley doctor "driven away" by post-war life



The Argentinians even left their mark in shearing sheds



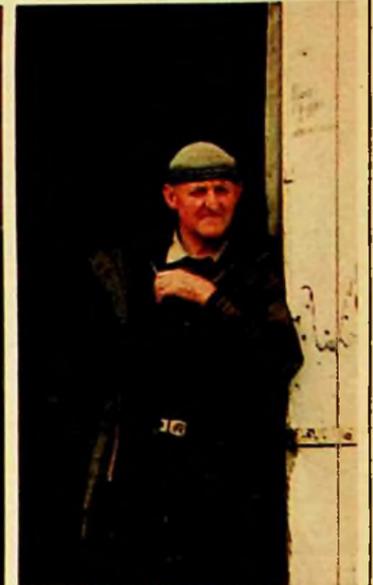
Stanley residents are proud of their penguins—and also of "our boys". They don't mind the noise—"as long as it's British"



Older islanders fear that their hardy yeoman life may never be lived by the children of today. For the young however, the troops' arrival has brought new excitements to daily life – not all welcomed by their parents



The young hope to buy their own land, but must borrow at 11%



For remote farmers, war has changed life very little



Hard work, sheep-shearing—but Falklanders' main income



Harold Rowlands "would starve rather than see the Argies back"



At Packes Port Howard, Jimmy and Ginny Foster are among the first kelpers to buy their own land—1,400 acres for £60,000

THE FALKLANDS NOW

23 ◀ Courage special bitter, sells to the NAAFI at 40p a pint, thanks to various freight and excise concessions, even though it is imported from England. Some bureaucrat somewhere, as Phil points out, takes an odd view of encouraging local Falklands industry.

Such anomalies abound all over town. At the Upland Goose, for instance, Stanley's (and the island's) only hotel proprietor Des King is having trouble getting a development grant to add 10 new bedrooms—even though the Goose is now full all year, and Shackleton recommended more hotel rooms.

During her visit Lady Young officially opened Stanley's first bank: the Standard Chartered, right in the centre of town. All island accounts were previously run by a Government Savings Bank, which has transferred all 2,000 accounts to Standard Chartered, without consulting their owners. All fine and dandy—except, for instance, that a £1 handing charge is now imposed on all UK cheques. Which, for the many to whom a UK bank account is useless, is an unavoidable and considerable loss.

A china rose atop a stone cairn marks the spot near Goose Green where Col "H" Jones fell—a potential tourist attraction?



Falkland Islanders have a reputation — also enshrined in Shackleton—for being slow to speak their minds. When the troops first arrived, they christened the islanders "Bennies"—after the half-witted character at ITV's *Crossroads* motel. Many Falklanders may be rather retiring characters, as is only to be expected of people who have opted for a solitary way of life. But they're not all dim. They now make jokes about "us poor Bennies", so the troops have taken to calling them "Bubs". It stands for "Bloody Ungrateful Bastards".

Most islanders are at pains to avoid appearing ungrateful, and sympathise with the huge burden on the British taxpayer—but they crave some local control over the way all this money is being spent, supposedly on their behalf. "The Prime Minister," says Councillor John Cheek, "promised us control over our destiny. We're not getting it."

Part of Lady Young's mission was to explain why: "British government ministers," she told them, "have to account for that money to Parliament. HMG must retain control." The locals did not appear to find this news reassuring.

Walking down Stanley's front one evening, I followed warily behind six very drunk and



rather aggressive squaddies, who threatened to turn ugly any minute. Nipping safely past as they paused to pee in someone's front garden, I felt for the minority who say they want the troops out. The worst offenders, apparently, are the "gozomees"—those about to go home, who spend their last week amid the "Bennies" painting Stanley red.

One important Stanley figure who takes a dim view of post-war life is Dr Alison Bleaney, head of the only hospital, where she must now share command with the military (who have no facilities of their own). As military personnel change every four months, her life is one of "constant disruption"—and she's

The floating "beatels" in Stanley Harbour, each the home of 800 troops, boast swimming-pools, squash courts and a gym

had enough. Dr Bleaney and her husband, a Falkland Islands Co manager who came here 30 years ago, are "getting out".

Mike Bleaney doesn't trust the Foreign Office—"they'll sell us out sooner or later"—but his wife has other reasons. Last Guy Fawkes night, she and her two children were menaced on their way home by drunken and abusive troops. On Christmas Day the Army laid on entertainment for the locals: it consisted of a British landing force "wiping out" defending "Argentinians". ▶ 28

... and all this choice, to make up my mind."

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THE FALKLANDS NOW

◀ The young Bleanys are already playing war games and asking their parents for guns. It was to escape that side of "civilised" European life that Dr Bleaney came here in the first place. As a doctor, she must cope with all the new disease imported into the Falklands by the new arrivals; as a mother, she must worry about "video nasties" and other such previously unknown imports. She'll be very sorry to go, and Stanley will be sorry to lose her.

Others confirm that life in Stanley can never be the same again. At the Upland Goose, Des and Nan King and their three daughters bemoan the new restrictions on their freedom of movement. The family used to be great picnickers; now all the beaches are mined. Des runs the annual island races; now Stanley Common, where horses were stabled and trained, is a no-go area—and probably always will be.

The Argentinians kept no proper record of their minefields, and defied the Geneva Convention by removing the metal rings which aid detection: the RE major in charge of clearance, whose predecessor lost a foot in territory he'd declared safe, has abandoned whole fields and beaches as "unclearable".

Out in "camp", where roughly half the islands' population is scattered through 30-odd settlements, the rugged yeoman way of Falkland life has altered less. This starkly beautiful countryside, you feel, is the heartland of the Falklands, Stanley the urban aberration en route to it. Out here there are no roads, no telephones; you get around by helicopter—or, at a stretch, Land-Rover, and you keep in touch with the world by radio.

A dugout on a bleak mountain-top above San Carlos is home for four months to a cheerful crew of Royal Fusiliers, manning the Rapier missile systems which helped win the 1982 war



A few "camp" settlements have troops for company, and enjoy it: they do each other favours. In the Goose Green social hall, where 40 islanders were held captive by the "Argies", I attended a joint military-civilian Sunday morning service. Despite a highly militaristic sermon, the event bore witness to the ease with which they've learnt to live together.

Nearby, the spot where Col "H" Jones fell has become a place of pilgrimage on Army-conducted tours of the Goose Green battlefield. Though buried in the British cemetery overlooking San Carlos Water—another affecting must on every post-war

visitor's itinerary—"H" is immortalised with an impromptu pile of rocks, poignantly surmounted by a china rose. The debris of war has been left scattered around the Darwin and Goose Green hillsides—a reminder of 2 Para's fierce struggle against huge odds.

In time the battlefields may well become something of a tourist attraction, along with the wildlife which brought in several hundred visitors a year before the war. But tourism must remain an unknown—and pretty marginal—quantity while there is no air link with South America. Out here in camp, the central change overtaking many lives is the sudden opportunity to buy land.

At Packes Port Howard, across Falkland Sound from Goose Green, Tim Miller and Jimmy Foster have between them invested £110,000 in 2,400 acres—and 6,000 sheep—to call their own. Ninety per cent of the money was borrowed from the government at a fixed interest rate of 11 per cent. "A daunting prospect," they declare, "but well worth it."

They are among the first to benefit from a land reform scheme, adopted from Shackleton's post-war report as one way of keeping Falklands money in the Falklands, rather than enriching the absentee landlords who own 2.4 million acres—or

80 per cent of the entire place. Forty-three per cent of the land, for instance, belongs to Coalite, in the shape of the Falkland Islands Company.

Many young Falklanders are now keen to invest in their own land—though few have the necessary down payment, and most are deeply worried about the 11 per cent. Acreages vary according to their quality, but the ideal equation is reckoned to be 3,000 sheep per man—each fleece being worth an average £5 at shearing time.



After years of seeking some stake in the land they work, Falklanders are now dismayed at the snail's pace of land re-

At North Arm, West Falklands' second largest settlement, manager Eric Goss and his son ride out to tend their flocks. As the summer weather turns ugly again, pelts dry in the wind

form. The applications queue is a long one, the red tape immense, and the procedures very slow. HMG calls it "gradualism", and takes the kind of paternalistic line the islanders hate. "This is a huge economic revolution," said one administrator: "Some of these people don't realise what they're taking on. It's as well to keep the pace slow, and watch how the pioneers get on." Many Falklanders themselves

admit that their islands cannot live by sheep alone. They clamour for a 200-mile fishing limit to be imposed—but again get evasive answers from visiting London bureaucrats. Apart from the conservation arguments—the waters, say the locals, are being "fished dry"—it galls them to see the Poles alone taking some £12 million worth of fish a year out of their seas, without paying any licensing fees.

Some estimates have the Poles, Russians, Spanish, Japanese, East Germans and others taking as much as £50 million worth of fish a year between them. But the FO mandarins point out that none of these countries recognises British sovereignty of the islands: so how would such a limit be policed? And the unspoken truth, for which the islanders feel only contempt, is that a fishing limit would be an act of provocation towards Argentina, at a time when Britain is working towards closer relations.

There are other points at issue: a constitutional quibble, for instance, in which London is resisting the islanders' wish to retain a two-tier system of self-government. The arguments are complex, but amount on the Falklanders' side to a suspicion that Whitehall is trying to minimise their autonomy.

But above all, right now, there is much local distress at the way the development money is disappearing. "Most of it," said Graham Bound, editor of the island's monthly newspaper, *Penguin News*, "is being spent deciding how to spend it."

The new £35,000-a-year chief executive, David Taylor (formerly of Booker McConnell), has only just arrived to supervise development—but already he's a target for dissidents. "I have to spend a year or so just getting the system in place," he told me, which drew derisory laughter when I quoted it to a Stanley dinner party.

Even establishment figures such as Councillor Bill Luxton, on whose 150,000-acre West Falkland farm, Chartres, I spent a night, blames the Overseas Development Administration for mishandling sundry projects. "Those houses in Stanley are very nice," he says, "but at £130,000 each so they should be. They've eaten up half the rehabilitation fund. And the new roads they're building there: two-lane tracks costing as much as a four-lane motorway in UK. The fund's all spent—and there's not a lot to show for it."

Eric Goss, manager of North Arm, the islands' second largest farm, pointed out perhaps the most striking anomaly of all. To prevent the land being overgrazed, Falklanders slaughter 10,000 sheep a ▶ 31



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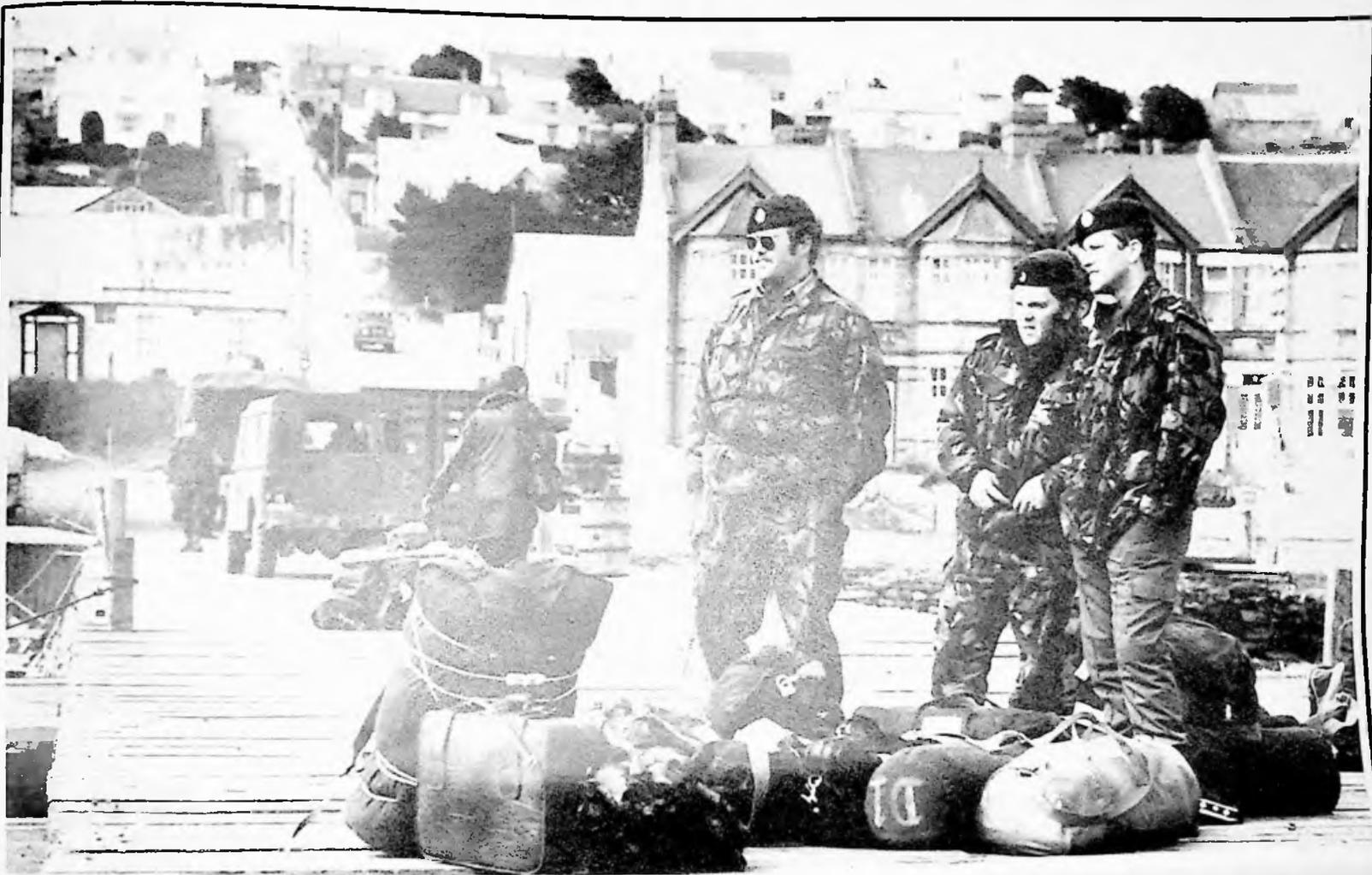
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THE FALKLANDS NOW

29 year, and have to burn the carcasses—a tragic waste, caused by the sheer expense of exporting them. As this goes on, the 4,000 troops manning Fortress Falklands are eating mutton and lamb imported—via London—from New Zealand. Why? Because Falklands mutton is not slaughtered to EEC standards.

Sir Rex Hunt, the Civil Commissioner, last year received a delegation from Bird's Eye-Walls who declared themselves willing to buy the surplus meat for use in frozen foods. He himself visited the Shetlands, and costed an EEC-standard abattoir and freezing plant at £100,000. Yet there are no plans to build one.

On the way back to Stanley I visited Mount Pleasant, site of the new £215 million airfield, due to be operational by March of next year, and fully complete by October 1986. Four hundred men are already at work on this vast and impressive project, which is bang on schedule. At the height of the work 1,400 construction workers will be employed—all shipped out (via South Africa) from England. That's almost as many airport-builders as Falklanders—yet not one islander is being employed on the project.

In Britain, there were 14,000 applications for the 1,400 jobs:

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partly through unemployment, partly because they can expect to earn two to three times UK rates, free of income tax, for a year and more. It is officially denied, but the Foreign Office has privately instructed contractors not to employ local workers. It would deprive the island, especially its overstretched Public Works Dept, of essential labour—there is no unemployment on the Falklands—and the rates of pay would throw the islands' economy out of kilter.

Again there is deep local resentment. "All this development," says Patrick Watts, mana-

On a jetty in Stanley harbour, cheerful troops await the boat home. Four months here, they say, is enough. Left: a sign of past times. Before the war, tourists, even Argentinians, could come and go as they pleased

ger of Radio Stanley, "is supposed to be enriching the Falkland islanders. Some of us may be enjoying a little temporary boom, but in the long run we're the last people being enriched."

The more worldly Falklanders, who recognise the need for a resumption of relations with Argentina, are quickly turning cynical. "We're going to give it all to the Argies in 10 years, anyway," they say. "That'll drive me out. So why bother?"

The most vociferous dissidents, native islanders point out, tend to be the "expats"—people who, for whatever reason, left the UK for a Falklands way of life which is now immutably changed. "Kelpers"—those born and bred in the islands—prefer on the whole to let their gratitude, and relief at their rescue from the hated Argies, overcome their reservations. Many agree that "Galtieri's folly", for all the waste of human life, has proved a blessing in disguise. "But it's a pity," said one kelper typically, "that after 15 years of neglect, it took a war to remind Britain we were here."

To preserve their fragile way of life, they're prepared to

accept all its built-in disadvantages— inadequate education, poor housing, a humble (and monotonous) diet, a bleak climate, a life free of all luxuries except the two necessities seen in even the humblest homes: video machines and short-wave radios. But can the self-sufficient life they love ever be the same again?

To this visitor, it looks unlikely. The remote country shepherd riding out to tend his flock seems lucky to have survived so long—defying economic logic, and escaping the shadow of modern geopolitics. As for the post-war plight of the urban Falklander: "Never mind all this fancy stuff about sovereignty and constitutions," says Phil Middleton. "Can somebody tell me how I can sell my beer?" ■



Mail On Sunday
26th February 1984

Varley and the secret of his vote



CONFIDENT: Benn yesterday

ERIC VARLEY'S chalet-style home outside Chesterfield is remarkable for just one thing — it doesn't boast a red Tony Benn poster.

And, intriguingly, the town's MP for the last 20 years is keeping a stony silence about his voting intentions on Thursday.

After phoning Mr Varley last week, Labour Leader Neil Kinnock reported that he would 'definitely, enthusiastically be voting Labour.' *But is that the final word?*

Mr Varley's new job as a top executive with Coalite means he will be in the Falklands on polling day, so he has entrusted his proxy vote to his wife Marjorie.

So how will he vote? 'That's his business,' declared Mrs Varley, ever faithful to her husband's vow of silence.

Would she be voting

DAVID ROSE on a by-election mystery in Chesterfield

Labour? 'That,' she said with equal determination, 'is my business.'

Yesterday Mr Benn addressed shoppers from a platform on the roof of a van in Chesterfield's market.

He predicted he would win the seat with an increased majority for Labour — and claimed the Tories would then ditch Mrs Thatcher.

Independent pollsters confirm that some Tory voters will vote tactically, supporting the Liberals' Max Payne rather than their own Nick Bourne.

But old traditions die hard in Chesterfield, where voting Labour is an obligation like going to work.

So, it still seems unlikely that the Alliance can dislodge Mr Benn now.

● Mr Benn has a massive 27 per cent lead over his closest rivals, the Alliance, according to a poll in today's Observer.

Man with no raison d'être

THE Data Protection Act, which bizarrely concerns computer records but not manual records, has now spent nine weeks in committee from which many hope it will never emerge.

A good many Tory MPs fervently wish that its author, Timothy Raison (Aylesbury), will remain forever locked up with it in there.

Mr Raison possesses the uncanny trick of

introducing legislation which his whole Party abhors. He is the man who bamboozled Willie Whitelaw into bringing in the Nationality Act 1983.

As a result of that, children born in this country are no longer automatically British — just one of the laws he has bequeathed us. This man must go.

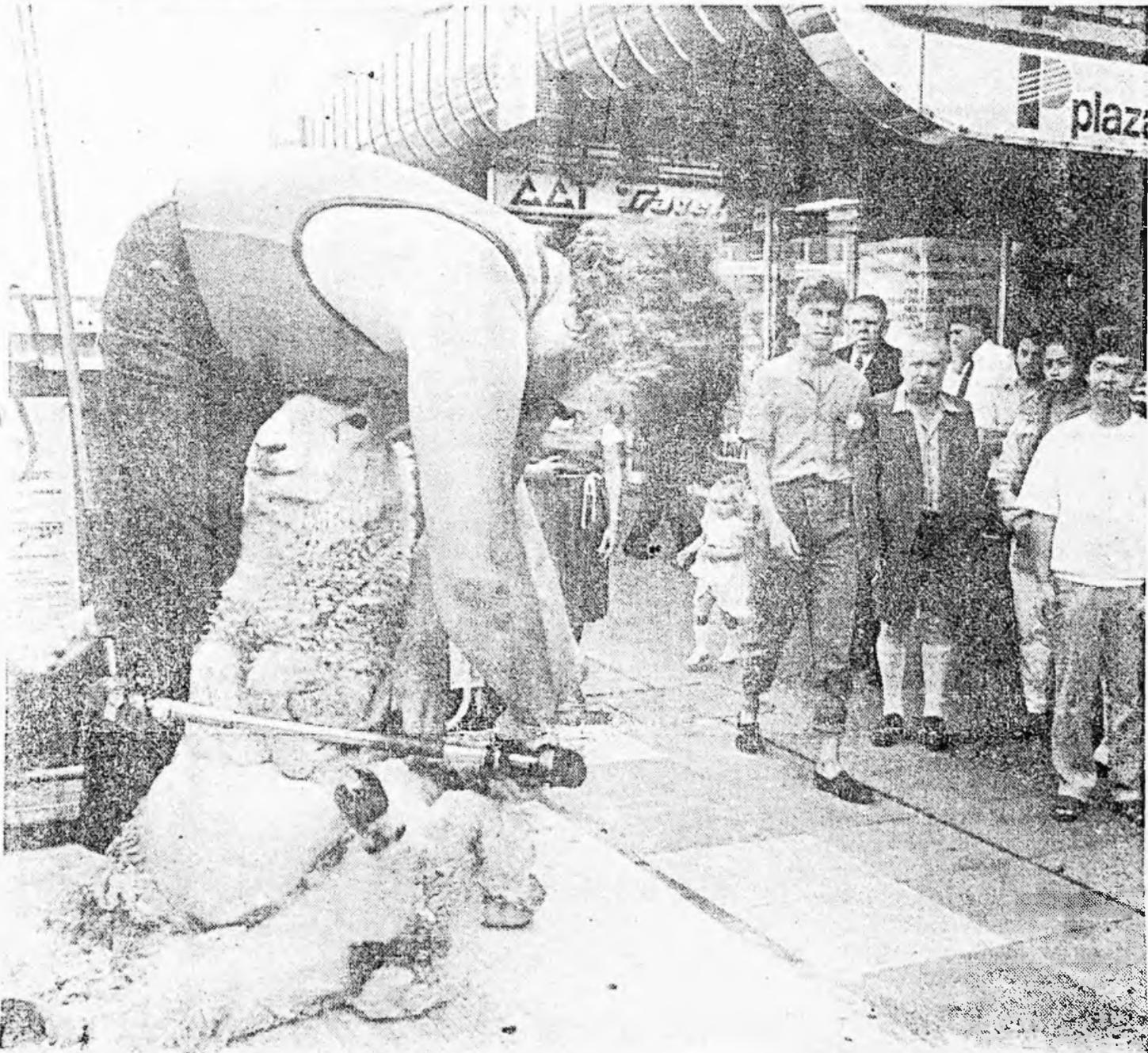
Falklands shearer here for contest

Falkland Island shearer Mr Patrick Berntsen demonstrates his skills in Manners Mall yesterday as part of a promotion for next week's Golden Shears Championship in Masterton. During the Falklands war, Mr Berntsen found himself supplying information to the Ministry of Defence in London. He was in New Zealand when the war broke out and tried to go straight home, but "they wouldn't let me out of London," he said.

He and other Falkland Islanders set up an information office in London to assist the ministry and the press. "People knew very little about the islands," he said.

A professional shearer, Mr Berntsen has spent the past six years working in the UK, America and New Zealand. He says he loves working in New Zealand because it's "similar to where I come from but the climate is a lot better."

This year the Golden Shears — the biggest shearing championship in the world — is being promoted to city people. Bus tours to Masterton have been arranged and a vintage train will also take people to the competition, which starts on February 29.



THE TIMES

25.2.84

SUNDAY
EXPRESS
26.2.84

Symbol

AS our Civil Commissioner in the Falklands, Sir Rex Hunt has been a symbol of Britain's integrity.

Restored after the liberation, he is trusted by the islanders to watch their interests as we seek better relations with the new rulers in Argentina.

Yet amazingly there is speculation that he may be moved — fuelled, of course, by our own Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

These are the same men who unwittingly led General Galtieri to think we would never defend the Falklands if he invaded. Now, by hinting that Sir Rex's removal might pave the way for concessions, they are making the same mistake over again.

Sir Geoffrey Howe must end this damaging talk straight away, by announcing that Sir Rex will stay there until his retirement in 1987.

He is needed to retain the trust of the islanders — and ours too.

Argentina complains of Falkland deadlock

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

The chairman of a congressional committee of foreign affairs here has said that efforts to normalise relations between Britain and Argentina have reached a dead end because of British intransigence in its negotiating position.

Señor Storani, who heads the House foreign relations committee and is known to be close to President Raúl Alfonsín, told the English language *Buenos Aires Herald* yesterday that diplomatic exchanges between the two countries "have yielded no substantial advantages".

"Britain has only changed the wording and the order of its proposals," Señor Storani told the *Herald*. Later, in an interview with *The Times*, he made it clear that he was referring to a series of "ideas" put forward by Britain last January 26, not to a new British proposal.

Señor also told the local newspaper that he believed there would be no agreement in the near future, and that President Alfonsín planned to deliver a message explaining the status of the indirect negotiations with Britain. He said Señor Alfonsín's message would "try to deflate the exaggerated expectations building up around this issue" rather than unveil a secret agreement.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman, Señor Albin Gómez, said that the *Herald* article "represents Señor Storani's personal judgement based on his own knowledge of the issue", and denied that Argentina had received any new proposals from Britain.

This was confirmed by a reliable source in the Foreign Ministry, who said it would be "inexact" to say that contacts with Britain have broken down.

Other diplomatic sources also affirmed that there has been no British reply to Argentina's latest proposals for talks aimed at normalizing relations severed because of the Falklands War.

The most recent diplomatic exchange took place on February 16, when Argentina sent a formal reply to a series of British suggestions relating to the renewal of commercial and cultural exchanges.

Daily Mail
23.2.84

Falklands admiral is held

BUENOS AIRES: Admiral Jorge Anaya, one of the planners of the Argentine invasion of the Falklands, was detained yesterday.

The order to hold him was given by a military tribunal after he was questioned on his role in the conflict.

His arrest came the day after the former Argentine president Leopold Galtieri, was also detained.

Both are expected to face trials accused of failing to provide proper equipment or leadership in the Falklands

Daily Mail
24.2.84

Invasion junta behind bars

MEN WHO ORDERED WAR AWAIT TRIAL

From AMIT ROY in Buenos Aires

ALL three members of the Argentine junta which ordered the invasion of the Falklands were under arrest last night.

Air force chief Basilio Lami Dozo was the last to be held and await trial on charges of leadership failure during the 74-day war with Britain in 1982.

He was arrested after a four-hour interrogation by the country's highest military court, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces.

Lami Dozo's pilots scored several major successes against British forces and had a far superior war record to that of the Argentine navy or army.

Former navy commander

Admiral Jorge Anaya was arrested on Wednesday, within hours of ex-President Galtieri being detained at a military base near the capital.

The action against the former junta is part of an effort by the new civilian government, led by President Raul Alfonsin to make

amends for things done during 7½ years of military rule.

Galtieri, Anaya and Lami Dozo are expected to be stripped of their ranks and retirement privileges in addition to receiving long prison sentences.

They could even face the death penalty.

Last weekend President Alfonsin revealed to the Daily Mail that he had accepted British proposals over the Falklands as a basis for discussion.

He hoped that talks between the two countries would begin soon.



HELD: LAMI DOZO



HELD: ANAYA



HELD: GALTIERI

Unity of interests in Antarctica

From Sir Donald Logan

Sir, If the rôle of the states who are consultative parties to the Antarctic Treaty is to be fairly assessed, more needs to be said in their defence than has so far appeared in your correspondence (February 4, 8, 13 and 16).

From recent observation, I can confirm that Antarctica is still "a vast beautiful wilderness, the domain of its wildlife and its scientists". Had there been no Antarctic Treaty it might have been different, as two of your previous correspondents have said. But as the relics of the old whaling stations still visible there testify, the presence of man and the dynamic of his activity are a reality and necessitate protective management if the nature and the peace of Antarctica are to be preserved.

To qualify as a consultative party a state must be engaged in substantial scientific research in Antarctica. Collectively the consultative parties form a repository of knowledge and experience of this unique and critical continent. For practical reasons alone that would seem to impose on them a major responsibility for prudent management. Acceptance of that responsibility led them to develop the Antarctic Treaty system.

These states are not engaged in a carve-up. They are not disposing of resources and are not asserting exclusive rights to anything. The treaty gives them none. All that their conclusions and recommendations can do is to impose restrictions on their own conduct in Antarctica. They are there, and see the need for both evolution and restraint. They cannot bind others, though they can hope that their example in self-restraint will commend itself to others so long as it is seen to be soundly based.

Environmental protection is the foremost consideration. It was in the living resources convention already negotiated and it is, I have no doubt, in the current negotiations about the distant possibility of mineral exploitation.

The system is neither a closed nor a secret one. No application to join

by a state engaged in scientific work there has been refused. All conclusions and recommendations are published by governments and in *Polar Record* (Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge). All scientific work may be and is freely published. It should be easier to obtain access to the technical input to the system than it is, say, to get at the input on matters before the European Community.

All who feel their interests involved should certainly be able to contribute. As the United Kingdom delegate at past meetings of the consultative parties I have urged that ample opportunity should be given for representative bodies of opinion to be heard and as a delegate have myself discussed issues with them, though always taking the view that the reality of man's presence and the dynamic of his activity must be recognised.

The system aims to chart a sensible course well before the risk of damage is imminent. It assumes that the responsibility to do so rests chiefly on those actively engaged in Antarctica. It is surely arguable that they are better placed to protect the universal interest than a universal body would be, most of whose members by the nature of things could never have been there.

Simple, economic, effective and timely measures are needed and sadly the United Nations record in that regard is not impressive. The UN General Assembly's interest in the matter is entirely appropriate, but it should surely be possible to start by an unprejudiced study of the present system rather than by dismissing it (as seemed to be advocated at the outset of this correspondence).

At the same time the consultative parties would do well to demonstrate their recognition of the legitimate interests of the rest of the world and develop more effective liaison with its representative organs.

Yours sincerely,
DONALD LOGAN,
6 Thurloe Street, SW7.
February 20.

Hunt may leave Falklands

By Henry Stanhope
Diplomatic Correspondent

Speculation over the future of Sir Rex Hunt, Civil Commissioner on the Falkland Islands, grew yesterday after the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office refused to comment on reports that he is soon to leave Port Stanley.

Sir Rex is said to have expressed a wish to remain on the islands until his retirement from the diplomatic service in three years' time.

But the Foreign Office is understood to want to replace him with someone less committed to the islanders' position, at a time when Britain and Argentina are groping towards an agreement.

Sir Rex went to Port Stanley in February 1980, and would be due for a move now anyway although, as the Foreign Office says, there is no fixed length to any diplomatic posting.

There would be some advantage in retaining him on the Falklands for a few more years because, having won the confidence of the islanders, he could be a stabilizing force.

On the other hand, Sir Rex is seen as a champion of the Falklanders' cause and the Foreign Office might now prefer a diplomat who would use his influence to persuade the 1,800 residents to accept a new relationship with Argentina.

The Foreign Office said yesterday that it was a matter of policy not to discuss diplomatic postings in public.

THE GUARDIAN
23.2.84



Long term worries over short Falklands runway

LONG-RANGE civil airliners will usually be able to take-off with a full load of passengers from the new airport the RAF is building in the Falklands, the Ministry of Defence has been assured by the British airlines it consulted.

But the Falklands Islands Association, representing the islanders' interests in this country, is still worried that restricting the length of the new runway to the 8,500 feet required for military operations will prove a false economy in commercial terms.

The association's chairman, Mr. Bill Christie, a lawyer, seems resigned to accepting the present plan but says he

is still getting conflicting advice. "The islanders have got to lump what the Government gives. They must rely on expert opinion. I only hope it's right."

RAF plans for the new airport have been questioned on two grounds. First, that if it really is intended to cope with potential commercial traffic as well as military transports serving the garrison, as the Government has claimed, then its runway should be sized accordingly. Second, that pilots taking off for the long haul across the South Atlantic will have only the minimum length available in an emergency.

Adding another couple of thousand feet to the runway

while the construction team is still there, critics point out, should add only a few million pounds to the £240 millions the airport is already estimated to cost. But once the contractors leave, it will be extremely expensive to bring them back.

The Defence Ministry originally took the view that if the RAF's new TriStar transports needed only 8,500 feet of runway to take-off, with military loads for Ascension Island, then that was the length for which they were prepared to pay and nothing more.

If the so-called commercial potential justified a longer runway, then it must be paid for on somebody else's

budget. As for the safety question, the military runway would in any case have a 1,000 overrun at each end, 600 feet of which, it turns out, will be paved.

This tough departmental approach has not fundamentally changed, but when the islanders' anxieties were publicised and defence officials were reminded that Government ministers keep talking about the airport as a civilian as well as military installation, they agreed to check their plans against airline requirements.

British Airways and British Caledonian have now informed the ministry that the three wide-bodied aircraft most likely to be involved —

the Boeing 747-236 jumbo, the DC 10-30, and the Lockheed TriStar 500 — could all take-off within their safety limits for Dakar, in West Africa, with a full load of passengers in most weather conditions (that is, assuming no worse than a light 10 knot headwind and a standard temperature plus or minus five degrees) although freight would probably be limited to between 4,000 and 6,000 kilograms.

In fact, the only airline that has so far specifically requested a Civil Aviation Authority licence to open a civil route from the UK to the Falklands, British Atlantic Airways, exists only on paper. The company was

formed for this purpose by an American lawyer based in London and an ex-Laker Airways pilot, Captain Alan Hellary. The plan was to operate a DC-10 on a weekly return flight.

British Caledonian objected to the CAA and the embryo airline is now busy trying to establish a cheap transatlantic service between Gatwick Airport and Newark, New Jersey. But Captain Hellary says the Falklands project has not been abandoned altogether and he believes the RAF runway would be satisfactory for the proposed operation.

David Fairhall

23.2.84

Liberal Delusions

SPEAKING of possible negotiations with the Argentines about the Falkland Islands, the Liberal leader Mr David Steel says that both countries have a "hard cash economic interest" in reducing tension. "What matters is international guarantees for the Falkland Islanders to be able to carry on their way of life. The colour of the flag flying over administrative buildings is not important."

In fact the "way of life" of the Falklanders has already been destroyed. But that is by the way. Has it never occurred to the smug, liberal mind of Mr Steel that the colour of flags may be very important indeed?

I would not expect him to feel moved, as many people do, when flags, *any* flags—except, perhaps, the fancy flags of the new pseudo-nations created by the liberal world-view—are unfurled, even without their appropriate anthems.

But could he not try, at least, to stretch an impoverished imagination to the point of realising that flags are *symbols*, concentrating in themselves a great mass of ancient, national associations? There is no liberal flag. The flag of the United Nations never moved anyone to tears. But does the flag of St Andrew really mean nothing to him?

If so, he is the poorer and the less able to understand the forces that move the world. Symbols and all they stand for cannot be quantified as "hard cash economic interest" can; but they are far more powerful.

THE TIMES

23.2.84

Falklands fun

More news from the Falklands front. Entertainment being at a premium, RAF pilots amuse themselves by flying parallel to beaches containing large penguin colonies. The penguins, apparently hypnotised, follow the planes to and fro with their eyes like centre court crowds at Wimbledon. Then the fearless flyers approach head-on, the penguins crane their necks until . . . sudden collapse backwards of thousands of stout parties.

PHS

Rodney Cowton, recently returned from the South Atlantic asks what the British taxpayer can expect in return for an outlay of £3,000m over five years

THE TIMES

23.2.84

Striking a Falklands balance

The price to the British taxpayer of the Argentine invasion of the Falklands will be about £3,000m. This was finally confirmed last week with the publication of the Government's spending plans up to 1987. These showed spending on garrisoning the islands and on replacing military equipment lost in the 1982 conflict coming to about £1,700m in the next three years, on top of the £1,400m spent in the last two years.

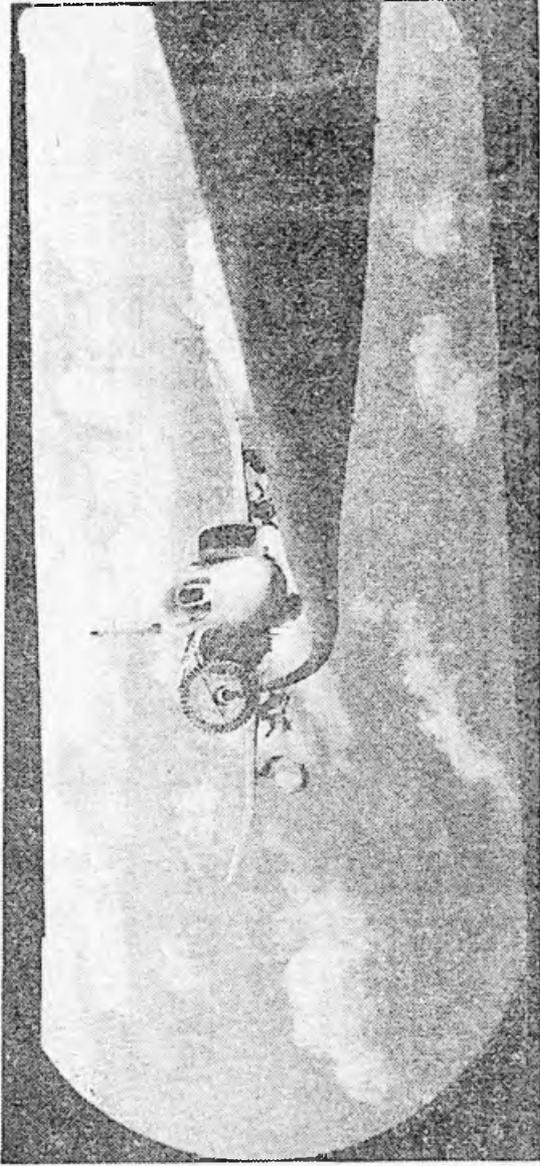
These huge defence costs dwarf the sums set aside for civil projects: £15m to make good the war damage, and £31m to be spent over six years on development.

Nearly two years after the conflict it is appropriate to ask what the long-term benefits will be — or whether the Government has been forced to drop £3,000m into a Falklands peat bog without hope of a return.

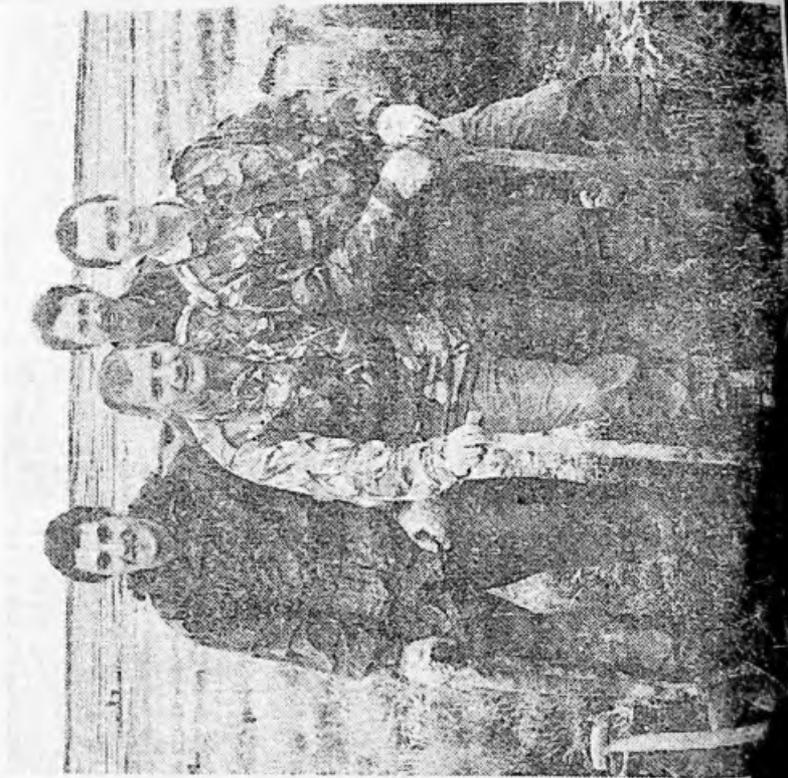
The Government's position undoubtedly will remain that it had no alternative but to respond as it did to the invasion and that this overrode narrow calculations of cost. But as the glow of military victory fades, the Government's position would be helped if it could point to continuing benefits arising from this spending. After all, political principles are routinely abandoned long before the cost of upholding them reaches the Falklands' level, which represents £300,000 a year for five years for every man, woman and child on the island.

The Government does point to some gains from the military victory: Britain's enhanced standing in the world and the West's greater credibility in Soviet eyes. The Services will benefit because lost ships and other hardware are being replaced by more advanced equipment.

However, these are mere spin-offs, and other direct benefits would have to be sought either in developments in the islands themselves, or in the wider advantages of retaining a foothold in the South Atlantic.



Where some of the money goes: a patrolling Phantom is refuelled by a Hercules tanker plane over the exclusion zone and (below) sappers clear away battlefield debris at Murray Heights, near Port Stanley



CONT... /

political benefits from the repossession of the islands must be sought by looking at the Falklands in relation to the South Atlantic generally.

The islands' most obvious value is as the door to the British Antarctic Territories, the most northerly point of which lies only about 800 miles to the south. The Government has reaffirmed its interest in Antarctica by providing the British Antarctic Survey with an increased budget.

The relationship between the Falklands and the southern continent was well demonstrated recently when, within a space of ten days, two of the most evocative symbols of modern British activity in Antarctica, the ice patrol ship HMS Endurance and the British Antarctic Survey ship John Biscoe, put into Port Stanley.

Sir Rex Hunt, The Falklands Civil Commissioner, is also High Commissioner for the British Antarctic Territories.

International activity in Antarctica is regulated by the Antarctic Treaty of 1959. There is increasing pressure for this to be revised in the early 1990s to take account of the interests of nations which were not in the original Antarctic club, and discussions are also in progress to find an agreement for regulating mineral extraction.

Possession of the Falklands, and indeed of South Georgia, will do much to sustain the long-term credibility of British activity further south.

The Falklands do also have potential military value. It seems unlikely that they will ever emerge as a fully developed western base, as some have suggested, but the role of Ascension Island in the Falklands conflict demonstrated that a small island with an airfield and some associated facilities can prove of incalculable advantage in a crisis.

The military value of the Falklands seems to be twofold. Lord Buxton has pointed out the importance which would attach to the islands if the Panama Canal were ever closed and shipping forced to use the route round Cape Horn. The Americans would presumably be particularly conscious of this. The islands may also acquire significance from the continuing world-wide expansion of the Soviet navy.

The typically flamboyant gesture by Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence secretary, in returning from his recent visit to the Falklands by a non-stop flight in a Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft may have had more purpose than merely headline grabbing. It may have also been signalling to Moscow that with the Falklands as a base, the West can carry out aerial reconnaissance over vast areas of the southern oceans.

In all this there is undoubtedly an element of *post hoc* rationalization. Governments tend to find roles for expensively acquired or preserved assets. The Government is spending £3,000m because Argentina forced its hand, but as one person closely involved said recently: "We are turning short-term necessity to long-term advantage."

It seems unlikely that economic and social advances in the Falklands will greatly affect Britain.

Before the conflict, the Falklands economy was in long-term decline, and the most that seems in prospect now is that the decline may be arrested and a minimum level of sustainable activity be achieved.

Both the Falklands society and economy are extremely fragile, though they provide a way of life which the 1,800 islanders value.

Some idea of this fragility, and of the lack of basic services is conveyed by the following facts:

- The only large-scale economic activity is sheep farming, but the grazing, as at present managed, is so poor that it supports only one sheep to about four and a half acres, as against four or five sheep to the acre on intensively managed good quality grassland in Britain.

- There are virtually no roads outside the only significant township, Port Stanley, with its population of about 900, though one is being constructed to the new airport. It is considered good going to cover by Land-Rover, across rough track and peat bog, the 60 miles to the second largest centre, Goose Green (population about 90) in four hours.

- Government revenue from the sale of stamps is at present comparable to that from income tax and company tax combined.

As our table shows, most of the recommendations by Lord Shackleton for the development of the islands are being implemented, though he did not see this leading to a growth of more than 500 in the population in this decade.

The two major Shackleton recommendations not being implemented are a radical and rapid break-up of the large land-holdings of absentee landlords (instead a policy is being adopted of gradual subdivision as land comes on the market), and the creation of a 200-

mile fishery zone, which is still under consideration by the Foreign Office, but for which the Government shows no enthusiasm.

There is concern among the islanders that roughly three quarters of the development funds are being spent on improving the infrastructure, leaving, in the view of many, too little to be spent on revenue-earning projects.

It is because of this that the islanders are campaigning hard for the establishment of the fishery zone, which they think would enable them to generate £3m a year from licensing fees and services to foreign trawlers.

Hopes of major oil exploration in the South Atlantic have been relegated to the distant future. Despite the entrancing wildlife, particularly on the outlying islands, the scope for the development of

any substantial level of tourist activity seems limited.

It would have been easy for the Government to have stimulated something of a boom, no doubt soon to have been followed by soaring inflation, by opening to the islanders highly paid employment on building the new airport and other big civil engineering projects. Instead these jobs have mostly gone to unemployed from the U.K., with locals being involved scarcely at all.

The Government seems to have decided on a policy of limited and gradual development, preserving the islanders' way of life and insulating them as far as possible from the impact of the military presence.

This is an enlightened and realistic approach, but it constitutes a minimal return for the expenditure of £3,000m.

That means that any large

The Shackleton Report, 1982*

Recommendation	Action
£30m-£35m should be made available for development over five years	£31m being provided over six years.
A Falkland Island Development Council should be established, and a chief executive appointed.	Council in final stages of being set up. Chief Executive appointed last November.
Government should purchase all farms of absentee landlords "as soon as feasible."	Rejected in favour of buying up and subdividing farms as they come on the market.
Establishment of a 200-mile fishery zone.	Still under consideration by Foreign Office.
8,500-ft runway should be constructed.	New airport 25 miles west of Stanley due to be completed in April, 1986. Cost £215m. Estimates being sought. May cost £7m.
Deepwater jetty should be constructed at Port Stanley.	£2m allocated.
£3m-£5m should be allocated to improving roads in the countryside.	

*Falkland Islands Economic Study, 1982. Command No 8653, HMSO, £7.80

Daily Telegraph 22.2.84

£3bn WAR BILL FOR ARGENTINA

Argentina's campaign to capture the Falkland Islands from Britain cost about £3 billion, an Argentine minister said in Rome yesterday.

"The cost in human terms, of young lives lost, was enormous and in economic terms the war cost in the order of £3 billion, said the economy minister, Mr Bernardo Grinspun, who is in Italy to seek support for the economic policies of President Alfonsín.—Reuter.

The Times 22.2.84

Tribunal orders arrest of General Galtieri

Former Argentine President General Leopoldo Galtieri could face immediate disciplinary action by Argentina's highest military court for having led the country into the disastrous Falklands War with Britain (Douglas Tweedale writes from Buenos Aires).

The supreme council of armed forces questioned General Galtieri extensively yesterday about charges that he was negligent in his leadership of that war, and the news agency Noticias Argentinas reported that the military tribunal had ordered his arrest, after hearing his testimony.

Time for Antarctic fishing pact

From Mr Martin Dent

Sir, We are all aware of the story of two dogs who quarrel so vigorously over a bone that it is taken by someone else and they both lose it. Your excellent article in today's issue (February 18) on the despoliation of the fisheries within the 200-mile limit around the Falkland/Malvinas Islands shows that this is just the situation of Britain and Argentina.

The 200 miles of water contain rich resources of fish which are now being grossly over-exploited by many foreign vessels while Britain is afraid to declare a 200-mile fishing limit for fear of offending Argentina and the Argentinians cannot fish or protect the fisheries because of our 200-mile exclusion zone.

The answer is obvious: let us share the responsibility for the fisheries. Surely we can rise above our quarrels to see that the waters around the islands must belong to one or other of us, or to both together, and certainly not to third parties who are now despoiling the fisheries.

The first step between two nations in dispute over a jurisdiction and responsibility is to attempt to share that honour, duty and benefit. Let Britain and Argentina exercise jointly the administration and conservation of the fisheries in these waters, allowing only the ships of our two nations, or those we jointly license, to fish.

To perform this manageable task let us appoint a fisheries protection and development officer (perhaps an outsider to both our nations acting on behalf of us both) and give him a British and an Argentinian adviser.

We shall soon find that, though we are still unable to agree on the emotion-laden subject of "sovereignty", we can cooperate admirably to mutual benefit in the practical business of administration. Although we are not yet ready for joint sovereignty over the land and people we can at least operate it over the sea.

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN DENT,
Department of Politics,
University of Keele,
Keele,
Staffordshire.
February 18.

From Mr Stanley Johnson, MEP for Wight and Hampshire East (European Democrat (Conservative))

Sir, Like Mr Lyster (feature, February 18) I have recently returned from the Falklands, as well as from visiting, on board the British Antarctic Survey ship John Biscoe, South Georgia, the South Orkneys and the Antarctic peninsula itself.

I completely agree with Mr Lyster's call for a 200-mile economic zone around the Falklands. It seems

likely that 250,000 tons of fish are being taken each year off the Falkland Islands, with little benefit being derived either by the British consumer or the Exchequer.

At the same time our failure to effect a fisheries regime puts at risk, as Mr Lyster rightly states, the whole marine ecosystem of the area. We are in a sense throwing away a priceless asset which was won back for Britain by great expense of blood and treasure.

The argument is sometimes advanced that declaring (and enforcing) a 200-mile economic zone around the Falklands will "upset the Argentinians" at a delicate moment of negotiation. But Argentina has had no hesitation in proclaiming its own economic zone.

Where the zones overlap there are established principles of international law for dividing the waters along the median line, and these principles could presumably be applied in this case without giving rise to diplomatic upset.

Even more important, it is as much in Argentina's interest as it is in Britain's for Britain to enforce a fisheries regime on its side of the Patagonian shelf. The current free for all must damage Argentinian stocks almost as much as our own since, biologically speaking, the resources of the Patagonian shelf are shared between the two countries.

As far as South Georgia is concerned, the arguments are even clearer. In Grytviken last week I was told that recent aerial surveys had revealed 180 ships trawling around the island. These are not British ships. They are Soviet or East European. Catching large quantities of krill, the small crustacean at the base of the Antarctic food chain, as well as fish, they may be intervening even more directly in the balance of the marine ecosystem.

Here again an economic zone around South Georgia is an indispensable tool of any effective management regime. The British Antarctic Survey, with its already established offshore biological programme, should be able to help in generating the necessary scientific data.

The South Orkneys, where I also observed heavy Soviet fishing, lie inside the Antarctic Treaty area. The urgent need there is for catch limits to be set and enforced on an international basis, having particular regard to the interaction of different elements in the food chain.

The machinery for this exists, but progress towards effective regulation is desperately slow. If the dismal history of the whaling industry is anything to go by, it may soon be too late.

Yours sincerely,
STANLEY JOHNSON,
30 Maida Avenue, W2.
February 19.

Falklands chief faces the axe

The Falklands Civil Commissioner Sir Rex Hunt is under heavy Foreign Office pressure to give up his post this spring so that he can be replaced by a diplomat less vigorously committed to representing and voicing the views of islanders, as well as those of the British Government.

Sir Rex, aged 57, whose present term of office ends in June, has made it clear for nearly a year that he wishes to stay and spend the final three years of his career carrying through the development projects started since the 1982 conflict.

But with a possible rapprochement between Britain and Argentina in the offing, the Foreign Office has so far been adamant in refusing to extend his term and it is thought unlikely that he will succeed in staying. This is because of fears that Sir Rex might be too determined to act as "defender of the islands" when talks were being held. He has consistently expressed the view that Argentina has "mucked" any chance of winning Falklands consent for Argentine sovereignty in the foreseeable future.

The Foreign Office is under-



Softer approach to Argentina likely to end Sir Rex Hunt's reign. Report by John Ezard

Sir Rex Hunt

stood to want to replace him with a middle-aged diplomat who, one Falklander said cynically yesterday, "would be beholden to the Foreign Office for his future career prospects. One of the problems for them with Rex is that he likes the islands and the islanders too much. He's prepared to put his wellies on and muck in with us."

The removal of the man who declared when the 1982 invasion started: "I'm not going to surrender to the bloody Argies," would be a substantial gesture to Buenos Aires.

Sir Rex has told no one of the dispute, which filtered out

through Westminster sources in a report in the Scotsman yesterday. The Foreign Office said: "We are not commenting on this." Sir Rex, who is visiting South Georgia aboard HMS Endurance, was not available for comment. Mr Bill Christie, chairman of the Falkland Islands Association, the islanders' 2,000-strong British support group, said: "If this were to happen, we in this country would all take it as evidence that the FO was acting against the interests of the Falklands."

"Sir Rex's behaviour in relation to the FO has always been impeccable. But it may well be

that FO officials are jealous of him and dislike him because he is a man of independent views who has given outstanding service in a situation of great danger and difficulty.

"If they don't renew his appointment, it would be a scandal if they replaced him with any diplomat. His successor should not be dependent on the FO for his advancement. He should be a distinguished public figure, ex-serviceman or businessman answerable — like the lieutenant governor of the Isle of Man — to the Home Office and the Queen.

"If there are to be negotiations with Argentina, it is very important that the Falklands should have a representative who puts their views fully and does not merely say what his masters want to hear."

Sir Rex was sent to the Falklands in 1980 with the rank of senior grade officer, a status more senior than that of most heads of British dependent territories. He is credited by Falklanders with having "bridged the gap between government and islanders better than any previous governor"

DTI backs move to retain Crown Agents in public sector

By David Simpson
City Correspondent

The overseas and defence sub-committee of the Cabinet is this evening expected to approve reports that the threatened Crown Agents has a viable future but may delay any decision on whether this future should be in the private or public sector.

Last year, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, who holds responsibility for the Crown Agents, indicated that its options consisted only of closure or privatisation, but a new lobby, backed strongly by the Department of Trade and Industry, is now recommending that the Crown Agents should be retained in the public sector.

The debate over the Crown Agents' future is likely to bring the DTI Secretary, Mr

Norman Tebbit, a traditional proponent of privatisation, into dispute with Sir Geoffrey Howe and the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson, who are both understood to favour the privatisation option.

Mr Tebbit, however, is thought to have been swayed by internal advice from the DTI and from the influential private sector Tropical Africa advisory Group, that if the Crown Agents is to remain an effective channel for overseas orders for UK companies, it will prove most effective if it remains in the public domain.

At the same time, the sub-committee will have on the table before it a financial report prepared by the merchant bank, Morgan Grenfell, which supports the Crown Agents' own figures that they can become a commercial and viable enterprise.

The Morgan Grenfell report backs the Crown Agents' own assertions that they can make profits of £11.6 million over the next three years. This return would, however, be made at the expense of considerable overhead savings, spearheaded by cutting 400 jobs from the Crown Agents' present 1,200 workforce.

The suggested level of redundancies has been strongly opposed by the Crown Agents' unions who have argued that present staffing levels are already barely adequate for the agents to fulfil their workload.

The future of the Crown Agents, who carry out procurement, project management and investment services for Third World nations, was first thrown into doubt last July when the agents lost their contract to manage funds of £3.5 billion for the Sultan of Brunei.

21.2.84

TALKING TO BUENOS AIRES

THE FLURRY of diplomatic activity centred on the future of relations between Britain and Argentina disguises the fact that there really cannot be any "movement" over the Falkland Islands for some time to come. The Foreign Office said as much yesterday when it commented on heightened speculation of an imminent deal, whatever that might mean. The FO said President RAUL ALFONSIN's latest proposals would be given careful study and it would respond in due course. The Government is clearly not going to be rushed by the new, and to be fair democratic, government in Buenos Aires into agreeing to any step which smacks of a climb-down over the Falklands and their wishes.

Diplomatic exchanges so far have been conducted both in secret and through an Argentine megaphone, but it is now possible to obtain some idea as to what is happening. The British Government favours restoring diplomatic, commercial, cultural and financial ties with Mr ALFONSIN, seeks a resumption of direct air links, and wants a long-term arrangement over the Argentine war graves. After all, closer contact could lead to mutual confidence and there is nothing wrong with that. But Mr ALFONSIN — and his politically discredited but by no means broken military — should understand that just at the moment Britain is in no mood to remove the 150-mile exclusion zone around the Falklands, and anything remotely suggesting talks about sovereignty is just plumb silly.

Britain right now is ready to talk about everything except the thing that Mr ALFONSIN wants to talk about. But with time this may change. It could even be (cynically) argued that some sort of deal should be struck now before the Argentine generals get back in power. A much more serious concern is that Fortress Falklands policy is costing some £600 million a year and, given the new runway and a reduction in the garrison to even a tripwire force, it will still have a distorting effect on the defence budget. Britain should make most of the running over improving relations with Argentina but it is still too early to be talking about leaseback, a United Nations presence and sovereignty.

FINANCIAL TIMES

21.2.84

Importance of Antarctica

From Mr J. White

Sir,—Robert Graham's most interesting article (February 16) emphasises the potential importance of the Antarctic continent. This fact is realised by the Soviet Union, perhaps more so than by any other nation. The large-scale 28th Antarctic expedition began in October, 1982, and the 29th exactly a year later.

There are now seven permanently manned Soviet bases in Antarctica, five of which have airstrips. Il-18D aircraft fly a more or less regular service Leningrad / Moscow - Odessa - Aden-Maputo to the airfield at Molodezhnaya. Some of the airstrips have helicopters and light aircraft attached to them.

Some 630 people, of whom 340 are scientists, are taking part in the 1983-84 expedition plus the permanent maintenance

staff. In November, 1983, five ships left Leningrad and Vladivostok carrying what was described as "thousands of tonnes of equipment and supplies." The research ship "Professor Vize," usually on station with the Baltic Fleet, has been operating in Antarctic waters. The personnel of the stations includes besides Soviet citizens Cubans, East Germans, and Mongolians.

Poland maintains a permanent Antarctic station, the H. Arctowski. The Argentinian stations in the Antarctic are all manned permanently by armed forces personnel with military commanders.

John Baker White,
Street End Place,
Street End,
Canterbury,
Kent.

Concern at report of ship faults

By Julian Haviland
Political Editor

Members of the Commons Select Committee on Defence, which is carrying out an inquiry into equipment performance and failures during the Falklands campaign, yesterday expressed concern at a report in *The Times* that faulty cables have been repeatedly supplied to ships built for the Royal Navy.

Members of the committee are expected to raise the report when they meet tomorrow to take further evidence.

Their doubts about the quality of naval design have already been roused by what they have heard of the seaworthiness of frigates operating in the South Atlantic.

Representatives of the Navy have been asked to give further evidence next month about warship construction and design, with the flammability and general suitability of cables a particular area of anxiety.

Mr Norman Godman, Labour MP for Greenock and Port Glasgow, is pressing the Ministry of Defence about defective cables which were supplied, to defence department specifications, to the Scott Lithgow shipyard in his constituency.

Mr Godman believes that the yard, which is to be sold by British Shipbuilders, has been blamed unjustly for costly delays in the building of a number of submarines in the mid-1970s.

He is also angry that the yard is again being blamed for a similar delay to the £90m seabed operations vessel *Challenger*, which after completion for the Royal Navy is now also having sub-standard cables replaced.

Mr Godman, who is disturbed by the wider implications of this sequence of mishaps, yesterday tabled Commons questions to Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence.

He is asking how many vessels built for the Royal Navy have had to be redesigned or reequipped as a result of faulty design or specification for which the Ministry of Defence was responsible, or because of faulty equipment supplied by outside contractors.

Argentina opens way for talks

A spokesman for President Raul Alfonsin said yesterday that Argentina has proposed a return to the situation existing before the 1982 Falklands war in its reply last Thursday to a series of British ideas for restoring relations.

He said that the idea of returning to prewar relations was one among several ideas.

"We have received some ideas from Great Britain and added some of our own", he said. "Now we are waiting for the British reply."

First, what do we want for the islands?

This is extraordinarily odd. Two countries have a territorial dispute. It leads to war. One side wins hands down. The proponents of war on the other side are bundled ignominiously from office. And yet, diplomatically, it is the losing country that, two years later, is calling all the shots. President Alfonsín of Argentina grows ever stronger on soothing initiatives. The Foreign Office in London grows ever more tortured in its evasive responses. If this is winning, then what on earth would losing have been like?

The key to Falklands' understanding, in fact, lies in just that paradox of winning and losing. We resecured, by 1982 force of arms, dominion over a small and economically unappetising territory we had been zealously seeking to give away for 20 years. So winning, in the short term, was a savagely expensive rebuff to the established policy of decades: that was, losing. At the moment it is adjudged politically impossible to say openly that Her Majesty's Government would like the Falklands to get lost. Mrs Margaret Thatcher is vehement in her pledges of island security, for as long as she lasts. The issue is no win so far as any brave mandarin or cost-conscious minister is concerned. There will come a day, however, probably post-Thatcher, when ownership of the islands will be back on the agenda. Better shrug wearily, then, and fudge along until that day dawns.

But such fudging can grow awfully wearisome. Argentina has a new democratic government: no more "tinpot fascist dictatorship." Its lately elected President would like to take the heat off over a potty little nationalistic wrangle once and for all. He has massive UN backing for his strategy; even America toes the line. Britain is internationally bereft of support (unless you include New Zealand). First he offers gentle chats about sovereignty and lease-back. Mrs Thatcher kicks those out of court. Then he returns proffering two-tier negotiations, with sovereignty stowed away for the later stage. The Foreign Office sucks its thumb. Three months ago, give or take the odd detail, this is precisely what the FO was manoeuvring for: sovereignty on the backburner, trade and aid in pride of place. But now, once again, winning a point involves the

risk of losing the argument. There is a void in British policy; and, because of that void, every positive approach has to be dead-batted away. The islanders want a 200-mile exclusive fishing zone, and ask for it plaintively. HMG writhes and says nothing.

This paper has argued time and again that it is this black hole at the heart of British policy-making which leaves us drifting. We promised—nay, She promised—the islanders a referendum on their future. She has forgotten that promise because she declines to have the options that could be put in Port Stanley decided first, as they must be, across the benches in the Houses of Parliament. Our politicians themselves aren't confront the future. Why not ask the major parties what guarantees can be extended to the Falklanders? Why not let the islanders choose; and make a solid, moral commitment which will endure? If there is a majority here, and then there, for the permanent Fortress, why not get it decided? If not, then there will never be a more amenable partner in the search for peace than Mr Alfonsín. But the questions start in Whitehall and Downing Street and Westminster. Until they are addressed, the only recourse is a barren diplomatic tap-dance; and the only people who will really suffer—because they are traduced, strung along and fundamentally disregarded once more—are the Falkland Islanders themselves.

Sellafield for Falklands

*by Our Environmental Staff
Graham C. Greenpeace*

THE nuclear processing plant at Sellotape, Cumbria, is to be re-sited in the Falkland Islands at a cost of £800 million the government announced today.

A spokesman explained that the re-siting had "nothing at all to do" with recent "absurdly exaggerated reports" that the Sellafield plant was

leaking radioactive waste.

Goose Greenpeace

"This is in no sense a panic measure" the spokesman continued "It just makes good economic sense to

transport this highly toxic but completely harmless stuff in R.A.F. Hercules transports and dump it on these god-forsaken islands where fortunately very few people live."

Meanwhile, in the courts, members of the ecology group Greenpeace have been jailed for life and fined £1 million for attempting to stop the British Nuclear Fuel Co. from discharging their perfectly harmful waste all over the beaches of Western Britain.

Said the judge: "It would be hard to imagine a more dastardly breach of the peace than this despicable interference with the rights of a law-abiding and widely respected government corporation to go around poisoning anyone it felt like."

Commentary



**Geoffrey
Smith**

Should the British Government be prepared to open discussions with Argentina without an explicit agreement that sovereignty over the Falklands was not negotiable? This is now the critical question in the light of President Alfonsín's as yet unofficial response to British proposals. The question needs to be phrased precisely because it is different from asking whether Britain should now be willing to negotiate over sovereignty.

For the British Government to do that now would, to my mind, be a grave error. It is true that there is a new democratic regime in Argentina, and it is sometimes suggested either that the establishment of democracy there removes the principal objection to a compromise on sovereignty over the islands, or alternatively that Britain should be prepared to negotiate over sovereignty in order to strengthen the tender plant of Argentine democracy. These arguments contradict each other and both, I believe, are specious.

It is much too soon to assume that Argentine democracy, welcome though it is, will be lasting. For the Falklanders to be placed, against their will, under ultimate Argentine control in the belief that military rule would never return to Buenos Aires would be naively irresponsible.

To believe, on the other hand, that it is necessary for Britain to negotiate on sovereignty in order to safeguard democracy in Argentina is to mistake the nature of Britain's responsibility and to exaggerate its influence.

But should this rule out any negotiation until Argentina has publicly accepted Britain's position? There are powerful arguments for saying that it should. It would be more honest, and it might be more prudent. It would avoid the danger of misunderstanding and allegations of bad faith later.

**Widespread desire
for talks**

Yet one of the arts of diplomacy is not to cross bridges before it is necessary to do so. If Britain is not prepared to talk unless Argentina agrees specifically to exclude the subject of sovereignty, that will make it difficult to have any discussions at all.

"We cannot accept", Mr Dante Caputo, the Argentine Foreign Minister, is reported to have told a Buenos Aires newspaper on Sunday, "that the beginning of talks and negotiations on the Malvinas implies the tacit renunciation of the sovereignty claim". Nor is there any need for him to go quite so far as that.

It was not the Argentine claim to the Falklands that was an infringement of international law and an offence to civilized conduct between nations. It was the attempt to prosecute that claim by violent means. Britain should not sit down with the representatives of any regime that continues to threaten the Falklands by force. But that is not President Alfonsín's position, even though he declines to make the diplomatic move of formally ending hostilities.

It must be in Britain's interest to find a means of opening negotiations on subjects other than sovereignty because there is a good deal that the British Government wants to discuss. It would be desirable to reopen commercial and diplomatic relations, to have a decent arrangement over Argentine war graves on the Falklands and to restore direct air links between London and Buenos Aires. Above all, life for the Falklanders would be made much easier if contact could be resumed between the islands and the South American mainland.

One of the advantages of opening talks on President Alfonsín's terms is that all these subjects would be on the agenda. So would some others, like the exclusion zone around the islands, that are of particular concern to him. But the principal Argentine interest - the sovereignty issue - would not be on the agenda. Britain would retain control of the Falklands, with its power undiminished and without any commitment to negotiate over their future at any time.

The opening of negotiations would have the added benefit of removing such international pressure as there is upon Britain over the Falklands. When I visited the United Nations last November I concluded that there was a widespread desire for Britain and Argentina simply to reopen discussions with each other. I did not believe then, and I do not see now, that to talk without commitment would be contrary to Britain's interest.

Argentine may shelve sovereignty problem

From Our Correspondent
Buenos Aires

While the Argentine Government is adamant that the issue of Falklands sovereignty is central to any talks with Britain over the future of the islands, there are clear signs that sovereignty need not be discussed immediately in any dialogue.

One official involved in formulating Argentine policy said that discussion of sovereignty "is absolutely central" to his country's interests in the Falklands, but added: "I cannot say whether it would be discussed in the first or second round of negotiations."

Similar signals have come from Señor Dante Caputo, the Argentine Foreign Minister, who said in the leading daily newspaper *Clarín* at the weekend that Argentina's latest proposals to Britain "go as far as is possible in our intentions of dialogue, of peace and of goodwill." He emphasized, however, that the talks with Britain would not imply Argentine resignation of its sovereignty claims.

Señor Caputo issued a warning that if there was a hardening of the British Government, it would be clear to the international community which of the two did not want dialogue.

The Foreign Minister also listed a series of issues related to British military presence on the Falklands which he said "in our judgment must be included in a initial discussion."

"In addition to the points Britain wants to include in an agenda for negotiations, there are issues which directly affect the (Argentine) national interest, the exclusion zone, the fortification of the islands, and the danger of the introduction of nuclear weapons or devices."

Señor Caputo said in the interview with *Clarín* that his government continued to advocate the presence of United Nations peacekeeping troops on the Falklands despite Britain's public rejection of the proposal on February 1.

● Admiral held: Admiral Rubén Chamorro who headed the Buenos Aires Navy School of Mechanics, said to be one of the worst secret detention and torture centres during Argentina's "dirty war," was detained when he returned from South Africa (Reuter reports).

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THE STNADARD

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Wise moves

THE government is right to be cautious (and discreet) in the delicate diplomatic tango with Argentina over the Falklands. But ministers must beware that caution and discretion, which come so naturally to the Foreign Office, do not mean invaluable chances missed.

Argentina seems to have made a sizeable step forward by offering to shelve sovereignty, the central and most difficult issue, for the time being. That would allow talks to get under way on practical matters, such as restoring trade and transport links, and the return of Argentinian soldiers buried on the Islands. With the two sides talking face to face, it should then be possible to move on to trickier matters.

It sounds a reasonable way to begin—and a beginning that Britain should be eager to make. The Falklands garrison is a costly means of maintaining what can only be a second-best way of life for the islanders. The best answer in the long run for London, Port Stanley and Buenos Aires is to see the Falklands a stable settlement, not a beleaguered base.

That objective is very much more likely under the democratic government of President Alfonsín. It is in Britain's interest to see that democracy takes root instead of a return to the dangerous and ugly unpredictability of military rule.

The obvious next steps are for Britain to lift its 150-mile exclusion zone around the islands and for Argentina to declare an official end to hostilities. In the aftermath of war it is easier for the victor to be magnanimous. If Argentina is ready to make positive moves, there are many good reasons why Britain should not appear grudging in reply.

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Modest optimism over Falklands initiative

By John Ezard and Patrick Keatley

Government hopes of a slow and partial return to normality between Britain and Argentina over the Falklands strengthened yesterday after ministers and officials had spent the weekend studying confidential proposals from President Alfonsín.

The proposals, a response to a British initiative, are understood to concede that the crucial long-term issue of sovereignty over the Falklands need not figure on the initial agenda of talks between the two countries. If the talks go well in the so far deliberately fostered mood of rapprochement between Britain and Argentina it would leave the way open

MP questions payments; back page

to full restoration of trade and diplomatic relations.

However, it seems likely that the confidential message from the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, relayed to the Alfonsín government last month, fell far short of what the Argentinians are expecting on the agenda.

The British plan calls for pragmatic progress by dealing with four specific matters: removal of the export licensing system which at present blocks 95 per cent of normal trade; removal of Argentina's financial restrictions, under which government overseers are still in position in the offices of British firms; humanitarian actions to send home bodies of Argentinian soldiers killed in the 1982 campaign; and reintroduction of air and sea links between Argentina and the Falklands.

The Argentinian message to London last Friday goes well beyond these targets. President Alfonsín wants to see phasing down of British forces and their replacement by a UN peacekeeping force. He considers that a formal ending of the state of hostilities and normalisation of commercial relations would come after this diplomatic stage, and after Britain had agreed to lift its 150-mile exclusion zone around the islands, at present enforced by the Royal Navy and the RAF.

The venue of the proposed high level negotiations should, in the Argentinian view, be the UN in New York.

As to the issue of sovereignty, which Mrs Thatcher has ruled out altogether as being unacceptable as an item on the agenda, the Alfonsín message proposes a face-saving formula; nothing would be said about it in advance of the talks, but it would not be excluded at a later stage if talks were going well.

Two separate copies of President Alfonsín's proposals reached London late on Friday night and on Saturday, through Swiss and Brazilian intermediaries. Mr Alfonsín was due to announce them to the Argentine people in a broadcast on Friday night, but he cancelled the broadcast, apparently after being advised that "megaphone diplomacy" would not be productive.

The Foreign Office had let it be known that the tactics represented by President Alfonsín's February 1 news conference in Venezuela, at which he set out his demands publicly, was unacceptable.

A Foreign Office official said yesterday that the seriousness with which the Argentinian proposals were being taken was shown by the department's refusal at present to disclose them in detail. "We believe the best way to normalise relations is through patient and discreet diplomacy".

Several leading politicians reacted to reports of the proposals by urging Mrs Thatcher to open immediate comprehensive talks on the Falklands. Labour's shadow foreign secretary, Mr Denis Healey, said on the Weekend World TV programme: "I think we should be prepared to talk about transferring sovereignty and the conditions under which this might happen."

The Liberal leader, Mr David Steel, said: "I don't know whether it is wise to exclude sovereignty in the way that Mrs Thatcher keeps insisting on doing. What matters is international guarantees for the islanders to be able to continue their way of life."

A Tory backbencher, Mr Cyril Townsend, chairman of the newly launched South Atlantic committee, an all-party group set up to lobby for a negotiated settlement, said the proposals were an important step forward, to which Britain should respond.

"Under Mrs Thatcher's leadership, we won the war. I hope that under Mrs

Thatcher's leadership we are going to win the peace."

A Harris poll of 500 people conducted for the programme in Argentina, found that only 6 per cent regarded a Falklands solution as the most important issue in domestic politics. The economy was rated as top priority by 60 per cent of the sample with 34 per cent preferring human rights. A simultaneous poll in Britain found 43 per cent supporting a transfer of Falklands sovereignty to Argentina with unspecified "safeguards," 46 per cent against and 11 per cent don't know.

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Airport payments 'going into Jersey accounts'

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, said yesterday that he had received information that payments to civilian contractors working on the new Falklands airport were being deposited in Jersey banks.

He intends to question the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson, about the payments. His information, he said, came from members of the family of one of the Falklands workers.

He said that wages of armed forces personnel, who often worked in similar conditions, could not be paid via tax-haven banks and that no special arrangements should be made

for civilians.

Mr Dalyell, a persistent critic of the Falklands conflict and of Britain's military involvement in the South Atlantic, also plans to ask the Prime Minister why she wants to use one of her advisers, the historian Lord Thomas, as an intermediary with Argentina, rather than the Foreign Office.

"Personal negotiations conducted by the Prime Minister are unsatisfactory at the best of times," he said.

It was all the more so, he said, given the unanswered questions about Lord Thomas's role in diplomatic contacts with Peru at the height of the Falklands war.

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Escaping from a dismal history

Trevor Fishlock on a new mood in Argentina which may produce peace in the Falklands

Buenos Aires

It is high summer in Argentina and on the fashionable beaches you can barely see sand for the glistening bodies. A magazine reports the first traces of a new phenomenon, *El Topless*, and shows discreet pictures of what it would have us believe are the swallows of the summer of the new liberty.

The beach superintendent is taxed earnestly on the moral question, but he is not drawn. The point is, he says, that if you are offended you can do something about it: you have recourse to the laws of a democratic country. I repeat, he says later, this is a democracy.

Argentines are trying on democracy for size, getting the feel of it. They roll the word around their tongues, as if tasting wine, and take pleasure in the novelties of a life without fetters.

A woman says to me that it is important to remember what life was like. "In the repression," she says, "we talked to no one we did not know intimately. If we wanted to speak of politics we did so while hurrying along a street, not in a restaurant where we might be overheard. We trusted nobody."

A man says that everyone knew of someone who had disappeared, the son of a friend, the boy who lived three doors away. And the frightening part was that people had no one to represent them. There were no congressmen, the cowed press could do nothing, the police were part of the apparatus of repression and law itself meant nothing. "We kept our heads down," he says. "What would you have done?"

The fresh start has resulted in a euphoric postwar mood. Soldiers have been put in their place, tyrants are on trial, the Peronists squashed, and a decent man has put democracy on the country's calling card.

And yet there is pessimism beneath the crust of optimism and hope. There is a melancholy in these deracinated people, and many of them look at their thin and dismal history of squandered health and opportunity, and find it hard to believe that, at this historic turning point, the country really will turn.

Argentina is like one of those wrecked football pools winners you read about who wins a fortune and goes to pieces. Its leaders did not build and succour institutions, did not invest in their own country intellectually, politically or financially. They lacked a real commitment. They looked to Europe and took their money to Switzerland and the United States.

"We are well practised at deluding



Alfonsín: coping with formidable reality

ourselves," a businessman says. "It is holiday time now and people have their democracy and feel pleased with themselves as they lie on the beach. Wait until they return to face reality."

"The reality," a woman says, "is that prices rise daily, and God knows where people get the money. But look at the shops, look at them spending. Last month my television rental was 245 pesos. This month, 410. How can you trust anything?"

The smell of Argentina is of steak and roast beef, the basis of the country's wealth and high-protein diet. When some men talk of tightening their belts they mean they are cutting back to one steak a day, but poorer people grumble they are eating less meat and more pizza.

An Anglo-Argentine considers his 2in-thick tenderloin. "In my lifetime we have been richer than Canada," he observes. "Now we are like a banana republic, counted in the

Third World like some misgoverned African or Asian country, or Bolivia. Think of the humiliation."

Like many others he blames "the monsters," the military rulers, for the country's wrecked economy and bad name. But he is honest enough to recall that 60,000 people gathered to cheer Galtieri in the main plaza of the capital at the start of the Falklands war.

Argentines tell me they are people who forget easily, who have no sense of history or tradition, or of reality. Two-thirds of the country's presidents in the past 50 years have been in uniform, and the dictators have divided up the country like loot. The last juntas even divided up television: there was an army channel, a navy channel and an air force channel. As the state owns most of the natural resources and means of production it was easy for the soldiers to control everything. Their arms spending was vast and

crippling, and they made fortunes in commissions.

In Buenos Aires I visited a huge hospital building. It had been almost completed, then abandoned, a typical episode of a grandiose scheme and resulting waste. In its grounds was a building said to have been a secret prison and torture chamber. The basement had been filled with earth, to hide the evidence, it was said.

But the skulls and handleless skeletons of the disappeared ones are everywhere being unearthed, rising as if to accuse. A few people ask themselves: what kind of people are these, our countrymen, who shot little children, gave electric shocks to pregnant women via the foetus, who tied bodies like strings of sausages and threw them from planes? Of course, the people blame the soldiers. How could we know what was going on, they say, and what could we have done? And an admiral says: "Don't blame the junior men, they were just obeying orders."

But for the time being Argentina's armed right-wing party, the military establishment, is crushed. No one would support a coup, the army's economic power is being broken down, and Peronism, a form of delusion, a belief that will get better without effort, has been defeated.

The demolition of the military edifice and rejection of Peronism are plainly important aspects of the new hope, and the belief among many Argentines, particularly younger people, that this time things are different. They argue that the prerequisites for modernizing the country have been achieved.

But democratic structures are not easily rebuilt at the best of times, and this is not the best of times. In the past the people have been easily bought: Eva's handouts, a football victory, an invasion stunt. Memories are short and it is by no means certain that the traditional rapacious rulers have at last been put permanently in their place.

After their first holiday under democracy for many years Argentines are leaving the beaches to return to formidable reality: a devastated economy, high unemployment and bushfire inflation, the fuel of discontent. It is President Alfonsín's great challenge – and he is a clever and determined man – and a test of the people's resolve. It will be hard, for their nationalism has never moulded them to an ideal, and their long experience of plenty has not equipped them with the qualities of stubbornness and persistence.

Britain refuses to leave sovereignty loophole in any Falklands agenda

By Henry Stanhope, Diplomatic Correspondent

Argentina's apparent readiness to talk to Britain about the Falkland Islands, while shelving the crucial question of sovereignty is being greeted with quiet satisfaction in Whitehall.

But the Government seems determined to drive a hard bargain, and any demand from Buenos Aires that Britain remove the 150-mile exclusion zone round the islands could prove a big obstacle.

President Raúl Alfonsín now seems ready to discuss a range of issues which Britain would like to settle, such as resumption of commercial relations, a more satisfactory settlement over Argentine war graves on the Falklands, cultural and scientific exchanges, and restoration of direct air links between London and Buenos Aires.

British ministers are still adamant that discussions should not begin with an open agenda, which would allow either side to raise any issue, including sovereignty.

The Argentines, conscious of the need to placate their own hard-line military in Buenos Aires, think it reasonable to expect Britain to make a parallel concession by removing

the protection zone which offends Argentine *amour propre*. But Britain is understood to be in no hurry to offer any such concession.

The subjects Britain wants to discuss are likely to benefit Argentina as much as Britain, if not more so. Moreover, Britain is said to be making a concession by agreeing to talks without demanding that Argentina should officially declare an end to hostilities. Argentine commercial vessels may already enter the protection zone of they ask permission first.

Britain will come under pressure to pursue negotiations constructively even if this means sacrificing its diplomatic position on such issues.

It is not thought likely that Argentina would attempt a further military operation against the Falklands, so the exclusion zone might now be considered an expensive luxury or a bargaining point to be negotiated away for a suitable return.

The Foreign Office remained silent yesterday after a terse acknowledgement on Friday that the Argentine reply to Britain's proposals had arrived

and was being carefully considered.

There was no comment on a report that talks would begin in a neutral capital. Until now Whitehall has insisted on secret communications through Switzerland and Brazil, despite the tortuous route.

● **BUENOS AIRES:** Mrs Thatcher's "Fortress Falklands" policy and the sovereignty issue are the principal sticking points in Argentine efforts to renew talks with Britain over the Falklands (Douglas Tweeddale writes).

The Argentine Government has not released any details of its reply last Thursday to a seven-point proposal by the Foreign Office to normalize the practical aspects of relations between the two countries, but statements from top government officials have made clear what the Argentines want from any negotiations.

In an interview published yesterday in the leading daily *Clarín*, Señor Dante Caputo, the Foreign Minister, strongly reiterated the Argentine position that it will not renounce its claims to sovereignty over the Falklands as a precondition to starting talks.

Concern at crime rise on island

From Graham Bound
Port Stanley

The authorities in the Falkland Islands are concerned about a potentially serious increase in crime and violent behaviour, which they attribute to the sudden influx of contract workers for projects such as the new airport at Mount Pleasant.

Three British labourers have recently appeared before the magistrate in Port Stanley on charges of theft, and it had become clear to Chief Supt William Richards, of the Stanley police, that some of the building site labourers have long criminal records.

Under the building consortium's own police and judiciary system, which copes with small crime, some 30 men have already been dismissed and sent home to Britain. The number of bar room brawls in Stanley has increased.

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Falkland force may be halved by 1986

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

The British garrison in the Falkland Islands may be reduced by up to a half when the £215m airport is completed.

Although a political decision has not been taken, the indications are that it will be cut to between 2,000 and 3,000 men.

However, that assumes some progress towards resuming normal relations with Argentina, but no permanent resolution of the issue of the islands' long-term control.

Since the conflict of 1982 the British military presence, including patrolling ships has usually amounted to about 4,500 men, although rising, at present, towards 6,000 because of an influx of Royal Engineers to take advantage of the southern summer for construction.

The size and composition of the Falklands force will be influenced by the airport, which is due to be operational by April next year, and to have all facilities completed 12 months later, and by completion of a chain of radar stations.

The airport, now under construction will enable the garrison to be reduced because it can accommodate large jet aircraft, so reinforcements can be flown in faster and in greater numbers.

It appears the garrison's cost is about £200m a year. A reduced garrison, and progressive introduction of more econ-

omic maintenance, should bring the cost to under £100m a year within two years.

The nucleus of a reduced garrison would be a substantial RAF presence and a sizeable infantry contingent, possibly a battalion strong, about 600 men.

It will probably be possible to reduce four frigates or destroyers normally on station. That will be helped by the introduction of inshore patrol boats, and the expected arrival this year of the converted container ship *Reliant*, at present off Lebanon, which carries four helicopters.

Other likely changes are:

- Much more reliable flying conditions at the new airport, about 30 miles west of Stanley Airport, will probably make it possible for air defence, at present based on Phantom supersonic jets and Harrier short-take-off jets, to be borne by Phantoms.

- The Royal Engineers are planned to be reduced by more than 1,000, from the present peak 1,200.

- The use of Hercules transport aircraft will be substantially reduced, particularly on the air-bridge between Ascension Island and the Falklands, where they will probably be replaced by TriStar wide-bodied jets, with an estimated saving of £25m a year.

Sovereignty sticking point, page 6

ARGENTINE RESPONSE IS STUDIED

By ROBIN GEDYE
Diplomatic Staff

THE Government is studying very carefully Argentina's response to specific proposals for normalising relations and would reply in due course, a Foreign Office spokesman said yesterday.

But he emphasised that whatever steps were taken as a result of the latest exchange, they would be in the form of "patient and discreet diplomacy," far removed from the "quantum leaps" suggested in some reports.

"We are looking carefully at the (Argentine) reply and see the process as one of step-by-step diplomacy," the spokesman said.

He said the Argentine message, delivered via the Brazilian Embassy in London on Saturday, was in reply to suggestions made by Britain through the Swiss Embassy in Buenos Aires at the end of January.

According to reports in the Brazilian Press Britain's proposals were: return of Argentine soldiers buried in the Falklands; re-establishment of direct communications between British and Argentine diplomats; restoration of trade, cultural, and financial links; resumption of flights between Buenos Aires and London.

'As far as we can go'

Mr Dante Caputo, Argentina's Foreign Minister, was quoted in Buenos Aires yesterday as saying that Argentina's reply to the British proposals "takes us as far as we can possibly go" to begin talks with London.

"The reply is marked by Argentina's wish to find a peaceful solution, but it states clearly that we cannot accept that the beginning of talks may imply a tacit drop of our sovereignty claims," he said.

He said that besides the points London wanted to include in the agenda there were issues directly affecting Argentina including the exclusion zone round the Falklands, military might in the area, and the danger of introducing nuclear weapons to the islands.

Mr Cyril Townsend, chairman of the all-party South Atlantic group, and Conservative MP for Bexleyheath, said that a growing number of his colleagues believed the Prime Minister was being obstinate over the Falklands.

Observer 19 2 84

Secret deal near on Falklands

by HUGH O'SHAUGNESSY and JIMMY BURNS

BRITAIN and Argentina are on the verge of an agreement to normalise relations after the Falklands War.

The negotiations, carried out behind a heavy curtain of secrecy, seem at last to be near a breakthrough, but both sides are under strong pressures which could yet prevent agreement.

A Foreign Ministry official in Buenos Aires indicated yesterday that the Argentines may have become more conciliatory in an attempt to meet the flexibility beginning to be shown on the British side.

Argentina has not made public its reply to Foreign Office proposals aimed at clearing the deadlock, but the official admitted privately: 'You could say our reply represents a meeting of minds.'

One key question is whether Argentina is ready to drop its earlier insistence that sovereignty be discussed at the initial round of talks, a condition unacceptable to Britain. A high-level leak last week said it was, but it immediately provoked a hard-line reaction from other officials in Buenos Aires.

A source close to the Argentine Foreign Ministry said that, while Argentina would not abandon its arguments on sovereignty, it might be prepared to open talks with Britain without a firm agenda. This would fudge the question of what was being discussed and enable talks to begin without preconditions. Britain seems unlikely to welcome such a proposal.

The long-awaited speech in which President Raúl Alfonsín will give his reaction to British proposals has still not been made. But sources say the message Argentina has sent to Britain contains a number of concessions which it will be difficult for the Government to ignore. The Foreign Office yesterday would make no comment.

Among Argentina's aims are an end to 'militarisation' of the Falklands and removal of the 150-mile exclusion zone. Britain wants

a formal announcement that hostilities are over before discussing either of these.

The pressures on Alfonsín are considerable. The military are still smarting over his decision to prosecute some generals for crimes during the military dictatorship, and Alfonsín is committed to making peace with Chile on ownership of three small islands in the Beagle Channel near Cape Horn, over which the two small islands in the Beagle Channel near Cape Horn, over which the two countries have argued fruitlessly for decades.

Alfonsín is willing to let the Chileans keep possession of the islands, but would face domestic problems if he could also be shown as soft on the Falklands.

On the British side, officials are strongly resisting pressure from the Falklands lobby, who want to see Britain declare a 200-mile fishing limit round the islands. The islanders claim such a limit is the only way to protect fish stocks possibly worth £1 million a year.

The Foreign Office recognises that declaration of such a limit would be a red flag to the Argentine bull and would stop the delicate negotiations in their tracks. British diplomats are quietly stalling on the issue.

Unofficial contacts between Britain and Argentina are multiplying. Next month one of Mrs Thatcher's advisers, the historian Lord Thomas, is due to fly to Buenos Aires, and he will be followed by two MPs, Mr Cyril Townsend (former PPS to Mr Edward Heath) and Mr George Foulkes, a Labour member. Both are involved in the newly formed South Atlantic Committee, which is trying to find a Falklands solution.

● The Buenos Aires *Daily Clarín* said yesterday that Argentine proposals had been sent to Britain by way of the Brazilian embassy. They included 'new ideas' for talks on sovereignty of the islands as part of renewed negotiations between the two countries.

Financial Times Monday February 20 1984

Sunday Times

19 2 84

Falkland olive branch offer

by Isabel Hilton and
Maria Laura Avignolo

PRESIDENT Raul Alfonsin of Argentina has offered to downgrade the question of the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands as a prerequisite for talks with Britain. In a secret memorandum from the government in Buenos Aires to the foreign office in London, the Argentinians said that while not dropping their sovereignty claim, they were not insisting it be the first item on the agenda.

An Argentine foreign ministry official told The Sunday Times: "We cannot leave sovereignty out of account in a final solution but it could be first or last on the agenda. The important thing is that we are taking a great step forward and trying to get negotiations moving."

The gesture is seen as a victory for President Alfonsin over hardliners in the foreign ministry.

In the cautiously-worded memorandum, Argentina has proposed "global dialogue" in response to the seven-point British proposals received in Buenos Aires on January 26. The Argentine document stresses that Britain must take into account "the situation in the area" when talks begin.

The Argentine foreign ministry official explained: "We are asking for the lifting of the 200-mile exclusion zone and an end to the militarisation of the islands. These are essential points because our fishing industry is on the edge of bankruptcy and the continued British military build-up on the islands is being used by the Argentinian military as an argument against reducing their budget." The transfer of funds from the armed services to such fields as education and health was a major plank in President Alfonsin's electoral platform.

The most sensitive point on the Argentine side, the official stressed, was Britain's request of a *de jure* declaration of the end of hostilities in the region. "We are offering a tacit agreement on the end of hostilities in return for a lifting of the exclusion zone, but internal problems make it difficult to make a formal declaration", he said.

Argentina is understood to be ready to accept British proposals for the transfer of Argentinian war dead to the mainland or a system of visits for relatives of the dead.

"We hope our reply demonstrates an increased goodwill on Argentina's part", said the foreign ministry official "without abandoning our fundamental position. It might eventually lead to further steps - perhaps a direct telephone call between Mrs Thatcher and President Alfonsin".

Pressure on Britain for early response to Argentine terms

BY ROBERT GRAHAM IN LONDON AND
JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES

BRITAIN will be under strong pressure to make an early response to Argentina's terms for resumption of normal diplomatic and commercial relations. The Argentinian terms were conveyed to the British Government last Friday and were a reply to British conditions for normalising relations after the Falklands conflict.

Argentina has made an important concession in agreeing to put on one side the sensitive issue of Falklands sovereignty. President Raul Alfonsin made it clear the concession was designed to underline his country's willingness to establish a dialogue.

But the risks of this concession within Argentina are substantial.

In a statement apparently aimed at preparing opinion for the acceptance of a dialogue, Sr Dante Caputo, Foreign Minister, said yesterday that the latest Argentine message offered "the maximum concession possible" that his country could make "in a spirit of dialogue and goodwill."

"If—as a result of Argentina's latest initiative—there is a hardening of the British position, it will become clear to international opinion which of the two sides is unwilling to start a dialogue," he declared.

The Argentine Government's refusal to spell out the contents of last Friday's message is in direct response to British diplomatic insistence that any conversations between the two sides should henceforth be

conducted in the utmost secrecy.

But government officials in Buenos Aires privately indicated that the main concession contained in last Friday's message was that Argentina has dropped its insistence that its sovereignty be explicitly accepted as a condition of normal relations. All it is insisting on is that discussion of sovereignty is not specifically ruled out.

Argentina essentially appears to be proposing a two-tier approach to future talks with Britain. Conversations would start on peace and normalisation of relations, including the points raised by Britain in its proposal on January 26, but with the essential addition from Argentina's point of view that the 150-mile protection zone around the Falklands be removed and that fortification of the islands be frozen. Formal talks on the island's future would follow later.

One interesting indicator of the changed climate will be a meeting of the Paris Club later this week to discuss Argentina's debt. This will be attended by Sr Bernardo Grinspun, Argentine Finance Minister.

Bankers say there has been no sign of diplomatic pressure by Britain to take a hard line on debt renegotiation. But the renegotiating process will be considerably eased in the case of British banks if diplomatic and commercial relations are restored.

Minerals regime still eludes the Antarctic club

By Simon Tisdall

A meeting of Antarctic Treaty countries, the latest in a series begun in June, 1982, has again failed to make significant progress towards creating a regime for mineral extraction in the world's last great untouched wilderness.

Time is now running out for the negotiations, as pressure increases from Third World countries which want a say in how Antarctica is administered, and from environmentalists who claim that the talks are a "carve-up" of its potentially vast resources.

The meeting, held in private, took place last month at the State Department in Washington. Delegates from the 16 countries with decision-making powers under the 1959 Antarctic Treaty — the so-called consultative parties — are understood to have completed a second reading of a working draft for the mineral regime submitted by New Zealand. But sources close to the talks confirmed that little of substance was agreed, nor any conclusions reached. The negotiators will meet again in Tokyo from May 21.

The mineral negotiations have reactivated the central

Antarctic problem of sovereignty successfully frozen by the treaty for 25 years. Seven of the consultative parties have territorial claims in the Antarctic; in the case of Britain, Argentina, and Chile, the claims overlap. The US and the Soviet Union do not recognise any territorial claims.

How to avoid circumstances in which mineral-related activity could lead to political disputes, and how to provide mining or oil-drilling companies with security of tenure, are questions at the heart of the internal accommodation now being sought.

It seems unlikely, however, that the freedom of access allowed under the 1959 treaty to countries displaying serious scientific interest in the continent will be extended to a new minerals regime.

It is the prospect of exclusive and apparently arbitrary controls on Antarctica's putative riches by a "club" of technologically advanced countries that has provoked Third World involvement. The Non-Aligned Movement's summit in Delhi last March called for a widening of international cooperation in the area, and the UN General Assembly voted

for a comprehensive report last November.

The report is due to be presented to the assembly this autumn, although it is suggested that it may not be completed by then. Even so, the treaty countries can expect further political debate, and increasing pressure for a more genuinely international and less secretive discussion.

The Minerals regime negotiators also face growing opposition from environmentalists who have formed an Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition comprising about 130 groups from 25 countries. As a point of departure, it does not accept the need for any form of Antarctic mineral extraction, arguing that the region, which accounts for a tenth of the world's surface — 5.4 million square miles — should be designated a world park.

The environmentalists claim that the working draft now being discussed by the minerals negotiators sacrifices legitimate conservation concerns to provide a political solution to the treaty powers' internal differences.

While information about the extent and value of the supposed oil, coal, iron ore, platinum, gold, silver deposits in Antarctica is extremely sketched,

environmentalists reject the argument that investigations should be undertaken to help assess the mineral wealth. Similarly, arguments that extraction is technically too difficult and commercially unviable cut no ice. "It's a question of your time-frame," Mr Roger Wilson, a Greenpeace campaigner, said. "Some say the capability to drill for oil on the Antarctic continental shelf could be with us in a very short time. Whether anyone would actually do this is another matter. It's dependent on the external world."

Whatever the external situation, it is a matter of record that the Japan National Oil Corporation is now well into its second three-year programme of seismic surveys in the Antarctic. Britain has strengthened up its presence there through recent increases in funds for the British Antarctic Survey — although there may be a Falklands motive here.

The US recently sent a research ship, the Samuel P. Lee, into Antarctic waters where it is conducting what are referred to as "hydrocarbon investigations" under a US-New Zealand-Australia-research appraisal plan. The ship

is co-sponsored by the Circumpacific Council for Energy and Mineral Resources, whose chairman is a Texan oilman and energy adviser to President Reagan.

France has also increased its interest with the construction of an airstrip at its base in Adelle Land. Environmentalists threaten nearby penguin colonies and contravenes an agreement protecting Antarctic flora and fauna which France signed.

Others have shown signs of stirring interest. What is not clear is whether this increased activity is a prelude to much greater involvement in Antarctica and whether the already permitted prospecting has now become exploration — not allowed, pending creation of a minerals regime — despite the treaty powers' stewardship.

Such developments underline the ultimate problem facing those interested in administering, or in containing, a minerals regime in Antarctica: How to prevent a disastrous free-for-all, or free-for-some, in the Antarctic is a question which cannot remain on ice for very much longer.

I have just returned from...

Simon Lyster

Falklands plunder that has to stop

Times

18 2 84

I have just returned from a month in the Falklands where there is a growing sense of frustration at the failure of the British Government to safeguard from foreign plundering one of the islands' most important natural resources: their offshore fish stocks.

The seas around the Falklands and South Georgia are some of the best fishing grounds in the world. Until a few years ago they were largely untouched, but they are now being heavily exploited by Polish, Spanish, Russian and Japanese trawlers. A vitally important marine ecosystem is being threatened, and neither Britain nor the Falklands is receiving even short-term financial rewards.

Why? - because the British Government has failed to declare a 200-mile fishing zone around the islands and their dependencies. Beyond just three miles from the Falklands coastline trawlers are free to take as much fish as they can catch without paying Britain or the Falklands anything, and the foreign factory ships are rushing in to share the spoils.

The right of states to declare 200-mile fishing zones around their coastlines is now firmly established as customary international law. Indeed there has been such a zone around UK coastlines since 1976. These 200-mile zones have economic advantages because coastal states can either fish the zones themselves or exact licence fees from foreign fishermen for the privilege. It is estimated that the Falkland islanders could expect an annual income of at least £3m in licence fees.

The 200-mile zones also make good sense from a conservation point of view because they enable coastal states to limit fishing to a level that can be sustained year after year. If there is no zone it is in everybody's interest to take what they can while they can, because if they do not somebody else will. This is what happened to the whales, and it will happen again to the Falklands fish stocks unless swift remedial action is taken.

Some 10 years ago a foreign fishing vessel in the waters around the Falklands or South Georgia was a relatively rare sight. By 1979 numbers were growing slowly, and since the war with Argentina they have risen sharply.

Statistics are hard to come by because only the Poles have volunteered precise figures, but even these are revealing. In 1979 the Poles reported having an average of nine trawlers in the area in any one month. For the last half of 1983 they reported an average of over 60. There are no statistics on catch levels prior to September 1983, but in the three months from September to November last year the Poles alone reported taking 99,408 tonnes of fish. The catches of the Russian, Japanese and Spanish vessels can only be guessed at, but they are undoubtedly very large.

This totally unregulated, rapidly increasing foreign fishery could ruin the prospect of a profitable long-term fishing industry in the Falklands. It could also seriously damage other species dependent on a plentiful marine food supply. The Falklands and their dependencies

are rightly famous for their spectacular breeding colonies of penguins, albatrosses and seals. They are also vital nesting areas for less well known sea birds such as slender billed prion and giant petrel. These species all require large supplies of food in offshore waters during the breeding season, and excessive fishing in their feeding areas could be disastrous.

The declaration of a 200-mile zone and the establishment of a



Baroness Young: Fears unfounded

fisheries management programme makes obvious good sense. So why has the British Government not yet done it? Baroness Young, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, implied during her visit to the Falklands in January that such a declaration might upset diplomatic efforts to improve relations with Argentina. Yet Argentina has no more to gain from a depletion of Falklands fish stocks than we do. The islanders have also been told that a fishing zone might be difficult to enforce because Poland and Russia do not officially recognize British claims to the Falklands and might refuse to abide by any zone that Britain declares. However, Russian ships stayed well clear of the exclusion zone during the war, and there is little evidence that the Soviet block wants a serious confrontation with Britain in the South Atlantic.

The Falkland islanders are friendly, hospitable people who love Britain and are extremely grateful for their liberation from Argentine occupation. They are naturally reluctant to criticize British Government policy, but they are becoming steadily more disturbed at our willingness to see their fish stocks plundered. The Government is under no domestic pressure to act because the British public and media know little of this scandal and have said less. It must speak up.

It would be said if we were to allow the opportunities for a profitable fishing industry in the Falklands to disappear. It would be unforgivable if we were to allow a fabulously rich marine ecosystem to go the way of the whales.

The author is honorary secretary, Falkland Islands Foundation

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FALKLANDS THREAT DROPPED

THE Transport Workers union has dropped threats of industrial action in support of members working on the £215 million Port Stanley airport project in the Falklands.

A six-page dossier containing allegations of atrocious kitchen hygiene, no toilet facilities, no protective clothing and cramped sleeping accommodation had been compiled by 26 men who returned to Britain at their own expense.

Mr John Parr-Burman, contract director with Laing Mowlem Amey Roadstone, inspected conditions on a recent visit to the islands and yesterday saw TGWU national officer Mr George Henderson in London.

He said that in November it was not always possible to give personnel "ideal conditions." There had been "some hardship" at times. Now the 476 men in the Falklands were "well fed and reasonably housed although living conditions are rather cramped."

The workforce will be built up to 1,500 in July and August. By then a permanent camp should have been established with gymnasiums, squash courts and possibly a swimming pool.

Mr Henderson said: "I am accepting what John Parr-Burman says. He has just come back from the Falklands. He says things are improving all the time. I must accept that."

Argentine Cabinet fails to agree Falklands stance

BY JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES

INTENSIVE consultations by President Raul Alfonsin all week with his closest cabinet colleagues have failed to produce a consensus on moves to break the deadlock with Britain over the Falklands.

As a result, President Alfonsin has put back plans for a major policy statement setting out Argentina's terms for a renewal of dialogue with Britain. The statement was originally due a week ago yesterday but reportedly cancelled because of the death of Soviet leader Mr Yuri Andropov. A series of leaks from senior officials in Buenos Aires said the statement would be made this past week.

The officials went so far as to indicate some of the points President Alfonsin would make. These included the dropping by the Argentine Government of insistence on the issue of sovereignty over the islands being an integral part of initial conversations.

Two main elements appear to be holding up the policy statement.

Some members of the cabinet are arguing that Argentina cannot be seen to be making major concession to Britain, especially on sovereignty. This, they maintain, would have serious repercussions on the standing of the two and a-half

Argentina has formally asked its bank creditors to wait until April 16 for payment of \$350m (£250m) due on a \$1.1bn bridging loan arranged last year. The payment should have been made on Wednesday, writes Peter Montagnon. The request was made in a telex to bank creditors from Sr Bernardo Grinspun, Economy Minister. He said Argentina needed more time for discussions with the International Monetary Fund and the committee of leading banks, chaired by Citibank.

month old democratic government.

At the same time, efforts to re-establish diplomatic and commercial relations with Britain are being considered parallel with highly sensitive negotiations with Chile over the disputed Beagle Channel.

Even if President Alfonsin does not now go public, he nevertheless will have to reply to British proposals for a resumption of commercial and diplomatic relations submitted more than two weeks ago through the Swiss. These proposals were yesterday reproduced in the press in Buenos Aires.

Can love save Argentina?

from

AMIT ROY

IN BUENOS AIRES



DR RAUL Alfonsín is clearly the most significant figure to have emerged on the international stage since he took over as Argentina's President on December 10 last year.

There is about his administration sufficient dash, style and openness to stir memories of the youthful President Kennedy.

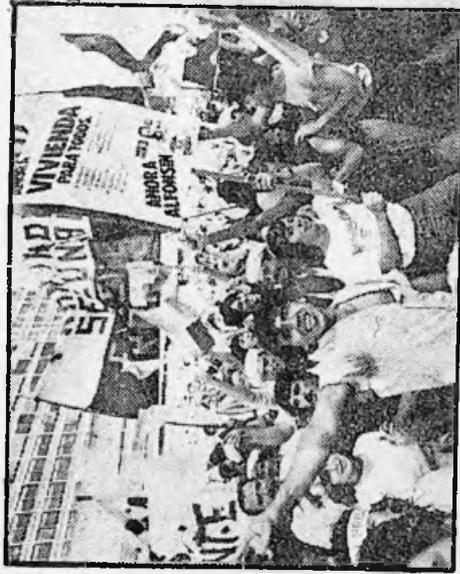
After the dark days of the Falklands war Argentina is suddenly a place of reason again.

Under Argentina's constitution he has only one six-year term of office. But in a country where the military took power in 1930, 1943, 1955, 1962, 1966 and 1976 the theory of probability suggests that, sooner or later, the military will be back.

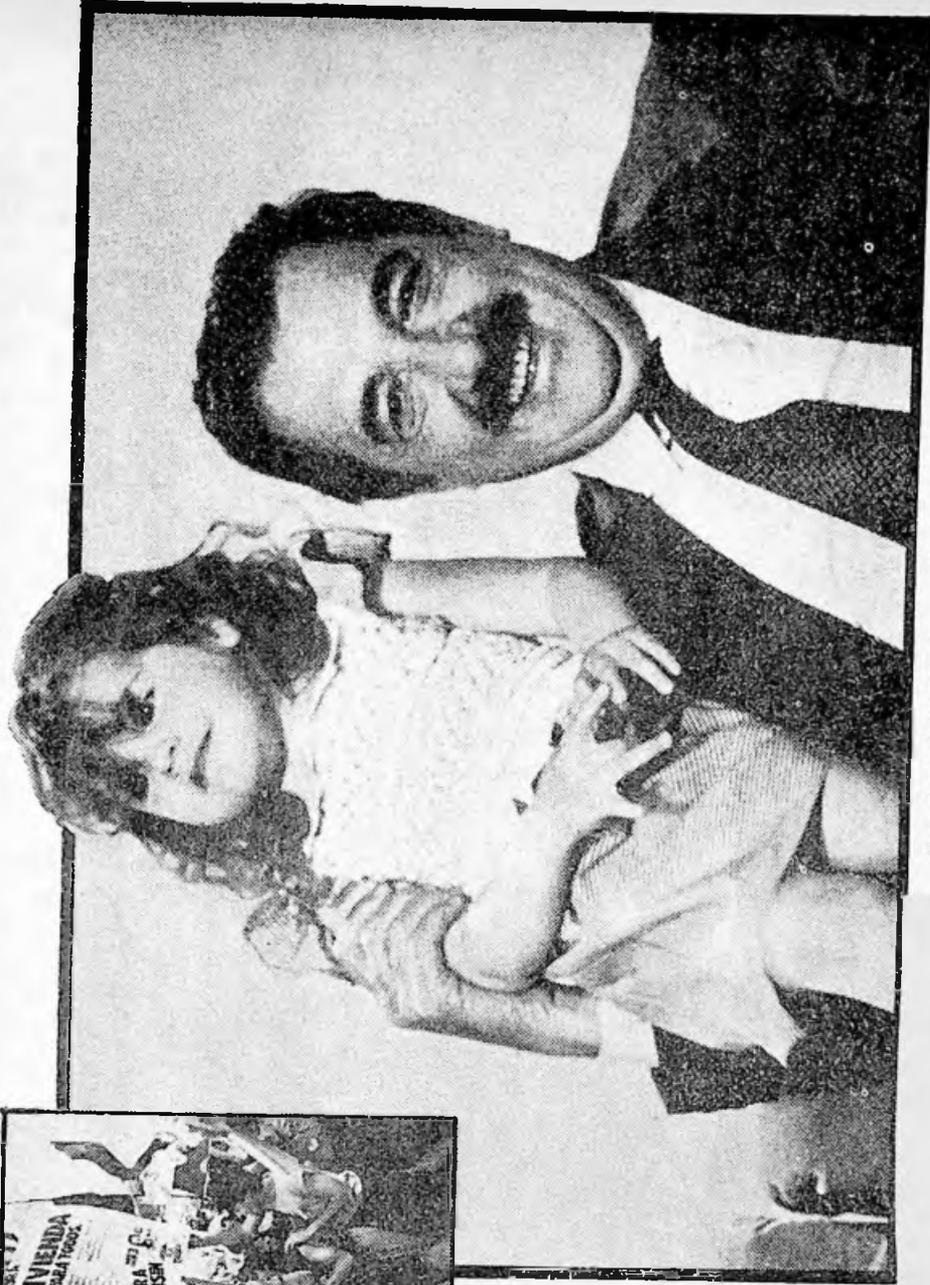
However, just how much the country has changed is shown by the fact that Argentine newspapers are able to joke openly about the return to democracy.

For example, in one cartoon, Venezuela's new President, Jaime Lusinchi, welcomes Dr Alfonsín on a visit to Caracas with the remark: 'After so many years under military dictatorship it is a bit difficult for us to get used to the idea that your country now has a democracy government. It is a real pleasure to have you here . . . General Alfonsín.'

Britain has to make a sound assessment of the stability of his Government if it is to start serious negotiations over the Falklands.



Cheers for the new hero . . .



. . . President Alfonsín, the gentle democrat, with his granddaughter

Behind the
man who is
changing
the world's
image of
his country



WORLD EXCLUSIVE: President Alfonsín reveals that secret diplomacy over the Falklands is beginning to work

ARGENTINA READY TO TALK PEACE



From AMIT ROY
Daily Mail Reporter:
Buenos Aires,
Friday

IN an exclusive interview, President Raul Alfonsín of Argentina revealed to me today that he has accepted British proposals over the Falkland Islands as a basis to begin discussions.

He said he would outline the situation to the Argentine people next week and he hoped talks between the two countries could begin after that.

On the seemingly intractable question of sovereignty, he reiterated that Argentina would not renounce it in any way but added: 'We would like to start our discussions with an open agenda.'

Generous

In this significant remark President Alfonsín seemed to clear away the preconditions that have so far held up talks to open the way for the fairly swift resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Previously, Britain has been insisting that Argentina must declare an end to hostilities before talks begin and Argentina has said it would not talk until Britain removed the exclusion zone from around the Falklands. We spoke in his office in the Casa Rosada, the Presidential Palace in Buenos Aires. He was relaxed and frank. He came across as a



'Willing to explore any path' — Argentina's Alfonsín
'Let's start discussions with an open agenda. Let's get back to where we were before the war'

warm and generous man with an infectious sense of humour.

Talking of his hoped-for negotiations with Mrs Thatcher, he said: 'Although it is not convenient to say this too much in Argentina at the moment, I am myself of British descent: Spanish on one side, British on the other.'

He paused for a moment and, perhaps thinking of Mr Kinnock, grinned and added: 'But there's no Welsh.'

Then, referring to British diplomatic proposals made through Swiss emissaries, he said: 'We have accepted the points that

Great Britain would like to discuss and have added other points which we would like to discuss.

'We would be willing to explore any possible path towards the solution we are looking for. But, in any case, our solution for our problems is a peaceful one.'

I asked why President Alfonsín did not make a gesture by declaring a formal ceasefire. 'We are absolutely at peace,' he replied. 'There wasn't a declaration of war. I don't believe it is necessary to declare a ceasefire. The fact of starting conversations is a clear

Turn to Page 2, Col. 1

Dateline Buenos Aires: President Alfonsin's hopes

'I have to tell the Argentines,

Continued from Page One

sign of this.
Negotiations would be difficult, he conceded, given all that had gone before and the fact that neither side would budge on sovereignty.

'But we have, both of us, to understand what is possible. I do really believe that it is possible for both countries to return to the former situation, the situation that existed before the war.'

'I believe this is a path that it is possible for both countries to follow. If there was any mistrust, then the United Nations could act as a go-between.'

I understand that the so-far unrevealed British proposals include restoration of economic, commercial and cultural links, resuming flights between London and Buenos Aires, return of Argentine war dead or a visit to the Falklands by their relatives, and an upgrading of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The Argentines announced today that their formal reply had been sent to Britain, via the Brazilian Embassy in London.

The war and democracy

President Alfonsin told me: 'We have added one or two points of our own. For us it is fundamental to end the exclusion zone and the fortification of the islands which is a great problem for the South Atlantic.'

His mood was that of a man who understood all the difficulties but realised that the first step was to return the situation between Britain and the Argentine back to where it was before the war.

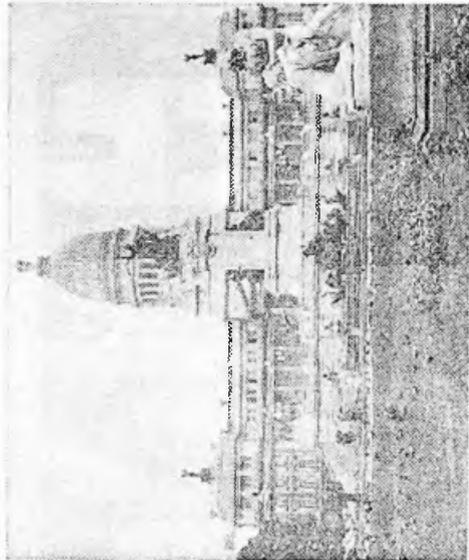
He discussed a point I put to him that, in one sense, the war had been instrumental in bringing democracy back to Argentina.

'Even before the war, the Argentine people had already shown their firm desire to return to democracy. Some big demonstrations had already taken



Mrs Thatcher: New links?

'IT IS
HARD TO
ARGUE
WITH
A
WOMAN'



The Casa Rosada, Alfonsin's Presidential Palace

place and we (in the Radical Party) travelled all over the country and noted more and more a desire for democracy. Undoubtedly, the Malvinas War brought all this to a head.

Aprpos of that, he made the point that one of the things he was very anxious to do was to reduce the Argentine military budget. Returning to a pre-conflict situation between Britain and Argentina would enable him to do that.

'It is very important,' he said. He is Commander-in-Chief of the Argentine Forces and I asked him what was the state of morale in the military now that so many senior officers were facing trial.

'They are disorientated but I believe that, for the prestige of the armed forces, it is necessary to uphold Argentine institutions, so we are not going to liquidate our forces. Merely change them, I suggested.

He nodded and said he would travel to barracks to talk to young soldiers.

'I would talk to them about what democracy signifies for our country and what we can do together.'

What were the chances of democracy taking firm root in Argentina?

'I am convinced we will take the right path to democracy. But at the same time, after so many years of frustration, our society is still sick.'

The images of destruction

'However, our institutions will function and improve all the time. But democracy has to function inside each one of us.'

Regarding talks, I wondered how he felt about meeting Mrs Thatcher face to face.

He had recently made a jocular reference to the problem of negotiating with a woman Prime Minister—the problem is that Mrs Thatcher is a woman and it is hard to argue with people.

women, I would rather speak with Mr Thatcher.

The 57-year-old President's shoulders shook with laughter. 'I thought some maco groups might be displeased (if he talked with Mrs Thatcher) but it is the feminists who have been annoyed.'

Then his mood became serious. He talked of the casualties on both sides. The images of death and destruction shown nightly on TV screens. The wounded coming home.

He accepted what all of this meant for Britain. And, as if directly addressing the British people, he said sadly: 'I would like to remind them that we too had ships sunk, widows, and much blood spilt in the episode we lament.'

President Alfonsin remained sombre. There were many problems, he said. They had to be solved.

It was a great responsibility and a strange feeling to be a democratically elected President, but he was determined not to fail the people.

CONTINUING AMIT ROYS EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

THE SCOTSMAN

No. 43,854

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1984

★ ★ ★

Sir Rex Hunt, the Civil Commissioner of the Falkland Islands, is engaged in a battle with Whitehall officials over his future — which could have a crucial impact on peace talks with Argentina.

Sir Rex (57) is believed to be resisting retirement in the spring and his determination to stay has convinced some key officials that he intends to fight strongly against any quick normalisation of relations with Argentina.

The dispute, which has been carefully shielded from the public eye, is said by some of those

closely involved in preparing the ground for talks to be a major problem, principally because Mrs Thatcher's Government will find it difficult to be seen to be removing Sir Rex against his will.

He has been in the Falklands for five years, which is regarded in Foreign Office circles as a sufficient span. Sir Rex became Civil Commissioner instead of Governor after the Falklands war, a change he is reliably said to have resented.

According to informed observers, he is digging in his heels and refusing to give way to a successor appointed by the

By JAMES NAUGHTIE, Our Chief Political Correspondent

Foreign Office who, he suspects, would be more accommodating to talks with President Alfonsin and the Argentine Government.

A public row on the matter would be intensely embarrassing to the Government, and particularly to Mrs Thatcher, who is sensitive to charges that by considering the normalisation of relations she is somehow "selling out" the interests of the Falklanders. Sir Rex speaks as a representative for both the Executive Council and the Legislative Council of Islanders.

President Alfonsin's proposals offer guarantees about the islanders' way of life and seem to pave the way for a fudging of the key issue of sovereignty allowing normalisation talks to proceed.

Though Mrs Thatcher and key Ministers are insistent about an early statement from Buenos Aires ending hostilities, they are also aware of the importance of President Alfonsin's move — and the benefits for both sides of offering something in return. The Government, however, believe they must be seen to

move cautiously towards an accommodation with the Argentinians, not least because of pressure from some Conservative back-benchers.

The role of Sir Rex is crucial. Given the difficulty for Mrs Thatcher of modifying her stance on sovereignty — an issue which may well be set aside for a time while negotiations on lesser matters are allowed to proceed to encourage a friendly atmosphere — she will not want a last-ditch stand by the islanders' leaders against any diplomatic moves.

It is because of fears that Sir

Rex might fulfil the role of defender of the islanders against Whitehall that his position is causing concern. Government officials, however, are refusing to comment publicly on the position.

President Alfonsin's proposals are still being studied in the Foreign Office and Downing Street, and the indications are that a response is still a little time away. Mrs Thatcher does not want to be seeming to rush into negotiations, and yet she is being advised that the democratically elected Government in Buenos Aires need some signals of goodwill to help strengthen their position.

Hunt seen as obstacle to Falklands deal

Daily Mail
21.2.84

Message of hope

IN HIS exclusive interview with our reporter, President Alfonsin of Argentina made it clear that he wishes to return as soon as possible to the situation before the Junta's invasion of the Falklands in 1982.

There are two main reasons for optimism.

First, our two democratic Governments are both not only compatible in their outlook but making efforts to explore each other's point of view. It is particularly useful that President Alfonsin is prepared to negotiate with an open agenda.

Second, both sides have strong economic incentives to end the drain which the continuance of the Fortress Falklands situation imposes on each of them.

When goodwill and interest thus coincide it must surely be possible for statesmanship to find the route to an honourable peace.

The Observer
21.2.84

WORDS

EMBUGGERANCE. The word appeared in the *Guardian* of 26 January in John Ezard's article on soaring Falklands expenditure, including the £130,000 prefabs first reported in *The Observer*.

At first I thought it might be one of those lovely *Grauniad* misprints which, rather to my regret, seem to have disappeared. But it occurred twice, once in the plural, so I asked Mr Ezard for its origin. 'Embuggerance,' he replied, 'which I've heard used by Royal Engineers officers in the Falklands and in London, is, as far as I can make out, a set of circumstances due partly to unavoidable natural problems, partly to human cock-ups. The speaker is responsible for neither, but expects to find himself carrying the can.'

'Example: a tool wears out unexpectedly quickly on Falklands quartzite which, though no one in London realised it, is unusually abrasive. London is asked for a suitable tool, but neglects to order it quickly enough to catch any of the following week's airbridge flights. This puts the job a week behind schedule. Then an inexperienced squaddie misuses the new tool, breaks it, and the whole process starts again. All this constitutes an embuggerance for the officer in charge who has to run around—"like a headless chicken"—trying to remedy things.'

A parallel construction based on another obscenity is 'snafu,' explained in most dictionaries as situation normal all fucked (or fouled) up; the Concise Oxford gives only 'fouled.' It is described as US slang. Perhaps, but in World War Two the British Army had OMFU and IMFU, in which the first two letters respectively were 'ordinary military' (for such situations at subaltern level) and 'imperial military' (general officer level).

John Silverlight

DAILY TELEGRAPH

17.2.84

Falklands divers raise crashed Harrier

By Maj.-Gen. EDWARD FURSDON
Defence Correspondent

RAISING a crashed Harrier from a kelp-infested seabed under 16ft of water is just one vital, but little known, task performed by the Royal Navy and Army divers working in the continuing aftermath of the Falklands campaign.

Despite the extreme hazard of diving among the heavy, thick kelp, local seaweed, in Beartrice Cove, the aircraft's engine was recovered within 24 hours.

Timber legs

It took a further week to bring up the cockpit instruments required to help discover the cause of the crash.

The divers' very varied work, often undertaken in extremely adverse weather and sea conditions, is a key contribution to the Services' commitment to the South Atlantic.

The Army Royal Engineer diving teams' urgent first task

was to repair Port Stanley's jetty which had been subjected to extremely heavy "punishment" both during and after the campaign.

Many of its heavy timber legs and underwater struts had to be replaced.

Other undersea tasks arose at the San Carlos and Goose Green landing points.

They had to reconnoitre the ship-to-shore pipeline at Port William and the groynes needed for the new Coastal troop accommodation barges moored in Port Stanley harbour.

Probably the most difficult and hazardous joint Navy-Army task successfully carried out to date was the recovery from the murky bottom of Stanley Harbour of eight "Haulamatic" lorries which had toppled off an Army unloading raft.

Within 72 hours the combined diving teams had brought up all the lorries and the local R E M E workshops had started repairing them.

McMillan-Scott Associates *Public Affairs*

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DEFENCE

Government moving towards defence expenditure 'plateau'

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

For the first time since the Conservatives came to power in 1979, the Government is moving towards a period in which there will be a negligible real growth in defence spending.

The Government is committed to achieving a Nato target of three per cent growth annually in real terms until March 1986. On present plans, it will have achieved by then a real growth of 19.5 per cent since 1979, if spending on the Falklands is excluded, or 23 per cent if Falklands spending is included.

In the first year after abandonment of the Nato target - 1986-87 - the Government is aiming for a growth in defence spending, excluding the Falklands, of only 4 per cent in cash terms, bringing the figure for that year to £18,660m.

That is predicted to yield an increase of 1 per cent in real spending power, but that assumes that inflation will be running at only about 3 per cent that year.

It is clear that the defence budget could come under severe pressure if inflation is much above that level two years from now.

However, Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, said that the Ministry of Defence had been basing its long-term planning on the assumption that spending would be on a plateau when the Nato growth commitment expired in 1986. There was no question, he said, of it leading to a big reexamination of defence commitment.

"We believe that on the present levels, notwithstanding

the ending of the 3 per cent growth target, we shall be able to accommodate our basic commitments in central Europe, some measure of out-of-area commitment, and our obligations to all three Services".

The White Paper shows that spending on the Falkland Islands, including the cost of building the new airport and of replacing equipment lost in the conflict of 1982, will be running at £684m in 1984-85, £552m in 1985-86, and £450m in 1986-87.

It confirms the previously announced fact that defence spending in the coming financial year will be running at just over £17,000m, which is about

£300 for every man, woman and child in the United Kingdom.

It also shows that reductions in manpower in the Armed Forces of up to 20,000 by 1986, which had been set as a target in June, 1981, will not be achieved. It now looks as though the reduction will be only about half that number, with small increases occurring this year and next.

The ministry, however, aims to reduce the number of its civilian employees from about 200,000 now to 170,000 by April, 1988. More than half that reduction will be achieved through a change of status for the Royal Ordnance Factories.



Laying of the matting that is intended to cover all of Port Stanley airfield.

16.2.84

Argentina's complaint is rejected

By Rodney Cowton,
Defence Correspondent

The Ministry of Defence yesterday rejected Argentine complaints of provocative action RAF aircraft patrolling around the Falkland Islands.

The Argentines have complained to the United Nations' Security Council of incidents on November 5 and December 24 when they say RAF aircraft buzzed Argentine vessels outside the Protection Zone.

A Ministry spokesman said: "We can confirm that we observed Argentine vessels on the two days in question, but we are not prepared to say whether they were inside or outside the protection zone. But we would like to emphasize that we do take some pains not to take any provocative action in cases where we are observing in order to identify ships."

While denying that there was any question of provocation, the spokesman said that very large numbers of vessels were identified as a matter of course, and in broad terms the RAF was free to fly in any area,

● **BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina is about to send Britain new proposals for a settlement of the Falklands dispute, Foreign Ministry sources said yesterday.

They said the ministry was considering a number of options. President Raul Alfonsin would make the final decision.

The sources added that shortly after the new Argentine proposals had been sent to Britain via diplomatic channels, President Alfonsin would address the nation on television to outline his government's policy.

Volunteer of stamp

THE PRESSURE of work at the Port Stanley post office, which I reported last week, could soon be alleviated by the arrival in the Falklands of Max Hull, an enterprising 19-year-old whose application to the Falklands Island Office in London has landed him a job there.

Hull of Ely, Cambridgeshire, is now on his way to Stanley on board the Uganda to take up his new job as postal assistant for the next six months.

His father, Anthony Hull, said yesterday that Max had wanted to do something "interesting and unusual" during his year between leaving school in Ely and going to Durham University to read history.

THE TIMES

16.2.84

Future of Antarctic

From the Chairman of Greenpeace International

Sir, We have followed the emerging debate on the Antarctic in your columns with interest.

The closed nature of the present Antarctic Treaty system presents not only a moral dilemma, but also political and environmental dilemmas which the Antarctic Treaty nations will, sooner or later, have to face up to.

Secrecy breeds distrust, and it is plain that there is a good deal of distrust of the Antarctic Treaty consultative parties from both the international community and the environmental movement.

The main criterion for membership of the "inner sanctum" of the Antarctic Treaty is substantial scientific research in the Antarctic. Is this the best basis for choosing which nations should decide the distribution of economic benefits?

We fear the closed nature of the system leads to bad decisions which are not subject to review.

The recent publicity over the French airstrip project in the Antarctic, which we believe has breached the agreed measures for the protection of Antarctic fauna

and flora, is a case in point. It was only because of the vigilance of a few scientists and environmentalists that the facts of this case were ever made public.

Where economic factors are also involved, such as in the case of mining or drilling for oil, it is even more important that all who feel their interests impinged on can participate.

It is clear that the legitimate concerns of these other participants in the debate cannot be ignored for ever. A means must be found for allowing their voices to be heard.

This could be done, if the will were there, within the context of the existing Antarctic Treaty system, and need not depend on a renegotiation, with uncertain results, in 1991.

History, however, may yet prove that the most sensible decision would have been to leave the Antarctic as it is - a vast, beautiful wilderness, the domain of its wildlife and its scientists.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID McTAGGART, Chairman,
Greenpeace International,
Temple House,
High Street,
Lewes,
East Sussex.
February 14.

Pursuit of the boot

FALKLANDS

By John Ezard

STRATEGIES for solving the Falklands dispute by "blurring" the controversial issue of sovereignty—together with the latest news of the hopeless search for a perfect Army boot—were given to MPs yesterday.

The Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee was told that Argentina and other Latin American nations might accept a settlement which stopped short of putting Argentinian "soldiers and policemen" on the Falklands.

A leading academic expert on the politics of the dispute, Dr Walter Little, of Liverpool University, said in evidence that the solution could include dual Argentine and British nationality for the islanders, international safeguards guaranteed by third-party countries, representation for the Falklands in the Argentine Congress and a treaty between Britain and Argentina.

Falklanders would control immigration and land purchase. Spanish would be taught as a second language to schoolchildren.

Another witness, the journalist and former director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Mr David Watt, said Brazil could be prepared to act as a guarantor for the integrity of the Falklands. And he had been told in Argentina that there would be "no overwhelming difficulties" about accepting the United States in a similar role.

News of the boot was given to the Commons Defence Committee by Colonel Robin Ross, Royal Marines commandant-general. He said that, despite the experience of trench foot and footwear inadequacies during the Falklands campaign, it had still "proved impossible in present technological terms to design a boot that both keeps the water out and allows the foot to breathe."

"My experience of boots has been long and bitter," Colonel Ross said. "If you stand in three feet of water as people did for most of the time in the Falklands campaign, water is going to get in."

A new boot had been designed since the conflict made of better leather and reaching halfway up the calf. "But it would be quite dishonest of me to pretend that it keeps water out."

Falklanders 'may move from fortress policy'

BY HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY

THE Falkland Islands Government representative in London yesterday hinted cautiously that the islanders could re-assess their international position if relations between Britain, Argentina and South America improved.

Mr Adrian Monk, head of the Falkland Islands Government representative office, was giving evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons.

While clinging tightly to the Falklanders' right to self-determination, Mr Monk indicated for the first time that

the islanders could show some willingness to move from their present support for a "Fortress Falklands" policy.

"Naturally, we should welcome a reduction in the scale of the (British) garrison, but for the time being it is the minimum level necessary," he added.

He revealed that the population of the archipelago had gone up since the war for the first time since 1931. The number of inhabitants, around 1,800 two years ago, had risen by 82. Seventy-one Falklanders had returned, which more than

compensated for the emigration of 30 Falklanders and 41 new, first-time permanent residents, unconnected with the British forces and the rehabilitation schemes, had arrived. Of the 41 new residents, 28 were adults.

Four new businesses and the Standard Chartered Bank had opened in the islands, and a woollen mill was being opened. The Wilton fish and chip business had, however, ceased trading.

Some 600 people had expressed an interest in emigrating to the Falklands.

Mr Monk pressed hard for a British decision to declare a 200 mile offshore fishing zone around the islands which, he said, was probably the only way the Falkland Islands Government revenue could be significantly increased in the short to medium term.

Although government revenue in Port Stanley this year was likely to fall short of expenditure—£3.3m against £3.5m—revenue from the sale of coins and stamps had far exceeded expectations.

Stamp revenue was expected to reach £900,000 against estimates of £400,000, and coin revenue £315,000 against estimates of £100,000.

Mr Monk was bitingly critical of the "sluggish and ponderous" attitudes of the Overseas Development Administration in dealing with British assistance to the islands. The Administration had still not approved the statutes of the Falkland Islands Development Corporation, which was supposed to be attracting private investment to the islands.

Daily Mail
16th February 1984

Animal wounding tests 'saved Falklands lives'

WOUND tests on live animals saved lives in the Falklands and Northern Ireland, the Defence Department said yesterday.

Defence Minister Geoffrey Pattie said he could understand people's concern and he wanted the reasons for the tests understood.

In the Falklands 'we suffered more than 350 injuries affecting damage to tissue.' There was no doubt that Porton Down research helped the Army medical teams dealing with the wounded.

Mr Pattie added: 'We have

Daily Mail Reporter

to ask ourselves the fundamental question of how highly do we value the lives and the health and well-being of these young men, soldiers, and indeed civilians in Northern Ireland, who have similarly benefited from work of this sort.'

Mr Pattie would not reveal what weapons or ammunition were used, but the animals were extensively anaesthetised.

Details of animals used in CS gas experiments given

yesterday showed that between 1974 and 1977, 810 rabbits, rats, mice and guinea pigs died or were killed soon afterwards. The experiments then ceased.

Main areas at present for the Porton experiments cover the testing of new bullets and bullet-proof jackets, chemical warfare tests and the treatment of head wounds.

The Institution of Professional Civil Servants, the union representing scientists who carry out the tests, said: 'Our members are not barbarians. Nobody carries out these experiments unless they feel they have to.'

Argentina hints at Falklands flexibility

By CRISTINA BONASEGNA in Buenos Aires

ARGENTINA'S response to a British proposal to resume talks about the Falklands would state willingness to be flexible, Foreign Ministry sources said in Buenos Aires yesterday.

In this sense, President Alfonsín might announce readiness to drop insistence that the sovereignty issue be clarified as a pre-condition.

This readiness, repeatedly stated by the Foreign Minister, Señor Dante Caputo, in the past two weeks, did not mean Argentina would give up sovereignty claims and calls for negotiations within the framework of United Nations resolutions.

A Government source quoted yesterday by the independent news agency NA (Argentine News) called the British proposal "interesting" and suggested there would be a positive and "constructive" response.

A Presidential spokesman said that a nationwide address by Señor Alfonsín might be broadcast as early as tonight, if the Foreign Ministry had concluded by then a report on what Argentina was to reply concerning the Falklands.

Economic relations

The British proposal, submitted to Argentina through the Swiss Embassy there, was said to concentrate mostly on a resumption of economic relations and a return of the bodies of Argentine Servicemen killed during the Falklands fighting.

Government sources quoted by NA said the proposal also

included a possible Falklands visit by relatives of Argentine soldiers, resumption of London-Buenos Aires flights, scientific and cultural ties, and diplomatic relations.

Argentina has complained to the United Nations Security Council of "fresh provocations" by British planes against Argentine fishing boats said to be operating outside the 150-mile "exclusion zone" around the Falklands. These are said to have occurred on Nov. 5 and Dec. 24.

NO NOTIFICATION F.O. comment

OUR DIPLOMATIC STAFF writes: The Foreign Office said that Britain had not received any formal notification that Argentina would be ready to drop insistence on discussing sovereignty. If that were so, Britain would of course welcome the development.

British forces made regular patrols along the 150-mile protection zone, which could be entered by Argentine ships and planes only with permission.

Galtieri gives evidence

By Our Correspondent
in Buenos Aires

FORMER President Galtieri and five other ex-junta members gave evidence on Monday at an Argentine court-martial investigating their responsibility for violations of human rights.

President Galtieri ruled Argentina during the 1982 Falklands war with Britain. Those giving evidence on Monday also included former President Roberto Viola, Adm. Jorge Anaya, and Brig. Basilio Lami Dozo.

President Alfonsín, who took office on Dec. 10, recently put at more than 10,000 the number of people who "disappeared" during the Armed Forces' drive against Left-wing terrorism in Argentina in the mid and late 1970s.

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces is also court-martialing Argentina's military leaders during the Falklands conflict, including Galtieri, for alleged mishandling of the war.

Under a recently-passed law reforming the military code of justice, rulings by military courts must be reviewed by civilian courts.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

15.2.84

Argentina complains about RAF 'buzzing'

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

While President Alfonsín put off an expected speech on the Falklands for the second time in less than a week, the Argentine Foreign Ministry revealed that it has presented a new complaint to the United Nations, accusing British aircraft of harassing its fishing fleet in the South Atlantic.

Argentine claims that the aircraft overflew fishing boats on two occasions last November and December while the boats were outside the British exclusion zone round the islands.

The representative at the UN, Señor Carlos Muniz, said the incidents were "new acts of provocation by British aircraft" against civilian fishing boats.

In a working paper presented to the Security Council, he said a four-engined RAF plane on November 5 made two passes over the Argentine-registered API-VI trawler, and that, on December 24, two RAF Phantom fighters buzzed the Atilio Malvagni from about 300ft.

Señor Muniz said the ships were "outside the zone of protection imposed by Britain, which Argentina does not recognize".

THE TIMES

15.2.84

Meanwhile, President Alfonsín's nationwide address on the Falklands once again failed to materialize. On Monday, Argentine newspapers headlined the news that he would deliver a policy speech that night, but a presidential spokesman quickly denied the reports and said the speech might come "later in the week".

Foreign Ministry sources said there had been no delays and no firm date had ever been set, while others said the Foreign Ministry was putting the finishing touches on a new study of the Falklands question.

It appears likely that Mr Alfonsín will present the speech either tonight or tomorrow, and that it will contain what one source said would be constructive ideas for getting Britain back to the negotiating table.

The press here printed what they described as a leak from a top government source, saying that Britain's seven-point proposal for renewing economic relations was seen as interesting.

A top diplomat has extended a virtual invitation to Labour MP's who oppose Mrs Margaret Thatcher's policies on the Falklands to come to Argentina to express their views.

Señor Hipólito Solari Yrigoyen, a special ambassador at large appointed by President Alfonsín, was quoted by a local news agency as saying: "It is very important that personalities, especially if they are from the colonialist country, come to learn the point of view that supports Argentina's claim".

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Concern at Falkland land costs

By Rodney Cowton

There is concern in the Falkland Islands about the impact of the workforce which is building a £215m airfield about 25 miles from Port Stanley, and about rising land prices.

The Government is believed to be paying £25 to £30 an acre for several thousand acres of land for the airport and adjoining areas. Although such rates are extremely low by British standards, they are very high for the Falklands.

There is no well-established price at present, but in the last few years a number of small farms have been carved out of the huge ranches which dominate the islands. For these smallish units, the price tends to be related to the number of sheep the land will support, and a farm and its stock typically works out at about £17 per

sheep. At the rate of about one sheep to four acres that values the land at between £4 and £5 an acre.

Last year there was criticism of a scheme put forward by the Falkland Islands Company which offered 50 acre lots by the proposed road from Stanley to the new airport at £20 an acre. Many of the islanders regarded this as very expensive.

There are at present about 500 workers on the site, but this is expected to rise to 1,400 by the middle of the year. There is considerable apprehension in Stanley, which has a population of 900, about the social impact if large numbers of these men descended on the town's limited facilities looking for recreation.

There are already signs of unhappiness among the site workers. A group of them returned to Britain last week,

complaining of poor food, bad living conditions, and rat and mouse infestation. Such complaints differ from those I heard in the last three weeks on the site and in Port Stanley. On the whole the food was praised, and I heard no mention of infestation. But there are serious complaints of overcrowding, with eight men to a Portakabin, sleeping in two tier bunks.

They also complain that recreation facilities on the site, apart from bars, are limited to two small rooms for viewing video films, say they are unable to get away from the site.

The men are also concerned about overtime payments. Most of them are receiving between £10,000 and £13,000 tax free for a one-year contract on the basis of working 60 hours a week, with an additional bonus at the end of their contract.

DAILY
TELEGRAPH
14.2.84

Flimsy case

From Lord MONSON

SIR—Mr Maurice Petherick's call (Jan. 27) for a robust restatement of the British case over the Falklands, and for an exposure of the flimsiness and absurdity of the Argentine claim, was timely indeed.

It is extraordinary that so many of the people who rightly condemned in the strongest possible terms Nazi Germany's territorial claims upon Czechoslovakia in the mid-1930s are passive or even sympathetic towards Argentina's territorial claims upon the Falklands today. For if Germany's case was flimsy, Argentina's case is at least 20 times flimsier—historically, geographically, ethnically, and culturally. One had hoped that the "Britain is always wrong" syndrome was a transient phenomenon of the 1960s, but it seems otherwise.

MONSON
House of Lords.

FINANCIAL
TIMES
14.2.84

Alfonsin may ease stance on Falklands talks

BY JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES

ARGENTINA is prepared to drop its insistence that the issue of sovereignty must form part of an initial round of conversations with Britain over the future of the Falklands.

This concession to break the diplomatic deadlock is expected to be made public this week when President Raul Alfonsin broadcasts to the nation. The broadcast was planned for the end of last week but was postponed because of the death of the Soviet leader.

When he attended the inauguration of Venezuela's President, Sr Jaime Lusinchi, in Caracas earlier this month, President Alfonsin proposed that the United Nations should act as an intermediary to establish a dialogue and as possible guarantor of security in the Falklands by sending troops there.

Sr Alfonsin's forthcoming message is likely to be more conciliatory. He is expected to drop conditions that the first round of conversations with

Britain, as opposed to negotiations, should be in accordance with United Nations resolutions approved in 1965 and 1982. These urged both nations to negotiate their dispute over the islands and Britain has refused to be bound by these resolutions.

Officials in Buenos Aires indicated yesterday that Sr Alfonsin's remarks in Caracas were a spontaneous personal initiative aimed at demonstrating his Government's commitment to non-belligerence and did not represent the final word on the dispute.

The proposals were rejected by the British Government. A statement from Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, said that Britain preferred to deal through established channels of Switzerland and Brazil which are looking after the UK's and Argentina's interest. Britain also said that it was still waiting a reply to specific proposals put forward

for the normalisation of relations.

Sr Alfonsin's forthcoming statement is understood to be the fruit of more than a week's consultations by the President with advisers and Foreign Ministry officials. It will seek to answer the proposals put forward by Britain through the Swiss.

Argentine insistence on including sovereignty at the earliest stage of conversations has been a major stumbling block. Nevertheless Argentina is still insisting that it will only put a formal end to the state of hostilities and re-establish normal commercial and diplomatic ties with Britain as part of a more wide-ranging agreement between the two sides.

That should include the lifting by Britain of its 150-mile protection zone round the Falklands, a halt to their military fortification and an understanding that Argentina's claim to the islands would be considered at a later stage.

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ANNA'S FALKLAND SOUND

GLOBE-TROTTER singer Anna Jolley, 25, feeds the ducks on the Thames near her home at Kingston, Surrey. Anna has recently returned from doing cabaret in India but she is already making plans to leave next month on a tour of the Falklands, Cyprus, and Northern Ireland to entertain the troops. When she has time Anna is a keen horsewoman and hunts with the Quorn in Leicestershire, where her family live.

The happy eater

ON RAF flights to the Falklands, VIPs like Mrs Thatcher and Michael Heseltine are offered oriental delicacies prepared by Flight Engineer Andy Mumlandi—star treatment refused, however, by Baroness Young, who, on her recent trip to the islands, insisted on having the same plain fare as the servicemen. Says Mr Mumlandi: "Lady

Young did not want to be pampered in any way. She wanted the same longlife food, chicken paste sandwiches and potato salad as the ordinary passengers.

"Mr Heseltine, however, enjoys everything. He has the VIP food and eats everything. He has a good appetite all right."

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Futile Fortress Falklands

Richard West

The news from the Falkland Islands must be the worst since Argentina invaded two years ago. First we are given reports that in spite of Argentina having elected a democratic and civilised President, Britain will not so much as discuss the future sovereignty of the islands. As if to rub in this point, the Falklands were recently visited by our demagogic Minister of Defence, Mr Michael Heseltine, who was photographed looking at graves and guns and penguins. And now we are told by the BBC's Christopher Wain, who accompanied Mr Heseltine, that the Fortress Falklands policy costs £740,000 a day out of the taxpayer's money. Is it not time to discuss if it is really in Britain's interest to defend these remote islands the other side of the world against a country that used to be one of our few friends in the world?

Since I was one of those journalists who refrained from giving his views on the Falkland two years ago, perhaps I should say where I stand. I have a slight acquaint-

ance with Argentina; slight but probably greater than some of the politicians and pundits who talk about it. I have always supported Argentina's claim to the Falkland Islands (and Spain's to Gibraltar). I was horrified by the criminal negligence of the Government at breaking off the discussions on sovereignty and then getting boxed in a corner by the surprise invasion. Once the Falklands had been invaded, we were obliged to take them back by force. Like most people, I was delighted that this was achieved at quite small loss of life. Once this had been achieved, I hoped that Mrs Thatcher would have the sense to make sure that we never again allowed ourselves to get in such a mess. Military victory gave us the chance to get out with honour from the Falklands and other embarrassing heritages of our former naval power. We could then give proper defence to those places and people to which we are bound by interest or duty.

There is no point in repeating the arguments about whether the Falklands belong by right to Britain or Argentina. The point is that they matter to Argentina, not to us. To see why, one only has to look at the map. The Falklands were never important to us even when we had an empire, since they did not involve our major sea routes. The settlers were employees of a private company. If we now hope to make the Falklands the justification for oil exploration around the South Atlantic, we must consider the precedent this would give for other powers to bid for own reserves off the British Isles. Of all the claims threatening 'oil wars', ours to the Falklands would be the most outrageous.

The Falklands war was a throwback to some of the most disreputable eras of British foreign policy. At the height of the

crisis two years ago, the BBC showed one of those old Hollywood movies of derring-do on the Spanish Main in which Errol Flynn singed the King of Spain's beard, saved prisoners from the Inquisition and brought home countless pieces of eight to the first Elizabeth (Bette Davis). In the early 19th century Britain once more looked towards Spanish America to recoup for the loss of trade and influence in the United States. The loud-mouthed Canning claimed he had 'called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the old'; he encouraged revolutions against Madrid and adopted a bullying attitude towards some of the new republics. We fought and lost a small campaign against Argentina. Fortunately, the sage Duke of Wellington disapproved of these South American ventures because, he argued, it was not England's business to stir up revolt abroad. From then until the present day, our relationship with South America has been, on the whole, cordial. Many British emigrated to Chile and still more to Argentina.

The Fortress Falklands policy is not simply useless but it distracts men, money and vigilance from the real threats to this country. These come from the Soviet Union and from internal terrorists, such as the IRA in Northern Ireland. I do not hold with

right-wing conspiracy theories of how Britain's enemies have taken over the unions, the Labour Party, the BBC and so on, but one ought not to ignore the damage done in, for instance, Argentina, where urban terrorists drove the country into the hands of the army. In spite of her tough talk, Mrs Thatcher seems little aware of the danger of this internal terrorist war. She will not even discuss the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands but she is only too ready to talk about the future sovereignty of Northern Ireland, thus giving hope and encouragement to the violent enemies of this country.

The commitment to Fortress Falklands has meant that Britain now cannot or will not meet its real obligations in the Americas, to countries in and around the Caribbean. While pledging ourselves to defend 2,000 white settlers or the descendants of settlers, we have welshed on our moral duty to help the descendants of Africans whom we brought in chains to slave on the sugar plantations. Because the West Indies had long since lost their value (because of beet sugar and other factors), the British during the last 30 years pushed these colonies into an independence that none of them are capable of enjoying and some did not want. With a few exceptions, such as Barbados, most of these former British countries have gone into bankruptcy, despotism or anarchy. Hundreds of thousands of English-speaking West Indians have emigrated, mostly to Canada and the United States. We forced independence upon Grenada under a right-wing dictator who kept his political prisoners in the old fortress, literally under the feet of the guests at the independence ceremony (see Max Hastings's article, *Spectator*, 29 October 1983). Later Grenada fell to a left-wing dictatorship, which called for help on the Soviet Union and its surrogate, Cuba. Britain ignored the reports of massacres and atrocities and left it to the United States and neighbouring Caribbean countries to set the Grenadians free by military intervention. Reporters who went there later told of the disappointment and bitterness felt towards what the Grenadians

ing expenditure on civil bureaucracy and the social services, had spent the money saved, and more, on armaments. Argentina spent it on ships and Exocet missiles and other toys in order to win back the Falklands. The obsession with the Falklands that was to bring down Galtieri may, in the end, help to bring down Mrs Thatcher.

But does not the 'Falklands Spirit' justify our retaining the islands? Nobody could deny the sense of excitement and purpose that swept this country two years ago, nor the pride we felt in the exploits of our armed forces. Our soldiers, sailors and airmen had rescued Mrs Thatcher from the consequences of her own folly and negligence. Had she been a statesman instead of a politician, she might have used the occasion to prevent another disaster by showing generosity to the defeated enemy and coming to an agreement on the Falkland Islands. She had another opportunity last year when the Argentinians elected a decent and honest man as their president. But Mrs

Thatcher's instincts are to crow over her vanquished enemies. The aftermath of the Falklands war saw an unseemly and boastful series of victory parades, out of all proportion to what had been little more than a skirmish.

The submarine that sank the *Belgrano* came back to Britain flying the skull-and-crossbones, to celebrate its 'kill'. It was then, in 1982, that I thought most painfully of that passage in Orwell's *1984*, when Winston Smith writes in his diary:

'Last night to the flicks. All war films. One very good one of a ship full of refugees being bombed somewhere in the Mediterranean. Audience much amused by shots of a great huge fat man trying to swim away with a helicopter after him...'. A few pages later in *1984*, we read how 'The music from the telescreen had stopped. Instead, a clipped military voice was reading out, with a sort of brutal relish, a description of the armaments of the new Floating Fortress which had just anchored between Iceland and the Faroe Islands.'

still regard as the 'mother country'.

Britain has a still more powerful obligation towards Belize, a country of 150,000 people, mostly of African descent, on a stretch of the central American isthmus also claimed by Guatemala. So far, the presence of British troops has preserved the freedom of Belize from the threat of a right-wing negrophobe military state. However, it was reported from Washington last autumn that Mrs Thatcher intends to withdraw these British troops from Belize because our armed forces are overstretched by the Fortress Falklands policy.

Again, the commitment to the Falkland Islands distracts attention from our obligations to Africa. We refuse to allow 2,000 British settlers to come under the rule of Argentina, a country where scores of thousands of British people have lived for a century, but we forced 200,000 British settlers to come under the government of Robert Mugabe. Perhaps this was inevitable; but it makes a mockery of our claim that our Fortress Falklands policy is intended solely to let these people of British descent live under democratic government. We have abandoned former colonial subjects in countries like Nigeria and Uganda, to civil war, bankruptcy and foreign intervention.

Our Fortress Falklands policy stands in shameful contrast to France's policy to its former empire. France has kept some of the former possessions, like Martinique in the Caribbean, Réunion in the Indian Ocean and New Caledonia in the Pacific, where the people want to maintain this link, and where the islands are not claimed by another power. France has a continuing economic and military presence in former African colonies, most of which value and benefit from the connection. France has sent troops to fight in Chad against the invasion from Libya. Having learned from the errors of Vietnam and Algeria, France now understands that her obligations lie not to the white settlers, or *colons*, but to the colonised (or former enslaved) people, struggling to govern themselves.

The cost of our Fortress Falklands policy will be met, like all the extravagances of the Thatcher regime, from North Sea oil. But oil cannot run for ever. Perhaps Mrs Thatcher should take a look at what happened in Argentina. This was a country bankrupted and driven almost to civil war by a megalomaniac trade union movement, supported by and supporting a vast bureaucracy. The middle classes turned either to some kind of fascism or communism. When the right wing of the army took power (setting up its notorious torture chambers) it tried to reform the economy and politics of the country on monetarist principles. A disciple of Milton Friedman was appointed to sweep away all state subsidies and intervention. Yet in Argentina, as in Chile and Uruguay, which also had right-wing, Friedmanite military governments, economic chaos persisted. Inflation continued to soar. The reason was that the military men in the government, while cut-

GUARDIAN

10.2.84

Falklands workers 'disgusted'

By Patrick Wintour,
Labour Staff

Construction workers are returning from the Falkland Islands airport project at their own cost, disgusted with their working conditions on the project. Mr George Henderson, the Transport and General Workers Union building group national secretary, claimed yesterday.

Mr Henderson said that about 28 men had returned last weekend, complaining to their union that they had been treated by the management of the airport project consortium "worse than dogs". A six-page dossier of complaints has been drawn up which will be put to the consortium of Laing, Mowlem, Amey Roadstone next week.

The consortium said yesterday that it had told Mr Henderson that it will not be able to investigate the allegations until one of its senior officials, Mr John Parr-Burmarn, returns from the Falklands.

The men complained of "terrible hygiene, poor water, atrocious food, doggy bag lunches, dangerous and unventilated transport to the work site, and cramped living conditions." The merchant ship Providence, designed for 50 people, had been used to feed 400, they said, and at Mount Pleasant there were no toilet facilities.

Island mail tests the pilots

From Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent
Port Stanley

The Royal Air Force has to do some fancy low-level flying in difficult conditions these days to deliver the mail to Captain Marius Coulson, Lord High Everything in the Falkland Islands dependency of South Georgia.

Apart from being a captain in the 2nd Battalion, the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, and officer commanding the small Army garrison in South Georgia, Captain Coulson is also the resident civil official, magistrate, postmaster, special constable, assistant Queen's harbourmaster and deputy collector of customs.

He is thus the very embodiment of civil and military authority in the island. These high offices were conferred on him in December as he and a detachment from his battalion were setting out for a four-month garrison duty in South Georgia, which was occupied by the Argentines for 22 days during the conflict in 1982.

His assumption of the roles was designed formally to reestablish a civil administration in the island which had been under military control since its recapture from the Argentines in April, 1982.

The delivery of mail to Captain Coulson and his men is part of a 1,600-mile round trip to South Georgia that an RAF



Captain Coulson: South Georgia's Lord High Everything.

Hercules transport aircraft makes about twice a month from the Falkland Islands.

It is part of a process of policing the British territories in the South Atlantic, because, apart from delivering the mail, the Hercules also checks various places in case there have been unauthorized landings such as occurred before the conflict with Argentina.

There is no airfield in South Georgia so the mail has to be dropped by parachute in the sea as close inshore as possible, at Gritvyken.

That calls for highly skilled flying. Ideally, the Hercules should approach at 250 ft above sea level and drop the parachutes at a speed of 125 mph. If the speed is much greater the parachute is liable

to be torn to shreds; if it is much lower the aircraft is in danger of stalling.

The flying is greatly complicated by the fact that Gritvyken is hemmed in by rising ground, with a 7,000 ft peak only about seven miles ahead as the aircraft makes its approach.

The approach starts with a dummy run to access the strength of the air currents from the mountains and the turbulence they produce. On a recent trip the Hercules lurched so violently that the pilot, Squadron Leader Ron Wright, aged 47, could not make the parachute drop possible close inshore.

Instead he had to radio for the men below to take their boats further out where the air was less turbulent, and there the drop was accomplished.

Although the weather around Gritvyken was clear and bright, despite the turbulence, as Squadron Leader Wright flew north-west along the coast to reconnoitre Stromness Bay, Prince Olav Harbour, and Bird Island, the black mountains and the grey and white of the glaciers and snowfields were very quickly lost in great swirls of cloud and that phase of the flight had to be abandoned.

Squadron Leader Wright thought that beyond Gritvyken conditions made any approach close to land impossible, while at Gritvyken itself during the parachute drop they had been merely "very, very difficult".

Scientists return to Grytviken base

By ADRIAN BERRY Science Correspondent

A NAVY Chaplain yesterday held a Communion service in the historic 1913 wooden church at the Grytviken whaling station in South Georgia.



S. GEORGIA 'TRESPASS' BY RUSSIA

By ADRIAN BERRY
Science Correspondent

A SOVIET fisheries factory ship operating off South Georgia was recently boarded by the commander of the British forces in the island, and ordered to leave British territorial waters, it was learned yesterday.

The ship was within three miles of the island, and the officer, Capt Marius Coulon of the Royal Fusiliers, was strictly within his rights.

British officers in South Georgia and British Antarctic Survey scientists are becoming increasingly concerned about Communist ships fishing within 200 miles of the island, which they feel should be made illegal.

A total of 180 Soviet or Eastern European vessels fishing in this area were recently spotted during a reconnaissance by an RAF Nimrod, Mr Stanley Johnson, Euro-MP for East Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, reported from the island yesterday.

But he also noted that the garrison had been forced to buy fish from a "trespassing" Polish ship when their supplies ran low.

FALKLANDS TALKS Sovereignty deadlock

Argentina cannot agree that the start of negotiations with Britain over the Falklands should imply "tacit acceptance" of British sovereignty, according to Senor Dante Caputo, Argentine Foreign Minister.

He told a Press conference on Wednesday that Argentina would respond in the next few days to Britain's offer for talks on re-establishing of commercial ties and the return to Buenos Aires of the bodies of Argentine Servicemen killed in the Falklands.

Conducting the service was the Rev. Marcus Robinson of the frigate Yarmouth, accompanied on the organ by a fellow officer, Sub-Lt Peter Snoxall.

After years of disuse and decay, the church, the whaling station and its accompanying huts are being repaired by men of the Royal Fusiliers.

Scientists from the British Antarctic Survey ship John Biscoe yesterday revisited their former base at Shackleton House on King Edward Point which, until now, has been in the hands of the military.

Having been excluded from the island since its recapture in 1982, they are eager to resume their work of studying the vast and growing populations of birds and seals.

Whaling history

They are also determined to turn South Georgia into something of a museum of its whaling past.

The island contains priceless artefacts from the years before 1960 when whaling ships were still doing a brisk trade. There are old harpoon guns, gigantic vats and catcher vessels, and all sorts of curious and rusting impedimenta.

In particular, there is the remainder of the scrap metal which Senor Davidoff, the Argentine merchant, came to loot in 1982, the incident which encouraged Gen. Galtieri to order the invasion.

A more serious problem is the grounded Argentine submarine which Britain crippled when recapturing the island. It is said to be filled with explosives and highly dangerous.

DAILY
TELEGRAPH
10.2.84

Falklands airport workers 'treated like animals'

By GERALD BARTLETT

CONSTRUCTION workers and craftsmen on the £215 million Falklands airport are being treated "like animals," according to some who have resigned and returned home.

They claim workers have to live in cramped and unhygienic "concentration camp conditions."

All 26 men, some of them seamen / stevedores earning £250 a week tell tales of cockroaches in their food and high-handed treatment at the hands of "little Hitlers."

They said there was an overwhelming feeling that they are "pretty worthless characters worthy of little or no consideration."

They claim a woman secretary was twice badly beaten up by her executive; that they were required to work long hours with few breaks and little food; and that people are being generally "ripped off."

Contract claim

Seaman/stevedore Mr William Chivers, 43, married with seven children, from Southampton, said last night: "I walked out because I couldn't stand seeing British workmen being treated like animals any more."

Those who have returned to Britain have given their union, the Transport and General Workers, a dossier of complaints.

They claim that the consortium which employs them, Laing-Mowlem-Amey Roadstone, has probably broken its contract with them.

Mr George Henderson, TGWU national officer, said last night: "We want these complaints investigated and dealt with. Failing that we shall take any action required."

The Merchant ship Providence, designed for 50 people, was used to feed 400 and, at a site at Mount Pleasant, there were no lavatory facilities. Men had to sleep on the floor, it is claimed.

A consortium spokesman said the complaints would be investigated to see if they could be substantiated.

SPARTAN LIFE ON MOUNTAIN

By Air Cdre G. S. COOPER
Air Correspondent
who was recently in
the Falklands

CONDITIONS at the barren site of the new airfield at Mount Pleasant are undoubtedly rugged, and will get tougher as the Falklands winter approaches.

When I visited the Merchant Providence base ship moored at East Cove three weeks ago, it was clear that the men there would be earning every penny of their high salary until the project is completed at the end of 1986.

The ship's tanks provide fresh water and a sewage treatment plant has been established ashore for the pioneer camp set up to accommodate most in prefabricated cabins.

Nothing seems to have been overlooked in planning the site, but the facilities are intended for Spartans rather than lotus-eaters.

Accommodation built

The first of many more accommodation blocks was laid on foundations near the runway, five miles to the north of East Cove on Jan. 21.

These will be used initially by the construction workers and then handed over to the military when operations begin at the airfield next year.

Transport between the airfield and the Merchant Providence jetty is provided by red single-decker buses.

There are 500 workers there now with more arriving by ship at the rate of 200 a month. The workforce — all from Britain — is due to reach a peak of 1,400 in July.

The isolation of the site is bound to test the morale of the workforce,

At one bound Luis is free

Bounder Basualdo with HHK in the palmy days when the Prince played in his team. Since then Luis, like all Argentine polo players, has been persona non grata at Windsor.



THE ban by the Guards Polo Club on Argentine players, which began with the invasion of the Falklands two years ago, has been neatly circumvented by Viscount Cowdray's former son-in-law Luis Sosa Basualdo—he has been granted U.S. citizenship.

A former patron of Prince Charles, who played for Basualdo's Golden Eagles high goal team for two seasons, Luis, 38, is confident that he will be welcomed back at Smith's Lawn, Windsor, owned by the Queen and scene of his social heyday.



Lucy: In New York.

Most recently the £220,000-a-year homme d'affaires to Christina Onassis, Basualdo is basing himself in Britain and is insisting that his ex-wife Lucy, 29, who lives in New York, sends their children, Charlotte and Rupert, here to be educated.

Guards Polo Club official Major Ronald Ferguson, who also happens to be Charles's manager, says: 'If Mr Basualdo is a genuine American citizen, he will be perfectly entitled to play here. But he will have to apply to a club to be registered. All polo clubs are private and can elect or turn down who they want.'

Since the Heir to the Throne is Colonel-in-Chief of the Welsh Guards, who suffered the greatest casualties in the Falklands conflict, Argentine players have been banished from Britain but they are not suffering—some are earning as much as £300,000 a year in America.

Last year Basualdo played in France, where he keeps his 30-strong string of ponies, with Robert de Balkany, property magnate son-in-law of the late ex-King Umberto of Italy.

Site workers on Falklands living 'worse than dogs'

WORKERS building Britain's new £215 million Falklands base have been treated 'worse than dogs,' their union claimed yesterday.

A dossier of complaints included 'terrible' food hygiene, poor water supplies and cramped sleeping conditions.

The Laing-Mowlem-Amey Roadstone consortium employing more than 500 manual workers promised to investigate complaints from the transport union.

Mr George Henderson, the union's national secretary for the construction group, claimed safety helmets were issued just before a visit by Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine.

RAF crews stay alert on sleeping pills

HUNDREDS of RAF pilots and crew have been given drugs to keep them alert during the repeated flights to the Falklands.

Regular doses of the drug—a kind of sleeping pill—ensured they got a minimum of six hours sleep whenever they landed, enabling them to wake fresh and alert and fly again almost immediately.

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
Air Correspondent

Now the programme is being studied by commercial companies and civilian doctors who believe that it could solve the problem of jet lag in airline pilots and passengers.

The drug called temazepam, was first issued to pilots of Hercules and Nimrod aircraft

during the Falklands war.

Scientists and military doctors at the Institute of Aviation Medicine had been concerned that repeated disruption of crews' sleep pattern could impair their efficiency and put the whole operation at risk.

The pills enabled nearly 300 air crew to fly up to 150 hours in 24 days often going for weeks with repeated flights lasting 28 hours a time.

Group Captain Tony Nicholson,

head of the institute's neuroscience division, said: 'They worked really well and had no lasting effect, though the men could not have gone on taking them endlessly.'

The drug, related to Valium, has been commercially produced for the last three years and is known as Normison. It is available on prescription.

Some crews making regular flights to the South Atlantic are still taking it.

Bankers back Crown Agents' reforms

BY DAVID DODWELL

MORGAN GRENFELL, the London merchant bank, has given general support to reforms of the Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations recently proposed by the agents. The bank was appointed by the Government to examine whether the agency could be successfully privatised.

It concludes, in a 20-page confidential report commissioned by the Overseas Development Ministry three weeks ago and completed early this week, that privatisation of the agency is possible. Detailed plans put forward early last month by Mr Peter Graham, the new chief Crown Agent, offered a reasonable framework for privatisation, it says.

The body for 150 years has acted as a procurement agency for countries in the developing world and more recently has provided financial services and

administered some British overseas aid.

The review of the agency's future was triggered last July when the loss of a lucrative contract to manage the £3.5bn investment portfolio of the Sultan of Brunei plunged the organisation into debt.

Since then there has been disagreement among government departments on the agency's fate. The Overseas Development Ministry and the Foreign Office have backed plans for a reorganisation and the Treasury has preferred privatisation or abolition.

Late last year the agency revealed plans to trim its workforce to about 860 from the current 1,200. It called for a rescheduling of its debts and proposed keeping most of its present roles.

Early last month Mr Graham

presented plans suggesting that privatisation was possible.

He said the Government could keep a 50 per cent stake, with staff taking a 20 per cent shareholding and the public the remaining 30 per cent.

Morgan Grenfell was appointed soon after this plan was tabled. The appointment was seen as signifying that the various ministries regarded Mr Graham's report as a basis for compromise. While details of the bank's report remain confidential it is understood the Morgan Grenfell team saw Mr Graham's plan as being fairly sensible.

The report is in the hands of Mr Timothy Raison, the Minister for Overseas Development. A final decision on the agency's fate is likely early next month.

HOW MUCH did it really cost to fly Mr Michael Heseltine back from the Falklands in a thrice-refuelled 17-hour hop by Nimrod reconnaissance plane? £90,000, the MoD officially claimed earlier this month. MoD moles beg to differ. The figure, they claim, is nearer £500,000 once you take into account the additional four refuelling aircraft, there in case of contingency but not in fact needed (they jettison their fuel before landing again). The MoD now admits to the other two tankers but refuses to discuss the final figures.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

9.2.84

£11m EEC bid for

fishing rights

The Common Market Commission has offered to pay £11 million a year for continued fishing rights in Greenland's waters when the Danish territory leaves the EEC.

The proposal is seen by Brussels officials as a significant breakthrough in negotiations on Greenland's withdrawal from the community by next Jan. 1.

Internal design of warships to change after Falklands lessons

BY BRIDGET BLOOM, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE ROYAL NAVY is introducing "extensive" changes to the internal design of its warships as a result of lessons learned during the Falklands conflict, the Commons Select Committee on Defence was told yesterday.

However, MPs queried whether the changes, which largely relate to the control of fire following enemy action, were being implemented quickly enough.

Mr Winston Churchill (Con, Davyhulme) accused the Ministry of Defence of being "lackadaisical" in its attitude to the introduction of better fire control methods.

The committee, which is inquiring into the performance of weapons during the conflict, was told by Rear Admiral G.

Marsh, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff, of four changes.

It had been discovered in the Falklands that ship-wide air-conditioning systems — apparently introduced mainly to "sanitise" a ship in the event of nuclear war — allowed smoke to penetrate far too easily throughout a vessel. Henceforth, ships would be divided into four or five self-contained zones in an effort to prevent this.

Access routes and escape hatches in most warships were too small for fighting teams and their equipment and were being enlarged, Admiral Marsh said.

Changes to firefighting equipment—from pumps to the personal dress of sailors—were being introduced, while it had been decided that far fewer

combustible materials, such as foam mattresses, should be in ships' furnishings.

MPs described these measures as "radical," although the MoD witnesses, under the leadership of Mr Michael Gainsborough, Assistant Under Secretary of Naval Staff, accepted only that they were "extensive."

Several MPs, however, queried whether the changes were being made quickly enough, and have asked the MoD for a detailed report, with costings, within a month.

Overall, the MoD claimed that Britain's warships had performed well in the Falklands, although weather conditions were not as severe as might be experienced in Nato areas of the North Atlantic.

LIFTING THE ZONE

THE TIMES
9.2.84

Britain and Argentina have been groping towards a modus vivendi over the Falklands Islands ever since President Raul Alfonsin and his civil administration came to power in December. Each has now clarified its position and illuminated the path which it would like to pursue towards a happier, more stable relationship. These paths may not converge completely while sovereignty is claimed by both sides, but they can run in close parallel, to the advantage of both sides and of the islanders themselves.

The British approach is to move cautiously as always from the bottom upwards, tackling first those issues over which there should be little real dissent - like the restoration of commercial links and a more satisfactory long-term arrangement over the Argentine war graves. Mutual confidence should then grow through closer contact and slowly but surely both parties could return to the status quo ante - albeit the central issue unresolved, as it had been for 150 years before the invasion.

This may not be fast enough for President Alfonsin. The military in Argentina may be

politically discredited, but it remains a force to which the new civil administration cannot afford to turn a blind eye. President Alfonsin needs to demonstrate his power to make progress by peaceful means - as well as his own determination not to be cowed by British refusals to negotiate on his terms.

While these conversations continue through diplomatic third parties, it may seem strange for either party to make public gestures or declarations of any kind, such as President Alfonsin's six-point plan last week proposing a United Nations force. But Britain should not be deterred by these "noises-off" from herself seriously considering a gesture which would demonstrate Britain's confidence in the new civilian rulers in Buenos Aires. That is to lift the 150-mile protection zone around the islands.

The orthodox Whitehall view is that this should not be agreed unless Argentina declared simultaneously a formal ceasefire. The zone, it has been argued, is a necessary security measure and

moreover a bargaining counter for which some similar quid pro quo should be exacted. But now that negotiations would seem to have started, this could be considered over-cautious, given that the security situation does not demand it.

It is unlikely that Argentina would take advantage of such a step to threaten the Falklands, and in the present political climate it is a risk worth taking anyway.

The removal of the zone would be more likely to secure a declaration over the end of hostilities than would the maintenance of it. To dispense with it would ease the workload on the British garrison - and might indeed enable it to be reduced without implying any diminution in British resolve. Moreover it would show the international community that Britain recognizes how much encouragement President Alfonsin needs to consolidate his new power, and that Britain is thus prepared to make the running in the negotiations to achieve greater stability in the South Atlantic.

Troops lose 'home comforts'

Military 'new town' in Falklands

From Rodney Cowton Defence Correspondent Port Stanley

British servicemen based in the Falkland Islands are in the final stages of a migration which is reducing their presence in Port Stanley, the capital.

Immediately after the conflict in 1982 large numbers of troops were billeted in Port Stanley, many living with Falkland Island families. As recently as last July or August there were still about 1,000 servicemen there. Military sources say that number has been reduced to about 60 or 70.

Most of the military presence in the Port Stanley area has moved to a newly developed area known as the Canache, about two miles away, which marks an effective separation from the town.

In the Canache there has developed a large amount of accommodation, storage areas and jetty facilities. Virtually all the structures have been designed to be easily movable.

The concentration in the Canache will make the service operations much more efficient than the previous makeshift arrangements in Port Stanley. But it has also been done to minimize disturbance to the civilian population, with whom relations appear to be excellent.

The unanimity with which Falkland islanders say that relations with the Armed Forces are "much better than anyone could reasonably expect", is remarkable.

If the roads show signs of rapid wear it tends, correctly, to be attributed to military vehicles. If there is a minor accident it excites slightly more comment if it involves the military rather than if it is a purely civilian affair. The islanders have had to get used to a vastly increased level of noise from helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft.

But, in spite of such irritations, it is clear that the Forces have handled their relations with the civilian community skilfully.

Broadly speaking the aim is to retain in Port Stanley only those activities which have a direct relationship with the civil authorities or with the civilian population. Thus the military headquarters will stay there for the time being, as will the military police unit, which needs to liaise closely with the civil police, and the section of the Royal Engineers responsible for clearing war debris. They

need to be easily accessible so that civilians can report findings of explosives or other dangerous materials.

The move to the Canache is generally welcomed as being a step towards the restoration of Port Stanley's prewar way of life. But there is a quite common remark that some families, and particularly older women, will miss the opportunity to "mother" soldiers with whom their families had struck up a friendship, and who called in for a cup of tea or a bath.

In spite of those good relations, there are the kinds of minor friction which are inseparable from a sizeable military presence using much heavy equipment and largely made up of very young, though well disciplined, men.

Any possibility of friction will diminish still further from the spring of next year when the airfield being constructed 25 miles away at Mount Pleasant comes into operation. That will then become the main military centre on the Islands, though some of the service activities, including, in particular, naval ones, will continue in and around the Port Stanley area.

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8.2.84

Russians exploit fishing loophole

By **ADRIAN BERRY** Science Correspondent

SOME 30 Soviet fishing ships were seen yesterday in British waters taking advantage of a loophole in the Antarctic Treaty which seeks to protect over-exploitation of stocks.

Many were spotted by Mr Stanley Johnson, Euro MP for East Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

"I counted at least 11 Soviet fishing trawlers concentrated in an area within a 10-mile radius," said Mr Johnson who is visiting the Antarctic.

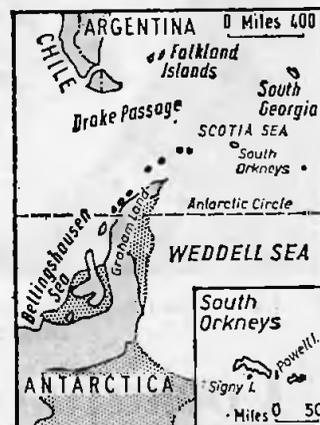
'Shameful history'

As the British Antarctic Survey ship John Biscoe passed Powell Island, northernmost of the South Orkneys group, he saw in addition two large Russian factory ships in the shelter of the ice-covered shore line.

"How many other Soviet ships were beyond the horizon was impossible to say, but scientists at the British base on Signy Island confirm that a large fleet of up to 30 vessels has been in the area for several months," he retorted.

The trouble was, he explained, that the South Orkneys, being offshore Antarctic islands, is a place where there is no agreement under the treaty to limit over-exploitation of fish and krill.

There was an urgent need



for catch limits in the area if the shameful history of the whaling industry, which had led to the near extinction of several species in the Southern Ocean, was not to be repeated, said Mr Johnson.

Russian fishing in the South Orkneys and around South Georgia is a full-scale industrial operation. Most vessels, including factory ships, remain there permanently.

Mr Johnson, an expert on Antarctic conservation, pointed out that both Lord Shackleton's reports of 1976 and 1982 had recommended a 200-mile economic zone around the Falklands, South Georgia, and other British offshore islands.

But the Foreign Office had done nothing, fearing to offend Argentina. The French had not hesitated to impose such zones.

Argentina bars exit of human rights suspects

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires



Captain Astiz: Suspected role in kidnapping

Former military chiefs suspected of committing human rights violations in Argentina will be prevented from leaving the country while the Government determines whether there are any outstanding requests for their appearance in court.

The Interior Ministry has instructed officials at airports and border posts to check with the judiciary and other government agencies before allowing any of the dozens of military officers under suspicion to leave the country.

It was originally reported that the Government had issued an outright ban on leaving the country against Captain Alfredo Astiz, known here as the "Archangel" for his suspected role in the kidnapping and disappearance of two French nuns and a 17-year-old Swedish girl in the mid-1970s.

But an Interior Ministry official said yesterday that the decree was only "a precautionary measure" and that it applied to "a long list" of other officers as well as Captain Astiz.

The official said the measure was taken in response to a request from a special presidential commission investigating the fate of thousands of Argentines who disappeared after being arrested or kidnapped under the military regime which stepped down last December.

The commission asked President Alfonsín to take whatever measures were

necessary to prevent officers leaving the country. It said the testimony of officers, including Captain Astiz, could be invaluable in clearing up the disappearances.

In a separate development, a national deputy here has said that it cost Argentina between \$5bn and \$7bn (£3.5bn and £5bn) to fight the 10-week Falklands war against Britain in 1982.

Señor Ruben Rabanal, a deputy for the governing Radical Party was quoted as saying in Madrid that the cost of the war was a primary cause of Argentina's economic crisis, along with other examples of exorbitant spending by the military regime.

He did not give any details about how he had arrived at the figure for the costs of the conflict or about the breakdown of the costs.

Whitehall brief

Sailor with freedom to think

By Peter Hennessy

If Admiral Sir James Eberle, the ebullient new director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, was instead at 10 Downing Street advising the Prime Minister, the arguments would be wondrous to behold.

The 56-year-old missile expert, judged by the dispensers of Whitehall patronage too outspoken to be First Sea Lord (he was highly critical of the Trident programme on cost grounds, preferring Britain's next deterrent to be cruise missiles launched from Hunter-killer submarines) last week indulged in another bout of heterodoxy.

Reflecting on the pleasures of running Chatham House, the nation's influential private foreign policy think tank after one month in the job, he revelled in the freedom to ponder and talk about issues without the constraints that bind a Whitehall insider.

"On the Falklands now, nobody in the Foreign Office can write down the word 'sovereignty'. Somebody has got to think about that," he said.

The same applied to talking

to the Russians, he added. Chatham House is about to begin a study of detente during the 1970s: what happened to it and what lessons it holds for future East-West relations. Sir James is very keen on historical perspectives as a guide to future policy making.

For example, the 1982 war in the South Atlantic clearly haunts him. On the Franks Report, he believes it was not so much the blemishes in the foreign and defence policy-making machinery that mattered, but more the people involved in it.

It was no good, either, saying that ministerial responsibility meant failure could be dumped into the lap of the politicians. "You should go back to who was advising Mr John Nott, the Secretary of State for Defence: the admirals. I will accept my share of the responsibility," he said.

In 1980, as Commander-in-Chief, Fleet, Sir James was visited at his Northwood headquarters in the London suburbs by Mr (now Sir) Rex Hunt, then about to take over as Governor of the Falkland Islands.

Their conversation set Sir James thinking. He knew he was responsible for the Royal Marines of Naval Party 8901 and for rebuilding their barracks at Moody Brook, but who was in charge operationally?

Whitehall was, his staff said. "I said 'I don't like it. I'm going down there'." His staff said the trip would take two weeks and he did not have the time. "I'm not in any sense claiming it would have made the difference between peace and war, but we might have been a little less unprepared," he said.

Chatham House's headhunters picked Sir James from a glittering field of candidates, keen to fill the vacancy left by Mr David Watt, for three reasons: he knew the inside of Whitehall, but was not a Foreign Office man whose appointment might have put a question mark on the institute's independence; he had plenty of intellectual horsepower; he was a considerable organizer and motivator of others, qualities needed if a decline in funds and activities was to be reversed.

Sir James was reluctant to leave Dartmoor to which he had retired to farm and to hunt.



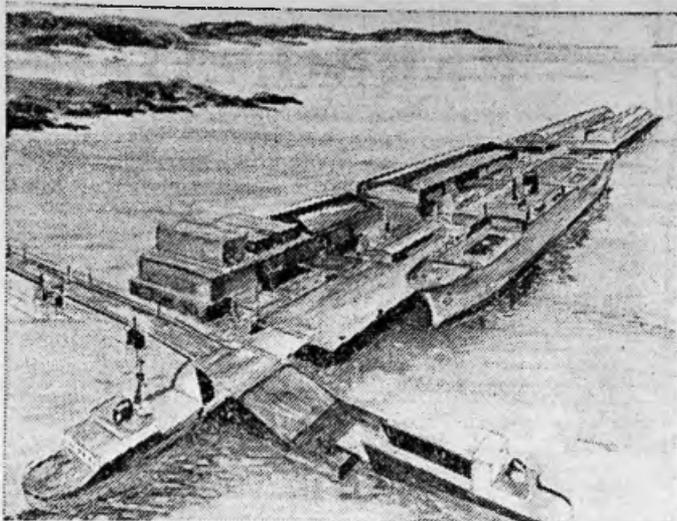
Sir James: Picked by Chatham House from a glittering field of candidates.

But, in the end, he could not resist.

He believes it is very silly when people are amazed to find that military men like Lord Carver and Sir John Hackett can think.

Sir James is known as "the thinking man's sailor", a tag which makes him laugh and inspires him to quote his favourite Admiralty minute drafted in 1913: "The Fleet would hold in the utmost contempt any officers who were trained to think."

6.2.84



An artist's impression of a floating dock at which three ships could moor simultaneously.

Floating ideas and harbours

ADRIAN BERRY on how the Falklands could be serviced

WHAT would be the best means of reducing the £500 million which military occupation of the Falkland Islands is now costing the taxpayer?

The answer: to build an airport there whose 8,000-ft runway will take wide-bodied jets, together with a 30,000-ton floating wharf in Port Stanley at which three ships can moor simultaneously.

Both these measures are now being undertaken. The first will enable thousands of soldiers from the Falklands garrison to come home, and yet be able to return quickly in the event of a crisis—while the second will save huge sums in time and labour during the loading and unloading of ships.

Last week in Port Stanley's wholly inadequate harbour, I counted six large ships riding at anchor, which were unable to discharge their cargoes because of heavy winds, while their owners spent money keeping them there and getting nothing in return.

Faced with this situation, the naval authorities have acted with vigour. ITM Offshore, the private Middlesbrough-based company which specialises in transporting massive loads, was commissioned to build a gigantic marine platform costing £24 million, the first of its kind in the world, except for the famous Mulberry Harbour which enabled Allied supplies to be landed after D-Day.

Imagine six steel barges each weighing 5,000 tons, all fixed to each other in as little as nine feet of water, and all in turn anchored to the sea floor so strongly that the entire complex will withstand winds of up to 115 mph.

To a company which, in Britain routinely tows around parts of oil terminals and the reactor vessels of nuclear power stations, this task presented no great difficulties. Having been started in December, the project is due for completion in April—in good time for the blustering Falklands winter—and creating, as far as I know, a peacetime speed record for an industrial enterprise on this scale.

Suppose that you are a ship's captain approaching the Falklands "Flexiport." What kind of services can you expect?

The 700ft floating dock, connected to the shore by a wide, man-made causeway, supports an operations centre that is independent of the outside environment.

Flexiport has its own desalination plant which can produce up to 36 tons of fresh water a day. With comfortable living quarters for 20 people, it makes its own electricity and even has its own effluent plant, to minimise pollution of the harbour, together with nearly every marine tool that a sailor could desire.

For a base equipped with these resources, a ship can expect almost any service short of a major refit. Nor is this all. The Flexiport does not bear such a name for nothing. At a few days' notice, it can up-anchor and set off under tow to any part of the far-flung Falkland Islands.

As may be expected, other countries are keenly interested in the Flexiport concept. Its

The answers to the Christmas science quiz, together with the prize-winners, will be published on Feb 20.

widespread introduction could lead not only to significant cost reductions in shipping operations but also to considerable social change.

Consider a sheltered bay in a lonely stretch of coastline. There has never been a harbour there, because the local geography is too forbidding. Then someone realises that financial advantage would follow if a port was placed there despite the forbidding local geography.

A Flexiport is towed there, with a causeway connecting it to the shore. The next thing that happens is that the area, hitherto sparsely populated, becomes a region of intense activity. A road is built from the new port to the nearest town. Its construction and its traffic create new wealth and jobs.

This is no fantasy. It is happening in the Falklands today. Flexiport is an exciting demonstration of how in what seems to be the most unpromising surroundings, high technology can produce the blessings of industrialisation.

Evening Standard
6.2.84

MRS P HAWES in her letter abuses the Prime Minister for spending millions on prefabs for servicemen and workers on the Falklands, but ignores the fact that the building of the airstrip has already provided 3500 jobs for British construction workers. And all the money is spent in Britain.

It goes into industry over a wide field, in particular engineering and materials, and thus into the wage packets of British trades union members.
—G. L. Smith, Devonshire Street, W.1.

BUENOS AIRES: Argentina ordered the arrest and expulsion of former Bolivian President General Garcia Meza and Colonel Arce Goez, his former interior minister, wanted in the United States on drug charges.

Argentina and its creditors

THE COMPLETION of Brazil's \$28bn rescheduling package for 1984 has provided only temporary relief from the continuing problem of developing country debt. The spotlight is now shifting to Argentina which has already notched up about \$3bn of arrears on its \$43.6bn of foreign debt.

In Argentina's case the numbers are no less daunting than those of other Latin American debtors. Sr Bernardo Grinspun, the Economy Minister, has forecast a trade surplus of only \$3.5bn this year, not nearly enough to meet debt service requirements of some \$20bn. The balance will have to be found through a combination of rescheduling and fresh loans.

Conditional promise

But the Government of President Raul Alfonsín finds itself in a relatively strong position vis-à-vis its foreign creditors. Banks have been reminded of the need to nurture Argentina's fledgling democracy by the acute interest being shown in its economic problems by the U.S. authorities. Unlike Brazil and Mexico, Argentina is also self-sufficient in food and energy. Indeed its grain exports yield such handsome returns in foreign exchange that it would have no need for fresh international credit at all, were it not for the huge overhang of existing debt.

So far, the newly-elected Radical Government has made it clear that it intends to honour the country's foreign debt. But its strength at the bargaining table has made this promise conditional. President Alfonsín may refuse to service that part of the debt which he regards as having been illegally contracted by his predecessors. At the very least he will insist on a rescheduling agreement that clearly reduces the debt service burden on the Argentine State.

Argentina's inherent economic strength has often in the past raised the spectre of repudiation, but this would not be a valid reason for lenders to rush in with concessionary terms for debt rescheduling. The previous military regime considered repudiation carefully, but found the risks too great in terms of loss of trading opportunities and the seizure by foreign creditors of Argentine assets abroad. There is no reason to assume that these arguments would not also weigh heavily with the new Government, especially since it

wants to re-establish Argentina's credentials as a full participant in Western democratic society.

On the other hand lenders must realise that the likelihood of Argentina paying its debts in the long-run would be immeasurably increased by a period of sustained political stability in Buenos Aires. It would be counterproductive to press for an agreement that of itself undermines that still fragile democracy through excessive harshness. Argentina is unlikely to accept any agreement that does not on the surface at least appear to be a victory for the debtor.

Here the International Monetary Fund faces a particularly delicate task. It needs to produce an effective austerity programme for Argentina without losing sight of the fact that it is not dealing with a strong government (such as that of Mexico) that can afford the loss of political support entailed in delivering economic reform. For the same reason, the banks will have to impress on other borrowers that any concessions made to Argentina are being granted because it really is a special case.

Basic conventions

This does not mean that President Alfonsín should expect unlimited largesse from the financial community. There are weak points in his bargaining position too. Argentina needs to secure immediate fresh trade credits from commercial banks to finance the purchase abroad of industrial raw materials. The fact, too, that his honeymoon with a fickle electorate may soon be over means his Government needs to move rapidly to consolidate its authority at home by getting a grip on the economic front.

So there is little time left for posturing — and not just because U.S. banks are worried about Argentina's ability to reduce its interest arrears before their important March 31 balance sheet deadlines. Argentina is justified in claiming concessions from its creditors, but only within the basic conventions of international finance. An attempt to win huge interest subsidies would almost certainly fail. So, probably, would any unilateral and arbitrary discrimination between "legally" and "illegally" contracted debt. The price of Argentina pushing for concessions too hard would be high for debtor and creditor alike.

Falklanders come first

Sir, — Guillermo Gil says in effect (Letters, February 3) that the Falklanders have no right to be in the Falklands because they were put there by force. He should remind himself that his own ancestors did not arrive peacefully in Argentina either. If he means that maps are to be redrawn according to the principle that territory conquered in the past should revert to the original owners this might sound like good news for South American Indians!

He invites us to imagine British reactions if the Shetland Islands were inhabited entirely by Spanish speakers owing allegiance to Mexico. I cannot of course be certain, but I should like to hope the amigos would be left in peace, free to travel to Wick or Thurso and buy lavatory paper or groceries if they wished. I am certain that I, personally, would not approve or support any attempt to impose British rule on them.

Militant nationalism is evil. It has caused more conflict and suffering than almost anything else. I include in this condemnation the unpleasant British jingoism that surfaced during the Falklands war. The losers in that war were the Falklanders. The inexcusable Argentine invasion disturbed their peace and now their peace is still disturbed by the British military presence.

The only hope for the future would be if both Britain and Argentina were to stop squabbling about flags and sovereignty and address themselves to the sole issue of any importance: the well-being of 1,800 people who must have a right to be consulted and listened to.

Sadly I see little prospect of this happening so long as ambiguous words like "reality" are used as a veiled threat; what I suspect Mr Gil means is that in the long run Argentina is bound to get what it wants regardless of the wishes of the Falklanders. On the other hand, if the latter can be persuaded peacefully that their best interests will be served by some form of association with Argentina, so be it. — Yours sincerely, Chris Gillespie, 9, St Martin's Hill, Canterbury, Kent.

GUARDIAN

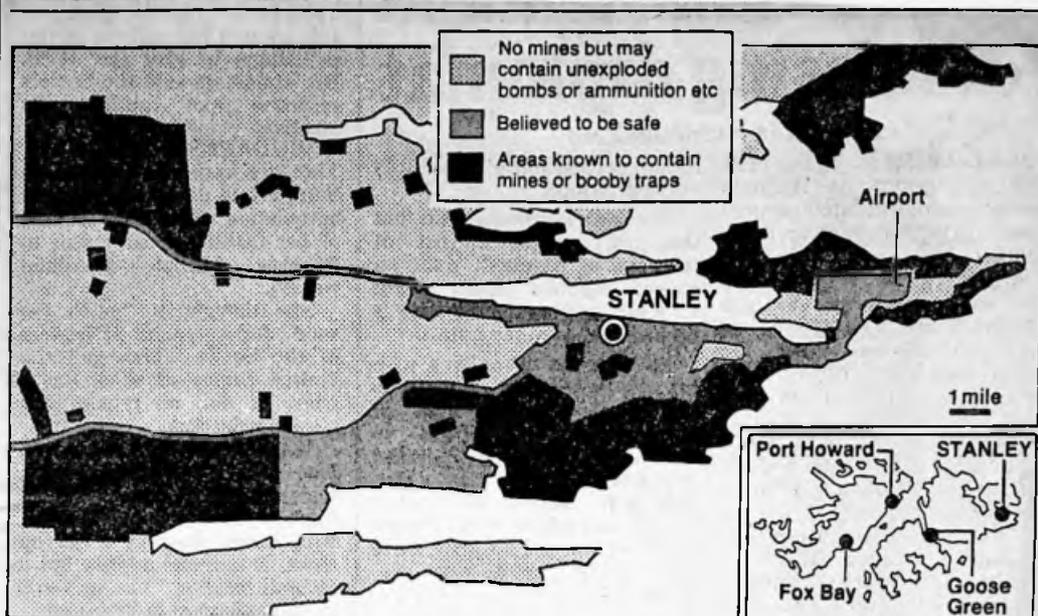
6.2.84

'Threat' by Britain

Bogota: President Alfonsín of Argentina said yesterday that the British military buildup on the Falklands endangered Latin America.

In a radio interview shortly after arriving in Bogota for a 20-hour visit, President Alfonsín said: "We have hopes of solving the problems and winning sovereignty over the islands."

Argentina called last week for a UN peacekeeping force to supervise the demilitarisation of the islands to allow for the resumption of negotiations on their future. Britain has rejected the proposal. — Reuter.



Danger underfoot: minefields around Port Stanley: others surround Port Howard, Fox Bay and Goose Green

Falkland hunt for deadly relics

From Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent, Port Stanley

More than 18 months after the conflict in the Falkland Islands, the British troops are still discovering Argentine weapons and ammunition and clearing it at a rate of about 1,000 items a day.

Since no completely reliable means of detecting certain kinds of plastic mines has yet been found, no attempt is being made to clear the minefields. They are simply fenced and left to be dealt with when an effective detection method is available.

However, the task of clearing up all the ammunition, weapons and general kit left by the Argentine forces as they surrendered is enormous.

Men of the Explosive Ordnance Demolition (EOD) detachment from the Royal Engineers' 33 Engineer Regiment have been clearing Argentine trenches on the Murray Heights less than a mile from the centre of Stanley.

When the Argentine soldiers surrendered they often filled in their trenches. As a result the EOD men are digging them out again to remove potentially dangerous ammunition that has been left in many of them.

This may mean digging out trenches to a depth of 4ft. Despite the fact that the Falklands are generally snuff dry at the moment after an unusually good summer, many of the trenches on Murray Heights, which were dug in peat, are filled with water to above ankle height.

While I was there a mortar was dug out, and at least four others have been found in the vicinity as well as quantities of detonators, grenades, and other ammunition.

Apart from such dangerous material, some of the trenches are strewn with clothing and other equipment ranging from boots and sleeping bags to jars of hair cream and tubes of

toothpaste which the Argentines abandoned.

Digging out the trenches is very unpleasant.

The men alternate a week of trench clearance with a week of marching across the very rough moorland looking for explosives lying on the ground. For some, such as Corporal Hamish Menzies from Hull, this is not sufficiently energetic and he makes a point of carrying a 60lb rucksack so as to get more fitness training out of the work.

So far nearly two and a half million items of ammunition have been found throughout the islands. The bulk of it is small arms ammunition, but there have also been over 12,000 shells, nearly 5,000 grenades and rockets, 21,000 mortar rounds and 2,700 mines. In all, the EOD units are estimated to have cleared about 35,000 acres of battlefield debris since the conflict ended.

Rescue mission, page 6

Falklands rescue mission for Soviet sailor

From Rodney Cowton, Port Stanley, Falkland Islands

A Russian Trawlerman was still seriously ill in hospital at Port Stanley yesterday after a 40-hour dash by sea and air from South Georgia, 800 miles away.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said the incident began on Wednesday, when Mr Palamar Evgeniy, aged 26, received a head injury in an accident on board the trawler Kotelnich.

The boat headed for Grytviken, South Georgia. The garrison doctor reported that Mr Evgeniy was likely to die unless he received hospital treatment within 36 hours. The nearest hospital was in Port Stanley and there was no possibility of

getting him there by fixed-wing aircraft, as South Georgia does not have a landing strip.

The fleet auxiliary Olna, which was about 350 miles away, heading for Port Stanley, turned back. The Trawler headed for the Olna and the injured man was transferred by helicopter.

The Olna steamed at full speed for Port Stanley, while the medical officer carried out emergency treatment. Once within range of the Falklands, Mr Evgeniy was flown by helicopter to Port Stanley.

Within an hour of arrival, an army surgeon had begun a two-hour operation.

McMillan-Scott Associates Public Affairs

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Falklands archives

From Dr Harold Blakemore

Sir, Dr Peter Beck (January 17) has raised yet again a fundamental question on the islands which still remains unanswered, namely the continued closure of documents relating to their history and to official British opinion on their status and future over several decades.

My own attempt to focus attention on this curious reticence (October 14, 1982) elicited no response and the replies to similar questions in the House of Lords before Christmas got no further either.

This stonewalling simply permits the clarity of dogma to override the complexity of truth, as the letter in your columns from Sir Miles Clifford (January 11) clearly indicates.

Is it not time we cleared our minds of cant? If the British public is to arrive at a just, reasonable and sensible appraisal of that situation it needs the facts to go on. Current policy denies that possibility and, so long as this situation persists, an increasing number of people at home and abroad will begin to wonder why.

Yours faithfully,
HAROLD BLAKEMORE,
43 Fitzjohn Avenue,
Barnet, Hertfordshire.

Mineral carve-up in Antarctica

From Mr Evan Luard

Sir, It is reported that the parties to the Antarctic Treaty have been meeting in Washington over the last few days to consider the creation of a new regime governing the exploitation of the mineral resources of the Antarctic.

If the reports are true it raises the question: under what right can these 16 countries dispose of the resources of this area (which some believe may be very valuable)?

The parties to the treaty are those that were invited by the US government to take part in the negotiations for an Antarctic Treaty in 1977-78, together with two or three others that had been invited to become parties since on the grounds that they are undertaking significant research in the area. They are, in other words, a self-appointed group, including some which put forward claims to territory in the area many years ago and others (including the US and the Soviet Union) that did not.

It is thus not at all clear what is the basis in international law under which they can claim to exercise control over the resources of the area. The Antarctic Treaty carefully avoided all questions of sovereignty and the claims that had been previously made were frozen.

Many developing countries (and indeed some developed ones, too) believe that the Antarctic should be recognised as a fully international area and its resources as the "common heritage of mankind". That is why the UN General Assembly, at its last session, called for a comprehensive study of the entire question.

It would surely be wrong for the treaty powers to preempt the results of that study, and of any decisions the Assembly may subsequently make, by purporting to establish a new "regime" for mineral resources before the report called for has even been completed?

Yours faithfully,
EVAN LUARD,
35 Observatory Street,
Oxford.

British boycott rescheduling talks

Argentine debt aid in danger

By John Lawless

Britain's severed relations with Argentina are likely to prove a big obstacle to debt rescheduling talks.

Argentina's Economy Minister, Señor Bernardo Grinspun, has written to the Paris Club of main creditor nations saying that help may be needed to refinance foreign debts of \$43.6 billion.

However, a spokesman for the Export Credits Guarantee Department said yesterday: "It is difficult to see how Paris Club talks could take place without our interests being represented".

The new Argentine administration now appears keen to push ahead with debt rescheduling talks.

Señor Grinspun's letter to M Michel Candessus, the Paris Club president, is understood to have said that aid might be sought for those debts falling

due not only in 1983 and 1984, but next year as well. That was the first official indication that 1985 maturities could be considered.

The minister met for three days with international bankers in New York this week, also to discuss what new commercial loans Argentina will now need.

Much hangs on agreement from the International Monetary Fund to a standby loan (of around \$2 billion). Paris Club rules specify that any debtor country seeking help must first enter such an IMF agreement.

However, Señor Grinspun told a diplomatic mission of club members in Buenos Aires that he expects negotiations to be at an advanced stage by the end of this month.

It sought, and largely got, economic sanctions applied by other mission members - the US, Canada, Japan, West

Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Sweden, Holland, Belgium and Spain - against Argentina during the Falklands war.

● **NEW YORK:** Considerable disagreement is developing among international bankers over how to tackle Brazil's next debit crisis (Nick Gilbert writes).

The problem is temporarily being forgotten in the euphoria of last week's successful completion of the \$6.5 billion new international bank loan. But in 1985 Brazil wants a further \$4 billion in new loans from commercial banks, on top of interest "roll-overs" of several billion dollars.

Different attitudes are taken by US and European bankers. One possibility would be to convert Brazil's future interest payments into a semi-automatic medium-term loan,

What Britain wants from Argentina

By Henry Stanhope, Diplomatic Correspondent

Whitehall last night was still awaiting a reply to secret proposals which have been put to Argentina with a view to improving relations between the two countries.

But it is now clear that the cautious optimism shown by Señor Dante Caputo, the Argentine Foreign Minister 24 hours before, had come after careful study of the British initiative.

The Foreign Office refused yesterday to clarify the "specific

ideas" which were communicated to Buenos Aires last week through the Swiss Embassy there which has been representing British interests in Argentina since the Falklands war.

But it is an open secret that the restoration of commercial links and a more satisfactory arrangement over the Argentine war graves on the Falklands are high on the list of practical measures through which Britain would like to improve relations.

Disclosure of the British move reflects growing pressure on the Government at home and abroad to show some response to the signals transmitted by President Raul Alfonsín and his new civilian administration in Buenos Aires. These signals culminated in the six-point plan disclosed by President Alfonsín in Caracas, where he was attending the Venezuelan President's inauguration.

Among others, he called for an end to the 150-mile British protection zone around the Falklands and Mrs Margaret Thatcher's policy on fortifying the colony. United Nations peacekeeping troops could then maintain a presence of the islands, while Britain and Argentina resume negotiations over Falklands' future.

Once these conditions were met, hostilities between the two countries would officially end

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Initiative on 'quiet diplomacy' with Argentina founders

DAILY TELEGRAPH

4.2.84

Falkland forces' main base to be switched

By Air Cdre G. S. COOPER Air Correspondent

THE forces in the Falkland Islands are to have their main base at Mount Pleasant, near Fitzroy, instead of at Port Stanley, the Defence Ministry has confirmed.

The requirement for additional facilities at the new airfield site, which was one of Mr Heseltine's main points of interest during his recent visit, will raise the cost of the project from £215 million to £240 million, a Defence spokesman said.

The original cost of the airfield, with an access road from the landing point at East Cove, was £190 million. To this was added £25 million for RAF facilities, including accommodation for about 1,000 personnel.

The latest decision adds a further £25 million for tri-Service "semi-permanent" accommodation, including a jetty at Mare Harbour next to East Cove for access to the garrison by sea as well as air.

A factor in deciding to concentrate accommodation for the garrison at Mount Pleasant was that there will be a saving of some £20 million compared to the cost of building facilities at Port Stanley.

Runway date

The move will also relieve the locals of the massive military presence of the 4,000-strong garrison.

"It makes sense to bring together at Mount Pleasant the additional facilities the garrison will need," the spokesman said.

The runway is due to be ready for use by April 1985. Completion of the whole project is due at the end of 1986.



By DAVID ADAMSON Diplomatic Correspondent

BRTAIN'S attempt to open a phase of "quiet diplomacy" with Argentina appeared yesterday to have foundered in a spate of statements and counter-statements emanating from three capitals.

The first move came from London at the end of last week.

The Foreign Office used the Swiss Embassy in Buenos Aires as the channel for putting some "specific ideas" to the Argentine Government.

In the absence of diplomatic relations between Britain and Argentina, Switzerland acts for Britain in Buenos Aires and Brazil for Argentina in London.

In the British view the first steps towards returning to normal relations should be taken with the help of these intermediaries.

Foreign Office sources claimed yesterday that the delivery of the Note on the eve of the departure of President Alfonsín and his Foreign Minister, Senor Caputo, for Caracas was coincidental.

Their presence there for the inauguration of President Lusinchi, of Venezuela. This week the same time as Baroness Young, deputy Foreign Secretary, was not a consideration.

Call for UN presence

The next development was a Press conference in Caracas by President Alfonsín in which he called for a United Nations presence in the Falklands and the lifting of the 150-mile protection zone.

The response to that was a Foreign Office statement on Thursday that Britain would not accept a United Nations presence. Nor would she be rushed into lifting the protection zone.

Next came a statement from Buenos Aires outlining six points as the basis on which Argentina was willing to talk to Britain.

Back went a further British statement announcing that Britain had made a "confidential" through the Swiss Government last week.

The last word seems to have been by Senor Caputo, who said yesterday he was surprised by reports claiming there had been two months of secret negotiations between the two countries.

The only communication he had had was last week's message delivered through the Swiss Embassy. This had said Britain did not want secret talks as trying to keep them secret would be "counter-productive."

The Foreign Office was in agreement on one point at least. It, too, denied that there had been any "secret negotiations" between the two countries.

Deadlock continues on two points. The first is that Argentina wants talks within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, an approach Britain rejects because it does not take account of the islanders wishes.

The second point is that Britain wants a firm assurance that Argentina has renounced the use of force before lifting the protection zone whereas Argentina wants an end to fortification of the islands before she announces a formal cessation of hostilities.

'REPLY WITHIN DAYS' Argentina's 'concern'

CHRISTABEL KING reports from Caracas: Senor Danta Caputo, Argentine Foreign Minister, has described Britain's proposals for normalising relations with his country as "one-sided" and not sufficient to start negotiations or even the beginning of a dialogue.

Senor Caputo told THE DAILY TELEGRAPH in Caracas that his country wanted to negotiate and would be responding to British proposals within the next few days.

"Nevertheless I can tell you of the concern that the British proposals do not include the theme of global issues we are interested in," he added.

"I insist they are one-sided. They look at some aspects and do not include other matters vital for us.

"For that reason we don't think it is sufficient to go ahead with the start of negotiations or the start of at least a dialogue."

Senor Caputo also said: "I want to reiterate that in our opinion the military concentration must be reduced because it is not only affecting Argentina from the point of view of her territorial security but is also changing the strategic situation in the South Atlantic."

Message to British

"In an irrational world advancing more every day towards conditions of global conflict it would be really an enormity if we were to increase the areas of conflict, transferring them to the South Atlantic. This must not happen."

His Government accepted that sovereignty need not necessarily be introduced at the beginning of negotiations but could not accept a start that implied sovereignty was excluded from future negotiations.

He sent this message to the British public: "We commit ourselves formally before the international community not to use force except of a dissuasive or defensive character."

Argentina and UK may step up diplomatic contacts

BY JIMMY BURNS IN ARGENTINA AND HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY
IN LONDON

THE resumption of full diplomatic relations between Britain and Argentina came several steps closer yesterday.

The British government said it was willing to authorise an upgrading of the Argentine diplomatic presence in London and the establishment of relations to a consular level.

At the same time the Argentine Government repeated its willingness to allow direct contacts between British diplomats in Buenos Aires and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London.

Since the Argentine invasion of the Falklands in 1982 Britain has been represented in Argentina by Switzerland and Argentina in Britain by Brazil.

A Whitehall spokesman commented: "It is important that Britain be seen to be interested in the normalisation of relations."

While welcoming the interest in mediation between Britain and Argentina expressed recently by Sig Bettino Craxi, the Italian Prime Minister, the British side is keen to continue the series of secret, informal contacts between British and Argentine diplomats which

have been going on since President Raúl Alfonsín took office in December after eight years of erratic and unstable military dictatorship.

Argentina is seeking agreement with Britain on a deal under which Argentina would declare a formal cessation of hostilities in the South Atlantic against a lifting by Britain of the exclusion zone round the Falklands and a commitment to the gradual demilitarisation of the islands.

In a move which is unlikely to have been coincidental, Argentina has allowed the system of maintaining government overseers of British companies in Argentina to fall into abeyance. Additionally, British companies have found little difficulty in getting official permission to remit profits back to their British parent companies.

Underlining continuing public interest in Argentina in the diplomatic manoeuvres between the two capitals, an editorial in the pro-government Buenos Aires daily *La Nación* yesterday urged both sides to set aside old differences and respond to what it sees as Sr Alfonsín's initiative.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

4.2.84

FALKLANDS AID FOR RUSSIAN

By Our Port Stanley
Correspondent

A Royal Navy helicopter and a Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel combined in an 800-mile mercy dash to pick up a Russian, injured on board a fishing trawler in the South Atlantic.

The helicopter from the RFA *Olna*, on its way to Port Stanley, transferred the 26-year-old seaman from the trawler to the auxiliary. He was taken to Port Stanley for an operation and is reported to be seriously ill.

Why none of us, not even the Falklanders, has the right to exist on our own terms

Sir,—I am Argentine. I settled here 12 years ago as an architect. My wife is English and we are about to have our first baby. I hope it is evident from these facts that I have as great a personal interest in the improvement of Anglo-Argentine relations as Martin Dodds (Letters, February 1) professes to have. Unfortunately the attitudes behind his letter will contribute very little towards achieving it.

The gist of his letter is that discussions on sovereignty are not possible for three reasons: Argentina's claim to the islands is not as good as that of the islanders themselves; although Mr Alfonsin is a welcome change, the next government (which in his view can only be either Peronist or the army) will renege on any guarantees given by him; and there can be no lasting solution to the problem unless the islanders' right to exist on their terms is recognised.

Let us assume that Mexico was the world's first sea power during the eighteenth-century, and Britain a small nation of agricultural settlers. During the century, Mexico carried out a number of raids on Shetland and temporary occupation took place, although relinquished after a short time.

In the nineteenth-century Mexico then became the world's most powerful nation and invaded Shetland in 1833. The local garrison and settlers were deported to mainland Britain, and Mexican settlers moved in. Mexico then remained a first-rank power until 1945, while Britain never had much clout in the international scene. Mexico by now is no longer as powerful, but it has a blank cheque from the US to maintain the status-quo in Shetland.

If the above had happened, Shetland would by now be a "paradise" of haciendas and enchiladas, and the local amigos would most emphatically deny that Britain has any right to the islands. If this fantasy about Latinos claiming Shetland as home sounds absurd to your readership, it is exactly as absurd as the fact of British domination over the Falklands to the people of Argentina.

Over the last decades it has become evident that the islanders will not talk to anyone about transfer of sov-

ereignty: dictators are unpalatable, democrats unreliable and their guarantees not credible. On this line of thought, there must be quite a few Poles still wondering about the credibility or ultimate effectiveness of British and French guarantees.

The only lasting arrangements are those that correspond with the realities of the situation in question, and this has very little to do with the moral qualities or blemishes of the parties concerned. I do not like the Argentine generals any more than Mr Dodds does, but if he wants to live in the South American continent, he has to accept that continent's reality.

The islanders will not accept talks on anything other than the supply of necessities from the Argentine mainland. I appreciate that this might be of great importance to them and useful to Britain if it avoids having to ship the lavatory paper from Portsmouth; the relevance to Argentina, if sovereignty is not mentionable, escapes me.

If the Falklands are to be anything but part of Argentina's sovereign territory, I cannot imagine that the supply of groceries to a market of 1,800 people justifies talks between governments or the forfeiture by Argentina of the right to what it considers its territory. Argentina might be forced to enter into discussions through pressure on issues which have nothing to do with the islands — ie the external debt — but if that happens we are into the realm of stick-and-carrot negotiations, not the grand moral principles invoked by Mr Dodds.

He mentions the islanders' right to exist on their own terms. This is a privilege denied to most of us: I doubt if the Queen lives life on her own terms, and Indian peasants certainly do not. For most of us, life is coming to terms with the limitations of our reality, and making the most of the opportunities available within them: I fail to see why the Falkland Islanders are a different case from the rest of mankind.

In the short term, the islanders have got the situation exactly as they want it: the Union Jack flies, money is poured in, sovereignty is unmentionable to Mr Kinnock, Mrs Thatcher or anyone else concerned, bar Mr Alfonsin. How long will

this last, and what will come next is a different matter.

It would be more useful if Mr Dodds put his mind to thinking about these last points rather than in finding reasons to preserve the present situation.—Yours sincerely,

Guillermo Gil,
1 Lyndhurst Road,
London NW3.

Sir,—Since leaving the Falkland Islands to take up my post here last year, I have been often dismayed by inaccurate and tendentious Letters to the Editor. It would have been impossible to answer them all.

The letter you published on January 31 from Professor J. D. Smyth of London University seeks to frighten the very people who liberated my country in 1982—members of the British Task Force, who Smyth claims may contract hydatid disease from infected dogs.

An eradication programme was started by the Falklands Islands Government in 1970 and included a visit by the world's expert on this disease, from New Zealand.

Our "Hydatid News" of July 1983 reported: "We in the Falklands head the world in our efforts to get rid of this disease. The cycle is broken at two places: firstly, no offal from sheep or cattle is allowed to be fed to dogs. In fact it must, by law, be destroyed soon after removal from the carcass, and secondly all dogs in the islands are treated every six weeks to kill any tapeworms they may have inside them. Very few other countries in the world have this approach, but the success of the campaign can be seen in the reduction of the incidence of cysts in sheep at Stanley Butchery from 53 per cent in 1970 to 1.8 per cent in 1983."

I now have a home in Wales. The Veterinary Record of March 27, 1982, records the prevalence of hydatid disease in adult sheep in Breconshire and Radnorshire at 29 per cent.

I can only add that during the Argentine invasion, 20 police dogs were introduced and were not subject to our strict controls, which carry heavy penalties.—Yours faithfully,

Adrian Monk,
(Representative).
Falkland Islands
Government,
29 Tufton Street,
London SW 1.

British 'peace plan' sent to Argentina

By DAVID ADAMSON Diplomatic Correspondent

THE Foreign Office disclosed last night that it sent Argentina proposals last week for restoring normal relations between the two countries.

The proposals, surrounded by considerable secrecy, were sent through Switzerland, which looks after British interests in Argentina.

The move was an attempt to move forward and take advantage of what is felt to be the more friendly atmosphere created when Mrs Thatcher sent a congratulatory message to President Alfonsín on his inauguration in December.

"We look forward to receiving the Argentine reply," said a Foreign Office spokesman.

Plan rejected

Earlier in the day the Foreign Office had replied to statements made by President Alfonsín at a Press conference in Caracas where he is attending the inauguration of President Luisinchi of Venezuela.

President Alfonsín had said that a formal cessation of hostilities must be preceded by the ending of the Protection Zone, a halt to the fortification of the islands and the presence in them of some form of U.N. peacekeeping force.

The Foreign Office said there was no role for the United Nations in protecting the Falklands and Britain was not going to be "rushed" into lifting the 150-mile Protection Zone, although it was not envisaged that it would be maintained indefinitely.

APPROACH WELCOMED Pressure eases

OUR POLITICAL STAFF writes: The disclosure of the British approach to Argentina will ease pressure on Mrs Thatcher from both sides of the Commons.

The Prime Minister has been coming under increasing fire both from the Opposition and a significant minority of her own senior backbenchers to take the plunge and open a dialogue with Argentina.

And her impatient comments in Rome a week ago over President Alfonsín's apparent failure to respond to British initiatives caused some concern that the prospects for useful discussion might be dimming.

Rejection 'a pity'

CHRISTABEL KING in Caracas writes: Argentina's Foreign Minister, Mr Dante Caputo, yesterday described as a "pity" the British Government's rejection of the proposal for a United Nations peacekeeping force in the Falklands. "What we are looking for is a way to begin, but it does not mean that all doors are closed," he said.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

3.2.84

Crown Agents' future in privatisation plan

By ANNE SEGALL

THE fate of the Crown Agents hangs in the balance today following a report by merchant bankers Morgan Grenfell on the prospects of privatising the 150-year-old government agency which specialises in providing procurement and investment management services for other countries.

The privatisation plan is believed to be the Crown Agents' only hope of avoiding a complete shutdown in the aftermath of last summer's decision by the Sultan of Brunei to take his £3.5 billion investment account elsewhere, thus depriving the agents of a key source of income.

As a result of the Brunei withdrawal the Agents are believed to have slipped into the red to the tune of £1 million in 1983.

The privatisation plan is part of a wider scheme for survival which is being pushed in Whitehall by the Agents' new chairman, Peter Graham, previously chairman of Standard Chartered. He believes that a slimmed-down version of the organisation will be profitable.

Relations between the Crown Agents and Whitehall have been soured over the past decade by a series of financial disasters which have cost the taxpayer more than £200 million. Huge sums were lost in loans to

secondary banks and property companies during the mid-1970s. The Morgan Grenfell report is being sent initially to the Overseas Development Agency and then on to the Foreign Office and Treasury. A final decision on the future of the Agents is expected by the end of the month.

The privatisation plan envisages a reduction in the Agents' capital debt from around £20 million at present to less than £10 million through the sale of the plush Millbank headquarters in London and other underutilised property assets.

The Agents will then operate mainly from existing premises at Sutton, with just a small base in London to provide a contact point with overseas customers.

To fund the capital base, the Agents hope to issue up to £10 million worth of shares, with roughly half going to the Government, 20 p.c. to staff and the rest to private investors. A Government shareholding is regarded as essential at first to provide continuity and reassure overseas customers.

Drastic cuts in operating expenses, particularly staff costs, are also envisaged to boost profitability. Staffing levels will be reduced from 1,150 at present to 870 to help reduce overall operating costs by £7 million to roughly £14 million a year.

McMillan-Scott Associates Public Affairs

41 Whitehall London SW1A 2BZ Telephone: 01-930 6935

3.2.84

UN role for Falklands rejected

Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe yesterday turned down a call by Argentine President Raul Alfonsin for a United Nations role in the Falklands.

Sir Geoffrey reiterated Britain's "commitments to the islanders" but stressed he was anxious for improved relations with Argentina.

UN forces could be used as a guarantor for the islands' security, Sr Alfonsin had suggested. Page 4

UK rejects Alfonsin plan for UN role on Falklands

By Robert Graham

SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, the British Foreign Secretary, yesterday turned down a call by the new Argentine President, Sr Raul Alfonsin, for a United Nations role in breaking the deadlock between the two countries over the fate of the Falkland Islands.

President Alfonsin proposed on Wednesday that the United Nations act both as an intermediary to establish a dialogue and as possible guarantor of security on the islands through the despatch of troops there.

In turning down Sr Alfonsin's suggestion, Sir Geoffrey was careful to underline that Britain was anxious to improve relations with Argentina. A statement issued by the Foreign Office in his name said that Britain was determined "to stand by all our commitments to the islanders, at the same time seeking to improve bilateral relations with Argentina."

Reiterating Britain's view yesterday, Sir Geoffrey said it was accepted in the UN that administration and protection of the Falklands was a British responsibility. The correct way of establishing mutual confidence was to "seek to improve bilateral relations through the protecting powers (Switzerland and Brazil) and to move from that to try to establish a normal pattern of business between the two countries."

A further move through the Swiss-Brazil route was made by Britain last week.

Sr Alfonsin's call was made as he arrived in Venezuela for the inauguration yesterday of President Jaime Lusinchi. While stressing that Argentina "will never renounce its legitimate rights over the Malvinas," Sr Alfonsin proposed conversations on normalising relations to be conducted through the countries respective delegations to the UN. The talks would be under the auspices of UN resolutions approved in 1965 and 1982 urging both nations to negotiate their dispute over the ownership of the islands.

As a pre-condition, Britain would have to lift the 150 mile protection zone round the islands and discontinue fortification of the islands. UN forces could be used as a guarantee of security, Sr Alfonsin suggested. On this basis, Argentina would then be willing to end its state of hostilities

GUARDIAN

3.2.84

Britain reveals secret links with Argentina on Falklands

By Patrick Keatley,
Diplomatic Correspondent

The Foreign Office revealed last night that secret negotiations have been under way with Argentina's civilian government since it entered office two months ago, aimed at breaking the stalemate over the Falkland islands.

The Foreign Office statement did not go into details about the proposals being put forward through the Swiss embassy which represents British interests in Buenos Aires and the Brazilian embassy in London, which handles Argentine interests. The contacts are aimed at restoring "normal relations" between the two countries.

The contacts had been made almost immediately after the exchange of goodwill messages between Mrs Thatcher and President Alfonsin when he took office on December 10.

Sir Geoffrey Howe's "specific ideas" to improve relations transmitted through the Swiss embassy are in part aimed to facilitate trade. Britain is suggesting that import and export licences could be removed. Britain also proposed that the new civilian government of President Alfonsin might like to organise visits to the cemetery in the Falklands where about 200 Argentine servicemen were buried.



Raul Alfonsin: exchange of goodwill messages

Britain has also suggested that official overseers posted into the offices of British companies operating in Argentina, be removed. Counter-restrictions here could also be removed.

Sir Geoffrey Howe also suggested that the time has come to re-establish sea and air links between the Falkland Islands and the mainland, and that this could apply to communications between Argentina and Britain as well.

The strategy behind this British plan is the idea that establishing a normal pattern of business between the two countries is the most practical

way forward, rather than tackling problems at the UN.

However, Britain unequivocally rejected the proposal for a UN peacekeeping force to supervise the demilitarisation of the Falklands.

The Argentine proposals call for the ending of the present 150-mile protection zone around the islands, which is enforced by patrols of the Royal Navy and the RAF, an immediate halt to the fortification of the islands; and, the removal of the large military forces there. The best way of providing a guarantee, and supervision of these steps, would be to introduce a UN force.

The objective, as Argentina sees it, should be to "restore the situation existing before the 1982 conflict."

The six-point plan outlined by President Alfonsin drew a swift response from Sir Geoffrey Howe. His three-point reply, issued last night by the Foreign Office, said there is "no role for the UN."

Britain and Argentina are both represented in Caracas for the inauguration of President Lusinchi today. The British delegation is led by Sir Geoffrey's deputy, Baroness Young. Each side issued statements last night saying that there were no plans for the president or the minister of state to meet.

my name

Assoc. ICE, Bournemouth
19 JAN hotel

New CIVIL ENGINEER

INSTITUTION FORUM

check

Sappers establish Fortress Falklands

Total Royal Engineers' expenditure in the Falklands will amount to over £30M when the planned hand over of responsibility for works to the PSA takes place in April, a Civils meeting in Bournemouth was told.

This figure does not include the American AM2 matting for Port Stanley airfield, which cost £32M, the strategic airfield being constructed by private contractors at £240M, the new civilian houses, nor the floating transport harbour due out in the Falklands in March at an estimated cost of £25M.

But it does include work carried out by the Royal Engineers in the autumn of last year amounting to £12M, (calculated to be about £5M at normal commercial rates), and the two new radar stations being constructed on West Falkland on Byron Heights and Mount Alice at a cost of £6.5M.

This was explained by Col Robin Jukes-Hughes, commander of the Royal Engineers military works force, and Lt Col Richard Meston, who has just returned from a stint in the south Atlantic as CRE (works) Falklands, when they described projects carried out on the Falklands and South Georgia since autumn of 1982.

By the end of last summer the nine camps (involving 830 huts) and three coastals - one built in Britain under considerable difficulties - for 4000 men had been completed. Contractors at the strategic airfield have now finished the harbour road and started ground work for the runway (NCE last week). Meston, who as CRE (works), was senior consultant and resident engineer in the Falklands from August until November last year, described not only projects constructed, designed and maintained while he was there, but preparations for handing over to the PSA.

Both he and Jukes-Hughes explained that the new Canache base being developed to remove military presence from Port

Stanley and all but one of the barracks built out in the 'camp' and RAF Stanley (on which work is still being carried out), will be vacated by 1986 and concentrated into a single air-base and garrison at Mount Pleasant.

Meston's unit of 150 Sappers established a satellite communication terminal for cable and wireless in Stanley. The work involved a deep, circular, reinforced concrete foundation down to bedrock for the main antenna dish and sophisticated underground earthing arrangements. Plessey installed and commissioned the equipment.

The unit completed a new military wing at Stanley hospital so that the civilian staff and patients could reoccupy areas leased to the services after the war. Additional facilities were a large ward and new mains services including an 800KVA substation together with Portakabin offices and stores.

For the army, a large complex was completed at Murray Heights, just north of Port Stanley, as the main operating and maintenance base for all army helicopters in the Falklands. It consisted of a 600m² rubb shelter, office and stores, and two taxiways with pans for 12 Lynx and Gazelle helicopters. Again the project included the supply and distribution of electricity and water.

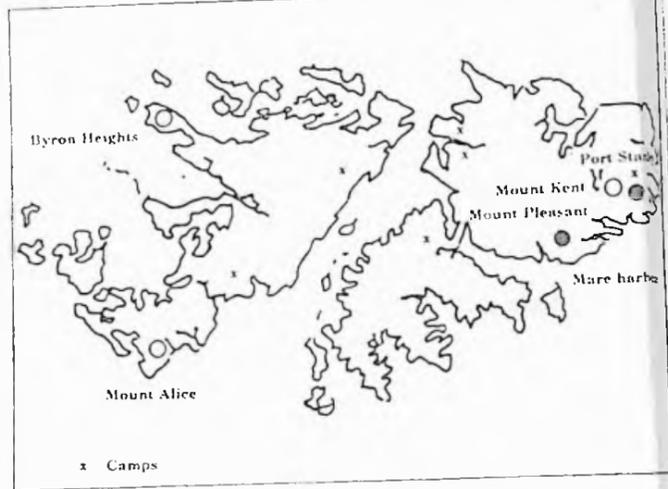
In the first phase of the military logistic development planned for the Canache, 5km east of Stanley, a heavy girder bridge was placed across the Canache waterway. It has shortened the haul distance for crushed rock and sand from the quarry on the airfield peninsula to the development area to about 1.5km each way. 'We used a very ancient NCK605 to drive the

Larsen piles for the abutments' said Meston 'and keeping the machine "on the road" was a nightmare!'

The major project completed for the Royal Air Force during Meston's tour was the north east dispersed parking area for three fighter aircraft at RAF Stanley. It consists of two taxiways and a large apron all surfaced with AM2.

four rubb shelters, offices and stores.

The other project of particular importance carried out for the RAF was some initial enhancement of the electrical, mechanical services at the Mount Kent early warning radar station, 10km west of Port Stanley. Designed and constructed in a hurry after the war various



Radar sites posed problems

Sites for two more early warning radar stations, at Byron Heights and Mount Alice, currently being constructed were selected last February by Col Robin Jukes-Hughes and two RAF officers. A detailed reconnaissance team was then sent down a month afterwards.

The design was not technically difficult, but it posed problems due to the remoteness of the sites and their exposed positions.

Living on remote mountain tops in the Falklands is not easy, he pointed out. So the military works force at Barton Stacey designed totally enclosed living and technical accommodation

complexes made entirely from containers, including containers with floors and roofs only for use in corridors and mess halls. The containers, trial assembled in Britain before being sent out, were completely fitted with wiring harnesses, plumbing and furniture in the UK to keep site work to a minimum.

Getting fuel for the generators up to the mountain tops was also a major design difficulty. Helicopters are far too scarce and expensive - it takes 18 Chinook loads a month to resupply Mount Kent at £7000 an hour - and army equipment is not powerful enough.

Various options were examined, 'such as ski lifts and mono-track railways',

aspects of the project were clearly inadequate for the longer term. Snow and ice caused the generators to fail periodically and the water supply had both frozen in winter and dried up in summer. Even the sewage has been known to freeze solid in the hose downstream of the high pressure ejector.

The project included insulation of the water source, trace heating of the pipework and vastly increased water storage. The problem with the sewage has been solved, but a major project will be required to overcome the problems of power generation. PSA intends to supply Mount Kent by overhead line from Mount Pleasant next year when the power station for the strategic airfield is commissioned.

Meston's design projects, currently being built at RAF Stanley include a liquid oxygen plant, an additional bulk fuel installation, a depot for the storage and servicing of aircraft missiles, buried communications system for the airfield, and improved technical accommodation for the Royal Air Force Rapier air defence squadron.

On the Canache, development

but eventually Jukes-Hughes' team decided that pumping at very high pressure using hydraulic pumps and hose was the best solution. A system using 5mm diameter hose rated at 12N/mm² was designed and tested and found to be satisfactory.

'Another problem which exercised us and the manufacturers was preventing the water system from freezing in the very low temperatures' said Jukes-Hughes. 'We overcame this by having a continuously circulating supply system, and by insulating and trace heating everything above ground. The design was not difficult, but much of it was new to us and in some cases, such as the fuel system, it had never been done before.'

includes construction of a new REME vehicle workshop, more covered stores accommodation for the Royal Engineer support squadron, pay post and provost offices and a large NAAFI complex, 5km of both high voltage power supply and water mains.

Outside Stanley, work is in progress on the Falkland Island trunk telephone system, an automated radio relay scheme to replace the present manned system and to provide secure communications throughout the islands.

At Kelly's Garden camp near San Carlos, the only permanent barracks to remain after 1986, a proper road circuit and a better water supply are being constructed. Operating work and maintenance includes looking after all the temporary camp sites, as well as running their power stations, water supply and refrigeration systems. At Port Stanley the Royal Engineers have also been looking after the containerised military power station and the water treatment plant. Combined civil and military plant capacity, said Meston, is now sufficient to bunker ships as well as shore requirements. ■

Matting maintenance

The 13ha of AM2 matting over the entire surface of the Port Stanley runway, bought from the US government at a cost of £32M, has, as forecast last year (NCE 17 February), created problems said Col Robin Jukes-Hughes.

Nevertheless, he pointed out, the completed runway has been in continuous use since October 1982, and is only meant to be in use for two or more years, until the new strategic airfield is fully operational in 1986.

Discussing the project in more detail Col Richard Meston said that the Vulcan crater was first repaired just after the war. Later, when the runway was strengthened by its AM2 capping, the crater area became a serious maintenance problem as the fill consolidated. Some remedial work was carried out last year, and settlement is now insignificant.

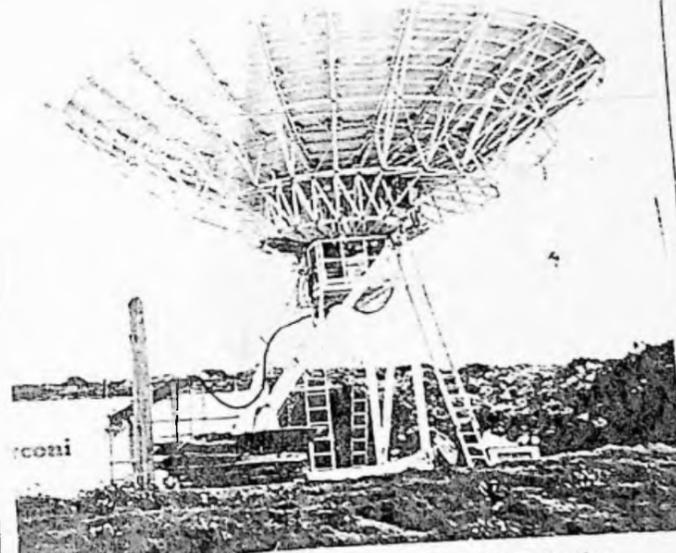
Meston then explained that two problems were produced by the almost constant use of this runway and the infrequent use

of the OS direction. The first is a dishing effect in the AM2 matting caused by local damage to the pavement either side of the runway centre near this threshold. Periodically the area has to be reinstated and new planks laid.

The second is a bowing effect in the matting caused by the aircraft braking after touchdown. A gradual creep of the AM2 over the surface occurs and is most noticeable at the centre line.

Eventually the welds between individual planks start to crack and the area has to be relaid.

The rotary hydraulic arrestor gears on the runway compound the damage because the heavy arrestor hooks on the Phantom tend to dent the planks as they strike the runway surface, seen as a curve in the transverse joints between planks. Damage can often be repaired with epoxy resin compounds but eventually plank replacement is again required.



The new satellite communications terminal at Port Stanley.

REES RECOGNITION: Innovative tunneller Donald Rees has been admitted to the Institution of Civil Engineers a Companion, having been sponsored by some of the highest names in the profession, three of them ex-presidents, acknowledging his standing as a tunnelling engineer of merit. Rees learnt civil engineering with his father's firm, William F Rees and the Sappers, spending much of the Second World War in India and Malaya. Following the war, Rees was in Jersey six years, tunnelling sewers. Concerned that few young miners were coming through into heading, he pioneered the use of pipejacking in Britain. Later his firm devised the 'man tunnel' concept for which he is best known, and set up Seer TV, a subsidiary that undertook television surveys of sewers. Aged 65, Rees has retired from the Rees Group but still works as a consultant.



Meshing management

'Management is the ability to be patient while others are being excessively long winded.' So said Professor Stephen Wearne at Yorkshire association meeting in Leeds, discussing the relationship, or lack of it, between management theory and civil engineering practice.

A survey of engineers he carried out five years ago revealed that the vast majority of engineers were concerned with issues of money, time and organisation. Yet

they did not describe themselves as managers. Many engineers, he said, regard management problems as a nuisance and management theory of little value.

Practitioners feel, Wearne believes, that theory is not related to what actually goes on in the field, and there is a need to close the gap between theory and practice.

Wearne showed that there are many areas of civil engineering practice where management research could be of use. Examples include organisation of measurement (sometimes it costs more to measure a bill item than to carry it out), innovation in

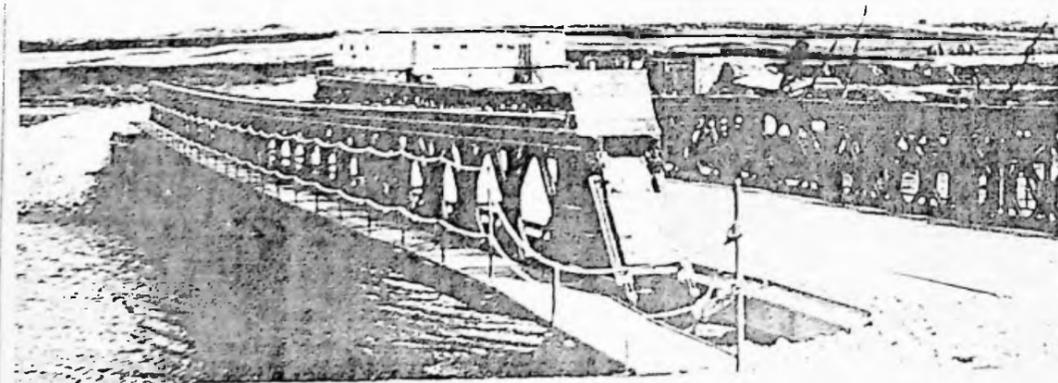
construction contracts and whose decisions control costs on site.

Many people have proposed that civil engineers should receive more management training. Wearne pointed out that this opened the questions of what should be taught and when. It is sometimes argued that students cannot be taught management and should receive training only after gaining experience. However, if management ideas are introduced at an early stage the engineer can relate his experiences in practice to the basic theory.

The best way to find out what civil engineers need is to ask them

Wearne argued. This was the reason behind the survey into the management content of civil engineering jobs (NCE 19 January) which is to reach ICE members in February. The survey forms part of a £1.3M programme of research into construction management financed by the Science & Engineering Research Council. The programme is controlled by a steering group comprising two academics and four industrialists.

The sample of 2000 (one in 20 members) is very large compared with most surveys of this type, and it is hoped that the response rate will exceed 10%.



Bridge over the Canache waterway.

South Georgia plan shelved after survey

One of the best kept secret Falkland projects has been the possibility of constructing a tactical airfield on South Georgia.

In November 1982 Lt Col Richard Meston returned to the south Atlantic, for the second time, to carry out a reconnaissance of South Georgia to confirm the feasibility of a tactical airfield on the island for use by C130 Hercules.

The success of this project was revealed at the Bournemouth ICE meeting. Earlier, in August and September 1982, said Meston, he had gone out to Falklands to carry out a detailed site investigation and outline design for the strategic airfield near Mount Pleasant.

Meston in turn followed close onto the map and helicopter survey by the team under Col Robin Jukes-Hughes. He had recommended Mount Pleasant, chosen from two selected sites, together with development of an associated deep water port at Mare harbour.

Meston's 20-man Mount Pleasant team, led by Royal Engineers, two chartered engineers, four technician officers and 12 technicians — surveyors, draughtsmen, and soil technicians, a senior engineer from the PSA and an RAF squadron leader. It was supported by survey ship HMS *Hecate*.

The meeting was told that having established the main runway centre line (proposed as 3353m but later reduced to 2590m), a 50m grid survey of the optimum airfield site was made, and a detailed soil survey carried out. Meanwhile the squadron leader defined the airspace clearance zone. The party then produced the outline plan of the site, located quarries, established the alignment of the access road from East Cove, and designed the bulk fuel handling facility at Mare harbour, an 8km land pipeline, and the road to Port Stanley.

A month later Meston was off again. This time he had a team of 12 men, mostly volunteers from the Mount Pleasant unit, plus another squadron leader who was an experienced Hercules pilot. They had to look at four possible South Georgia sites, identified in London desk studies, for an airfield, associated military base and port facilities. South Georgia, is a barren and mountainous sub Antarctic island 1400km from Port Stanley, covered with glaciers, ice caps and snow fields. None of the sites were going to be ideal.

Meston's party were taken to the island by HMS *Hecate*, a three day journey, and the sites were inspected by Meston from a Wasp helicopter. There was only one site with approaches likely to be acceptable, at the north west end

RIGHT: The only approachable site for an airfield on South Georgia.

BELOW: A Hercules confirming the viability of the runway alignment.



of the island. The party went ashore by helicopter and boat and camped under canvas for 17 days.

Situated between the Grace and Lucas glaciers on the southern shore of the Bay of Isles, the site is the largest flat area of sands and gravels in South Georgia, 3km long, up to 2km in width and with topography generally within $\pm 3m$. Melt water from the Grace glacier crosses the plain by river and a series of braided streams. The plain is unvegetated except for small areas of tussock grass.

The wildlife on the plain is almost unbelievable. Meston said: 'There were large harems of elephant seals on the beaches and their pups tended to move inland throughout the area. There were also some fur seals and sea lions. There was an enormous King penguin colony, one of the largest in the world, on a spur near the Lucas Glacier and a smaller colony of Gentoo penguins in the rocky area on the west of the plain.'

'Both species of penguin ambled across the plain between beach and colony throughout the day. Other birds seen in the Bay of Isles included various petrels, the brown skua, the antarctic tern and the wandering albatross.'

A proposed 1200m runway position on a 10/28 bearing was selected on the western side of the plain by taking account of the topography of the area, the known prevailing wind and the multitude of wildlife.

Arrangements were made with

RAF Stanley for a C130 aircraft on a mail drop to Grytviken (the only inhabited place on the island) to divert to the plain and test the approach proposals for each runway. Visibility was marginal when the aircraft arrived, but it completed and confirmed the acceptability of the runway alignment, although it crossed the Gentoo penguin colony.

The Royal Navy completed a thorough survey of the Bay of Isles and identified the best sea approach to the plain and the favoured anchorage as well as assisting with the location of the port facility.

The major engineering problems to be overcome in the design of the airfield were those produced by the harsh environment rather than those induced by applied loads. The effects of rain, snow, ground water and frost were particularly significant and the elevation of the aircraft manoeuvring areas 1m to 2m above the plain was the best general solution to prevent flooding, counter frost heave and ease snow clearance. The water table was generally only 0.5m below the surface of the plain at the time of the reconnaissance and drainage design was obviously crucial but complicated by the lack of reliable statistics on local conditions.

Three alternative pavement designs were considered — a natural surface of compacted granular material from the plain, an AM2 expedient surface as at

Stanley (although the cost of this was likely to be prohibitive), and an all weather asphalt surface, even though the use of asphalt plant in South Georgia would not be without problems.

A perimeter fence was clearly necessary to exclude the penguins and seals from the airfield, and snow fences were essential to minimise the build up of snow on the aircraft manoeuvring areas.

Meston's planning showed that the airfield could be constructed by a Royal Engineer field squadron reinforced by an additional troop and other specialist attachments. The duration of the project would vary from four summer months for a natural surface airfield to eight or 12 months spread over two or three years for an airfield with an all weather surface. The construction costs using military labour and plant were of the order of £0.25M for the natural surface, and £1.25M for the all weather option.

The degree of utilisation of the airfield could not be forecast with confidence as so little was known about the capricious local weather. A permanent presence on the ground would certainly have been required to keep the airfield open in winter, and night use would have been particularly hazardous as artificial lights in the area tended to attract the birds. The Ministry of Defence decided not to pursue the project any further and the report has been shelved. ■

Daily Telegraph
2nd February 1984

ALFONSIN TALKS HINT IN CARACAS

By CHRISTABEL KING
in Caracas, Venezuela

BARONESS YOUNG,
Foreign Office minister, and President Alfonsin of Argentina arrived in Caracas yesterday amid speculation that Venezuela could prove neutral ground for informal peace talks.

Both are in Venezuela for the inauguration today of Senor Jaime Lusinchi as President. Baroness Young is staying in the country for four days before flying to Mexico at the weekend.

A spokesman for the British Embassy in Caracas said he knew of no plans for any meeting between Baroness Young and Sr Alfonsin. But observers believe there will be ample opportunity for informal talks.

Three conditions

President Alfonsin yesterday laid down three conditions before his Government will declare the end of hostilities.

He told a Press conference that Britain must abandon the 150-mile protection zone and must stop fortifying the island.

"All of this is a danger not just to Argentina but also the whole of South America" he said. He added that he would like to see some form of United Nations peace keeping force in the islands. "This would give the Argentines some kind of guarantee and then they could declare the end of hostilities." But Argentina was never going to renounce or disclaim sovereignty over the islands.

Asked if talks with Britain were possible President Alfonsin said: "It is very difficult but it's not impossible. We would like to break the impasse."

Baroness Young made a three-day tour of the Falklands early last month, but gave no hint of a dialogue with Argentina.

SAILOR KILLED

By Our Port Stanley
Correspondent

Artificer Apprentice John Mills, 18, from Felpham, Bognor, serving aboard the destroyer Fife, 5,440 tons, died yesterday after suffering burns and injuries while carrying out pre-flight checks of a Sea-Cat missile, in the Falklands.

Standard
2nd February 1984

Argentina wants UN force for Falklands

CARACAS, Thursday
ARGENTINE President
Raul Alfonsin called today
for a United Nations peace-
keeping force to supervise
demilitarisation of the
Falkland Islands.

President Alfonsin, in Vene-
zuela to attend the inaugura-
tion of President Jaime
Lusinchi, repeated previous
Argentine demands that

Britain lift its exclusion zone
around the disputed South
Atlantic islands and stop for-
tifying them.

Argentina required guaran-
tees before it could sign a
formal cessation of hostilities
as requested by Britain, he
said.

"The establishment of a
United Nations peacekeeping
force would, for us, solve the
problem of a formal cessation

of hostilities," he added.

Argentina's civilian govern-
ment elected in December
after nearly eight years of
military rule, has said that a
settlement to the dispute
should be negotiated within
the framework of UN resolu-
tions.

Sovereignty

President Alfonsin said
Argentina's sovereignty claims
over the islands would remain
a fundamental principle in
any negotiations.

Britain, which has control-
led the Falklands for 150 years,
has said it will not discuss
sovereignty.

He repeated Argentina's
support for the peace effort
in Central America and
called on the United States
to adopt a more flexible atti-
tude towards Socialist govern-
ments in the region.

He said the possibility of
U.S. intervention in Central
America was hindering efforts
to settle the conflict. (Reuter).

A start

PRESIDENT Raul Alfonsin
of Argentina has made
an impressive start as the
new leader of his country.
Not only was he democrati-
cally elected; he has demon-
strated his concern for the
well-being of all his people
and is making a brave and
bold bid to root out those
responsible for the worst
excesses of the military
junta.

So the Prime Minister
should not immediately
rebuff Alfonsin's tentative
peace moves over the Falk-
lands, given the difficulties
he faces at home. His latest
call is for a UN peace keep-
ing force to supervise the
demilitarisation of the
islands as a pre-condition of
signing a peace treaty (as
well as the lifting of the ex-
clusion zone and an end to
the fortifying of the Falk-
lands).

Mrs Thatcher would do well
to regard the President's
remarks as the unveiling of
a hard-line opening bargain-
ing stance from which it
might be possible to negotiate
further and achieve a formal
end to the technical state of
hostilities that still exists.

Falklands action fed into campaign model

By Air Cdre G. S. COOPER Defence Staff

MAJOR discrepancies in the number of Argentine combat aircraft shot down during the Falklands war have not been, and may never be, resolved, the Commons Defence Committee was told yesterday at the start of its investigation into the performance of weapons systems in the conflict.

The Defence Ministry stands by the British Task Force's claim for 60 Skyhawks and Mirages in the White Paper on "The Lessons of the Falklands Campaign."

After taking the reports of Argentine pilots into account, the authors of "Air War South Atlantic," Mr Jeffrey Ethell and Mr Alfred Price, concluded that only 27 of such aircraft were shot down.

In giving evidence, Mr W. D. Reeves, the Ministry's Assistant Under Secretary for Resources and Programmes, said that although it was an excellent book further study would be needed.

The Defence Operational Analysis Establishment at West Byfleet is to complete a study of the air war by the end of the year.

Committee's concern

The unit's computerised campaign model, used to predict the outcome of future tactical conflicts, is being updated.

The Defence Committee, chaired by Sir Humphrey Atkins, is concerned that the validity of the DOAE assessments will be undermined through using exaggerated claims of kills in the South Atlantic.

Concern was also expressed by Mr Winston Churchill that the rates of use of ammunition, provisioned for the South Atlantic on expenditure calculated for a major war in Europe, proved to be inadequate for a comparatively minor out-of-area conflict.

TENSION IN ARGENTINA OVER UNIONS

By CRISTINA BONASEGNA in Buenos Aires

TENSION between the Argentine Government and trade unions mounted yesterday following a Labour Ministry decision to appoint trustees to some trade associations.

The decision came as Congress negotiations over a crucial Bill to reorganise labour unions remained in deadlock.

President Raul Alfonsin overcame one of the main obstacles of his new administration when the Senate finally approved the controversial Government Bill to reform the military justice code, which will now be applied on court martialling armed forces officers for violations of human rights in the 1970s.

President Alfonsin, who left for Caracas yesterday to attend the inauguration ceremony of the new Venezuelan president Jaime Lusinchi, has expressed concern at a delay in Congress to pass about 40 Bills he submitted for approval shortly after taking office on Dec. 10.

'State of alert'

The Government launched an offensive programme on Monday and Tuesday by appointing trustees at three unions representing telephone operators, petrol and paperworkers.

The nationwide General Confederation of Labour — which supports the opposition Peronist party—retaliated by declaring a "state of alert."

The union criticised the official move and said it would not surrender its buildings to the trustees. The Government, meanwhile, ordered the necessary legal steps to be taken to enforce its decree.

The Government proposal, which seriously challenges the powers of the present Peronist labour leaders, is stalled in committee at the Lower House, despite feverish negotiations.

RECREATING ARGENTINA

IT IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT for the British to comment on events in Argentina without some aspect of the Falklands question creeping indirectly in. It would be a good idea nevertheless to try. Argentina has a new government struggling with long-accumulated evils, and it deserves some attention. First, Señor RAUL ALFONSIN gives every impression of being that rare man in a Spanish context, a serious liberal democrat somewhere to the Left of centre, with a profound regard for the rule of law. He is also the first man of liberal stamp to hold power at a time when both the Army and Peronists were deeply discredited. Cautiously he is working towards the trial and punishment of those responsible under the last régime for mass murder. The bodies of those who disappeared are being identified in their graves, and it has become clear that the Viola/Galtieri/Videla régime committed at least the equivalent of the Soviet massacre at Katyn.

It is a source of ironic satisfaction that the Conservative Government of Mrs THATCHER should have effectively destroyed a régime which the Left merely denounced. Incidentally Mrs THATCHER habitually referred to the then rulers as "fascists," something which seemed at the time rather extravagant. As the dead are disinterred the term seems most apt. There is a lesson here for the United States and for its talented but sometimes mistaken Mrs JEANNE KIRKPATRICK in particular. Mrs KIRKPATRICK is fond in her opposition to Communists of drawing a distinction between "totalitarian governments" which are bad, and "authoritarian governments" with which we can go along. The Argentine junta was one of her favourite examples of the second category. Such an approach is not simply wrong on moral grounds, it is disastrous for policy. The bad old American habit of cherishing "our bastard" from the Sicilian mafia in the 1940s through to FERDINAND MARCOS is continued by a soft spot for the "authoritarian generals" in the Argentine and limpness in objecting to the fearful and murderous Major D'AUBUISSON in El Salvador.

The instincts of those Americans who believe that if you touch tar you will be defiled is correct. A defensive policy against Soviet ambitions in South America will best come through allies whom one can be seen with unashamed. Liberal democrats have a hard time of it in the Hispanic world, but it is made much harder by the readiness of the rest of us to rub along too tolerantly with a hard man in gold braid. Never mind the wretchedness of such an attitude, it is a folly upon which no friendship or security can ever be built. We need as friends in poor and vulnerable countries those who have their own people behind them and who have no catalogue of crime waiting for exposure. Señor ALFONSIN, like the King of Spain, represents a piece of good news and good luck for more people than his compatriots. One hopes for more like them in the Hispanic world.

Associated Fisheries better than forecast and raises payment

Associated Fisheries finished the year to September 30 1983 well ahead of forecast. It was helped in this by a Government grant to aid the fishing industry and by an improved performance from its other activities, which more than offset heavy trawling losses and a fall in food processing profits.

Turnover for the 12 months rose from £69.23m to £73.15m and the group's pre-tax result advanced £714,000 to £2.57m. At the interim stage profits were £610,000 higher at £1m and the directors said an outcome of £1.55m should again be attainable for the year.

Yearly earnings increased from 10.01p to 10.58p per 25p share and the final dividend payment is 2.25p for a 2.5p (2.25p) total.

The cost of sales amounted to £61.02m (£55.71m) for a gross profit of £12.14m (£13.51m), and after net operating expenses of £10.06m (£12m) operating profits expanded from £1.51m to £2.07m. These, however, included the £521,000 Government grant this time, without which the result showed only a marginal improvement at £1.55m (£1.51m).

The pre-tax figure included a £104,000 (£49,000) contribution from share of associates and investment income of £852,000 (£850,000). It was after interest of £461,000 (£552,000) and subject to tax of £671,000 (£57,000). There were minority interests of £12,000 (same) and extraordinary items of £176,000 (£783,000) which left the attributable balance up from £1m to £1.71m.

The directors report that it is intended to implement an accelerated disposal programme as to five of the group's six remaining freezer vessels in

British United Trawlers. Application for de-commissioning grants in respect of these has recently been made under the fishing vessels (financial assistance) scheme. They add that a satisfactory level of financial liquidity was maintained throughout the year under review.

● comment

A casualty of the cod war and the oil crisis of a decade ago, AF is now heading for much richer waters on its present course. Once it completes its planned ship sales, the loss-making trawler activities will comprise a single profitable freezer vessel and 11 so-called "wets," which have a good chance of returning to the black if fish prices hold up. If so, the company will at last have thrown off the albatross of heavy trawling losses hanging round its neck, leaving a handsome pile of cash and a string of profitable on-shore businesses, most of which are fish-related. While the temporary UK government subsidy will not likely be repeated, there is a good chance of some UK/EEC restructuring grants to add some further spice. Overriding this somewhat bullish outlook lies one uncertainty—the intentions of Eastern Produce, the largest single shareholder with a stake of more than 40 per cent. With its tea interests on the boil EP is certainly flush enough to consider a full bid for a company whose net asset value is conservatively valued at around 135p. AF's 87p shares are selling on a p/e of 8 (stated earnings) while the yield is 4 per cent—a rating which appears to be based on past performance rather than immediate prospects.

Fisheries deal given cool reception

BY OUR COMMODITIES STAFF

FOR INFORMATION

THE EEC fisheries deal reached on Tuesday night was given a cool reception by the British fishing industry yesterday.

"We must recognise that it is infinitely better to have agreement in January than have to wait until December as we did last year," Mr Nigel Atkins, director general of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations, said. "But we have reservations in some key areas."

Chief among these were the fact that only an interim share-out had been agreed for North Sea herring and that talks on improving the EEC share of North Sea cod under an existing pact with Norway had not been completed.

There is also concern about continuing arrangements for closures of herring fishing in the central North Sea in late summer and sprat fishing north of Scotland in the winter. Both these issues have been referred

	EEC FISH QUOTAS 1984					Denmark	Ireland	Total
	(Main species in tonnes with 1983 levels in brackets)							
	W. Germany	France	Netherlands	Belgium	UK			
Cod	84,380 (82,980)	36,390 (35,240)	23,230 (26,250)	8,230 (9,150)	117,910 (131,070)	234,350 (215,690)	11,520 (11,720)	516,010 (512,100)
Haddock	7,110 (7,120)	19,340 (19,940)	1,120 (1,120)	1,670 (1,700)	140,840 (145,410)	18,615 (17,880)	4,370 (4,730)	193,065 (197,900)
Saithe	21,100 (18,760)	69,850 (64,340)	190 (170)	80 (80)	20,860 (19,060)	7,550 (6,630)	3,060 (3,060)	122,700 (112,100)
Whiting	3,900 (4,600)	37,510 (41,550)	8,630 (10,190)	3,680 (4,300)	79,480 (90,200)	34,190 (36,880)	17,800 (17,800)	185,190 (205,520)
Plaice	9,860 (8,900)	7,250 (7,340)	66,890 (60,420)	12,030 (11,080)	53,710 (49,070)	46,110 (43,730)	3,070 (3,070)	198,920 (183,610)
Mackerel	25,600 (24,000)	17,100 (16,000)	37,300 (35,000)	100 (—)	234,700 (220,000)	7,400 (6,500)	85,300 (80,000)	407,500 (381,500)
Herring	6,890 (—)	7,150 (—)	14,290 (—)	2,490 (—)	12,520 (—)	10,930 (—)	— (—)	54,270 (—)

for scientific review.

Agreement on dividing the EEC's fish quotas for all eight main species was reached after member states accepted upward revisions of the Total Allowable Catches in several areas, writes Ivo Dawnay in Brussels.

Atlantic mackerel, for example, was increased by

25,000 tonnes to 400,000 tonnes, with a special 7,400 tonnes, for Denmark in the North Sea.

The main area of contention is still herring. Although Tuesday's agreement secures fishing until the end of July, a renewed share-out battle is expected with the Norwegians.

Commission officials have

refused to acknowledge reports that the seven-month settlement of the Norwegian herring issue was won on the tacit understanding that Norway's 15,000-tonnes quota in EEC waters may be supplemented by a further 7,000-10,000 tonne catch in the Norwegian fleet's home seas.

Officers disclose plan to pull in outlying forces

New stronghold adds £25m to Falklands airport

By John Ezard

The estimated cost for the new Falklands strategic airport has risen from £215 million to £240 million since it began three months ago because of plans to move most of the garrison from outlying positions to a single stronghold barracks near the airport by 1986, Ministry of Defence officials said last night. It will be partly offset by savings on military accommodation elsewhere.

The rise was disclosed in papers given at an Institution of Civil Engineers meeting by Colonel Robin Jukes-Hughes and Lieutenant Colonel Richard Meston, both of the Royal Engineers. Their addresses are reported in today's issue of the specialist magazine *New Civil Engineer*.

Col. Jukes-Hughes, who is a fellow of the institution, is headquarters commander of the Royal Engineers military works force based at Drayton, Hampshire. As the most senior engineer in the Falklands, he examined possible airport sites in July, 1982, influenced the choice and did the work which was the basis of the plan accepted by Mrs Thatcher's Cabinet last year. Lieut-Col. Meston was the RE works commander in the Falklands until recently.

The *New Civil Engineer* reports that they told the meeting that all but one of the garrison groups now in the Falklands Camp (countryside) would be pulled out by 1986. They would be housed first in quarters near RAF Stanley, then at a "single all-base and garrison" near the new airport. The Portakabin base at San Carlos would, however, be retained.

Col. Jukes-Hughes indicated that the originally planned runway length was to cover "maximum catastrophic needs" but it was cut by 3,000ft to 8,500ft because of cash restraints.

"It initially cost £215 million but this is now an estimated £240 million," he told the meeting.

He said the 155,000 square yards of matting for the existing runway had cost £32 million. It had been continuously used since October, 1982, and was meant to be in use for only two or three years. His paper discussed technical problems which it had caused.

He said he had chosen the sites for two radar stations,

costing £6.5 million, last February. A detailed reconnaissance team was sent in March. They were on remote mountains in the West Falklands and fuel had to be pumped at very high pressure. Options like ski-lifts and mono-track railways had been rejected.

According to the *New Civil Engineer*, Colonel Meston led a secret South Georgia reconnaissance in November, 1982. The 20-man team found "almost unbelievable wildlife" including "large harems" of elephant seals on the beaches. But the terrain was difficult, the weather unpredictable for an all-year military airfield and the project dangerous because artificial lights in the area tended to attract birds. The airfield would have taken C-130 Hercules transporters.

The Property Services Agency, which has taken over the project from the RE, said yesterday: "The figure is still £215 million. We, not Col. Jukes-Hughes, control the costs of this project."

But a Defence Ministry official confirmed that the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, was aware of it when he made a three-day visit to the Falklands earlier last month. "I did not come as a shock to him," the official said.

Michael White adds: Mr Heseltine's non-stop flight from the Falklands to Britain last month cost £90,000 in direct operating costs compared with the £650 which an additional non-VIP would cost to send home via Ascension Island.

Mr John Stanley, Mr Heseltine's Minister of State, gave the figure in a Commons written reply to the junior Labour defence spokesman, Mr Kevin McNamara, last night.

Mr Stanley emphasised that Mr Heseltine's RAF Nimrod surveillance aircraft "was coming back from an operational detachment and no additional cost arose." The flight, which involved three refuellings in mid-air, was billed as a record breaker.

It was not possible to provide precise estimates of average costs, he told Mr McNamara, because the air-sea costs varied.

"The other method is by RAF Hercules to Ascension Island and then by VC10 to the UK, for which the average extra cost to the department per passenger is some £650," said Mr Stanley.

Red tape restored to its peacetime place

By David Fairhall, Defence Correspondent

The improvisation and cutting of red tape during the Falklands war could not be repeated in peacetime, a Ministry of Defence witness told MPs yesterday.

The business of procuring weapons for the armed forces would have to return to the "usual channels."

Mr William Reeves, assistant under secretary for resources and programmes at the ministry had been asked by Mr Michael Marshall, the Conservative MP for Arundel, whether the speed and flexibility with which the military establishment had responded to the Falklands crisis, could herald some permanent improvement in procurement procedures.

But Mr Reeves said that during the war, corners had deliberately been cut, cash limits removed, contracts placed informally over the telephone, equipment developed and cleared with limited testing "for emergency use only."

This could not set a permanent standard, and Mr Reeves rejected Mr Marshall's description of "business as usual" in favour of "a return to businesslike behaviour."

The exchange took place at the first sitting of the Commons all-party defence committee.

Other subjects on the committee's agenda are an investigation of the physical security of military installations in the UK, presumably including the Greenham Common cruise missile base, and an inquiry into the Government's decision to abandon the Nato commitment to 3 per cent real annual growth in defence expenditure from 1986.

● Britain's Rhine Army wants permission to build a complete village near Paderborn on its Sennelager training ranges in West Germany, at a cost of £6 million, to practise urban combat.

According to *Jane's Defence Weekly*, which disclosed the plan, people in the nearby village of Augustdorf are worried at the prospect of noise and inconvenience but the Army argues that it must practise fighting in the sort of villages that are scattered across the north German plain.

2.2

EVENING STANDARD

2.2.84

RAY CONNOLLY had reservations in his article last Monday about the Falklands conflict but now feels that it may have been positive after all in that it restored democracy to Argentina. That is probably true.

But may I point out to Mr Connolly that the British Task Force restored democracy to the Falkland Islands first.
—Adrian Monk, Representative Falkland Island Government, Tufon Street, SW1.

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When a U-turn is a sign of courage



FALKLANDS SURRENDER:
How will those who were angry at the rush to arms feel if one day it is irrefutably shown that our victory was a turning point in the return of democracy to Argentina?

Americans say "hindsight is twenty-twenty.")
At the time of the war I was, like many others, angry at what I saw as a rush to arms. I still don't believe the Falklands themselves were worth fighting over, and far less do I believe in dying for the principle of the Falklands. (Those who go to war over one principle would, if their actions were carried to the logical conclusion, presumably roast the end of the world over another.)

But it is a fact that Gallieri's humiliation by the Task Force was very largely responsible for the fall of the Junta (another group of men who couldn't admit to having made a mistake) and there on to the return of democracy.

The Task Force did not set out to bring democracy back to Argentina, but indirectly that has been one of the results of the war. So how will I, and those who think like me, feel if one day it is irrefutably shown that the historical turning point in the reversal of fascism in South America was the battle for the Falklands? Will we have the guts to admit that history may have proved us wrong, or will we hide behind excuses about that eventually having been entirely unforeseeable?

Honest

For the man in the street it is easy to have a change of mind. His decisions, do not often affect those outside his immediate circle. But for the public figure, upon whose actions might depend the lives of millions of millions, to admit a mistake is to risk a serious wounding of a career.

How much more honest would public life become if politicians, union leaders, church leaders and the rest were able to come clean more often and say "All right, I did my best. I made a decision which I have since had cause to regret. I got it wrong. I'm human." Perhaps if that were to happen more frequently there might be a lifting of that general cynicism shown by the public for those in the business of decision-making.

to suggest that the Church was bowing to media pressure. But it would have been heartening to have read that there were those in the Catholic hierarchy who felt that perhaps the letter of the law was being complied to rather than its spirit in that first decision.

Unfortunately the Church, like all vast institutions (and many not so vast) does not encourage a belief in error. To admit to making mistakes tends to undermine authority and Churches like Governments avoid that situation at all costs.

Humbug

When did you last hear a politician admit to having radically changed his mind? Not recently. Whether in or out of office politicians put great emphasis on their consistency throughout life. When they charge parties it is invariably because the party has changed, not themselves. All their comrades and colleagues are out of step, never them.

Any intelligent person can see that this is complete humbug. The MP who does not reconsider his opinions and actions as he travels through life must be suffering from a kind of political tunnel vision and is quite the most unsuitable person to be governing anything.

HOW often do you hear someone in public life admit to having been wrong? Hardly ever.

To err is human, we are told, but apparently to admit an error publicly is a manifestation of at best dangerous inconsistency and at worst culpable failure.

And yet in the ordinary course of life how frequently do we change our minds about issues large and small as new information and changed conditions reach us?

It seems to me that if we are honest with ourselves we must be aware of the continual process of reassessment with which an alert brain is forever coping. And yet for a public figure to express doubts about positions he has stood for is seen by the world (a world made up of other doubt-ridden, erring human beings) as a sign of weakness.

No-one ever wants to admit that they have made a mistake. Last week even the Catholic Church preferred to talk about "a second medical opinion" when the Bishop of Nottingham reversed an earlier decision disallowing a paralysed man from marrying in the Church. No doubt the Bishop acted in all sincerity in his interpretation of Canon Law, and it would be church-

THE STANDARD, MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 1984

RAY  CONNOLLY EVERY MONDAY

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Daily Mail
3.2.84

Falklands talks held in secret

BRITAIN and Argentina have been conducting secret talks about the future of the Falkland Islands, for nearly two months, the Foreign Office revealed last night.

The negotiations covered all issues except sovereignty, said a spokesman.

The FO last week put forward 'specific ideas' for normalising relations between the two countries after the 1982 Falklands war in discussions being handled by the 'protecting power' embassies of Switzerland and Brazil, which represent Britain and Argentina in each other's countries.

'We look forward to receiving the Argentine reply,' the spokesman added.

The Prime Minister's message to President Raul Alfonsin on his election in December was seen as the 'first step' towards better relations. 'Since then we have been actively exploring ways of carrying this forward,' said the spokesman.

Earlier Mrs Thatcher told the Commons the Government believed it was in everybody's interests to 'establish better relations with the Argentine.' But she added: 'We have no

intention of negotiating on sovereignty.'

The Prime Minister's comments followed Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe's brusque rejection of President Alfonsin's proposal for direct peace talks on the Falklands at the United Nations.

His second olive branch, for a new climate of peace to be established through a UN peace-keeping force in the islands, was also given the brush-off.

Sir Geoffrey said: 'It has over many years been accepted in the United Nations that the administration and protection of the Falklands is a clear British responsibility. It follows that there is no role for the United Nations in the protection of the islands.'

Falklands to be towed back home

The Government announced yesterday that it intends to remove Airstrip Two - formerly known as The Falkland Islands - from its current location in the South Atlantic, tow it northwards and eventually moor it in Colwyn Bay.

This massive undertaking will involve costs that are in the finest traditions of Falklands expenditure. Current estimates range between £3 billion and £420 billion, and Treasury sources report an atmosphere of considerable uncertainty as to possible implications for the rate of income tax.

The remains of the Royal Navy are believed to have informed the Ministry of Peace that the towing operation will require the use of all their remaining surface vessels in a tug-boat capacity. This will involve the postponement or cancellation of contracts with the governments of Luxembourg, Switzerland, Bolivia and Czechoslovakia, which between them were on the point of purchasing the remnants of the British fleet.

Expert commentators see the repositioning of Airstrip Two as the first stage in a major drive to win back some of the conflict and battle business currently being scooped by the Lebanon. (See page 4).

Former Field-Marshal Bruce Kent, the Minister of Peace, commented yesterday: "We believe that we have tried and tested facilities for waging war on Airstrip Two, and if we can only bring them closer to major world markets we must be onto a winner. Airstrip Two has, quite apart from its lavishly-appointed international airport, excellent beaches suitable for amphibious landing, coupled with state-of-the-art boggy terrain, lots of hills for marching up and then down again, and an economically-sized civilian population who know how to react in a time of crisis.

"Not only that, but we have trained personnel ready to operate and administer the battle zones, and I am sure that we could arrange the hire of actual fighting troops on a kill-or-return basis.

"It is absolutely essential," he

continued, "to restore the British warfaring industry to its traditional position as the world's leader. Far too much of our business has been going to foreign competitors in recent years, and even though British troops have been involved on a piecemeal basis in the Lebanon, South America, the Gulf States, Cyprus and Germany, there is no doubt that employment prospects here at home would be considerably brightened if Airstrip Two was closer at hand."

In Buenos Aires the Argentine Prime Minister, Senor Ardiles, declared that his nation's claim to sovereignty of the Elvinos, as they are called by Johnny Gaucho, would not be affected by their proposed removal. Indeed, he added, were the islands to reappear in Colwyn Bay his nation might be forced to add most of north Wales to the territories which it claims as its own. He warned that marauding bands of scrap metal dealers might be appearing over the western horizon at any moment.

At home, trades union reaction to the proposed land transfer was hostile. Algy Maitland, leader of the Warmonger's Union, remarked: "I'm appalled by the Government's hasty and ill-considered action, which has been undertaken without any of the consultation we would have hoped for.

"My members feel that there are many areas of Britain which could be used for such a scheme, such as the centre of Birmingham or the Hackney Marshes, and which are perfectly suited for heavy artillery bombardment and the deployment of tactical nuclear missiles." There are also suburban areas of Liverpool and South London which should have been considered, he added, since they are already well stocked with battle-hardened militias.

Maitland hinted that there would be strong resistance to any use of foreign troops on Airstrip Two, commenting: "We can't just have any old continental soldier coming here and getting killed when the job could have gone to one of our own boys."

Daily Mail
1.2.84

£90,000 VIP flight

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Heseltine's non-stop flight from the Falklands to Britain last month cost £90,000, it was disclosed last night.

Defence officials claimed that the 17-hour trip by a Nimrod reconnaissance plane was cheaper than the normal five-times a week flights to

the Falklands by Hercules at £100,000 a time.

But these aircraft fly full. Mr Heseltine was the only passenger on the Nimrod, which refuelled three times.

Ministers say that because the Nimrod was on 'operational detachment' no additional cost was involved.

Daily Mail
2.2.84

OPEN SPACE

BBC 2, 7.5: Falkland Sound to Plymouth Sound. Lt David Tinker, RN, was killed in action aboard HMS Glamorgan on June 12, 1982. This Open Space special presents a dramatisation of his letters home in the play Falkland Sound/Voces de Malvinas which was originally banned in Plymouth as opening too many still raw wounds.

However, the acclaimed Royal Court production, with its anti-war sentiments, eventually did arrive at the Serenade Theatre giving the local people a chance to see and comment on it.

Following the performance, which was filmed last December, presenter Jenni Murray asked the audience for their reactions. Some sharply criticise the play as being an inaccurate picture of Navy wives. But one Navy wife stood up and claimed that the play had

not gone far enough in showing how the women suffered — from too much media coverage on the one hand and not enough official information on the other.

A Falkland islander, 'proud to be British', now wishes the place less full of troops and strangers . . . 'it will never be the same again.'

Three young Naval officers who opted out after the war (and were seen on last night's Open Space) felt strongly that there should have been more talk between governments and less haste to fight. Altogether a fascinating postscript, nearly two years on. . . .

FINANCIAL TIMES

1.2.84

Falklands flight tab

The non-stop 17 hr 15 min flight from the Falklands to Britain last week by Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine cost the taxpayer £90,000

DAILY TELEGRAPH

1.2.84

Cost of the Falklands

From Sir THOMAS BAZLEY

SIR—Wouldn't it be relevant to know whether the realistic alternatives were ever spelled out clearly and firmly to the Falkland Islanders? One would have been the present "Fortress Falklands" policy; given the crippling costs of this, it would surely have been reasonable to warn them that no British Government would be likely to continue such a policy indefinitely.

Another alternative would be assisted emigration within the Commonwealth.

T. S. BAZLEY
Hatherop, Glos.

GUARDIAN

1.2.84

Why Argentina must also listen to the islanders

Sir, — The welcome return of democracy to Argentina in the reassuringly sincere style of Mr Alfonsín marks an opportunity for constructive dialogue which it would be irresponsible to ignore.

Nevertheless to urge that we should consider a "deal" with Argentina over the Falklands — as is now frequently implied in many so-called "liberal" statements — on the grounds that Mr Alfonsín will be more decent to the islanders than the generals, is to place much more blind faith in the permanence of Argentina's rediscovered freedom than can be justified from her history — or even from current signs of political impatience within the republic.

Mr Alfonsín clearly does not consider himself bound by the decisions of his unsavoury predecessors. No doubt the next Peronist government or military junta will feel equally free to repudiate any agreements he makes with Britain or anyone else over the status of the Falklands.

In the rush to be magnanimous — and what an old-fashioned patronising attitude lies behind that word — there may be a danger of forgetting that the Falklands issue has become a problem for this decade primarily because of Argentine nationalist mythology; perhaps secondarily because of affronted British pride; but not at all because of any intrinsic fault or unreasonableness on the part of the islanders themselves.

The islands may have become a political headache for Britain, but once again this is not the fault of the islanders. It is essentially a self-inflicted problem for Britain arising from past indifference and neglect of inherited responsibilities.

I could concur in some "deal" with Argentina on sovereignty, which remains the nub of the problem, only if I were persuaded that Argentina's legal, historical, and moral claim to the islands was at least as good as that of the islanders themselves; and if I was equally convinced that the terms of such a deal were acceptable to the islanders. In nearly 20 years of association with the Falklands, I have seen no credible evidence of either.

To negotiate an agreement which sacrificed the islanders' rights to live in peace in their own islands under the government of their choice, for the sake of easing the largely self-created problems of Argentina and Britain, would be cynically selfish and undemocratically inconsistent with our welcoming of Mr Alfonsín's "return to democracy."

There can be no honest, just or lasting solution to the Falklands problem until their right to exist on their own terms is recognised by the international community, and is not dependent on the political expediency of individual parties or powers in either Britain or Argentina.

Yes, it is important to talk, and listen, to Argentina and her people, but it is necessary for Argentina not only to talk to, but also to listen to and understand the islanders. Stability and peace in future relations between Argentina and the Falklands depend on mutual trust and respect. Argentina has a lot of ground to make up. The election, and survival in power, of Alfonsín could give a good chance of making a constructive beginning to this process. — Yours sincerely,

Martin J. Dodds.
(Member, UK Falkland Islands Committee),
Sedburgh, Cumbria.

No Falklands hurry, says Kinnock

By John Ezard

The Labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, said last night that there was no need for hurry in solving the Falklands problem. He praised the Government's "mature and temperate response" so far to the new democratic Argentinian government.

He suggested that the issue of Argentine sovereignty over the Falklands might now be a "dated virility symbol" which President Alfonsín's government might be prepared to discard. He emphasised that no settlement could be negotiated without the closest consultation with Falklanders.

Mr Kinnock was being interviewed on the BBC External

Service's Calling the Falklands. The interview was broadcast earlier to Latin American countries, including Argentina.

He said that the Falklanders must have a "very influential role" in determining their own future. This was a basic condition that Britain could not move away from in any talks or discussions with Argentina.

Britain must assure itself that the Alfonsín regime would be stable and long-lived, or that it would be replaced by a similar democratic government. "It really would be a gamble with the future if that kind of safeguard did not exist," he said.

Mr Kinnock said that the Government must pay serious

attention to any Argentinian overtures, but "without setting any close time. I don't think there is a hurry about this as far as the Argentine or British governments are concerned.

Asked about Labour policy on sovereignty, he said: "It may not retain the significance that it had when the brasshats were running Argentina. In some ways the very fact of the election of a democratic government in Argentina makes it difficult to talk in that vocabulary, which to some extent is dated. There may be other options.

"The Argentine government does not now need the borrowed virility of the idea that sovereignty is at stake."

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February 1984

Reader's Digest

FLYING SQUAD

Life-Savers

PAGE 56

War Hero With a Screwdriver

PAGE 87

THE SNOOPY STORY

PAGE 77

Face of the Falklands

PAGE 48

HE PROBES THE SECRETS OF CREATION

PAGE 39

Stephen Hawking Probes the Heart of Creation	39
A Rose for Miss Caroline	45
Changing Face of the Falklands	48
Life's Like That	54
Derby's Life-Saving Flying Squad	56
Lessons from an Old Lag	62
Pride v. Prosperity: a Tale of Two Nations	67
Dangerous Drivers on the High Seas	72
Happiness Is . . . Snoopy	77
Time to Prepare	82
Into Battle With a Screwdriver	87
My Very Special Cat	93
Laughter, the Best Medicine	97
Return to Poland	99
Why Men Must Be Men	105
A Case of Double Identity	109
Clean Up Your Act!	117
Lost in a Frozen Wilderness	119
Love Among the Haddock	127
Immunization, Still Vital for Your Child	131
Royal Treasures of Korea	136
How to Live to a Hundred or More	141
When Airline Workers Said Thank You - With a Plane	145
Shape of Things to Come	151
The Composer Who Set England To Music	154

Special Feature

BUSHFIRE!

by DAVID MOLLER

When Ash Wednesday brought Australia a holocaust of horror

PAGE 161

£100 for Your Letter, 1; It Pays to Enrich Your Word Power, 7; Money's Worth, 13; Points to Ponder, 35

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Changing Face of the Falklands

BY SUSAN CROSLAND

In the aftermath of war, this remote community faces its uncertain future with tangled emotions

FROM the flight deck of the RAF's C-130 Hercules I look down on the large, empty island of East Falkland, with a cluster of houses—Port Stanley—laid out on one side of a harbour. A couple of miles outside the town is Stanley airport, crowded with Phantom and Harrier jets, ringed by Rapier anti-aircraft missiles. After 13 hours of cramped torture on the military flight

from Ascension Island, I stagger from the Hercules into October sunlight and a cold dry wind.

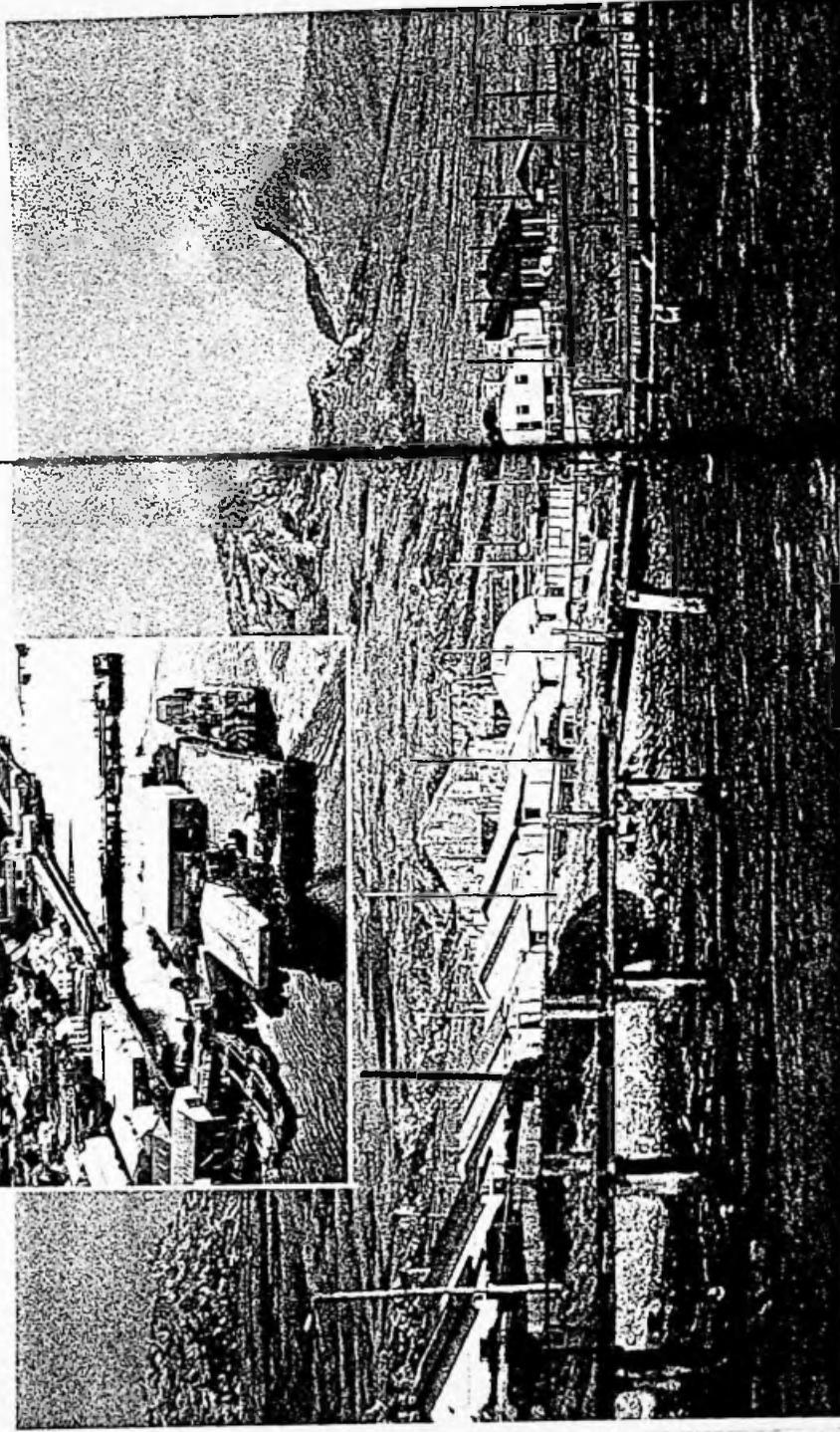
The road from Stanley airport to the town is ruptured by military transport grinding back and forth. Barbed wire bearing little coloured placards faces miles of land around Stanley, and all the best beaches. Green tags mean: "These areas have been exhaustively checked by the Royal Engineers and are believed to be safe." Blue: "There is no evidence at all that these areas contain minefields or booby traps. However, they may contain unexploded bombs, ammunition, missiles etc." Red: "These areas are known to contain mines or booby traps. DO NOT ENTER."

The Royal Engineers repeatedly issue revised maps. Even so, no one is meant to go walking alone. On the day I arrive, three civilians are hiking in a blue area. Two find themselves standing among mines. They freeze. The third goes for help: a helicopter lifts his companions out of the mines.

Lying 400 miles off Argentina at the bottom tip of South America, the two large and 200 small islands of the Falklands are together less than the size of Wales. Made up of moorland scored with stone runs and streams, these largely barren islands have no native land mammals, no

AMERICAN-BORN journalist Susan Crosland is the widow of former Foreign Secretary Anthony Crosland; her 1982 biography, *Tommy Crosland* (Cape), became a best-seller. Under the name Susan Barnes, she has also written numerous profiles for *The Sunday Times*, a selection of which was published in a book, *Behind the Image* (Cape), in 1974.

Scattered houses on the coastline near Stanley and (inset) an aerial view of the harbour



native trees. The majority of the 1,800 Islanders live in settlements in the "camp"—the countryside—ranching sheep. Inter-linking roads are non-existent, so travel between communities is by light aircraft, Land Rover, Honda or horse.

Port Stanley is where the action is. It has 700 inhabitants (plus most of the 4,000 military now engaged in defending the islands). Some 20 warships and merchant ships are anchored in the harbour. Above them tower three astounding vessels: called "coastals," they are barges stacked with metal containers, each coastal housing, feeding, entertaining 930 British servicemen.

Stanley proper is enchanting. Painted with mostly primary colours, the clapboard or tin houses are built along streets that run parallel to the harbour, each street higher up the hill so that the glass front porches can catch the sun. Most of the shrapnel damage has now been repaired.

Islanders' crime consists of petty thieving and drunkenness. In the food and drink section of Stanley's only department store, I ask if I can see the Black List. Under a very old law, a person with a drink problem can be put on the list; six or 12 months is written by the name, during which time the person cannot buy alcohol. The Black List circulates to the three pubs, four shops and the two hotels, the Upland Goose and Malvina House. I see there are two women among some 20 names on the list.

I stay at the Upland Goose, run by

Nanette and Desmond King and their three daughters. It sleeps 31. Trade was good before the war, when tourists came via Argentina. This week there are only eight guests, all on business. Nanette King is a kelper—as those born in the Falklands call themselves, after the seaweed that surrounds their islands. She belongs to one of the old-established families who came here in 1842. "There were ten or eleven families who owned the land. All but one still own the land."

Social Strata. There is a sharp divide between employers and employees. In the upper tier are the Islander landowners, plus the top expatriates—managers of the Falkland Islands Company (the biggest owner and employer of all), senior civil servants, doctors. In the lower tier are the other Islanders. But the barrier has begun to crumble.

"A lot of it stems from the Governor," Mrs King says. "He has widened that tight little list his predecessors used to entertain. And that attitude goes right through the community." Since the war, Sir Rex Hunt has been styled Civil Commissioner, as he now shares duties with the commander of the British forces on the island. "But people still call him Governor."

Islanders know everything about everyone else. Marriage between relations is common. Stanley's telephone book looks like a toy book. The locals seldom bother asking the only operator for a number. "I went out for dinner with the manager of the

Falkland Islands Company," says Monsignor Spraggon, the urbane, jovial priest who has been there for years. "Soon after I arrived, the telephone rang. It was for me. The person had just picked up the phone and said: 'Get me Monsignor.'" Does the lack of privacy compel the Islanders to be puritanical? "No, we're fairly loose," says Graham Bound, the young editor of *Pequain News*, the Falklands' only newspaper, a photostatted weekly. "We have a lot of alcoholism, a high divorce rate." Women are so outnumbered that they quickly rearm.

Graham and I keep our anoraks on while visiting Monsignor in his new house. Its construction began two years ago, but he is still waiting for a heating system and chimney. Why does it take so long to complete a simple house? Primarily the time it takes for the materials to be shipped out from England. Also the kelper temperament.

"There's a certain amount of apathy," says Monsignor. "People here have never known want, hunger or unemployment. They haven't had to make the effort that they have to in the big outside world. They're not lazy, but they don't kill themselves; it isn't necessary."

Healthy and self-reliant, the Islanders walk everywhere in Stanley: because distances are small, because half the roads are blocked for repair or being churned by military vehicles.

The people who complain loudest about the military presence are the

British expatriates who came here for the stress-free atmosphere but never committed themselves as settlers. "I feel really resentful," says one of them, "like a child whose toy is taken away." But some of the young like the outside interest brought by the forces' presence: "Social life has zipped up enormously."

For Sonia and Brian Paul, with



Susan Crosland at Goose Green

daughters aged 13 and 15, this outside stimulation will cut two ways when the girls are a year or so older. "The incredible ratio—about 200 men to one girl—is exciting for the girls," says Sonia, "but a horrific problem for the parents."

The junior school in Stanley is staffed by seven teachers, the senior school by eight. Travelling teachers fly to each settlement for one week in four, and some of the camp children are sent to school in Stanley. Any

child wanting "A" levels and higher education goes abroad.

"Outsiders think that because there's no daily newspaper here, no television, Islanders don't know anything," says Charles Keenleyside, a technician with Cable and Wireless who trained in England after schooling in Stanley. "When expatriates find I'm articulate, they assume I must have gone to school in Britain. But people here regularly listen to the news and are well-informed."

Expatriates are paid twice as much as Islanders for doing exactly the same job. As ordinary Islanders grow aware of their own worth, bitterness mounts. "It's not jealousy," says Graham Bound. "It's a subtle thing—the distinction made between those people and us."

The new "strategic" airfield is being built by contract labour, shipped from Britain and paid immensely high wages. Islanders apply for the

jobs and are turned down. "It may pain Sir Rex Hunt to do it," says one British technician, "but he encourages contractors not to employ Falkland Islanders: it would wreck the islands' economy."

So the large landowners' interests remain central. The high-quality wool that they ship to Bradford is the Falklands' only trade. As there is no unemployment, there is no spare labour. If Islanders go to work at the airfield, who will shear the sheep?

I climb into an army helicopter to fly to a settlement on West Falkland. Skimming low, we skirt the water where 49 men died when the landing ships *Sir Galahad* and *Sir Tristram* were hit, then turn west over moorland pock-marked with puddles, intersected with straight fences needed to gather the sheep.

West Falkland's cliffs rise directly from the sea. We fly over armed soldiers on a military exercise running

New Settlers

THE civilian population of the Falkland Islands has increased by only 65 since the end of hostilities with Argentina in June 1982.

In London, the Islands' offices have a big backlog of emigrant applicants ranging from unemployed people in Britain to wealthy widows from America. Others include Hong Kong Chinese and families from India wishing to set up take-away curry restaurants and laundries.

The London representative of the Falkland Islands government, Adrian Monk, says: "People don't realize the accommodation problems. For instance, we need skilled tradesmen and although we may have more than 20 carpenters on our books, we cannot find places for them all."

Many applicants have been attracted by the decision of the Falkland Islands Company to sell off plots to individuals wishing to start businesses and small farms. But government officials stress that the purchasers would still need another source of income to survive.

—David Brown in *Sunday Telegraph*

between ridges, others crawling on their stomachs. The training is real enough: two days later three British soldiers are badly wounded in a similar exercise; two weeks after that a jet fighter crashes, killing its crew.

We look down on Hill Cove settlement, cream-coloured houses with red roofs. Begun in 1868, the settlement is managed by Tim and Sally Blake. Tim works with his employees gathering sheep for lamb-marking, shearing and so on. The farm covers 146,000 acres. Today an acre sells at around £3, including stock.

Sally Blake walks out to greet our helicopter—friendly, open face, red hair (most Islanders have dark hair), hands worn by hard work. Like all owner/managers' wives, she keeps an open house for travellers. Staying in some of the eight bedrooms of "the big house" are the flying doctor; an ecologist; a Ministry of Defence man.

Solitary Tribute. Between Goose Green and Darwin on our way back to Stanley, we fly low over the gully where Colonel H. Jones of 2 Para was shot while leading an attack on the adjacent ridge. He was posthumously awarded the VC. Gorse grows in the gully. A small cross stands where it overlooks Goose Green on one side, Darwin on the other. The Argentine cemetery not far away, which cannot be seen from Goose Green and Darwin, has 280 crosses.

CONDENSED FROM HARPERS & QUEEN, DECEMBER 1982. © 1983 HARPERS & QUEEN. PHOTOGRAPHS, GRAHAM BOUND. © HARPERS & QUEEN, PAGE 48 (INSET TIC)

Falkland Islanders are caught up in a tangle of emotions. They prefer the presence of the military to the return of the Argentines: "I'd feel deeply humiliated and helpless at seeing the Argentines swaggering in. It would scotch any aspirations we have."

They have a profound mistrust of the Foreign Office. And they no longer think Britain has a moral obligation to protect their colony at all costs; they can see the British taxpayer's point of view, that £1 million per Islander per year is a lot. Before the war they were not costing Britain money. All they were asking for—and still are asking for—is development of light industry in their islands.

They know that to the Argentines "negotiation" means transfer of sovereignty. Even if some sort of lease-back were assured, the vast majority would opt for repatriation—to Britain, New Zealand. Yet they keep on hoping that someone somewhere will negotiate something so that they can live and work more or less as they have done.

"It's an extraordinary magnetic place for us—not a logical thing at all," says one Islander. "There's an astonishing amount of physical freedom, even with the minefields. Any place is close to the sea: empty, remote, stark. That appeals to me."

Once you've been there, it's hard to get it out of your mind.

A GOOD memory is not as good as a little ink. —Chinese proverb

Vietnamese immigrant plan angers Falklands

By PATRICK WATTS in Port Stanley

A ROW is brewing in the Falklands over the planned immigration of several Vietnamese families currently living with relations in Old Goole South Yorkshire.

So intense has the matter become within the Islands that the Sheep Owners' Association has sent a circular to all its members condemning the move by the administration to permit the seven Vietnamese to take up residence.

This has prompted the chairman of the Islands' Immigration Advisors Committee to threatened to resign.

World Service

Mr Roland, 36, is already in the Falklands, employed as a house parent in the Stanley school hostel, while his Vietnamese wife Cam-Tu, 32, and her two-year-old son Michael should be on their way to the Islands shortly.

It is Cam-Tu's two sisters and their husbands and families that are causing the problems.

They were kicked out of Vietnam by the Communist government after the the Vietnamese authorities heard a broadcast by Mr Dowling on the B B C World Service, in which he talked of the plans of his relations to join him.

"I am amazed that some people even were frowning on

the fact that my wife would be joining me," said Mr Dowling. "She has every right as a British citizen." Mrs Dowling is a qualified social worker.

Her two sisters, Hoa, 35, and Ghia, 23, are both English teachers and would be an asset to Falklands farms where teachers are scarce, said Mr Dowling.

In Stanley, Mr Sydney Miller, a member of the Sheep Owners' Association, said: "We simply don't want Vietnamese in the Falklands, especially when we know there are several hundred Britishers wanting to emigrate to the Falklands."

Dialy Telegraph
31/3/84



SHIP SHAKE: Cleansea, I, which is to leave for the Antarctic on August 1 at the start of the *In the Footsteps of Scott* Antarctic Expedition 1984-1986, crashes into the Thames bank on the way into St Katherine's Dock yesterday. Roger Maar and Robert Swan will sail on it before following Scott's route to the South Pole on foot. Cleansea escaped with scraped paint. The river wall lost some bricks.

George Walden on Hongkong and Falklands parallels

The dangers of digging in

Two years after the invasion, the Falklanders are as safe as the day the last Argentine withdrew. But their real security depends on the stability of opinion in Britain. The Falkland Islanders lobby is alive and alert for any signs of backsliding. But there is now a British Islanders lobby, too. It is composed mainly of people who were not against the war, and know the price of peace. But they are disturbed by a nagging sense of disproportion. The new lobby grows every time some item of equipment to sustain the Falklanders is paraded across our TV screens with price tag attached. It grows when we are reminded that the cost to date is £1m per inhabitant. It will grow again when a deal with China over Hongkong is announced.

The doubts can still be silenced by a simple question: how do you compute the cost of the defence of sovereign territory? Yet, as the war recedes, the strength of this and other apparently unanswerable arguments could ebb with it.

To the layman, sovereignty seems an absolute concept: you either have it, or don't. If you do, you keep it, especially if the population wants you to. Yet later this month, Sir Geoffrey Howe will be negotiating with the Chinese in Peking about Hongkong. Why are we contemplating "giving away" the sovereignty of Hongkong Island? For the most practical of reasons: you give away what you have and you can have only what you can hold. And we cannot hold Hongkong. In politics as in ordinary life, most absolutes are rather relative.

The Falklands, technically speaking, like Hongkong Island, are ours

in perpetuity. But our ability to hold them is relative, too. This is not because the island cannot be defended - they can, indefinitely. But only at staggering cost.

Self-determination is another absolute which is easily *relativized*. There are good reasons for its not applying in Hongkong, and, anyway, the Chinese would not stand for it. But self-determination in the Falklands cannot be a dogma either, for different reasons. Don Pacifico and *civis romanus* are all very well, but the British mind would presumably reject a situation in which the last farmer on the island might decide on his own account to stay, thus incurring the massive costs of his defence. At what number between 1,800 and one does the principle of self-determination cease to operate?

Absolute refusal to discuss sovereignty is a relatively recent phenomenon. Within a few years, we have gone from a readiness to countenance leaseback to relentlessly insisting on sovereignty. During that period, in a purely legal sense, nothing has changed; in real life the situation could hardly be more different. A criminally irresponsible invasion resulted in 255 British dead. In political terms, that alone justifies a reversion to absolutist attitudes.

But you cannot begin a long process of negotiation by melting at the first smile.

What can we do? It is now often suggested that the ball is in our court. In fact the Argentines' court is littered with balls that could take years for them to return.

Yet the British Government must have a positive policy - otherwise the whole issue could turn sour. It would be damaging to the sense of national purpose shown during the war itself if domestic recrimination were to follow the euphoria of victory. People understand that sovereignty cannot just be slapped back on to the table. But if it dawns on them that there really is no end to the dispute or the expenditure, even though Argentina continues to behave responsibly, the erosion of public support for the Falklanders could gather pace.

We are well dug in militarily; there is no need for us to dig ourselves in too deeply politically. What we should do is to reiterate tirelessly that it is up to the Argentines to change the broader context in the long term. They need to prove to us, and to the Falklanders themselves, that they are reasonable people with honourable intentions. After what they did that will take time. We can help the Argentines to help themselves by not appearing unresponsive. But it is for them to conciliate us, not vice versa.

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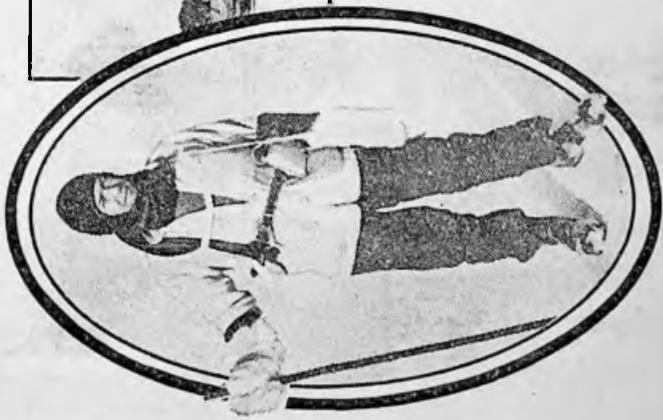
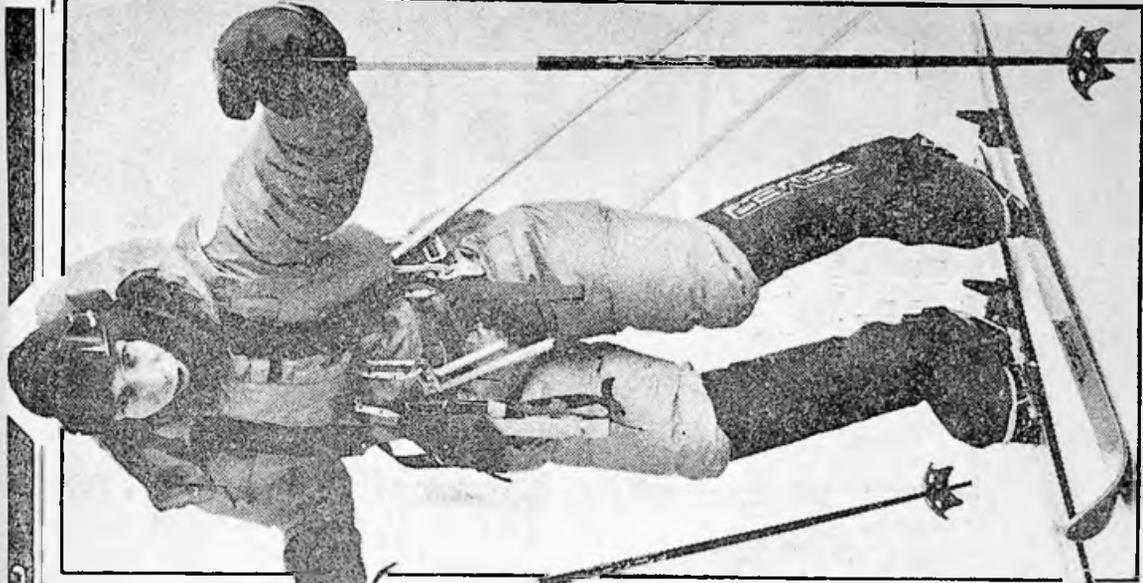
The author, Conservative MP for Buckingham, was Private Secretary to Lord Carrington when he was Foreign Secretary.

It also shows that it is the practical political context that predominates. This context is now evolving rapidly, in three ways. The Argentine regime has changed for the better: feelers are out on both sides. Second, though our own ability and will to defend the islanders has not changed, the full extent of the cost is only beginning to emerge. Lastly, and most importantly, there is a noticeable evolution in public opinion. Recognition of the paramountcy of the wishes of the islanders is one thing, but in the last resort, it is the British people and Parliament that are paramount. The Falkland Islanders are now all full British citizens, too.

This new context is already increasing the pressure on the Government to compromise. But governments exist to lead, as well as be led, and there are moments when decency matters at least as much as political expediency.

There is something mildly indecent about being asked to give the Argentines today what they tried to seize by force two years ago, just because they are now asking nicely. The new regime is only months old, in a country with a history of chronic political instability. This is not a reason for British obduracy.

Cruellest walk in history



FOLLOWING in famous foot-steps. An undaunted Roger Mear (right) hopes to follow Captain Scott (left) to the South Pole. Above: the last journey as Scott leads his men to disappointment and death.

IT WAS perhaps the most heroic expedition ever undertaken.

Even today, 72 years after he perished in the merciless Antarctic wastelands, only a few miles from his base camp, Captain Scott's doomed journey to the South Pole remains a legendary adventure.

Now it's to be done all over again the hard way. Without even the huskies, the horses or the team that Scott gathered together.

It will be simply two young Englishmen, Robert Swan, 27, and Roger Mear, 34, retracing Scott's footsteps across the 850 treacherous and forbidding miles from Ross Island to the Pole.

More recent expeditions have used massive back-up teams, snow buggies, planes and transporters, as well as every conceivable piece of technological equipment available.

But Swan and Mear will be travelling on foot, pulling all their equipment behind them on six-foot sledges. Walking all the way.

It is an adventure that defies the imagination. Like Scott, they will be confronted by temperatures plunging to minus 60 degrees Centigrade, and 100 mile-an-hour gales.

Romance

What in the world makes them do it? Why do they want to take on a journey that even Scott, had he not been driven by the urge to be first to the Pole, would have been daunted by?

Says Mear: 'Ever since I went on an adventure holiday to North Wales when I was 12 I've been in love with the Captain Scott spirit. In spite of all the danger there's a great romance about his type of exploit.'

'And the South Pole is the ultimate.'

'We can't repeat what he did, but we want to restore the odds. Obviously we'll have some sort of radio communication, and our equipment is infinitely superior, not to mention the fact that there are planes in the area.'

'But by carrying everything ourselves and not setting up a chain of depots we're evening things out.'

Because of the weight they will carry it will be impossible for them to manage the return trip on foot, so they will be flown out from the South Pole.

When Mear talks of the expedition and of the Antarctic, a touch of awe enters his voice. It was when he met Swan working for the British Antarctic Survey for a couple of years that they first hatched the idea of making the trip themselves. As they were snowbound inside the huts, sometimes for days on end, they began to make their plans.

This weekend those dreams take yet another step nearer to reality

TWO YOUNG BRITONS ... RETRACING THE STEPS OF CAPTAIN SCOTT

by Simon
Kinnersley

when the ship they are to use to transport them and their equipment down to the Antarctic — a former Hull trawler — moors at London's St Katherine's Dock, appropriately enough, the resting place for Scott's Discovery.

For the moment at least the biggest problem confronting Swan and Mear is not the Antarctic climate, but money. The ship, still unnamed and awaiting a sponsor, cost £500,000—raised through private donation. It will take another £15,000 to reinforce her sides and bow against ice, and then the actual expedition which will begin when they set sail in August, will cost a further £189,000.

They don't talk about the possibility of dying on the expedition, rather they 'might blow it'.

Spirit

'Technically', says Mear with classic under-statement, 'it's just a matter of walking to the South Pole on a pair of skis. It's the obstacles that we'll meet along the way that can make things go wrong. You've got to make sure you can meet all eventualities.'

This means having the sort of self-contained sleeping bags that even if their tent blows away they will still survive. It means remembering never to pick up metal objects with bare hands because they'll stick to your skin.

When they eventually set out across Antarctica—and it won't be until October 1985—they've set themselves a target of averaging 11.2 miles per day—the same as Scott—and on that reckoning the journey should take them 75 days.

It shows the kind of indomitable eccentric spirit that has enabled Britain to lead the way for centuries of great adventures... climbing Everest, going round the world from top to bottom, running along the Himalayas or walking the full length of the American continent. But the challenge of the South Pole remains one of the greatest of them all. Why?

'On this one,' says Mear, 'you have to put your trust in your own experience and ability. There's no back up. No chance of anyone picking up the pieces. We have one chance.'

Daily Mail
30th March
1984

HOWE OFF TO CHINA AS MARKETS CRASH

Fear of pull-out from Hongkong

FOREIGN Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe is to have talks with Chinese leaders in Peking next month 'on all aspects of Hongkong's future,' it was announced yesterday.

Details of his first direct intervention in the Crown Colony's future were given amid growing fears that there could be a large-scale pull-out of major financial ventures from Hongkong.

They came after Whitehall was stunned by the decision of the colony's oldest trading firm Jardine Matheson to switch its holding company to Bermuda.

The impact on investors was dramatic. In the first hour of trading on the Hongkong stock market, the Hang Seng index plummeted 72.95 points — the biggest drop for six months. Despite a partial recovery the market closed 61.76 points down.

Equally ominous was the decision of the large trading company Hutchison Whampoa to pay an unprecedented bonus dividend instead of ploughing profits back into



Sir Geoffrey . . . talks

kong on April 11 and 12 the Foreign Secretary will stress the essential framework the British Government is determined to work out.

Sir Geoffrey is committed to a solution acceptable to the colony and the Commons.

His three days in Hongkong from April 18 to 20 after his talks in Peking will expose the Foreign Secretary to widespread criticism that people are being kept in the dark about their future.

Asked about the impact of the Jardine Matheson switch, the Foreign Office said yesterday that it was a commercial decision. 'The Government is conscious of Hongkong's concern about the future and believes they can best be met by seeking a negotiated agreement acceptable to the British Parliament, the Government of China and the people of Hongkong.'

Sir Geoffrey is also visiting South Korea and Japan.

City—Page 35

By JOHN DICKIE, Diplomatic Correspondent

operations in the colony.

With 92 per cent. of the territory having its lease terminated in 1997, Sir Geoffrey will have a mammoth task trying to shore up the confidence of Hongkong and its 5.3 million inhabitants.

Although he will not em-

bark on direct negotiations with the Chinese, the Foreign Secretary will be discussing the shape of the package in detail when he meets China's Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian from April 15 to 18.

Following the 12th round of talks between the Chinese and British delegations on Hong-

It's D-day for Argentine debt

DON'T cry for the banks who have loaned money to Argentina — yet. Start at midnight tonight.

Argentina has paid no interest since October on the \$44bn. (£35.5bn.) debt they owe to U.S. British and other banks. If none is forthcoming by the end of the first quarter, today, the loans should be reclassified as 'non-performing'. Under US banking law the outstanding interest must then appear in the accounts as losses. Such losses could even make some banks technically insolvent.

In New York last night the 11 main U.S. banks involved were meeting to seek a last-ditch solution. One possibility is an emergency bridging loan

from the U.S. Treasury.

In Britain, Lloyds Bank International is a lead manager, but will not say how deeply they are in.

One bank with a big involvement is America's Manufacturers Hanover with an exposure of \$1.32bn. (£915m.). They are keeping cool and say: 'There is still time and there are still people working on it.'

Everyone is playing down the possibility of serious repercussions. Bankers try to forget that Brazilian, Mexican and Chilean loan debt repayments are looming. They total much more than the Argentine debt.

KENNETH ALLEN

Daily Mail
30th March
1984

Daily Mail
29th March
1984

Falkland phoneys

FALKLANDS: Troops can find no evidence of a visit by militant protesters from Buenos Aires who claim to have planted an Argentine flag in the past week.

Tam follows a tradition of backbench dissent

Peter Riddell assesses Tam Dalyell's lone campaign on the sinking of the Belgrano

IF ONE of these days you see a man with a familiar, slightly aggrieved look on his face, and a jumble of papers under his arm, dashing for a train, it could be Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, off on another foray of what has become one of the most remarkable personal campaigns in British politics.

By the end of April, Mr Dalyell will have addressed 47 meetings within six months—all devoted to the single theme of the need for a public inquiry into the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser Belgrano by a British submarine in May 1982, during the Falklands war.

His case is that Mrs Thatcher ordered the sinking of the cruiser, knowing not only that the ship had started to head for home but also that a Peruvian peace plan was on the point of acceptance by the Argentinian junta. Both these claims have been rejected by the Government.

To Mr Dalyell's critics—and there are many on the Conservative benches—his campaign has become a misguided obsession. Hence, a groan tends to come from the Tory side when he rises in the Commons.

To his friends, including a sizeable group of sympathisers on the Labour benches, Mr Dalyell is a fierce battler for truth, persistent in the face of stonewalling denials.

There is undeniably something epic about his campaign which has brought him abuse—including excreta and a white

feather in his post—though only four hostile letters from constituents.

Mr Dalyell, a courteous and friendly man for all his doggedness, is no stranger to controversy. During his nearly 22 years in Parliament he has fought Governments of both parties on issues ranging from oceanic islands via chemical warfare and devolution to the Falklands.

The remarkable feature of his latest campaign is how it has been taken up by others. His speaking engagements are not at his prompting, while there have been learned articles on the Belgrano in the London Review of Books and the Times Literary Supplement.

Yet in parliament, Mr Dalyell has been a more lonely figure. A motion on the Belgrano attracted 63 signatures, but the Labour leadership has been reluctant to take the issue up—partly, Mr Dalyell feels, because some Labour spokesmen were part of the bipartisan policy during the Falklands war, partly because Labour members fear unfavourable electoral consequences.

After all, it is argued, do voters really care about the Belgrano, since Britain won the war?



Mr Tam Dalyell: fierce battle for truth or misguided obsession?

British task force.

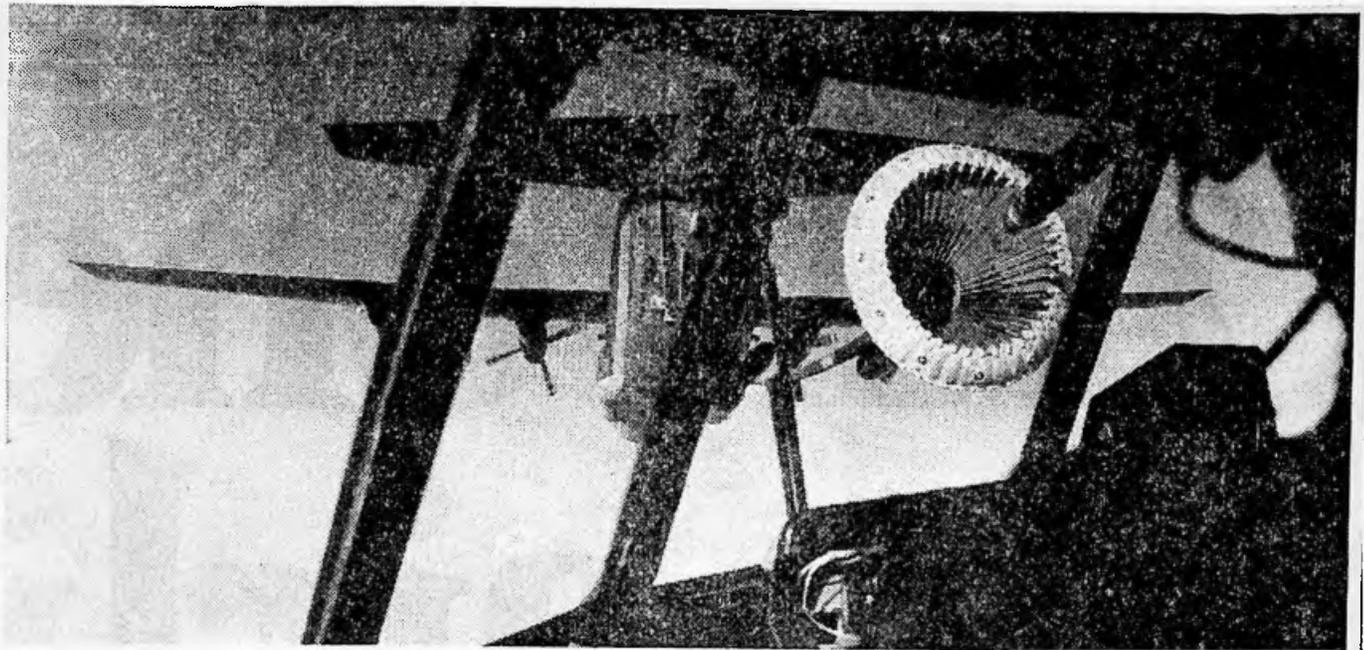
However, Mr Dalyell has asked a number of questions which are still to be answered.

He still hopes that further information, possibly from U.S. or British officials involved, will eventually smoke out Mrs Thatcher.

For the moment, Mr Dalyell looks condemned to an uphill struggle. Yet his campaign has already confirmed him as one of the great backbenchers in the long British tradition of parliamentary dissent.

Malvinas Day off

Argentina dropped a national holiday instituted by the previous military rulers to celebrate the 1982 invasion of the Falkland Islands.



The view from a Hercules transport refuelling from a Hercules tanker over the south Atlantic (Photograph: Brian Harris).

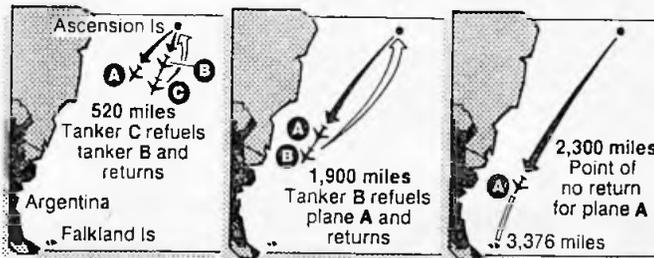
Stanley 'air bridge' notches 600 trips

By Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent

Hercules transport aircraft of the Royal Air Force will this week make the six-hundredth flight of the "air bridge" between Ascension Island and the Falkland Islands.

Since the recapture of the Falkland Islands in June, 1982, the Hercules have been operating their regular service across 3,376 miles of uninterrupted ocean at a cost of more than £100,000 a time.

It is thought to be the only regular passenger-carrying service in the world which depends entirely on the ability of one aircraft to refuel another in flight.



The air bridge began about ten days after the re-occupation of Port Stanley. Initially it involved seven or eight flights a week, but now it has settled down to five, of which two are basically passenger flights.

Because of favourable winds, the reliably good weather, the

return flight to Ascension Island can be made without refuelling in flight, but the outward flight requires a minimum of two transfers of fuel. In the first operation one air tanker tops up another, which then flies on to refuel the Hercules bound for Port Stanley.

The margins for error are small but 600 flights have been made without mishap, although there have been a few diversions to South American airfields.

The flights have not, however, been free of discomfort. Thirteen hours of noisy, cramped, uninterrupted flying with nothing to see, on seats which lack upholstery can be an ordeal.

Over the past 12 months only 4 per cent of flights had to turn back: 10 because of technical difficulties with the aircraft, six because of in-flight refuelling problems, six because of weather at Port Stanley, and one because of a blocked runway there.

GUARDIAN
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Speculation on colony

Peking: China and Britain opened another round of formal talks on the future of Hong Kong yesterday, maintaining the usual silence despite mounting interest in the British Foreign Secretary's planned visit here next month.

British and Chinese negotiators held the normal three-hour meeting, making the ritual small-talk for the benefit of reporters beforehand, and refusing to comment later.

But diplomats said that the announcement by the Foreign

Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, that he would arrive in Peking in mid-April, and recent optimistic statements by Chinese officials, could indicate that a preliminary announcement on the future of the territory would be made in early summer.

The tempo of the meetings has quickened, with this eleventh two-day round convening only 10 days after the previous talks, instead of the usual one-month gap.

British government officials, at least in public, have consistently refused to recognise the negotiating deadline of September, 1984, set by China.

Sir Geoffrey, announcing his visit last week, called for great patience and added: "We are getting on with the talks as quickly as we can, but I cannot predict precisely how long they will take."—Reuter.

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Russian offer to sink Invincible, says Haig

By DESMOND WETTERN Naval Correspondent

THE Argentine claim that the Russians offered to sink the carrier *Invincible*, 16,000 tons, during the Falklands conflict almost certainly has some factual basis. For a time the British Task Force was shadowed

ARGENTINE £413m DUE ON FRIDAY

By TONY ALLEN-MILLS
in New York

ARGENTINA has less than a week to meet a crucial deadline on its foreign debt repayments, but there are few signs from Buenos Aires that a new financial crisis will be averted, according to American banking sources in New York.

If President Alfonsín does not pay more than \$600 million (£413 million) in interest arrears by Friday, American banks will face heavy losses and future debt negotiations will be jeopardised.

But so far Argentina has shown no intention of using its growing reserves of foreign exchange earnings to pay off its debts.

There was speculation in New York over the weekend that an Argentine economic revival plan was far too vague for new IMF funds to be made available to Buenos Aires.

Danger to shares

Western bankers had been relying on the IMF to approve Argentina's programme and hand over part of a \$1,500 million (£1,049 million) medium-term loan that was granted last August but later frozen. Buenos Aires could have used that money to bring its interest payments up to date.

If Senior Alfonsín fails to pay the interest owing by the end of this month, American banks will be obliged by law to declare nearly \$10 billion (£7 billion) worth of loans as non-performing. The outstanding interest would then have to be deducted from bank profits.

Such a move would damage share performance and undermine confidence in the international banking system.

Sr Alfonsín and Sr Bernardo Grimspon, his economy minister, have made it clear that their ultimate objective is a long moratorium on debt repayments

by Russian ships, and most probably submarines.

Moscow was prepared to give the Argentine Navy the credit for sinking the carrier, according to Gen. Gallieri in conversations with Gen. Alexander Haig, the former American Secretary of State.

The first excerpt from Gen. Haig's book, "Caveat," was published in THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH yesterday.

A very considerable number of possible submarine contacts was made during the conflict by ships and helicopters of the British Task Force.

False echoes

In view of the now known level of inactivity of Argentina's two operational submarines, not all of these contacts may have been false echoes and marine creatures such as whales or huge shoals of fish, and conceivably some could have been Russian submarines.

While Gen. Haig views Gen. Gallieri's claim with understandable scepticism, his belief that the Argentine junta was to some extent drawn into the conflict by the Argentine Navy, full accords with the bellicose attitude of Adml Anaya, the Navy's commander-in-chief.

Adml Anaya was serving in the Argentine Naval Mission in London in the late 1960s and early 1970s when Mr Healey, the Labour Defence Minister, was running down the Royal Navy's carrier force.

Mr Healey maintained at the time that such ships were really only needed to support the landing of British troops in areas beyond the range of shore-based air cover, a kind of operation in which Britain, acting alone, would not in future be involved.

Anaya influenced

Men like Mr John Lehman, the present American Secretary of the Navy, who was also in London at that time, believe that the Government defence policy of the period profoundly influenced Adml Anaya.

The Argentine naval leader probably thought that the Royal Navy no longer had the means of seriously contesting Argentina's seizure of the Falklands.

Haig saw PM 'in Falklands messiah role'

By John Ezard

Mrs Thatcher viewed the Falklands invasion "almost messianically" as a test of Western fibre and determination, according to the former United States Secretary of State, Mr Alexander Haig, in a memoir of his 1982 peace shuttle.

He recalls a moment in the drawing room at 10 Downing Street after he had explained American peace proposals to Mrs Thatcher. "She rapped sharply on the table and recalled that this was the table at which Neville Chamberlain sat in 1938 and spoke of the Czechs as a faraway people of whom we know little."

The then foreign secretary, Mr Francis Pym murmured: "Maybe we should ask the Falklanders how they feel about a war." This gaffe provoked a "heated challenge" from Mrs Thatcher to Mr Pym, Mr Haig says in an extract from the memoir published in the Sunday Telegraph yesterday.

She told Mr Pym that aggressors classically tried to intimidate their victims by arguing that the results of resistance could be worse than the aggression. "Had I been Francis Pym," Mr Haig writes, "I would not have counted my chances of remaining in the Cabinet as very great." In fact Mr Pym was — in his own words — "abruptly dismissed" immediately after the general election last May.

At the US State Department the crisis was initially viewed with amusement as "a Gilbert and Sullivan battle in a sheep

pasture between a choleric old John Bull and a comic dictator in a gaudy uniform."

Mr Haig says he was virtually alone in the department in seeing it as a vital test of whether the will of the West was corrupt. But the British ambassador in Washington, Sir Nicholas Henderson, "was unequivocal: Argentina must withdraw. Anything less would mean the fall of the Thatcher Government."

Moreover, Mr Haig says Sir Nicholas told him: "We wouldn't mind sinking the Argentine fleet — something that can be done relatively easily." The Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was sunk later with the loss of over 300 lives.

Mr Haig says in the extract that Mrs Thatcher was prepared to compromise with Argentina "although compromise came hard to her."



Alexander Haig: 'obvious Pym's days were numbered'

Ex-MPs on by-election shortlist

By Our Political Staff

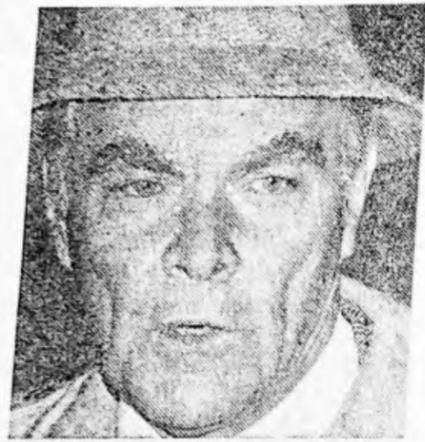
Four former MPs are on a shortlist of six to fight the forthcoming Cynon Valley by-election in South Wales for Labour.

The six are Mrs Ann Clwyd, European MP for Mid and West Wales; Mr Bryan Davies, former MP for Enfield North; Mr Reg Race, former MP for Wood Green; Mr Gwilym Roberts, former MP for Cannock; Mr Caerwyn Roderick, former MP for Brecon and Radnor, and Mr Alun Williams, an area organizer for Usdaw, the shopworkers' union.

The candidate will be chosen on Saturday. Labour had a 13,000 majority at the general election.

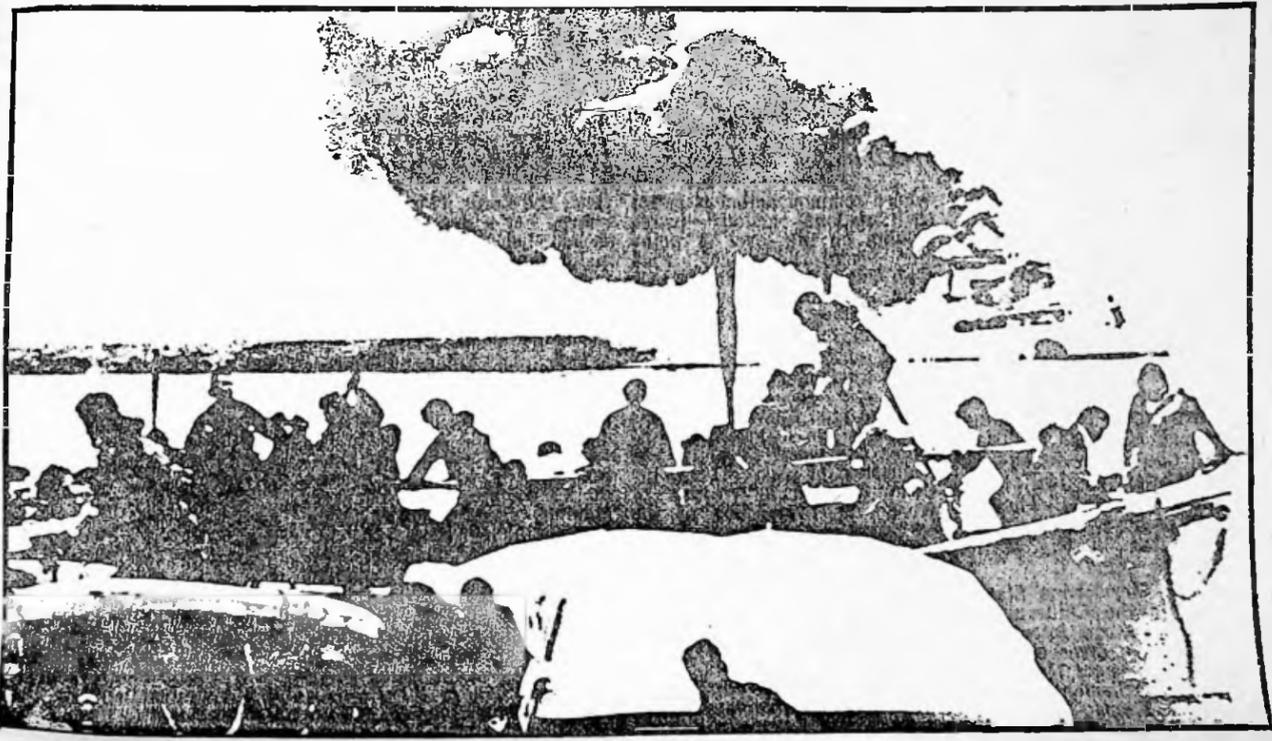
● The Conservative candidate for York North at the European elections in June is Mr Edward McMillan-Scott, a political adviser to the Falkland Islands Administration's London office.

A Secretary of State's disclosures: Mrs T raps the fable ... Galtieri snubs Reagan ... Francis Pym's gaffe



ALEXANDER HAIG

Secrets of the Falklands War



ON March 28, 1982, a Sunday, the British Ambassador, Nicholas ("Nikko") Henderson, brought me a letter from Lord Carrington. A party of Argentines, wrote the Foreign Secretary, had landed nine days earlier on the island of South Georgia, some 600 miles to the east of the Falkland Islands. The Argentine Government had refused a British request to remove its citizens from South Georgia or regularise their presence and had subsequently landed additional supplies. "I should be grateful if you would consider taking up the matter with the Argentinians, stressing the need to defuse the situation," Lord Carrington wrote. "If we do not find a solution soon, I fear the gravest consequences."

On March 30 the United States picked up signs of an unusual state of force readiness in Argentina. The following morning, a Wednesday, the brilliant and studiously rumped Ambassador Henderson called on me at the State Department. "They are invading," he said in astonished tones, and placed before me an array of information that indeed suggested that an Argentine military operation against the Falklands was imminent. I asked our own Intelligence community to check the British information, and they confirmed it was probable that an Argentine task force would strike the Falklands in a matter of days or hours. Immediately, I ordered our Ambassador in Buenos Aires, Harry W. Shlaudeman, to deliver a strong warning to the Argentine Government. Shlaudeman experienced difficulty in arranging an appointment with the Argentine Foreign Minister, Nicanor Costa Mendez, and when finally he saw him, Costa Mendez refused to make any direct response to the American request for assurances.

I ordered Shlaudeman to see Galtieri himself and tell him that should any Argentine military action occur overwhelming internal and external pressure would be

TODAY WE begin serialisation of the forthcoming memoirs of General Alexander Haig, who was appointed US Secretary of State in 1981. Eighteen months later, as a result of opposition from some of President Reagan's men, he was forced to resign. Just before he fell, he carried out desperate negotiations to avert the Falklands War. Here, for the first time, is his own story of his dealings with Mrs Thatcher, President Galtieri and the other key figures in the conflict.

brought to bear on the Reagan Administration to abandon the new and promising relationship it had been building with Argentina. We waited anxiously for Galtieri's answer, but Shlaudeman reported that Costa Mendez appeared intent on delaying his interview with the President. On hearing this, I urged President Reagan to phone Galtieri and issue a strong personal warning. That afternoon, March 31, Prime Minister Thatcher informed President Reagan that the British Government believed that the Argentine Navy was preparing to invade the Falkland Islands within 48 hours. Mrs Thatcher asked Reagan to talk urgently to Galtieri. Meanwhile the British would not escalate the dispute or start fighting. After a good deal of stonewalling on the part of the Argentine Foreign Ministry, Shlaudeman was finally admitted to Galtieri's presence and

delivered our demarche. Galtieri, who seemed to Shlaudeman to be in a state of high emotion, bluntly informed our Ambassador that he was not going to say whether or not he intended to use force. At about 6.30 on Thursday evening, President Reagan attempted to place a telephone call from the White House to Galtieri in Buenos Aires. Galtieri's aide stated that his chief was "unavailable" to speak to the President of the United States. After a two-hour delay, however, Galtieri consented to come on the line. During a conversation that lasted for 50 minutes, Reagan reiterated our concern, offered the good offices of the United States, and volunteered to send Vice President Bush to Buenos Aires for discussions. Galtieri declined both the good offices and the Vice President; he appreciated Reagan's concern, he



Galtieri addresses his people



Thatcher and Haig outside No 10, April 13, 1982

said, but the British had refused for 150 years to relinquish sovereignty and time had run out. "Do you intend to use force?" Reagan asked. Galtieri replied that Argentina felt free to use whatever resources it possessed unless Her Majesty's Government, that very night, recognised Argentine sovereignty over all the islands and turned over control within the next few months. Reagan warned that the British would certainly fight in case of an Argentine landing on the Falklands. "I must have your assurance that there will be no landing tomorrow," Reagan said. Galtieri responded with a portentous silence.

confirmed the corruption of the West. Knowing the technological capabilities and the state of training of the two sides, there was never the slightest doubt in my mind that if it came to a fight — as I feared it must — Britain would win. This was not an opinion that was universally held among the White House staff, the American military, or our Intelligence analysts.

In conversations with the British and Argentines it became clear that both sides hoped that I would serve as intermediary. It was clear to me that if I undertook this mission and did not find a way to stop the hostilities, I might have to resign. By now it was clear enough that there were men and women around the President who would urge my departure. "If the situation cannot be saved, and this is very possible," I told my wife, "then whatever I do will be seen as a failure, even if it is a success in larger terms than the conflict itself. I'm going to take this on because I have to, but it may turn out to be my Waterloo."

By April 6 the State Department had produced the bones of a solution. This involved diverting the British fleet, withdrawing Argentine military forces from the Falklands, and interposing on the islands a peacekeeping force consisting of personnel from Canada and the United States and two Latin American countries. Negotiations would follow. The Argentine Ambassador told me that he thought it was at the extreme of what the Junta might be able to accept. Ambassador Henderson was unequivocal: Argentina must withdraw; anything less would mean the fall of the Thatcher Government. Britain would prefer to see the United States alone as the guarantor of the security of the Falklands.

Even as Gallieri spoke to Reagan, the invasion was being launched. During the night of April 1-2, an assault force of about 500 Argentine marines went ashore near Port Stanley and in a short time secured the airfield and the port.

Britain broke diplomatic relations with Argentina, froze Argentine assets in London, and asked its partners in the European Economic Community and the United States to impose financial sanctions and a trade embargo. The very accomplished Lord Carrington, who was subjected to the charge that he had not read the signs of trouble afloat or brought them soon enough to the notice of the Prime Minister (and who may have taken a slacker line after the invasion than Mrs Thatcher), resigned as Foreign Secretary and was replaced by Francis Pym.

In a reawakening of the spirit of the Blitz that exhilarated Britain, warships were withdrawn from Nato, civilian ships were requisitioned and refitted, troops were embarked, and in an astonishingly short time a task force of over 100 ships and 28,000 men were steaming under the British flag toward the Falklands. On April 5 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 502, calling for cessation of hostilities, Argentine withdrawal from the Falklands, and a negotiated settlement of the dispute. On April 4 Argentina invaded and took South Georgia.

AT THE State Department, in the early hours of the crisis, most of the staff shared the amusement of the Press and public over what was perceived as a Gilbert and Sullivan battle over a sheep pasture between a choleric old John Bull and a comic dictator in a gaudy uniform. Among the White House staff, there was little sense of urgency. Though I was virtually alone in this, I viewed the situation from the very beginning with the utmost seriousness.

Margaret Thatcher never saw the problem as a narrow issue exclusively between Britain and Argentina. Almost messianically, she viewed it as a test of Western fibre and determination. In this she was correct. The Argentine Junta, in the first of many miscalculations, invaded the Falklands because it believed the European democracies were so decadent that Britain would never fight and the United States would decide that its vital interests and its political and economic future lay not in an exhausted Europe but in a nascent Latin America. (To Ambassador Shlaudeman, in fact, Gallieri had suggested that Washington should acquiesce in the invasion as a *quid pro quo* for Argentine support for the United States in the Southern Hemisphere.)

Had Britain collapsed in the face of this petty aggression, it would, in Mrs Thatcher's words to me, have sent a signal round the world with devastating consequences. Had the United States, for reasons of selfish advantage, retreated from the principle that the status quo must not be changed by the use of force, and, however subtly, connived at rewarding aggression, it would have

Extracted from "CAVEAT: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy," by Alexander Haig, to be published on April 30 by Weidenfeld & Nicolson at £12.95.

In the National Security Council I argued that the United States must do whatever it could to avoid further bloodshed and bring the crisis to a negotiated solution, but if this was not possible, it must support Britain and the rule of law. In this view I enjoyed the enthusiastic, if uncharacteristic, support of Caspar Weinberger, the Defence Secretary. Mrs Kirkpatrick, a specialist in Latin American questions, vehemently opposed an approach that condemned Argentina and supported Britain on the basis of international law. Such a policy, she told the President, would buy the United States a hundred years of animosity in Latin America.

Even after the policy was approved, Mrs Kirkpatrick, in the eyes of the British, at least, continued to attack and undermine it, notably through a series of misleading signals to the Argentines, a course of action that risked influencing the Argen-

6 We wouldn't mind sinking the Argentine fleet — something that can be done relatively easily 9

lines into thinking that American policy differed from the one I was describing to them, and thereby affecting the outcome of negotiations.

Before the end of the first week of the crisis, the British were telling us they believed that Mrs Kirkpatrick had told the Argentine Ambassador to the UN that if his country continued to support the United States on Nicaragua, there would be no American criticism in the UN on the landing in the Falklands. I assured an agitated Ambassador Henderson that, no matter what his evidence, this statement bore no resemblance to official US policy. Mrs Kirkpatrick continued to assure me that she was not engaged in such activity.

Nevertheless, the British went on complaining till the end about Mrs Kirkpatrick's public statements and her private conversations with the Argentines.

In the Falklands crisis, while I was shuttling back and forth from Washington to London to Buenos Aires carrying the details of the negotiations in my own mind while reporting the broad outlines to the President for his eyes only, Mrs Kirkpatrick was describing the progress and the meaning of the talks, about which she knew little, in a variety of public forums — and, if the British are to be believed, in a very active pattern of private contacts.

Because she held Cabinet rank and was known to have access to the White House through channels that excluded the Secretary of State, her words were given considerable weight. How were the Argentines to know that hers was not the authentic text on Presidential policy? Mrs Kirkpatrick was in no way to be blamed for this unfortunate state of affairs. She was merely acting according to the rules of the system which had at its heart an evidently irresistible desire to save the President's popularity even if this meant undermining the President's policies. Mrs Kirkpatrick herself acted out of a deep loyalty to her own principles and very intelligent opinions. The populist instincts of the White House staff, quick to adjust appearances to shifts in public mood and opinion, were the real cause of the problem.

ON THURSDAY, April 8, the day of my arrival in London, Britain imposed a blockade of the Falklands, announcing that any Argentine ship within 200 miles of the islands after dawn on the following Monday risked being sunk. Our excellent deputy chief of mission, E. J. Streater, told me that his conversations with figures in the British Government portrayed Mrs Thatcher as being set on the principle of "unconditional withdrawal" and as seeing the situation as a simple matter of right and wrong. In Streater's opinion Britain was in a bellicose mood.

I could believe this. In Washington Nikko Henderson had assured me that the support for Mrs Thatcher was the greatest for any British leader since 1939, that the Government and the country were determined not to back down, and, what's more, "we wouldn't mind sinking the Argentine fleet — something that can be done relatively easily."

In the drawing room at No 10 Downing Street, after I had explained the American proposals to Mrs Thatcher, she rapped sharply on the table-top and recalled that this was the table at which Neville Chamberlain sat in 1938 and spoke of the Czechs "as a faraway people about whom we know so little and with whom we have so little in common." A world war and the death of over 45 million people followed. She begged us to remember this: do not urge Britain to reward aggression, to give Argentina something taken by force that it could not attain by peaceful means.

Before dinner, Mrs Thatcher had shown me and the other Americans portraits of Wellington and Nelson. She was in forceful mood, embattled, incisive, and with the right indisputably on her side. It was evident from the beginning of the five hours of talks with Mrs Thatcher and members of her Government that the Prime Minister, as I afterward reported to the President, "had the bit in her teeth." The working dinner at No 10, which followed an earlier private talk with Mrs Thatcher, included the new Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym; the Minister of Defence, John Nott; my old colleague Admiral of the Fleet Sir Terence Lewin, chief of the British Defence Staff; and other officials.

At one point, during a discussion about the capabilities of the British task force, Pym murmured, "Maybe we should ask the Falklanders how they feel about a war." Mrs Thatcher heatedly challenged him: aggressors classically try to intimidate those against whom they aggress, saying that things far worse than the aggression itself could happen. Had I been Francis Pym, I would not have counted my chances of remaining in the Cabinet as being very great if I persisted in suggesting to this Prime Minister that a retreat from her principles might be desirable.

I had not come to London with the idea of urging a compromise of principle on Mrs Thatcher. My purposes were the opposite. I wished to assure her that she had the support of the United States in a right course of action. It was supremely important that the democracies demonstrate their strength, their uprightness, and their statecraft in resolving this crisis, and I was quite certain that Mrs Thatcher would do this. Immediately on

Continued on next page

Mrs Kirkpatrick's interference... 'The British won't fight'

From facing page

arrival. I assured her that there would be no repetition of Suez, in which the United States had coerced Britain and France into retreating from a military expedition in 1956. "I am in London to help the British," I told Mrs Thatcher. "We are fully sensitive to the depth of British feeling on the Falklands issue. But we must, if possible, avoid armed conflict."

In these early hours of the crisis, it was evident that Mrs Thatcher, though she was strongly backed by Nott and also by Admiral Lewin, did not enjoy the full support of the other members of her Government. In the days that followed, other doubts surfaced.

I pressed on the question of interposing an international force on the islands and setting up some sort of interim administration and providing for self-determination. The notion was too woolly, Mrs Thatcher said. The House of Commons would never accept it because she was pledged to restoration of British administration, which meant all the normal apparatus of government. No vague international presence could substitute for this essential authority. She feared that we were talking about negotiations under conditions of duress, which would be a terrible insult to Britain. In any case, she felt that Argentina would never accept self-determination because all the islanders wanted to remain British. As for sovereignty: British sovereignty was a fact.

Mrs Thatcher and I had met when she visited Nato headquarters in 1979, just before she became Prime Minister; if I had been impressed then by her muscular intelligence, I had been aware ever since of her ability to absorb facts and see the lessons in them. My experience with her suggested to me that though compromise came hard for her, it did come. Self-determination for the islanders was her irreducible requirement for settlement.

She would not impose on British citizens a solution that deprived them of their freedom of choice, and she would go to war, if need be. As the evening ended at No 10, Mrs Thatcher gave me her hand. "Only true friends could discuss such an issue as this with the candour of feeling that has characterised this dinner," she said. Then she laughed and said, "We are nice to other people."

In reporting to the President I emphasised that unless some way could be found to alter British authority and provide for an Argentine role in the government of the Falklands, Mrs Thatcher's terms ruled out Argentine acceptance. If Galtieri accepted her terms, it would be the end of him. Just as Mrs Thatcher must show that the Junta got nothing for its use of force, Galtieri must be able to show that he got something. Here I will say again, because it was constantly in my thoughts at the time, that many young lives hung in the balance.

In Argentina there was no British understatement. Costa Mendez met me at the airport. In the distance could be heard an indistinct roar of voices and what sounded like many

automobile horns being honked in unison. I asked what the noise was. "Argentina is welcoming you," Costa Mendez said. He rode with me, formal and somewhat withdrawn, into the city. Every street was lined with people.

While hundreds of automobile horns blasted the rhythm, the crowd uttered a deep-throated, repetitive cry: *Ar-gen-tina! Ar-gen-tina!* Costa Mendez smiled with pleasure at this demonstration of patriotic emotion. Yet as the car moved slowly through the crowd and faces looked in at the windows, I thought that I saw in the eyes of the people, for all their frenzied display of belligerent spirit, the haunting fear that Argentina was facing unknown dangers.

On the first morning in Buenos Aires, as I drove with Costa Mendez to the Casa Rosada, the presidential palace, I learned a new meaning for the word *crowd*. The media had urged the population to gather in the Plaza de Mayo to "show Haig the spirit of Argentina." Overnight, the Government had transported thousands of demonstrators, many of them militant Peronists, from the provinces. Costa Mendez slowed the car "so that we will have longer to talk before we reach the Casa Rosada," but really, I suspect, to let the hired crowd produce in me an impression of its frenzy. In fact, it reminded me of newsreels taken in Rome and Berlin in the 1930s.

Inside the Casa Rosada, with its presidential guards wearing shakoes and carrying drawn swords and its grim female security agents in grey shirts, Galtieri, a tall handsome man with a strong nose and a hearty drill-ground voice, greeted me with a bear hug and a cry of "General!" We had never met before, but I had brought an old friend of Galtieri's with me, Ambassador-at-Large Dick Walters.

GALTIERI ushered me into the Cabinet room. Already standing around the burnished table were uniformed representatives of the Army and Air Force and a sprinkling of Foreign Ministry people. Galtieri opened the discussions with an exhaustive review of the history of the dispute.

What he said next, while the British fleet moved down the South Atlantic like the weight on a clock, made me realise that the mixture of bravado and apprehension I believed I had seen the night before in the eyes of the crowd also existed inside the Casa Rosada. "The Argentine Government is willing to find an honourable solution that will save Mrs Thatcher's Government," Galtieri said with grandiose diction. "But we cannot sacrifice our honour." Then he lowered his voice, looked around the table at his colleagues, and added, "You will understand that the Argentinian Government has to look good, too."

Galtieri was a man of considerable presence and bluff goodwill who was caught in the difficult position of trying to save a situation he did not create. The Falklands adventure was a navy operation, conceived and urged upon the Junta by that service. The Air Force, realising it must bear the

brunt of any battle with the British Navy and Air Force, was unenthusiastic. So, to a lesser degree, was the Army.

On at least three occasions, Galtieri prevented offensive operations from taking place, and there is reason to speculate that when the invasion finally was put in train, in deepest secrecy and employing only naval forces, the Air Force, and perhaps the Army, may not have known exactly what was happening until it was too late. The extraordinary security measures surrounding the preparations for the landings kept both Britain and the United States in the dark, but the blackout may well have been equally designed to surprise the Argentine Army and Air Force. We were informed that four out of the five Army commanders were not informed of the pending invasion.

Faced with a *fait accompli* and an impossible situation, Galtieri loyally attempted to preserve his country's safety and honour—meanwhile fighting hard to save himself from removal from power and disgrace. Had he been vested with the power to act alone, I think he might well have succeeded. In view of some of the alternatives to Galtieri, the world

¶ I have received offers of aircraft, pilots and armaments from countries not of the West ¶

ought to have been happy enough to see him survive and guide Argentina back to democratic civilian rule.

Galtieri evidently had some political need to interlace sensible talk with bombast when in the presence of men who represented the other armed services. Hard on the heels of a clear-eyed estimate of the possible consequences of the situation, he recalled the capture of Lord Beresford, the leader of a British expedition against Argentina in 1806-1807, and his imprisonment in the religious shrine at Lujan. "If the British wish to send another army," he said with a flourish, "we will receive this anachronistic colonialist expedition with the appropriate honours."

Galtieri, with heavy meaning, then told me, "I cannot fail to express to you that I have received offers of aircraft, pilots and armaments from countries not of the West. Last night at midnight a Cuban plane arrived in Buenos Aires carrying [Emilio] Aragonés, the Cuban Ambassador to Argentina, who brought an urgent letter to me from Fidel Castro. I have not yet received this letter."

Now that all the scenery was in place, the dialogue began. I told Galtieri what the American proposals were. Galtieri listened, nodding as I made my points. "In this pleasant conversation," he said, "I will say something once and then I will not repeat it again. As far as Argentina is concerned, there is no question of Argentine sovereignty. Everything

... Did the Russians offer to sink Invincible?

else, Argentina is disposed to negotiate."

I told him that if he insisted on having an Argentine governor on the island, there would be war. For the first time of many, I expressed my judgment that the British were the superior force and would prevail in case of hostilities. "I must be frank," I added. "In the United States the support for Britain is widespread. In the liberal world the sentiment is overwhelmingly in favour of Great Britain and would remain so if it comes to a confrontation."

However, as the conversation continued, the Argentines spoke of withdrawing from the island as if this were a possibility they were willing to consider, and there were other signs that progress might be possible. The two sides agreed to work out a draft agreement modifying the American proposal to reflect the needs of Argentina and meet again at six o'clock in the evening.

Galtieri then drew me toward an open french window leading onto a balcony. The crowd, later estimated at 500,000, seethed below. Galtieri obviously loved the sight of so much aroused humanity. He invited me to step onto the balcony with him while he addressed the Argentine nation. Naturally, I declined, but I discovered on emerging from his office that he had arranged a bit of theatre anyway—a helicopter to fly me back to the American Embassy. As this craft, bearing the American negotiator, lifted off from the roof of the Casa Rosada and circled the crowd, Galtieri stepped out onto the balcony and gave his speech. There were cries from the crowd of "Peru, Peru," for a possible ally, and also shouts of "War! War!" and "Peron!" The United States was booed, and Mrs Thatcher was called a rude name.

After the meeting, I played a couple of sets of tennis on courts at the American Ambassador's residence, and attempted to take a half-hour nap. But even if I had not been disturbed by the rumble of tank treads in the street outside, I doubt that I would have been able to sleep with the situation as it was. Already I felt a glimmering of understanding that Galtieri, for all his imperious manner, was not a free man politically and diplomatically.

Beyond that, the grandiloquent language, the posturing, the pretence of dealing from strength when disastrous weakness was the truth of the matter, filled me with dismay. Machismo appeared to be the style of the Argentine leadership. This would mix dangerously with the icy scorn and iron will of Mrs Thatcher. I sent Dick Walters to see Galtieri alone and to tell him in crystal-clear terms, in the Spanish language, that if there was no negotiated settlement, the British would fight and win—and that the United States would support Britain. Galtieri listened and replied: "Why are you telling me



Haig at tennis in Buenos Aires

this? The British won't fight." In this judgment, I believe, he had the agreement if not the tutelage of Costa Mendez, who was reportedly the main opponent of my advice.

That afternoon, after hours of intensive drafting and redrafting we presented a proposed agreement to the Argentines. The draft suggested, on the basis of UN Resolution 502, that all military and security forces of both sides be withdrawn from the islands and an agreed surrounding area no later than two weeks from signature, and that no new forces be introduced. A consortium composed of the United States, Canada, and two Latin American countries would monitor compliance.

The British and the Argentines would undertake to negotiate a final settlement of the dispute, taking into account the rights and interests of the inhabitants, no later than December 31, 1982. The final paragraph read, in part, "The traditional local administration shall continue, including the executive and legislative councils. Argentina shall name a senior official as its co-ordinator on the islands to act as liaison with the consortium and to assist it in its tasks."

Officials of the Argentine Foreign Ministry, in a working session with Assistant Secretary Enders, bitterly resisted this approach. They demanded that the Argentine

presence and authority on the island be preserved. If they insisted on that, Enders repeated, there would be no agreement and there would be war. Costa Mendez himself took the draft and asked for a short time in which to work on it. At 8.30 on Saturday evening, after an absence of more than two hours, Costa Mendez reappeared. He had been with his President. Argentina was now proposing changes that had the effect of establishing its sovereignty and authority over the islands regardless of the outcome of negotiations. To Costa Mendez I said, "I'm afraid we'll have to go home. Your proposals will be utterly unacceptable to the British."

I ASKED for a meeting with Galtieri and this was arranged. There ensued 11 hours of intensive and often tumultuous negotiation. That day, the EEC had imposed an embargo on trade with Argentina, and this had had a staggering effect. Argentina could be bankrupt in a matter of a few weeks—unless Russia stepped in with massive purchases of Argentine wheat.

Galtieri, though he never once conceded the slightest Argentine military disadvantage, seemed keenly aware that the movement of the British fleet was also the movement of a historical clock that was striking the hours of these negotiations. Argentina had reinforced its landings with thousands of fresh troops. Any man who had passed through a military academy understood that every soldier the Argentines put ashore in the Falklands was another potential hostage to the Royal Navy.

At one point, Galtieri confided that the Russians had insinuated that they might be prepared to have one of their submarines sink the British carrier *Invincible* with Prince Andrew aboard and let Argentina take credit for the action. I was incredulous, but when imaginations begin to skid out of control, so do events.

In one of the most gruelling sessions I have ever experienced, we worked hour after hour in the Casa Rosada with Galtieri and Costa Mendez and other officials. Between midnight and one in the morning, the impasse broke. Galtieri, fact to face with the prospect of war and economic ruin, took me aside and, all bravado abandoned, said that only soldiers could understand how critically important it was to avoid conflict. Then, with moving candour, he told me that he could not withdraw both his military and his administrative presence from the Malvinas and last a week. If the British attacked, he would have to accept help from whomever it might be obtained.

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NEXT: A blatant double-cross

Setback for Argentina's IMF deal

By Jeremy Morgan
in Buenos Aires and
Peter Rodgers in London

A compromise plan to pull Argentina back from a financial crisis suffered a serious setback this week, when the International Monetary Fund's Western hemisphere director Mr Eduardo Wiesner Duran left Buenos Aires apparently without making any solid progress towards a new debts deal.

Local banking sources said he left "virtually empty handed," contradicting government claims that "very important advances" had been made towards an accord. It had been hoped that the two sides would agree on a letter of intent to the International Monetary Fund, covering new economic targets to get the economy back on course.

International banks are making signature of a letter of intent an absolute condition for lending Argentina any more money.

But because of immensely

complex political problems within Argentina, where the new civilian government cannot be seen to be kowtowing to the IMF, negotiations may drag on until May or June. By that time Argentina would have paid no interest for more than nine months, the nearest any major Latin American debtor will have come to a full scale moratorium on payments to creditors.

United States banks steeled themselves several weeks ago for failure to reach agreement by an artificial deadline of March 31 imposed by US accounting practices. On that date they will set aside over \$1 billion from first quarter profits to take account of "non-performing" Argentine loans on which payments are more than 90 days in arrears.

This will cause a shock in financial markets, because it has not happened before with a large debtor, but the banks appear to have swallowed it already and the March 31 deadline is no longer an issue for them. Efforts are now concen-

trated on ensuring that they do not have to do it a second time when the next accounting deadline comes on June 30.

The more optimistic talk of an agreement by the end of April, but bankers acknowledge that there is still a possibility of a complete breakdown in relationships between debtor and creditors — the first time this will have happened.

Argentine economy minister Dr Bernardo Grinspun will meet the banks' advisory committee and IMF officials at the annual meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank in Punta del Este, Uruguay, which starts this weekend, to try and break the deadlock.

Argentine sources said that the banks offered to release half the \$1 billion outstanding under last year's five year syndicated loan, providing the Argentines paid \$100 million from their reserves towards the backlog of interest payments, and provided the IMF managing director signed a new letter of intent. This would cover \$600 million

arrears from October 13 to the end of the year.

The other \$500 million would be released once the IMF board formally approves the letter of intent, and would be used to repay a \$1.1 billion bridging loan due to banks on April 16 but an extension of this deadline is almost certain. Argentina would have to contribute a further \$200 million from reserves.

Little attention was paid at the time to the Government's statement shortly after taking office that it wanted until June 30, this year, to renegotiate the debts, since this was generally regarded as nothing more than an opening position in the negotiations.

Mr Grinspun said some time ago that the government intended to send its letter of intent to the IMF late this month or in early April. But some bankers here doubt even this will be possible since the government does not intend to send its 1984 budget, and essential part of the document, to Congress until mid-April.

'Falkland barriers' coming down

A LARGE step towards the re-establishment of commercial links between Britain and Argentina was taken here this week with the appointment of a senior civil servant to head the Argentine Commission for Overseeing British Assets.

Elias Fernandez de la Puente will have the job of de-activating the commission, according to leading business and government figures here.

The new democratic administration of President Raúl Alfonsín prefers this quiet approach to the introduction of a congressional Bill to abolish the commission, which would attract criticism from politicians who maintain that no kind of olive branch should be held out to the UK while the Falklands are still occupied by British forces.

Trade with Britain, though still banned here, does take place, using third

by ROBERT del QUIARO in Buenos Aires

countries to disguise the origin of goods. This commerce, which is almost entirely to Britain's benefit because Argentine companies are not selling to the UK, will be helped by the de-activation of the commission and the withdrawal of its inspectors.

These officials cracked down recently to stop shipments of malting barley from Scotland, travelling via Italy and Spain, from reaching Argentine whisky distillers. But they have been turning a blind eye to imports of goods for a wide range of Argentine enterprises, including state companies.

Remittance of profits and royalties to Britain from here also remains outlawed, but the drawing of the commission's teeth will leave British companies and subsidiaries in Argentina to

decide whether to break the law or not.

Some British companies will be glad to get rid of the inspectors, some of whom created much extra work by demanding reports on all a company's activities, access to books and files, as well as notification whenever a manager wanted to sell a company car or even leave town.

Duperial, ICI's associated company here found itself saddled with inspectors who turned out to be army officers from the military run factory which is Duperial's main rival in the Argentine market.

The trade normalisation moves are part of the attempt to solve Argentina's massive \$44 billion foreign debt problem. Argentina is threatening to default on a \$650 million payment due on Saturday as part settlement of the debts.

Argentina's debt crisis is likely to dominate this week's annual meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank which takes place in Uruguay. The members of the Latin American debtors club owe \$340 billion to foreign bankers. Brazil accounts for \$100 billion of that sum alone, but Argentina's default threat is more pressing and there will be intensive behind-the-scenes negotiations to secure a bridging loan which will avert a major confrontation with the country's creditors.

The IADB meeting is overshadowed by a growing realisation of the horrendous social and political consequences which will accompany measures to solve the debt problem. This is counterbalanced by the threat to the international financial system if the problem is not resolved.

Yet, for all the threats, pleas, roll-overs and moratorium proposals, no resolution is in sight. And although trade is recognised as perhaps the only eventual channel out of indebtedness, even the most optimistic forecasts reveal how slender is this hope, even for the more industrialised of the nations.

OBSERVER BUSINESS SECTION
25/3/84

1,200 reduction in Falklands troops

By NORMAN KIRKHAM, Diplomatic Correspondent

MORE than 1,200 men of the Royal Engineers are leaving the Falklands in what is expected to prove the first of a series of heavy reductions in the 6,500 strong military force on the islands.

The Army garrison, backed up by RAF units, is likely to be only 2,000-strong by the time the new £215 million airfield at Mount Pleasant is in operation next year.

The plans to scale down the complement of troops are connected with the moves towards peace negotiations with Argentina. Also, the new 8,500 feet runway will allow reinforcements to be ferried out quickly in wide-bodied jets.

I understand that hundreds of the engineers have left Port

Stanley already and the remainder of the 1,200 will follow during the next month. Many of the men have been clearing mines left by Argentine forces, preparing sites for Rapier missiles and radar, and building roads.

Whitehall officials commented yesterday that some of the sappers might go back late this year, after the Falklands winter, but remaining minefields are to be left fenced.

The bill for maintaining Fortress Falklands is soaring. Therefore Mrs Thatcher and her ministers will be eager to make savings if encouraging exchanges continue with the new Buenos Aires Government of President Alfonsín.

The cost of maintaining the garrison and replacing military

equipment lost in the Falklands conflict will amount to £1.700 million in the next three years.

It was learned yesterday that the military force on the islands recently comprised some 6,500 men, although the Defence Ministry has only given the garrison figure, which "exceeds 3,000."

In addition, a considerable force of naval ships has remained to protect the 150-mile exclusion zone. London sources said yesterday that two or three frigates would be pulled out soon with the arrival of new patrol boats. It was also said that the RAF planes, which include Phantoms and Harriers, might be reduced.

Britain has already proposed negotiations to cover restoration of economic and cultural links, resumption of flights between London and Buenos Aires and improved diplomatic contacts.

Last month Senor Alfonsín said in his reply to this proposal that the talks should begin on the basis of an open agenda and that there should be an understanding that sovereignty of the Falklands would not be excluded.

Mrs Thatcher is continuing to insist that sovereignty is not negotiable. A new formula from the Foreign Office might offer a solution to the impasse. Each side might state at the opening of discussions its case on sovereignty and this issue then might be set aside, without prejudice to the other negotiations.

DIARY

GUARDIAN

22.3.84

IS THERE no limit to the General Belgrano/Falklands publishing market? The most recent addition to the canon of works, *The Sinking of the Belgrano*, has completely sold out its first edition and is re-printing. Now it is to be followed by a book by and about Diana Gould.

Diana Gould? Yes, Mrs Gould is the Bristol housewife who, on May 24 last year, achieved a few minutes of Warholesque fame when she appeared on Nationwide, grilling Mrs Finchley on the subject of the Belgrano sinking. She caused something of a stir at the time by managing to ruffle the Finchley feathers in a way few others managed during the election

In three weeks' time she publishes a book about herself, setting the interview in the context of her life—her first class Cambridge geography degree, her wartime service in the Wrens and the letter in a local freesheet that sparked off her interest in the Belgrano affair and led her to contact Tam Dalyell, Emeritus professor in Belgrano Studies. The short book is being brought out by Cecil Woolf, the small publishing house which published Mr Dalyell's own books on the subject. "It's really only a footnote on the Falklands" concedes Mr Woolf "and it doesn't add anything new. But I hope it will be interesting nonetheless."

Research benefits from Antarctica

From Mr G. de Q. Robin

Sir, Discussions of "Rights in Antarctica" (Evan Luard, March 17) and "Unity of interests in Antarctica" (Sir Donald Logan, February 23) tend to neglect a major benefit to man of Antarctic research.

Initiatives for much of the research in this remote area come from the scientific community through the non-governmental International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU). This body organised the International Geophysical Year of 1957-58 which, thanks to support from many governments, stepped up Antarctic research to its present level and led to the Antarctic Treaty.

Since the IGY various global research programmes related to man and his environment have been organised by ICSU, often in collaboration with UN agencies. The Antarctic component of such programmes is assessed by ICSU's Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, whose members in turn pass its recommendations on to their own governments.

International science and the world in general owe much to Antarctic Treaty governments for supporting this research. Hopefully non-Antarctic representatives will take the opportunity to express their appreciation when the next UN General Assembly debates the "question of Antarctica".

Yours sincerely,

G. de Q. ROBIN (UK delegate,
Scientific Committee on Antarctic
Research),
Scott Polar Research Institute,
University of Cambridge,
Lensfield Road,
Cambridge.
March 19.

FALKLAND PLEA BY 'DOVES'

By Our Political Staff

TWENTY-EIGHT Conservative MPs called on the Government yesterday to open direct talks to break the deadlock over restoration of diplomatic and commercial relations between Britain and Argentina.

Despite Mrs Thatcher's insistence that Argentina must declare an end to hostilities first, the Tory backbenchers argued in a Commons motion that such contacts were "in the immediate interests of the United Kingdom, the Falkland Islands and the Argentine."

And they further claimed that their proposal to cut out the "protecting powers" of Brazil and Switzerland and talk to Argentina direct was in keeping with "the Prime Minister's admirable message to President Alfonsin on his election."

Tory 'wets'

They signatories are headed by Mr Cyril Townsend, MP for Bexleyheath and one of the leaders of the recently-formed South Atlantic Council, which plans to convey its dovish stance on the future of the Falklands to Buenos Aires this summer.

Supporters of a continued firm line with Argentina can also point to a concentration of Tory "wets" among the names at the head of the motion.

Mrs Thatcher has repeatedly stressed that negotiation over sovereignty in any form, is simply not on. The bulk of Conservative MPs agree with her.

THE TIMES

21.3.84

Tory MPs urge direct talks with Argentina

By Anthony Bevins
Political Correspondent

The Prime Minister is being urged by Conservative backbenchers to reconsider her attitude to direct talks with the Argentine.

She said in the Commons last Thursday: "It would be difficult to restore diplomatic relations until Argentina said that hostilities towards us had permanently ceased."

But a group of 28 backbenchers yesterday tabled a Commons motion saying that it was "in the immediate interests" of the United Kingdom, the Falkland Islands and Argentina that direct diplomatic links should be restored.

The MPs include Mr Stephen Dorrell (Loughborough) Parliamentary Private Secretary to Mr Peter Walker, Secretary for Energy, Mr Peter Bottomley (Eltham), PPS to Mr Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, and Mr Kenneth Carlisle (Lincoln) a PPS to junior Home Office ministers.

FINANCIAL TIMES

21.3.84

Tories call for Falklands move

NEARLY 30 Conservative MPs yesterday tabled a Commons motion calling for new diplomatic initiatives between Britain and Argentina.

They said it was in the immediate interests of the United Kingdom, the Falkland Islands and Argentina that there should be improved diplomatic and commercial relations.

"While grateful for the help given by the protecting powers, we believe at this stage there should be direct talks between diplomats from the United Kingdom and Argentina," they said.

ARGENTINE DILEMMA

THE NEW CIVILIAN Government in Argentina, under the leadership of President RAUL ALFONSIN, has achieved a great deal in its first 100 days. It has restored democratic freedoms to a country which was blighted by one of the worst human rights records outside the Soviet bloc. It has negotiated a peace agreement with neighbouring Chile and it has put out conciliatory feelers to the British in an attempt to restore normal relations after the Falklands War. What Señor ALFONSIN has not done is to make any impression on Argentina's terrifying economic problems, in particular its foreign debt.

When Señor ALFONSIN entered office he immediately asked the banks for a six-month moratorium on the country's \$43 billion debt, while talks would begin to extend maturities and reschedule payments. The banks agreed on condition that the debt would continue to be serviced. Unfortunately, Argentina has not honoured its side of the deal and unpaid interest dating from the end of October has now reached nearly \$3 billion. The banks have responded by imposing a March 31 deadline for arrears to be brought up-to-date. If nothing happens, the banks, which are mainly American, will be forced under U.S. banking regulations to declare the loans "non-performing." Initially, banks both in America and in Britain would have to make substantial provisions against an Argentine default, but a further consequence would be the shattering of the uneasy calm which has enabled similar debt problems in other Latin American countries to be met with relative success.

President ALFONSIN deserves a good deal of sympathy for finding himself in such a predicament—he can hardly be blamed for Argentina's profligacy under the Peronists and the Generals. He is also riding a tiger in the shape of an Argentine electorate which is notoriously hedonistic and reluctant to accept economic sacrifice. Somehow, Señor ALFONSIN will have to find a way of imposing an austerity programme which he can simultaneously sell to the banks (with the International Monetary Fund in the background) and his countrymen. It will not be easy, but the politics of *mañana* and the economics of Micawber will not do either.

Banks facing crisis on Argentine debt

BANKERS on both sides of the Atlantic are now convinced that a crisis over Argentine debts is unavoidable. With only a fortnight to the US banks' crucial end-of-quarter accounting deadline, the Americans are bracing themselves to declare the loans - believed to total at least \$10 billion - "non-performing" debts.

Argentina has paid no interest since last October and unless it does so in the next few days, major banks will have to slash their profit figures to take into account the huge increase in loans where interest is more than 90 days in arrears.

They will also come under pressure to increase loss provisions for Latin American loans which, until now, have been treated as viable credit risks - at least for cosmetic accounting purposes.

The repercussions will affect

British banks but not until their first-half figures, by which time they hope to have scrambled together new financing arrangements for Argentina.

Efforts to find a solution continued in talks between Argentina and the 11-member Bank Advisory Committee in New York last week. But British banks are refusing to accept the American proposal that a further billion dollars should be lent to Argentina to help bring its arrears down to under 90 days.

This opposition is being led by Lloyds, which has some \$2 billion at stake in Argentina and wants to see the new government there accept tough financial measures prescribed by the IMF before lending any more money.

The big US banks are keeping the scale of their problems under wraps, but cracks are beginning to appear. Mellon Bank last week conceded that

by Nick Gilbert, New York

its first-quarter earnings would take a severe knock. Its problem loans to Argentina rose from \$26m to \$76m in just the first eight weeks of this year.

Mellon's candour underlines the much larger problems facing major Argentinian lenders like Lloyds and such US heavyweights as Manufacturers Hanover, Citicorp and Chase. At the end of the year the three Americans had put on a "non-

accrual" basis only 10% to 18% of their total loans to Argentina.

Citicorp has in fact put a large percentage of Venezuelan loans on a "non accrual" basis but the general problem is similarly acute. "The private sector is way over 90 days in arrears," a senior New York banker told The Sunday Times this weekend. "A lot of US banks may have to take it on the chin."

Meanwhile the Argentines show no signs of meeting the IMF, despite rumours in

Buenos Aires that a fund mission, which returned to Washington empty-handed from Argentina 10 days ago, is on its way back. In addition to rows over interest arrears, talks have stalled on rescheduling \$10 billion of principal debt.

A further crisis is developing over Venezuela whose interest arrears now exceed \$1 billion. The new administration has refused to approach the IMF and is imposing its own austerity package which it hopes will encourage the banks to reschedule a total of \$16 billion of debt that has already fallen due or falls due this year. A stop-gap moratorium on public sector debts runs out on April 30.

Banks are also insisting that before they reschedule debt Venezuela must impose an economic adjustment programme acceptable to the IMF.

Sheep pest in Falklands

By Our Correspondent
in Port Stanley

Warnings issued some time ago to Falklands sheep farmers to watch out for the dreaded greenbottle have been intensified following the discovery of dead lambs on East Falklands, the victims of "fly strike".

Urgent measures are being taken to combat this killer, new to Falklands sheep farming, which could devastate the islands' only industry.

SUNDAY EXPRESS

18.3.84

Britain rejected gift of land for Falkland airport

by ROBIN LUSTIG

THE Government has rejected an offer by the Falkland Islands Company to make a donation of 4,300 acres of its land as a site for the new Falklands airport. It has agreed instead that the company should donate £25,000 to the islanders themselves.

This startling disclosure which comes amid controversy over the price the Government has agreed to pay for the airport site, was made last week by Mr C. E. (Ted) Needham, chairman of the Coalite Group which owns the Falkland Islands Company.

The Ministry of Defence said yesterday it was unable to confirm the Coalite account. The Government has refused to reveal how much it paid for the site, although an authoritative source told *The Observer* last week that the sum was £155,000 for a total of 8,300 acres. This includes the airport site itself, plus an additional 4,000 acres for access roads, quarries and construction camps.

Mr Needham said: 'Originally we offered to donate 4,300 acres to the Ministry of Defence for the new airport. But eventually it was decided that it would be of more benefit to the islanders if we made a donation directly to them.' The company has given £5,000 towards the cost of a £70,000 war memorial being built in Port Stanley and has offered a further £20,000 towards the cost of a building a swimming pool Mr Needham said.

A price of £155,000 for 8,300 acres is equivalent to £18.60 per acre. But according to the Falkland Islands Company's 1981 accounts, the most recent filed, the total value of its land and buildings is only £2.2 million. As its land holdings amount to 1.2 million acres, this is equivalent to a book value of only £1.80 per acre, which is one-tenth the value placed on the airport land sold to the British Government.

A note attached to the company's 1981 accounts states: 'The directors are of the opinion that the market value of land and buildings is materially in excess of book value but have made no estimate of the amount.'

Disruption

Mr Needham said last week: 'The land was sold to the Ministry of Defence at a reasonable market price to take account of the quality of the land, the disruption to the operations of Fitzroy Farm caused by the building of the airport, and the cost of shifting fences, installing new generators and moving telephone lines.'

The airport site, at Mount Pleasant on the south side of East Falkland island, is in the middle of the company's 107,000-acre Fitzroy Farm, which is effectively cut in half. The land is considered to be of relatively good quality and would fetch a market price of up to £6.50 an acre, according to knowledgeable sources in Port Stanley.

The new airport is designed

to take wide-body jets which cannot land on the existing short runway at Port Stanley. It will be used both by the Royal Air Force, to reinforce the islands' garrison in case of need, and by civilian airlines if they decide to establish routes to the Falklands.

During a heated, half-hour debate in the House of Lords last week, Lord Shackleton, the Labour peer who wrote an authoritative report on the Falklands in 1976, described the Government's action over the airport as 'a scandal.'

Lord Trefgarne, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, who refused to disclose how much the Government has paid for the site, said: 'I do not think it would be appropriate for me to give details of how the price was arrived at. I can say that it happened after negotiations with the Falkland Islands Company . . . and took account of the land value, severance of the company's land and damage sustained to other property and earnings as a result.'

He added: 'It is the case, of course, that compulsory purchase could have been used to acquire this land, but as it was possible to reach agreement by negotiation the Government preferred to reach their conclusions that way . . . If the British Government had sought to acquire this land by a compulsory purchase arrangement, the price would have been subject to independent arbitration, and the Government took that into account in reaching their agreement with the Falkland Islands Company.'

19th March 1984

A sweet return to the Falklands

HARRIER pilot Jeffrey Glover, shot down in the Falklands war, has returned to the islands and thanked the girl who gave him hope while he was a prisoner of the Argentines.

Now on a second tour of duty there, Flight Lieutenant Glover, 29, found Sharon Middleton in the remote Port Howard settlement on West Falkland and, like the man in the TV advertisement, gave her a box of Milk Tray chocolates.

Sharon smuggled him chocolates in captivity.

MP renews call for Belgrano inquiry

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The Labour MP Mr Tam Dalyell, the most persistent Commons critic of the Falklands War, said yesterday that his party's front bench now has a duty to demand an inquiry into the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser, the General Belgrano.

The MP for Linlithgow told the annual general meeting of his constituency party that members of the crew of the nuclear-powered submarine, Conqueror, which torpedoed the cruiser on instructions from London, had confirmed in a recent book that the Belgrano had been followed for more than 30 hours before it was sunk on April 2, 1982.

He challenged a remark made by Mr Cecil Parkinson, a member of Mrs Thatcher's war

cabinet, last week that the aged cruiser was within six hours' sailing distance of British aircraft carriers when it was sunk.

The Prime Minister told Mr Dalyell in a written parliamentary answer on Wednesday that she warmly endorsed the views expressed by Mr Parkinson.

In the book, *Sinking of the Belgrano*, the authors Desmond Wright and Arthur Gavshan—whose sources include members of the Conqueror's crew—confirm information extracted from Whitehall by Mr Dalyell that the cruiser was hit outside the total exclusion zone as it was heading towards its home port of Ushuaia.

The ship was further away from the Falklands than when it was first sighted.

Radio waves over Belgrano

Sir, — Dr Paul Rogers (Letters, March 16) makes a characteristically logical case for an independent enquiry into the sinking of the General Belgrano. Nevertheless, he omits to mention a point which, if true, is the most damaging of all to the Government's case.

On February 3 1984, Labour Weekly reported that a radio message from the Argentinian High Command on May 2 1982 was intercepted by GCHQ, Cheltenham, was decoded within two minutes, and relayed to the British Naval Intelligence Centre. The message was an order to the Belgrano to steer away from the Falklands Exclusion Zone and return home to base.

According to the report, Naval Intelligence received the order five hours before the Belgrano was sunk. The implication is that the War Cabinet must have been told of it, and told also that the Belgrano appeared to be obeying.

The report goes on to say that after Defence Secretary John Nott had given several mutually-contradictory statements to the House of Commons, an employee of GCHQ 'leaked' news of the order to Mr Tam Dalyell and that Mr Dalyell's comments at the time of the GCHQ trouble suggest that he believed Mrs Thatcher's vindictiveness towards the trades unions at Cheltenham stemmed from her conception that to call her credibility into question was tantamount to treason.

It is certain that Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, in New York at the time, seeking a peaceful solution, knew nothing of the sinking until after it happened. Nor did the Americans—causing President Reagan's widely-reported off-the-cuff remark, 'That lady wants a fight!'

Ted Valentine,
26 Loxley Road,
Stratford-upon-Avon.

Sir, — All the signs are that a growing number of people are beginning to get the message that questions have to be answered, not just about the Belgrano but also about the conduct of the war generally and the public expenditure implications of the "fortress Falklands" policy.

Tam Dalyell is becoming increasingly well received at packed meetings even in Tory constituencies. Last weekend's Labour Party Scottish Conference unanimously called for an inquiry into the Belgrano affair and the conduct of the war generally. Dalyell, not the most popular of people within the party in Scotland because of his anti-Devolution views, received an ovation before he even started to speak. The message from the conference was that the Labour Party needs to come out strongly on this issue, instead of blowing hot and cold.

Bill Gilby
Bo'ness, West Lothian.

Rodney Cowton meets the first woman to command a troop of sappers

The number of British servicemen in and around the Falkland Islands is an official secret.

What is not a secret, is that it includes very few women. If you lump together the women members of the armed forces, plus the red-cloaked nurses of Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, and the female staff of Naafi, then the female members of the garrison tot up to about 45, making at best one woman to every 100 men.

Among them is Jan Harper, a 26-year-old lieutenant in the Corps of Royal Engineers, a lady whom readers of *The Times* met last summer when we recorded her success in coming top of a course for young officers, of whom she was the only woman, at the Royal School of Military Engineering at Chattenden Barracks, near Rochester in Kent.

Since then she has been learning to command a troop of 38 men, coping with the resistance of men who think women should have no place in a front-line corps like the sappers and living in a Falklands accommodation unit in which she was the only woman among 800 men.

In between times she has been falling off motor-cycles, trying to catch fish and passing her professional examinations to become a chartered engineer as a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

Last September she took command of 1 Troop, of 53 Field Squadron at Waterbeach in Cambridgeshire. This was accompanied by a certain amount of middle-aged masculine spluttering into gin-and-tonics and wondering what the army was coming to.

Neither did the 38 men, or "lads" as she calls them, of her troop seem very enthusiastic. She now says: "I think having a girl as troop commander was just horrendous for them. They were given a hard time by other troops and called the Petticoat Troop and things like that."

In wartime the job of her squadron would be repairing damage to airfields, though in the Falklands they have been doing the

The Falklands' female factor



Some men, Jan Harper concedes, have been downright rude

civil engineering work associated with the installation of new quarrying machinery near Port Stanley and more recently she and her troop were at Fox Bay on West Falkland installing a new sewerage system.

She says an awful lot of people think there should not be girls doing her sort of job. "If I am on an exercise people do very often give the impression of wondering 'what

on earth are you doing here?'" Some men, she concedes, have been downright rude.

Though she does not tell of it, it seems to have been on an exercise that she was accepted as having made the grade. That was last September when after only about three weeks as a Troop Commander, her troop came second out of seven in a week-long exercise practising engineering and infantry skills.

"That comes of having a good troop", she said.

She acknowledges that in commanding her troop she may have to rely on her 33-year-old staff sergeant, Peter Davidson, more than a man would have to do. "I may have more technical knowledge than he does, but he has more knowledge in military things."

Being a woman in a man's world does have some advantages. In the floating multi-storey accommodation unit which is home for the sappers while in the Port Stanley area, almost everybody lives four to a room, but as the only woman she had a room to herself.

She says she misses female companionship. "It would be nicer if there were girls in the mess. . . . so that you would not feel such an oddity."

One of the problems in the Falklands is finding recreational opportunities. For her a natural trip was to go 25-miles out of Port Stanley to Mount Pleasant where a new airfield is being constructed, and where there are many people working whom she knew when she worked at Birmingham Airport, before joining the army.

The only difficulty was that for about half the distance the only access is by extremely rough, unmade, moorland track. To get there she hired a motorcycle. The journey took three hours, "but that was because I kept falling off."

People who have seen her at work in the Falklands speak very highly of her professional capabilities, though male reactions wobbled uneasily between a professional reaction and sexism and paternalism. One man having said "She is very, very good" went on by way of amplification to say: "She is pretty, intelligent, has a good character and is well behaved."

Of the problems of having women potentially in military hot-spots one senior officer, who was by no means unsympathetic to the desire of women to widen their scope in life said: "The trouble could be in war, that if a male officer were wounded his men would be sorry, but would get on with the job, whereas if the wounded officer were a woman they might react more emotionally and take it more badly."

THE TIMES

15.3.84

Navy learns from the Falklands

By Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent

The House of Commons Defence Committee was told yesterday of changes being introduced by the Royal Navy to improve the safety of ships in the light of experience gained in the Falklands conflict. They include the introduction of new overalls to improved fire fighting systems and the relocation of fuel tanks.

Evidence was given by a team of witnesses from the Ministry of Defence led by Mr J. M. Stewart, Assistant Under-Secretary of State in charge of navy material.

The committee was told of decorative melamine wall and ceiling panels, which should have been jettisoned before action, but which could not be removed because of the way they had been fitted. That had contributed significantly to the extent of damage on HMS Plymouth when she was hit in an air attack.

In written evidence it was stated that the navy had increased fire fighting teams on ships, and ordered a new fire-fighting pump and improved breathing apparatus.

● The ministry is being allowed to carry forward into the next financial year up to £387m from this year's budget, instead of such unspent money being reclaimed by the Treasury.

● The navy will name its latest Type 22 frigate, being built at Yarrow shipyard on the Clyde, HMS Cornwall. It is due to be launched in March next year.

FINANCIAL TIMES

15.3.84

Hong Kong backs public debate

BY ROBERT COTTRELL IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG'S Legislative Council yesterday voted unanimously in favour of a motion deeming it "essential that any proposals for the future of Hong Kong should be debated in this Council before any final agreement is reached."

The motion was proposed by Mr Roger Lobo, a non-governmental, or "unofficial," member of the Council. Sir Philip Haddon-Cave, Hong Kong's Chief Secretary, replied on behalf of the Council's "official"—governmental—members.

Sir Philip said that the motion did not seek to breach confidentiality of negotiations now taking place between Britain and China about Hong Kong's future, nor did it try to pre-empt their outcome. On that basis, he said, there should be no "quarrel" with Mr Lobo's proposal. Sir Phillip said that the British Parliament would consider Hong Kong's views before endorsing any agreement with China, and that in this context the Legislative Council would act as an important forum of opinion.

In the course of the debate, several unofficial members argued that Britain and China should relax now the confidentiality which has surrounded the negotiations since they began 18 months ago. They said that it was generally accepted that China would resume sovereignty

over Hong Kong when Britain's lease expires in 1997, and that if Hong Kong people were better informed about the talks, they would be less vulnerable to rumour-mongering, and more able to offer constructive opinions about future administrative arrangements.

Mr Alex Wu, an unofficial member, commenting on the Sino-British handling of the Hong Kong issue, said that the territory "cannot relish the prospect of an arranged marriage." Mr T. S. Lo, another unofficial member, said that one purpose of the motion was to ensure adequate opportunity for Hong Kong to debate any Sino-British agreement "before it is set in concrete."

Mr Bill Brown, an unofficial Council member, who is also Hong Kong area manager of the Chartered Bank, said that foreign investors still have confidence in Hong Kong, but that such confidence cannot be sustained indefinitely by vague verbal assurances.

Some unofficial members have said privately that they would prefer Britain and China to make public any proposals for Hong Kong prior to the initialling of an agreement between negotiators in Peking. They expect, however, that an agreement will only be made public after its initialling, in preparation for parliamentary debate and ratification.

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Fiction of the week reviewed by John Nicholson

Tall tales from the Task Force

The Falklands Whale

By Pierre Boule

(W. H. Allen, £8.95)

The Ides of March it may be, but there's a distinctly Februaryish flavour to this week's new fiction. Least drear is the *The Falklands Whale*, the latest offering from the pen that brought you *Bridge on the River Kwai* and *Planet of the Apes*. Pierre Boule's attempt to make it a hat-trick of hits contains elements of both of his previous best-sellers. As the Falklands taskforce steams southwards to give Johnny Argie a drubbing, HMS Daring takes time off to rescue a blue whale from a pack of killer orcs. In return, Auntie

Margot, as the jolly tars christen her, adopts the destroyer and assumes a dual role as ship's scout and auxiliary mine-sweeper to the fleet.

She displays an IQ which would put your average dolphin (or, as they are described here, most of the High Command of the Royal Navy) to shame. Unfortunately her part in the ensuing hostilities is too predictable to supply this whimsical little tale (or "extraordinary, heart-warming affair between Man and Nature", if you'd rather take the publisher's word than mine) with any real tension. I suppose it might appeal to Mr Tam Dalyell, but non-Falklands specialists will probably find themselves relying for entertainment on unintentional humour. M. Boule

has a nice line in banal nautical philosophizing, and his idea of how British officers address each other provides a new twist to the perfidious Albion saga:

"Just between the two of us, General, man to man, forget for a moment that we're in charge of this expedition and answer me frankly. Do you think any other army and navy anywhere in the world would behave as insanely as we have over a whale?" I suspect that even the late and greatly missed Jack Hawkins might have had difficulty delivering that one with a straight face.

Naval appreciation

From Vice-Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly

Sir, In a booklet, *Diminishing the Nuclear Threat*, sponsored by the British Atlantic Committee (report, February 6), a posse of senior retired Army and Air Force officers and civil servants, assisted, inevitably, by Mr Hugh Hanning, have suggested that a reduction in naval forces could pay for the conventional weaponry which might take the place of nuclear arms: despite the fact that the war threshold would thereby be lowered.

They base their ideas on the alleged vulnerability of surface ships as "demonstrated" in the Falklands and on the Argentine claim to have hit the *Invincible* with a dud torpedo.

Surface escorts, like all fighting machines at sea, on land or in the air, can be destroyed by a force superior to that against which their defences have been optimised or which, despite mobility, they cannot avoid.

Forty-one years to the day before Carlos Water, only a few hundred miles from base, without air cover, but with plenty of searoom and warning of air attack, albeit at colossal cost in ships and men, the Navy stopped seaborne forces reaching Crete until the great garrison had been overcome by airborne troops.

At Carlos Water, 8,000 miles from base, surrounded by hills inhibiting aircraft warning, a static gun line of ships with some naval air cover achieved an equal feat of arms with minimal casualties. Two brigades were safely landed and supported for several weeks, without loss to the protected lift shipping in the amphibious objective area.

Their parrot-like echo of Argentine propaganda ill behoves such a distinguished group, from open sources it is clear that there were no ships in the area on the day that the submarine *San Luis* claimed a dud hit and unless she had made a gross navigational error the carrier group was over 100 miles away.

Finally, an inch-by-inch inspection, in dry dock, of *Invincible's* hull shows no sign of any impact; much less that of a 1½-ton steel bar travelling at 40 mph.

Yours truly,
LOUIS Le BAILLY,
Garlands House,
St Tudy,
Bodmin,
Cornwall.
March 8.

THE TIMES

15.3.84

15.3.84

Hongkong council breaks silence on Sino-British talks

By HUGH DAVIES
in Hongkong

AFTER remaining conspicuously silent for more than two years, Hongkong's Legislative Council finally debated China's 1997 takeover of the colony yesterday, with leading members voicing extreme frustration over the Sino-British talks.

Cantonese-born Mr Alex Wu, 63, a prominent businessman, spoke out angrily at the destiny of five million people being "debated over our heads." He found it remarkable that residents should be expected to stay "calm, confident and clueless" for so long.

Even more astonishing was the fact that the colony continued to thrive "under such intolerable conditions," he said.

Like many of his colleagues, he objected to the continuing secrecy of the talks, particularly as major problems, such as the issue of sovereignty, seemed now to have been resolved.

Referendum hope

"It is meaningless to say that the proposals should be acceptable to the people of Hongkong without knowing how or where to get a consensus.

During a recent visit, Mr Richard Luce, Foreign Office Minister, confessed that the "mechanics of acceptability" had still to be decided, and made it clear that a referendum had still not been ruled out.

Mr Wu stressed that if the proposals were designed to maintain institutions and community aspirations, "they will surely stand up to our scrutiny.

"We are a modern people who

cannot relish the prospect of an arranged marriage," he said.

Mr Allan Lee, 43, chairman of Hongkong's productivity council, who was born in Chefoo, China, talked of "deep concern" among the people, who wanted desperately to know whether their views would be heeded by London and Peking.

Peking's record

"They have questioned, and are questioning, why the negotiations between the two governments concerning our own future are being kept a secret from us.

"We should not doubt the sincerity of the Chinese leaders in wishing to maintain our prosperity and stability, and to allow us to keep our present freedoms and legal systems.

"Yet many people have told me that China's past track record is not one to inspire confidence," he said.

He mentioned that a recent survey of professional organisations indicated that 60 per cent. of those interviewed were thinking of leaving Hongkong.

The debate was carried "live" on Hongkong radio. Members passed a motion saying that they "deemed it essential" that any pact be debated by them before a final agreement was reached.

Two M Ps present

Two Opposition M Ps visiting Hongkong as guests of the government—Mr George Robertson, deputy shadow spokesman for foreign affairs, and Mr Tom Clarke, chairman of Labour's foreign affairs committee—listened intently to the speeches.

Mr Robertson said that Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, was about to visit the colony — "presumably within four weeks" — and this was being interpreted as "an indication that things are getting towards the end of a process."

DALYELL CALL FOR FALKLAND DEBATE FAILS

Mr TAM DALYELL (Lab., Linnithgow) failed to get an emergency debate on allegations that the Defence Ministry had agreed to buy land for the Falklands airport at more than 30 times the market value.

The issue arose in the Lords on Tuesday when Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos, Opposition Leader, said a figure of more than £250,000 had been mentioned concerning the land, which was 33 times the market price. Peers were told yesterday that the land belonged to the Falkland Islands Co.

Mr Dalyell said other owners had given land "because of what happened." The airport land was "a definite matter of exploitation."

The Speaker, Mr WEATHERILL, refused Mr Dalyell's application because it did not fit the rules for emergency debates.

14.3.84

Argentina offers Falklands concession

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

Argentina has adjusted a "preliminary exchange of ideas" to resolve the Falkland Islands dispute based on a nine-point agenda which does not include the thorny issue of sovereignty, a local newspaper reported yesterday.

However, the latest Argentine proposal (currently under study by the Foreign Office) clearly specifies that any such interchange should lead to "substantial negotiations" about sovereignty at some time in the future.

The financial daily *Ambito Financiero* published what it said was the full text of an Argentine proposal sent to London on February 16 through the Brazilian Embassy in reply to a series of "specific ideas" put forward by Britain in January.

The Foreign Ministry would neither confirm nor deny the authenticity of the proposals published yesterday but a reliable source said that Foreign Minister Señor Dante Caputo, was "seriously worried" about the leak, fearing it could impair further contacts on the Falklands issue. An official statement was expected later.

Sources familiar with the document said the *Ambito Financiero* version bore a remarkable resemblance to the original.

The Argentine proposal states that Argentina "favours contacts that could lead to a first interchange of ideas leading to the opportune initiation of substantial negotiations".

It also states that Argentina has analysed Britain's January proposals "with great interest" and sees as "a step forward" a suggested agenda for initial discussions

GUARDIAN

14.3.84

BBC spokespersons have weaved and dodged over the question of whether they would be giving an airing to Mr Eduardo Crawley's Falklands programme in the "War and Peace in our Time" Radio Four series. Yes, there would be a Falklands programme, but a week later than advertised and now containing "several points of view." Including Mr Crawley's? No comment. Argentine-born Mr Crawley, who has been told his programme's controversial views had offended high-ups and would not be broadcast, solves the mystery. The show has been axed, but the BBC has tried to lure him on to a discussion programme. He has refused: "It takes me back to Buenos Aires, where the newspapers were sometimes more Papist than the Pope."

La respuesta a Gran Bretaña

Tratar la soberanía es vital para solucionar la disputa

El gobierno argentino considera que en las conversaciones que se puedan realizar con Gran Bretaña en torno de las islas Malvinas no puede quedar de lado "el tema vital de la soberanía para la solución total de la disputa".

Esa posición está contenida en la respuesta argentina que actualmente se encuentra a consideración del gobierno de Londres.

Se agrega que toda negociación debe darse en el marco de las pertinentes resoluciones de las Naciones Unidas y con la intervención del secretario general de esa organización. También se indica que la normalización de las relaciones entre la Argentina y Gran Bretaña tiene por objetivo el retorno a la situación prebélica, con todos sus alcances, para "preparar el camino a ulteriores negociaciones".

El documento

El texto del documento es el siguiente: "Tengo el agrado de dirigirme a V.E. a fin que tenga a bien poner en conocimiento del gobierno británico la siguiente respuesta:

"El gobierno argentino, inspirado en su vocación de paz, propicia los contactos que puedan significar un primer intercambio de ideas conducente al oportuno comienzo de las negociaciones sustanciales. Una apreciación realista del conjunto de las relaciones entre la Argentina y el Reino Unido hace que esas negociaciones sustanciales no pueden ignorar el tema vital de la soberanía para la solución total de la disputa.

"Dicha negociación sobre la soberanía de las islas Malvinas, Georgias del Sur y Sandwich del Sur debe darse en el marco de las pertinentes resoluciones de las Naciones Unidas y con la intervención que por ellas corresponde al secretario general. Una negociación global como la que propone el gobierno argentino también otorgaría la debida consideración a los intereses de los habitantes de las islas, como asimismo al tema de la cooperación económica y científico-tecnológica en el área.

"Debe quedar claro que el gobierno argentino desea eliminar los obstáculos que impiden la normalización de las relaciones entre ambos países, y entiende que el objetivo de esa normalización es el retorno a la situación prebélica, con todos sus alcances. En ese sentido el esquema propuesto no innova en sus aspectos sustanciales de aquellas cuestiones que ya fueron expresamente con-

firmadas en el comunicado conjunto argentino-británico, el 26 de abril de 1977.

"Como se tendrá presente, ese comunicado fue llevado a conocimiento de la comunidad internacional a través de notas paralelas presentadas por los representantes permanentes de la República Argentina y del Reino Unido ante la organización de las Naciones Unidas, en junio de 1977.

Gran interés

"El gobierno argentino ha analizado con gran interés la propuesta del gobierno británico del 26 de enero de 1984, en la cual se sugiere una agenda que incluiría los siguientes puntos:

"A) El levantamiento recíproco de restricciones al comercio entre el Reino Unido y la Argentina.

"B) El levantamiento de las restricciones financieras vigentes.

"C) Arreglos para el traslado de los muertos argentinos desde las islas o, en su defecto, para visita de sus deudos.

"D) La nueva puesta en vigencia del acuerdo sobre servicios aéreos entre los dos países.

"E) La reanudación de contactos culturales, científicos y deportivos.

"F) La elevación en jerarquía de las relaciones oficiales.

"El gobierno argentino estima que esta iniciativa británica constituye un paso positivo, por cuanto sugiere la posibilidad de un intercambio de ideas a nivel oficial, tendiente a la progresiva normalización de las relaciones entre los dos países.

"Reconociendo la conveniencia de examinar profundamente estas cuestiones, el gobierno argentino está persuadido de que también deben ser incluidos otros problemas de insoslayable importancia existentes entre ambos países que requieren inmediata atención.

"Por lo tanto, cree indispensable añadir los temas siguientes:

"A) El levantamiento de la zona de protección que el Reino Unido pretende establecer en el Atlántico Sur.

"B) El cese de la fortificación de las islas, de la construcción del aeropuerto estratégico y de la concentración bélica en el área.

"C) Garantías de que serán retiradas armas o artefactos nucleares en esta misma región.

Temas propuestos

"Una agenda compuesta por los temas propuestos por la Argentina y el

Reino Unido podría entonces permitir la iniciación de los contactos.

"Asimismo, el gobierno argentino desea transmitir al Reino Unido el espíritu con que encara el problema de las relaciones bilaterales. En este sentido el gobierno argentino:

"1) Asigna suma importancia a la normalización definitiva de las relaciones entre la República Argentina y el Reino Unido.

"2) Considera que para ello resulta indispensable -y ésta es su voluntad- poner fin, por medios pacíficos, a la disputa sobre las islas Malvinas, Georgias del Sur y Sandwich del Sur.

"3) Coincide plenamente que para ello deben tenerse en cuenta las condiciones y limitaciones con las que actualmente están actuando cada una de las partes.

"4) Coincide también en la inconveniencia de reuniones, negociaciones o conversaciones secretas, siendo como es un punto fundamental de su política exterior la información a la opinión pública, respondiendo al estilo democrático que se ha instaurado en la República Argentina.

"5) Considera que no se debe, sin embargo, estimular una publicidad inadecuada en las actuales circunstancias.

"6) Estima que en estos momentos resultaría altamente conveniente una exploración sincera y de buena fe, que tenga en cuenta todos los elementos en juego, y que permita a cada parte visualizar las perspectivas futuras de una negociación formal.

Paso preliminar

"7) Considera, como se ha señalado anteriormente, que la presencia de las fuerzas de paz de las Naciones Unidas en las islas, en lugar de otras fuerzas militares sería para restablecer una mejor atmósfera en el área y resguardar la seguridad de sus habitantes.

"8) Considera que, para cumplir con una decidida voluntad de poner punto final a la separación existente entre ambos países, lo más aconsejable es realizar, con carácter preliminar, un abierto intercambio de ideas, dando oportunamente cuenta de su contenido al secretario general de las Naciones Unidas. Estos intercambios informales prepararían el camino para las ulteriores negociaciones a realizarse con la asistencia del secretario general de las Naciones Unidas en virtud del mandato de buenos oficios recibido de la asamblea general

Alfonsoín presenciara

Elle a box up

Hong Kong 'politicians' seek a say on the future

BY ROBERT COTTELL IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG'S Legislative Council will today address publicly the most sensitive unanswered question about the territory's future—how much say Hong Kong itself will have in the final shaping of any agreement between Britain and China about its future.

Britain and China have been discussing secretly since October 1982 what will happen when Britain's lease over most of Hong Kong expires in 1997. It is generally accepted that China will resume sovereignty over the whole of Hong Kong, and will promise an autonomous—though not independent—administration for the territory.

The Legislative Council (Legco) is made up of 18 "official" members, who are private-sector figures appointed by the Governor. The unofficials

are typically bankers, lawyers, company directors and educationists.

While the main function of Legco is to amend or approve new laws for Hong Kong, it is also the territory's highest forum for open debate. The 16-member Executive Council, which advises the Governor on policy, meets in secret.

Some Legco unofficials fear that Britain may not press China hard enough for an agreement which will safeguard Hong Kong's way of life—partly because Britain may not want to offend China, partly because both sides may want an end to the protracted negotiations.

The Legco debate may be conceived as a way of stimulating more British parliamentary interest in the terms of the approaching settlement. It may also be a signal to China not

to underestimate concern in Hong Kong about the future, despite the territory's relative calm this year.

Today's motion reads: "This Council deems it essential that any proposals for the future of Hong Kong should be debated in this Council before any final agreement is reached."

Its proposer is Mr Roger Lobo, the Council's senior unofficial, who enjoys the support of all other unofficials. The motion will, therefore, probably be passed, but its value may be more symbolic than practical. Legco does not have the power to compel the British or Hong Kong Governments to breach the agreed confidentiality of the

Sino-British negotiations. Nor does it enjoy a constitutional position which would permit it to veto any settlement.

Legally, the nearest Hong

Kong could come to halting any Sino-British settlement would be if the Executive Council were to advise the Governor to register his opposition with the British Foreign Secretary.

Commentators sympathetic to Peking have attacked the Lobo motion calling it prejudicial to the Sino-British negotiations. Peking regards the Hong Kong issue as a strictly bipartisan matter with Britain. It fears that to concede a formal distinction to Hong Kong would be to tolerate separatism. It probably also fears that, given a choice, most Hong Kong people would opt for independence or even continued British rule, rather than reunification with China.

The Legislative Councilors also have critics who fear that irritating China could produce a repeat of the "jitters" which

shook Hong Kong's stock and currency markets last year.

Today's debate, however restrained, will necessarily touch on some of the awkward questions which the British and Hong Kong Governments have so far sidestepped by insisting on the confidentiality of the negotiations.

Does Britain plan to reach an agreement secretly with China, and only then publish its terms for ratification? Britain probably does, fearing that to "go public" before reaching an agreement would risk China's angry withdrawal from negotiations.

Yet at the same time, Britain can scarcely afford any impression of "dealing" if it hopes to maintain the territory's support and trust during its final 13 years as Hong Kong's governing power.

A more important question which Britain has yet to answer is how it plans to test its pledge that any settlement with China must be "acceptable" to the people of Hong Kong. Should Legco's unofficials speak on behalf of the people? Britain seems to think not. It may even be convenient that the unofficials' standing as appointees is now to be offset by movements towards increased democratic participation in the Government.

If Britain provides a formal, public means for Hong Kong to "accept" a settlement, such as a referendum, it will also be providing the means for a refusal, which China would not tolerate. Tomorrow's Legco debate sees the cracks in the British position starting to appear.

Falklanders campaign against pressure to replace Sir Rex

By John Ezard

Falkland politicians will tomorrow announce a campaign to save their civil commissioner, Sir Rex Hunt.

Their aim is to prevent his falling victim to what is seen as a Foreign Office plan to replace him with someone more docile and less resistant to discussing Argentine sovereignty.

The councillors have agreed to go on the offensive after the failure of months of efforts to resolve the issue of Sir Rex's future in private communications between him and the Foreign Office. His present term of office, extended for two years after the 1982 libe-

ration, expires in four months. Sir Rex, aged 57, has made it plain for more than a year that he wants to stay until he retires from the diplomatic service in 1986. He appears to have received no answer so far, but his wishes have been discouraged.

Although councillors trust Mrs Thatcher's repeated assurances that their British sovereignty is secure during her time as Prime Minister, the pressure on Sir Rex has revived suspicions that elements in the Foreign Office are working to achieve a change in perceptions of the Falklands in Whitehall and Westminster.

The role of a civil commis-

sioner — either in reporting back local views accurately or in "telling Whitehall what it wants to hear" — is seen as crucial in this. A leading councillor, Mr Tony Blake, said yesterday: "It is vitally important that the man at the top here understands the situation and feelings of the people fully."

This was important in view of obvious pressure on the Government to include the question of Falklands sovereignty in establishing relations with President Alfonsín's government in Argentina. The councillors had been impressed with the strength of Sir Rex's stand on sovereignty, which must have annoyed the FO, Mr

Blake said. He should stay at least another year.

Mr Blake is elected by the Camp—Falklands countryside voters. Other councillors in Port Stanley have been canvassing constituents and have found strong backing for Sir Rex as "the devil we know."

He has also achieved support from Penguin News, the Falklands news magazine whose critics have sometimes reduced him to near-apoplexy in the past.

A leader in the latest issue calls him "the right man in the right place," and praises him for presiding over important land reforms, for moving towards a more democratic form of government, and for

his courage during the Argentina invasion.

He has too much power and responsibility, which should be in the hands of islanders, (but) as long as islanders are reluctant to take the responsibility of government themselves the present man is the right one. He would not be a Foreign and Commonwealth Office lackey if he stayed," the editorial says.

Sir Rex has declined to discuss publicly his relationship with the FO. But he has roots support by saying that whether he stayed would be up to the islanders.

Some islanders have already sent written appeals to Mrs

Thatcher, but her aides have forwarded them to the Foreign Office, whose personnel operations department has replied: "An announcement will be made when the time comes to replace (Sir Rex)." A full-scale petition to her is being discussed.

Sir Rex's departure would leave no one in the Falklands administration with more than two years' experience of the islands.

The FO declined yesterday to comment about Sir Rex's future or on a weekend report that Mrs Thatcher overruled colleagues at Thursday's Cabinet meeting and rejected the latest set of negotiating proposals from Argentina.

Argentina's Falklands chief victim of infighting

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

The resignation of an Argentine diplomat charged with handling the Falkland Islands dispute appears to have been the result of bureaucratic infighting, and is unlikely to affect the broad reach of Argentine policy towards the islands.

Señor Hugo Gobbi, a career diplomat who held the key post of Secretary of State for Special Matters, resigned on Friday amid reports of squabbles and personal differences among senior officials at the Foreign Ministry.

The Foreign Minister, Señor Dante Caputo, said that Señor Gobbi's resignation had been envisaged last December, when he accepted his post, but newspaper reports over the weekend played up a supposed feud between Señor Gobbi and Señorita Elsa Kelly, another career diplomat of equal rank.

A Foreign Ministry source confirmed the friction between the two officials, but said it was more the result of overlapping functions

The source said the problem stemmed from a reorganization of the Ministry's internal structure when Señor Caputo took over. It established two equal-ranking posts immediately below that of the Foreign Minister, but failed to make a clear division of their functions.

As Secretary of State for Special Matters, Señor Gobbi directly supervised Argentine negotiations with neighbouring Chile over the Beagle Channel dispute, and looked after efforts to start negotiations with Britain over the Falklands.

Señorita Kelly, whose title is Secretary of State for Foreign Relations, was apparently to have handled all other aspects of foreign policy, but in practice she has also played a role in the Falklands issue, causing friction with Señor Gobbi, the source said.

The chairman of the foreign relations committee, Señor Adolfo Gass, yesterday denied that Señor Gobbi's resignation had thrown the Foreign Ministry into crisis.

Señor Gobbi is to be replaced by Señor Jorge Sábato, a political scientist with no diplomatic experience who is known to be close to the President. It was too early to tell what Señor Sábato's role over the Falklands would be.

THE TIMES

12.3.84

Labour backs Falkland inquiry

From Richard Faux, Perth

A public inquiry into the Prime Minister's conduct of the Falklands conflict was demanded yesterday on the Scottish conference of the Labour Party's final day in Perth. Delegates also called for an independent judicial inquiry into the sinking of the Argentine cruiser Belgrano.

Mr Tam Dalyell, MP for West Lothian, who has made the conduct of the Falklands campaign a personal crusade, was applauded loudly when he stood up to address the conference holding a copy of his book *The Sinking of The Belgrano*, solemnly in front of him. He recommended delegates to read it.

The charge against Mrs Thatcher, he said, could not be greater and he dismissed the explanation which Mr Cecil Parkinson, former Conservative Party chairman and member of the "War Cabinet" gave on television yesterday that the Belgrano had been "a threat to our boys".

If Mr Parkinson was going to

A suggestion that the Falkland Islands should be placed in trust, with Britain and Argentina relinquishing their claims to sovereignty, is put forward today in a Bow Group pamphlet written by Mr Michael Stephen, a barrister and former Conservative parliamentary candidate.

Mr Stephen examines and dismisses six other possible bases for a settlement of the dispute with Argentina, including independence, leaseback and recourse to the International Court of Justice. He suggests that a trust would solve the sovereignty question.

explain away the offence he should have a better answer than that, Mr Dalyell said. If the Argentine warship really had been a threat to the task force why was action not taken earlier after the cruiser and its escorts had been detected, Mr Dalyell asked.

He insisted that Mrs Thatcher had known what the position was before she gave the

orders to sink the cruiser, moving the conflict from second to fifth gear.

The conference demanded that Labour called for a public inquiry into Mrs Thatcher's conduct; to investigate the extent of the Government's knowledge of Argentina's invasion plans and examine the Prime Minister and War Cabinet's actions to intensify hostilities while diplomatic peace moves were in progress.

Any Labour government should immediately negotiate with Argentina and with representatives of the Falkland islanders to draw up a just treaty to guarantee the islanders' democratic rights.

The conference agreed on devolution for Scotland, with an assembly holding power to legislate and raise taxes, although the hard core of anti-devolutionists conspicuously kept their counsel until, as one of them put it, there was a really serious likelihood of an assembly being established.

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U.S. offered carriers before Falklands

By DESMOND WETTERN Naval Correspondent in Washington

THE American Government is now known to have offered to sell Britain one or two of its moth-balled aircraft carriers in 1981, well before the Falklands conflict.

The ships would have been fully equipped with aircraft before being handed over.

The American proposal arose from concern—which still continues among senior American officers—over Britain's lack of seaborne air power.

That concern was made obvious in the offer of the 18,000-ton helicopter carrier, Guam, as a replacement if one of Britain's two carriers, the Hermes and Invincible, been put out of action in the Falklands conflict.

It is understood that the 1981 offer was made directly to Mrs Thatcher during her visit to Washington shortly after President Reagan came to office at the beginning of 1981.

U S overstretched

One of the carriers was the 45,000-ton Oriskany and the other probably her sister-ship the Hancock.

In 1981 the American Navy had sought to put the Oriskany back in commission to boost its own carrier force which was seriously overstretched after the deployment of two carrier class groups in the Indian Ocean in 1980 following the Russian invasion of Afghanistan; but Congress refused to provide funds for her recommissioning.

The offer was rejected by Britain probably because of the problem or re-establishing a large fixed-wing Fleet Air Arm, which, since the paying-off of the last conventional British carrier, the Ark Royal, in 1978, had become chiefly a helicopter force.

The initial difficulties in providing enough pilots for the Navy's 34 Sea Harrier fighters had meant calling on the services of R A F pilots on loan.

Budget pressures

Such problems would not have been insurmountable but with the Government signalling the go-ahead for the Trident missile programme, heavy expenditure on the R A F's Tornado force and the plan for re-equipping the British Army in Germany, the Defence budget would have been put under severe pressure.

The loss of a continuing British carrier capability is still widely felt by the Americans and is the source of some puzzlement.

Senior American officers cannot understand why France still manages to operate two conventional carriers and is planning to replace them with nuclear-powered carriers in the 1990s. Britain feels no longer able to maintain this type of ship.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

12.3.84

Falklands 'trust' plan by Bow Group

By Our Political Staff

A CONTROVERSIAL proposal to hand over sovereignty of the Falkland Islands to a trust to end Britain's dispute with Argentina, is proposed in a memorandum published today by the Bow Group, the Tory pressure group.

It argues that Britain and Argentina should transfer their rights and claims over the islands to seven trustees who would administer the islands.

One trustee would be selected by the islanders, one by London, and one by the Buenos Aires government. They would be obliged to consult fully with elected representatives of the islands.

The other independent trustees could be selected from nations approved by Britain and Argentina.

The report is written by Mr Michael Stephen, a barrister, who contested Doncaster North for the Conservatives in the last general election.

Acceptable solution

It reflects an important strand of thought within the Conservative party that an acceptable political solution for the islands needs to be considered to replace the "Fortress Falklands" approach.

The report argues that the Falklanders should not be placed in a position where they can block any constitutional change.

It says: "If, as seems likely, they choose to be British, they would, like all British people, have to accept any decision that Parliament might make in relation to them in the interests of the British people as a whole."

Mr Stephen, secretary of the Bow Group's Foreign Affairs committee, argues that trusteeship would permit Argentina and Britain to jointly exploit the potential wealth of the islands.

The Falklands: A Possible Way Forward, by Michael Stephen, Bow Publications Ltd, 240 High Holborn, London W.C.1. Price £1.

LABOUR SEEKS FALKLANDS WAR INQUIRY

A resolution calling for a public inquiry into Mrs Thatcher's conduct of the Falklands war and for a judicial inquiry into the sinking of the Belgrano was passed at the Scottish Labour party annual conference in Perth yesterday.

The resolution also called on the Government to enter into talks with Argentina and representatives of the Falkland Islanders to draw up a "just treaty" that would guarantee the islanders' democratic rights, acknowledge Argentina's "historical claims" and provide a "rational basis" for the economic future of the islands.

Mr Tam Dalyell, M P for West Lothian, won a thunderous ovation from delegates when he said: "The charge could hardly be graver — that the British Prime Minister is guilty of gross deception for her own political ends, and of lying to the House of Commons."

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12.3.84

Argentines braced for a week without meat

BY OUR BUENOS AIRES CORRESPONDENT

LONG QUEUES formed outside butchers throughout the country over the weekend, as Argentines stocked up in preparation for a week-long Government ban on all meat sales starting today.

The ban on the national dish is the latest in a series of increasingly drastic measures taken by the Radical Government to curb the country's spiralling inflation rate.

The Government imposed sweeping price controls on most industrial products soon after taking power in December. But increases of more than 30 per cent in recent weeks in prices of meat and other food-stuffs not subject to these controls, have severely undermined Government targets.

The consumer price index for the month of February showed an increase of 17 per cent, bringing the annual inflation rate to almost 436 per cent. The Government, which had

hoped to keep prices to an increase of only 10 per cent, last month had to readjust upwards latest wage increases consistent with its policy of ensuring an increase in real salaries.

In its first public admission that the Government's prices and incomes policy may have begun to backfire, Sr Bernardo Grinspun, Economy Minister, yesterday partly blamed recent wage rises for higher meat prices. Greater demand has also co-incided with supply shortages.

The Government is publicly insisting that the meat ban is only a temporary measure and that it still hopes to bring inflation down to 2 digit figures by the end of the year.

However, some economists predicted yesterday that the meat ban would cause a steep rise of other food prices, as well as undermining breeders' confidence.

Buenos Aires denies cabinet crisis reports

BY JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES

ARGENTINA'S Radical Government yesterday moved quickly to defuse reports of a Cabinet crisis following the sudden resignation on Friday night of Sr Hugo Gobbi, a key negotiator on the Falklands and Beagle channel disputes.

Senator Adolfo Gass, the head of a parliamentary foreign affairs committee, said that Sr Gobbi's original appointment had been temporary, and that the outgoing junior minister had been offered the post of ambassador to Spain.

Sources close to Sr Gobbi, however, yesterday insisted that the resignation had followed sharp personal differences with Sr Dante Caputo, the Foreign Minister. At the same time there was a growing feeling that the timing of Sr Gobbi's departure represented a setback for reconciliation between Britain and Argentina. A further round of talks between Argentina and Chile, due to begin later this

week in Rome, may also be affected.

A fluent English speaker with wide experience of dealing with UK officials as a former UN envoy to Cyprus, Sr Gobbi had recently been patiently laying the groundwork for a first round of talks over the future of the islands. He was also largely responsible for an initial agreement with Chile over the Beagle Channel dispute.

Sr Gobbi is understood to have resigned after being blamed for a series of high-level Government leaks which suggested that Argentina might be softening its position on the Falklands.

Sr Caputo is believed to have argued that the Falklands is too sensitive an issue to be treated outside the strict spheres of secret diplomacy and that any appearance of major compromise with the British ran the risk of aggravating nationalist opinion.

Parkinson says conscience clear over Belgrano

By Ian Aitken and Jean Stead

Mr Cecil Parkinson, the Government's principal media spokesman during the tense weeks of the Falklands war, returned to the subject yesterday with a spirited defence of the decision to sink the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano.

As a member of the war cabinet which ordered the sinking, he said, "I have a perfectly clear conscience".

Mr Parkinson insisted that the cruiser, whose sinking cost the lives of more than 300 Argentine sailors, was within six hours' steaming of the

the sinking had been ordered on the advice of the chiefs of staff.

Mr Jim Slater, general secretary of the National Union of Seamen, said at the weekend that the civilian container ship, Atlantic Conveyor, had been used to decoy missiles from the aircraft carrier Hermes, in the Falklands War.

He told a fringe meeting on the Falklands at the Scottish Labour Party's conference at Perth that the crew had told him the Atlantic Conveyor had been positioned between the Hermes and other naval ships and had deflected attacks from the warships.

Afterwards, Mr Sam McCluskey, the assistant general secretary, said: "There is no question that it was used as a decoy. The reflection on the radar shows exactly the same beam to an aircraft carrier as for a container ship."

Mr Dalyell, who was at the meeting, said later that he intended to call for a full statement on Mr Slater's allegation at the House of Commons this week.

The conference yesterday passed unanimously a resolution demanding a public inquiry into the Prime Minister's conduct of the war, as well as a judicial inquiry into the sinking of the Belgrano.

The sovereignty of the Falklands should be placed in trust, a pamphlet from the Tory Bow Group suggests today.

Mr Michael Stephen, secretary of the group's foreign affairs committee, said the pamphlet, *The Falklands — a Possible Way Forward*, proposed Britain and Argentina should both abandon their claims to the islands and let them be administered by seven trustees.

Falklanders fight for Sir Rex, page 2

Royal Navy's carrier force at the time the order was given. Had Britain lost one of her two carriers, "the whole mission would have been totally aborted", he said on TV-am.

This was the main consideration when the war cabinet was faced with having to make a decision. They were being advised by the chiefs of staff that the ship was "in our sights", that there was a danger of losing it, and that it could be within striking distance of our fleet within six hours.

Mr Parkinson, who resigned from the Cabinet last autumn after his admission that he was the father of the illegitimate child expected by his former mistress, added: "We were asked by the chiefs of staff for permission to sink it because on their advice it was militarily essential that we did. That was why the decision was taken. I have a perfectly clear conscience about having been a party to that decision."

But Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP who has fought a long and often lonely campaign suggesting that the sinking was deliberately intended to put paid to hopes of a negotiated settlement, flatly rejected Mr Parkinson's account yesterday.

He claimed that the Belgrano was too far away from the British carriers to constitute a real threat.

It was between 250 and 350 miles from the fleet, which Admiral Woodward had rightly kept well to the east of the Falklands, he added. "By no stretch of the imagination could they have reached the carriers within six hours."

But Mr Dalyell also attacked Mr Parkinson's argument that



Cecil Parkinson—spirited defence of sinking

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A piece of war on the radio

WELCOME to 'Mastermind.' The contestant is the BBC and its chosen subject is 'War and Peace in Our Time.' First question: Was there a war in the Falklands followed by peace in our time? Pass.

Radio 4 is currently running an interesting series of half-hour programmes called 'War and Peace in Our Time.' Next Friday's was to have been all about the Falklands. The programme was recorded last month — but will not be broadcast because it is considered too 'sensitive' and senior management have pulled it out of the schedules.

It is hard to see why on looking at a transcript. Arguments that could be termed critical of Mrs Thatcher are all ones that have been repeatedly aired in the past (Did the war help Mrs T win the election? Was it worth it? etc. etc.).

The theory in Broadcasting House is that senior management took fright at the thought of annoying Mrs Thatcher at this particular time, when the Corporation is after more licence money and defending itself over 'Panorama.' Programmes about war and peace in the Lebanon, Iran and Vietnam are so much safer.

At the moment, the BBC's Falklands star, Robert Fox, is on the islands listening to the new deputy chairman of Coalite, ex-Labour Minister Eric Varley stoutly defending the enterprise and profits, as part of a safe magazine programme about the happy islanders in our time.

I too have had a tame penguin in Port Stanley (it's too cold for moles). He's been telling me of the naughty japes that pilots get up to, amusing their mates stuck out on South Georgia.

The pilots send down longed-for mail bags by parachute to the waiting soldiers. On one occasion a bag floated down, only to sink gently into the sea in front of the horrified onlookers. It had been filled with rocks rather than letters. On another occasion, the pilots simply let loose a large number of (blank) airletters which fluttered down into the water, to the anguish of those below, who imagined them to be messages from their dear ones.

SUNDAY TIMES

11.3.84

New Falklands battle on price of airport land

by Justine Picardie and
Dorothy Wade

THE Falkland Islands Company faces a political storm in parliament over the price it has charged the defence ministry for the 8,300 acre site for the islands' new airfield.

Lord Beswick, a Labour peer and former industry minister, has tabled a question in the house of lords for Tuesday, seeking confirmation that the firm sold the land as the only suitable site — for £33 an acre, when the going rate is only £1. If that is the price the public is paying £273,900 instead of £8,300.

Also on Tuesday, Michael Heseltine, the defence secretary,

will face questioning in the commons. Labour's defence spokesman, Kevin McNamara, says: "We will be seeking the earliest opportunity to raise the matter on the floor of the house."

Beswick will ask how the price compares with that of land sold to non-government buyers. He said: "I would have thought that in the circumstances the company might have made a gift of the land."

The new airfield is being built

at Mount Pleasant, on the southern coast of East Falkland, to take wide-bodied jets, which will be used both to reinforce the islands in times of tension and to carry civilian passengers. The defence ministry maintains the contract "has not yet been signed and the buying price for the land has not been fixed". But Sir Rex Hunt, the islands' civil commissioner, said: "The purchase price has been paid. Negotiations are almost completed." He refuses to divulge the price per acre but agrees that it is "certainly higher than it would be for agricultural land."

The cost of land in the Falklands is calculated on the number of sheep it will support. There is little good quality grazing and the landscape has been compared to the Western Isles of Scotland and the Brecon Beacons. Prices usually are from £1 to £2 an acre.

Mike Bleaney, works manager of the Falkland Islands Company in Port Stanley, says he has heard that the firm got a good deal more than the going rate. He added that his employers were right to push for a high price, because they would be losing the value of grazing the land.

However, the airfield is of great value to the Falkland Islands Company. There is a feeling within government that it will increase the value of the company's assets by assuring the political and economic future of the islands. The company owns nearly 43% of the land and employs half the population.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

11.3.84

Major is now a magistrate

By Our Correspondent
in Port Stanley

Major John Rhind of the Royal Scots has been appointed magistrate on the island of South Georgia, 800 miles south-east of the Falklands.

Major Rhind will act also as customs officer, harbour master, immigration officer and postmaster. He will deal with Russian and Polish trawlers replenishing their water supplies.

Dual blow to hopes of Falklands talks

by JIMMY BURNS and NIGEL HAWKES

HOPES of early talks between Britain and Argentina over the Falkland Islands have suffered a double setback.

In Argentina, a key figure responsible for formulating policy over the Falklands, Hugo Gobbi, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, has been forced to resign. And in London neither the Foreign Office nor 10 Downing Street would yesterday deny reports that Mrs Thatcher had overruled Foreign Office proposals on the Falklands when they were discussed in Cabinet on Thursday.

Gobbi's unexpected resignation came on Friday night, after reports that he had clashed with Foreign Minister Dante Caputo.

According to the reports, Caputo was angry over a series of recent leaks, both about the Falklands and about the Beagle Channel dispute with Chile, which he felt had undermined his cautious diplomacy.

At a stormy meeting last week, Gobbi is said to have been severely reprimanded.

Late on Friday, the Argentine Foreign Ministry issued a brief statement saying that Gobbi's appointment had always been conceived as 'temporary' and that he would now be taking up a position as ambassador in an

'important foreign country'—believed to be Spain.

Argentina is still waiting for a British response to proposals made by President Alfonsín three weeks ago.

The Foreign Office was willing to go along with his suggestion that talks should take place with an 'open' agenda, which would neither include nor exclude the issue of sovereignty.

Insistence

Such an agenda would not imply the abandonment by either side of its claim to sovereignty, but it would enable talks to open on other less contentious issues.

It now appears that Mrs Thatcher has rejected that approach and is sticking to her insistence that Argentina should abandon all sovereignty claims before talks begin.

If so, it is a recipe for having no talks at all. Argentina could not accept such a precondition for talks. Many Argentine officials take the view that the pressure is now on Britain, which is forced to maintain a large and expensive garrison in the islands.

Argentina is unlikely to do anything (like, for example, declaring an end to hostilities) which would allow Britain to reduce the garrison and cut its

costs of around £600 million a year.

Argentina has made it clear that despite the resignation of Gobbi its position remains unchanged. Alfonsín is still strongly committed to compromise as a way of securing a peaceful settlement with Britain.

Gobbi's replacement is Jorge Sabato, a lawyer and sociologist with little diplomatic experience.

A noted civil rights campaigner and a close friend of Alfonsín, Sabato is known to have nationalist sympathies and may prove less flexible than his predecessor.

If reports of Mrs Thatcher's inflexibility prove true, Argentina may well be tempted to sit back and wait for the financial pressures to wear down British resistance.

11.3.84

Sir Rex keen to stay in Stanley

from ROBIN LUSTIG in
Port Stanley

SIR REX HUNT, the Falklands Civil Commissioner, responded to the controversy over his future last week to say it was his 'conscious choice' to stay at his post until he is due to retire in two years.

Sir Rex, who is reported to be under Foreign Office pressure to give up his post in the Falklands, said: 'I am waiting to hear from London about what is to happen to me. I would like to stay to see the opening of the new airfield in 1986. That would be personally very satisfying for me.'

The civil commissioner, who was Governor of the Falkland islands until the Argentine invasion two years ago, was speaking at Government House, Port Stanley, after his return from a three-week voyage to the British Antarctic Territories on HMS Endurance.

Replying to British Press reports that he may be replaced this summer, Sir Rex said: 'I have always made it clear that I would be happy to come back if



ROBIN LUSTIG

Sir Rex Hunt last week: 'There is still a lot to be done here.'

the Foreign Office wants me to. But I'm too old to go anywhere else (he will be 58 in June) and I would retire to Berkshire. My own conscious choice would be to stay. There is still a lot to be done here.'

His undoubted popularity with the Falkland islanders — there was talk last week of a petition being organised to press for him to stay — is understood to be seen at the Foreign Office as something of an embarrassment as it attempts to find some common ground with the new Argentine Government headed by President Alfonsín.

Sir Rex was in no mood to compromise last week. 'There is no middle way,' he insisted. 'As long as the Argentine claim (of sovereignty) remains, there is no halfway house. It's up to the Argentines — they started the war.'

'In time they will become mature enough to realise that these islands were never theirs.'

'The new president is, by all accounts, an honourable man. He has called the Argentine invasion "an immoral act by an illegal Government in a just cause." We have to convince him that it was not a just cause.'

Falklanders do not regard Sir

Rex as indispensable, although many believe it would be a mistake to replace him at this stage with someone who would have little understanding of their feelings. An editorial in the latest issue of the local newspaper *Penguin News* suggested that if islanders preferred 'the devil we know,' they should write to Mrs Thatcher.

The position of civil commissioner is pivotal in the islands' system of government. With the military commissioner, Major-General Keith Stacie, he runs the colony's internal affairs as a kind of 'executive President.'

Weinberger denies offer of Falkland carrier

From Our Own correspondent
Washington

Mr Caspar Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, yesterday denied press reports that during the Falklands war he had agreed to lend Britain the USS Guam, a helicopter carrier, if either of the two British carriers Hermes and Invincible in the conflict became disabled.

He said on television: "No, it's not true. We have no authority to do that. Only the Congress, by specific action, would be able to do that, and there is no such suggestion."

He added: "On the other hand, we did supply a very substantial amount of military assistance to the United Kingdom during the Falklands. Britain paid for it all, and our role, primarily, was to make sure that it got where it was needed in time to be of use."

Answering questions by satellite from West European correspondents, Mr Weinberger disagreed with some of the views of Mr Lawrence Eagleburger, a senior State Department official who has criticized certain aspects of European policy

● **Resignations on way!** Although not formerly confirmed, it is now nearly certain that Mr Eagleburger will resign in May. Mr Donald Rumsfeld, Mr Reagan's special Middle East envoy, has decided to return to private business after the collapse of the US initiative in

the anti-govern-

THE TIMES

9.3.84

Falkland denial

Mr Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, denied he had agreed to lend Britain a helicopter carrier if either British carrier in the Falklands conflict had been disabled.

Junta aftermath

Buenos Aires (Reuter) - Argentina's highest military court placed Admiral Jorge Anaya, the former commander of the Navy, and the former Air Force leader, Brigadier Basilio Lami Dozo, in "rigorous preventive custody," confirming that both face serious charges over the Falklands war.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

8.3.84

S. GEORGIA SUIT

Fourteen Argentine workers whose presence on the South Georgia islands two years ago helped spark the 1982 Falklands war yesterday filed suit against their country's armed forces for "physical and psychological damages."—U P I.

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Falklands chaplain is home

By Martyn Halsall,
Churches Correspondent

THE Reverend Colin Frampton, Free Church chaplain to the Falkland Islands, arrived home yesterday after serving less than three months of his initial one-year commitment in Port Stanley.

The reason for his return was "the relationship between himself and the church in the Falklands, and that really is a very private matter," the Reverend David Harper, general superintendent of the eastern area of the Baptist Union said.

Mr Frampton, who is in his 40s, arrived in Port Stanley with his wife, Maureen, on December 11.

The first the Baptist Union knew of his return was when a letter arrived at its London headquarters saying that he was aboard SS Uganda on the way to Ascension Island, the union's assistant general secretary, the Reverend Douglas Sparkes, said yesterday.

Mr Frampton had a very good record and is held in very high esteem, said Mr Sparkes. "He is a very able and experienced minister."

A Baptist minister since 1972, Mr Frampton was in charge of a church at Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, before responding to an advertisement for the Falkland Islands

6.3.84

End in sight to Beagle Channel dispute

By Jimmy Burns in Buenos Aires

ARGENTINA and Chile have made major progress in settling outstanding issues related to their longstanding dispute over the Beagle Channel. The two countries are likely to reach a final settlement by September following ratification of an agreement by the Argentine Parliament.

The latest round of talks over the Beagle have been conducted in the utmost secrecy since the two countries signed a joint declaration of peace in Rome on January 23.

According to high level Government sources, however, Argentina two weeks ago formally told Chile that it was prepared to give up its claims to all the disputed islands at the eastern end of the Beagle Channel, south of Tierra del Fuego. The islands are Chilean occupied Lennox, Picton and Nueva, and six more uninhabited islands between the three and Cape Horn

Diplomatic sources described progress at the talks as a major departure in Argentine foreign policy which underlines President Raul Alfonsin's commitment to non-belligerence.

Argentine rejection of Chilean ownership of the islands, in defiance of a recommendation by an international arbitration committee, brought both countries to the brink of war in late 1978. Confrontation was narrowly averted by a last minute intervention by the Vatican.

According to a draft agreement being elaborated by both sides, Chile will get 12 miles of territorial waters around the disputed islands on the Atlantic, beyond which the sea would be under Argentine jurisdiction with only restricted zones open to Chilean exploitation. This arrangement would replace the Vatican's original suggestion of shared maritime territorial waters in the Atlantic.

Both sides believe that such a compromise would make final agreement more acceptable to Argentine domestic opinion at a time when Sr Alfonsin is already risking considerable criticism from hard line nationalist sectors over his more reconciliatory line on the Falklands.

THE TIMES

6.3.84

Beagle Channel deal negotiated

Buenos Aires (Reuter) - Argentina and Chile have negotiated a draft treaty to settle the Beagle Channel dispute, an issue that brought them to the brink of war in 1978, Argentine Foreign Ministry sources said yesterday.

Delegation leaders would now return home from the Vatican to brief their Governments; the signing of a formal treaty was only a matter of time.

The Vatican has been mediating between Argentina and Chile for five years to solve the dispute over several small islands each country claims in the Beagle Channel at the southern tip of South America. A breakthrough followed the end of military rule in Argentina and democratic elections in December.

The draft treaty grants all the disputed islands and 12 miles of

offshore waters to Chile. Argentina will have jurisdiction over offshore waters in the Atlantic beyond this limit.

In Santiago, Chilean Foreign Ministry sources said the negotiators had made significant progress.

He added that although the Vatican talks had produced agreement on substantive issues there might still be other points outstanding.

Daily Mail
5th March 1984

New talks offer to Argentina

By JOHN DICKIE

Diplomatic Correspondent

BRITAIN is ready to take a softer line towards Argentina in order to start talks over the Falklands.

New proposals are shortly to be sent to President Alfonsín from Downing Street.

The theme will be that anything can be discussed except sovereignty over the Falklands.

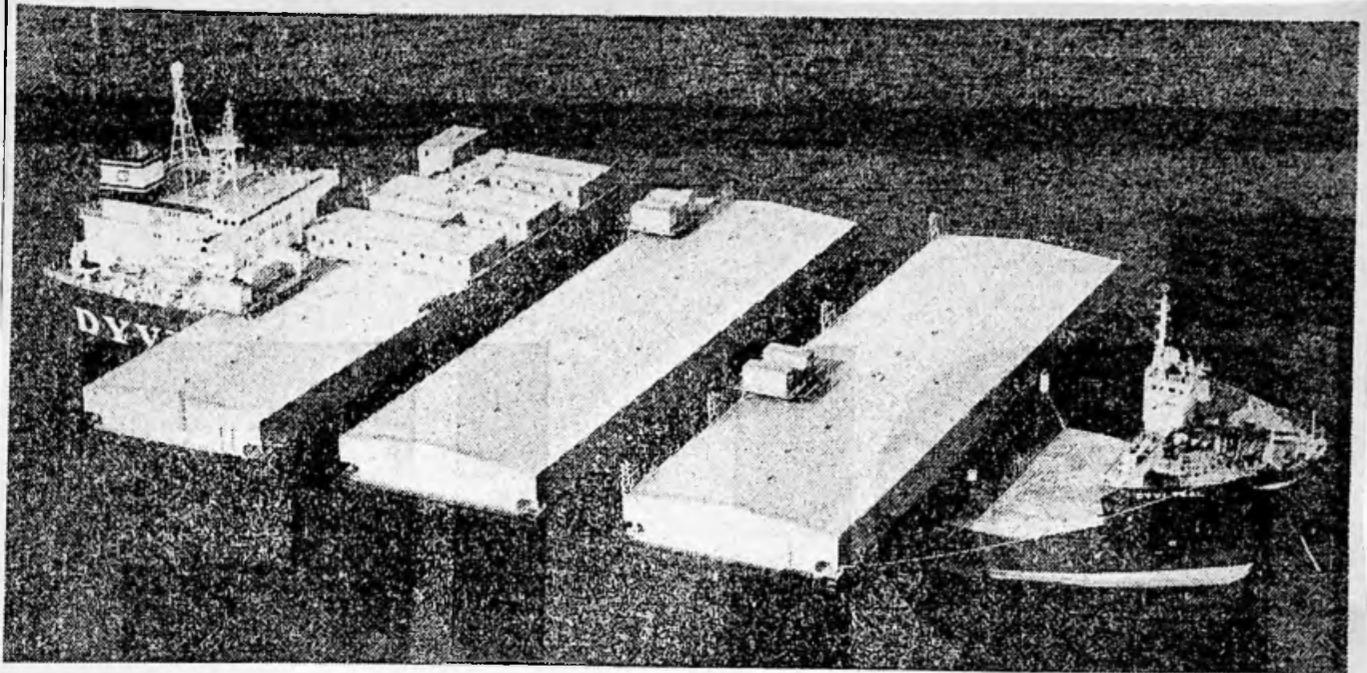
As part of Britain's conciliatory mood, the 'Fortress Falklands' atmosphere may be played down, although major troop withdrawals are unlikely until the runway is completed at the new airport.

The 150-mile protection zone round the islands could also be lifted.

By easing the situation the British government expects Argentina to agree that hostilities are over and the way is clear for better financial, trading and cultural links.

Two British MPs are to fly to Argentina on a fact-finding visit in June.

They are Mr Cyril Townsend, chairman of the all-party South Atlantic group, and Conservative MP for Bexleyheath, and Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for South Ayrshire.



Three 300ft-long barges with massive warehouse facilities being loaded in Belfast Lough on board the Dyvi Teal which is on her way to the Falklands where the barges will form part of a new floating port facility in Port Stanley. The sternmost of the three is also fitted with accommodation units for the men who will operate the dock facility.

Two MPs to visit Argentina

By Colin Hughes

Two British MPs are planning to visit Argentina in June for informal talks with ministers and officials in an attempt to prepare the ground for agreement over the Falkland Islands.

Mr Cyril Townsend, Conservative MP for Bexleyheath and Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, have recently set up the South Atlantic Council, comprising a cross-section of MPs, senior clergy, businessmen and former diplomats, who believe there is wide room for agreement on issues such as sovereignty over the islands.

Council members recently met Lady Young, Minister of



Mr Townsend, left, and Mr Foulkes.

THE TIMES

5.3.84

State at the Foreign Office, to ensure that they do not interfere with sensitive talks through intermediaries between the Argentine and British Governments.

Mr Foulkes said yesterday that members were anxious about the cost of the "Fortress Falklands" policy and believed that an early resumption of normal relations between the two nations would be in both their interests.

Señor Adolfo Gass, head of the Argentine Senate foreign affairs committee, with whom the South Atlantic Council has been in contact, said yesterday that he was convinced direct conversations with Britain would open by the end of the year, but emphasized that sovereignty must be on the agenda.

"If it is not recognized that we have rights over the islands, what are we going to discuss?" he said, adding that he hoped to return the British visit.

Loans crisis, page 15

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Russia offered Falklands deal on arms

Richard Norton-Taylor and John Ezard report on a book about the conflict which says Moscow wanted to build a base at Cape Horn and traces the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, Belgrano

THE Soviet Union asked for the right to set up a military base commanding the strategic seaways of Cape Horn in offering to supply Argentina with arms during the 1982 Falklands conflict, according to a book out today.

The authors say Russian terms for replacing Argentine arms losses through a third party state such as Libya were presented by the Soviet Ambassador in Buenos Aires, Mr Sergei Striganov in a formal call to General Galtieri at the Casa Rosada, the presidential palace on April 30, 1982.

Mr Striganov had already made an arms offer to the Argentine Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Enrico Ros, after the British re-conquest of South Georgia, the book says. But the full offer to General Galtieri came "hours after the American tilt of support towards Britain", following the collapse of the peace shuttle by Mr Alexander Haig, the then US Secretary of State.

The book also contains new evidence about the scale of diplomatic and military acti-

Four hours after the sinking of the Belgrano but before President Terry knew about it, he was sufficiently optimistic to tell a press conference in Lima that Britain and Argentina "would tonight announce the end of all hostilities" over the Falklands.

Mr Francis Pym, then the foreign secretary, who was in Washington had only just been informed of Conqueror's action, not by London but by Mr Haig.

The account of Russia's arms offer lends weight to long-voiced fears among some British MPs about Soviet contingency plans to exploit a possible closure of the Panama Canal resulting from instability in Central America.

A closure would mean that Western tanker and shipping traffic would have to use the old stormbound route round Cape Horn.

Mr Striganov asked for "fishery installations" at Ushuaia, near Cape Horn, according to the book, but

the authors say this was understood by the Argentines to be the normal diplomatic euphemism for a military base. The request was presumed to "involve rights to develop a communications system covering the South Atlantic."

Russia has a well established fishing presence in Antarctic waters. But, according to British Antarctic Survey fishing experts yesterday Ushuaia would not be a natural place for a purely fishing operation. Dr Inigo Everson, section head of the survey's marine biology unit, said it was "a fair old flog—a day's steam away—from the nearest big fishing ground."

Dr Richard Laws, survey director said: "Argentina has other ports that would be more accessible for fish stocks."

The book says Mr Striganov also asked for: immediate and permanent withdrawal of all Argentine military advisers from Central America; a guarantee of

abstentions by Argentina on all anti-Soviet votes in the United Nations on issues like the occupation of Afghanistan and immediate cessation of Argentine support for General Torrelío's rightwing military government in Bolivia.

The book provides a detailed chronicle of the Conqueror's movements from the moment it first contacted the cruiser at 4pm on April 30 and signalled the news to London. It tells how the submarine tracked the Belgrano for 25 hours at periscope depth before sinking it.

On May 1, the day before the War Cabinet gave the order to sink the Belgrano after agreeing to change the rules of engagement to allow the Conqueror to attack outside the Total Exclusion Zone around the Falklands, the submarine observed the cruiser refuelling just 4,000 yards away.

Replies to detailed questions put by the authors to Admiral Woodward, commander of the task force, in

October last year were blocked by Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for Defence. The authors also say that Lord Thomas, one of Mrs Thatcher's advisers on foreign affairs and a fluent Spanish speaker who was in touch with Peru during that fateful weekend, refused to be interviewed.

Labour Party leaders are expected this week to repeat their call for an inquiry into the sinking of the Belgrano and to seek a parliamentary debate.

Jeremy Morgan in Buenos Aires adds: Two British MPs will visit Argentina next June, two years after the end of the war, according to a leading Argentine politician.

The visit by Mr Cyril Townsend, (C, Bexleyheath), and Mr George Foulkes (Lab, Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley), will be aimed at establishing "direct conversations" between the two Governments on the Falklands issue, said Mr Adolfo Gass, President of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The sinking of the Belgrano, by Desmond Rice and Arthur Gauslion, Secker and Warburg, £8.95.

Falklands troops may be cut in peace move

By PETER SIMMONDS
and DAVID ROSE

FOREIGN SECRETARY Sir Geoffrey Howe is considering an immediate cut in Britain's troops on the Falklands as part of a new peace offer to Argentina.

The package of proposals to be put to Argentina's President Alfonsín is being drawn up by Sir Geoffrey and Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine.

Mrs Thatcher went to a 'routine' Defence Ministry meeting last week on how defence cuts would affect the Services. Force levels on

LABOUR leaders are to press Mrs Thatcher to clarify events leading up to the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano during the Falklands war.

The move by Neil Kinnock follows a controversial new book, out tomorrow, challenging Whitehall's version of the affair in which

the Falklands are thought to have been discussed.

Her attendance at a ministry meeting is unprecedented in peacetime. Usually defence chiefs go to her at No 10.

368 sailors died just as a peace bid seemed on the brink of success.

Authors Arthur Gavshon and Desmond Rice, former president of the Royal Dutch Shell company in Argentina, claim that when she was torpedoed by the submarine Conqueror, the Belgrano

was heading away from — not towards — the British task force after getting two 'come home' signals. And they reveal that Conqueror's crew had told them they detected the Belgrano two days earlier and not on the day of the sinking as the Government claimed.

Mrs Thatcher is expected to ask the Cabinet within the next few weeks whether to back the deal and authorise its immediate dispatch to President Alfonsín.

I understand that the pro-

Belgrano probe plea to Maggie

way of the new £215 million airport comes into operation in about a year. This would enable troop reinforcements to be flown in rapidly and in large numbers on wide-bodied aircraft.

Mr Heseltine flew to the Falklands at New Year to discuss with army commanders the garrison strength, put officially at about 5,000 men.

He is understood to be prepared to support the reduction, which would be in addition to withdrawal of engineers and other support soldiers no longer needed on the islands because of winter.

In return, the Government would expect a start to official talks on getting links and relations back to normal.

So far as the Government is concerned, the talks can cover anything — except Argentina's claims to sovereignty of the islands.

Negotiations between Britain and Argentina are at present being conducted through the Swiss as middlemen.

After an initial British initiative, the Argentines made what the Foreign Office formally described as a 'serious and substantive reply' last month.

But the diplomatic ball is now firmly back in the British side.

Questionable

DID AMERICA offer to lend Britain one of her ships if an aircraft carrier had been lost in the Falklands? A Defence Ministry spokesman refused to answer on the ground that it was a 'hypothetical question' (which it isn't). What would the Government do if many Cheltenham employees rejected the £1,000 offer? The Foreign Secretary refused to answer because it was a 'hypothetical question'. Statesmanship entails being prepared for contingencies. It would be more reassuring, as well as more honest, if politicians simply said, 'Won't tell you.'

4.3.84

Bunkum

YET another attempt is made to "prove" that it was all Britain's fault that a shooting war broke out over the Falklands.

The authors of "The Sinking of the Belgrano" claim that the cruiser was sunk just as peace talks were on the brink of success. They claim that war thereafter was inevitable.

Bunkum.

The Argentinians started the war when they invaded the islands.

They had no intention of ever quitting the Falklands unless ejected by force.

As for the Belgrano, there are hundreds of British servicemen alive today precisely because the Belgrano went to the bottom.

That is the justification for the whole episode. Mrs Margaret Thatcher was right to give the order for the Belgrano to be sunk. And she deserves the gratitude of the nation for having the guts to do so.

Farce

IT will be a whopping turnout today when the citizens of the Soviet Union go to the polls.

Miraculously, every single one of the 1,500 candidates standing for the Supreme Soviet will be elected. There will be no disappointments. No blighted ambitions. No lost deposits.

The corrupt farce of "democracy" in the Soviet Union has been going on for so long now that we have grown used to the monstrous lie which is at the root of Communist rule.

Of course we have to live with the Soviet Union.

But we would be mad if we ever allowed ourselves to forget the evil which Soviet Communism represents.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

4.3.84

Belgrano row rekindled

By Our Defence Correspondent

A CONTROVERSIAL book on the Falklands War, to be published tomorrow, accuses Britain of cold-bloodedly sinking the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, with the loss of 368 lives, in the knowledge that the ship was returning to base and that the junta was about to sign a peace agreement on largely British terms.

The book, "The Sinking of Balgrano", will undoubtedly revive demands for a high-level inquiry from opposition MPs who opposed Mrs Thatcher's campaign to retake the Falklands after the Argentine invasion of April 1982.

It accuses Mrs Thatcher of having had ample warning of the likelihood of an Argentine invasion, of being hell-bent on a military solution from the start, of having used the diplomatic negotiations as a smoke-screen to deceive the junta, and of having master-minded an official cover-up of the facts.

The authors of the book are Desmond Rice, a former president of Royal Dutch Shell in Argentina, and Arthur Gavshon, until 1981 the London-based European Diplomatic Correspondent for Associated Press of America.

Throughout their account they take an unequivocally pro-Argentine line.

Nowhere is there the suggestion that the junta might have been playing for time in the diplomatic exchanges, in the hope that the British Task Force might run out of steam in the South Atlantic winter, or that it might give the Argentine Navy and Air Force the opening for a crippling attack.

"The Sinking of the Belgrano," by Desmond Rice and Arthur Gavshon; Secker and Warburg;

DAILY TELEGRAPH

3.3.84

£1m in Falklands

Mr Harold Rowlands, the Falklands Commissioner of currency, has said that for the first time in 150 years there is now £1 million in circulation in the islands, brought about by the massive increase in population since the South Atlantic conflict. The normal money in circulation would be about £300,000 at its peak.

GUARDIAN

3.3.84

Falklands bill

Total spending per head in the Falkland Islands this year, including defence, was £240,000, the Treasury said yesterday. Mr Peter Rees, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, told Mr Nicholas Soames (C. Crawley) in a written reply that he expected a reduction in the figure to about £190,000 per head in 1984-85.

Britain 'knew Belgrano was no threat'

by ANDREW WILSON

A NEW book about the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano claims that defence chiefs in Britain were aware that the ship posed no threat to the Task Force at the time they decided to sink it.

Drawing on hitherto unpublished information about the movements of the nuclear submarine HMS Conqueror, during the Falklands war, the authors reveal that the Belgrano had been spotted 48 hours before it was sunk, and then tracked for 25 hours at periscope depth.

During all that time the cruiser was on patrol 20 miles outside the Total Exclusion Zone which surrounded the islands. At the time she was sunk, the Belgrano was on course for the Argentine coastline.

The book, 'The Sinking of the Belgrano,' by Desmond Rice and Arthur Gavshon, (Secker and Warburg, £8.95) is bound to raise again the controversy over the incident in which 368 Argentinian lives were lost. Mrs Thatcher has consistently said that the Task Force was at risk from the Belgrano, and originally it was

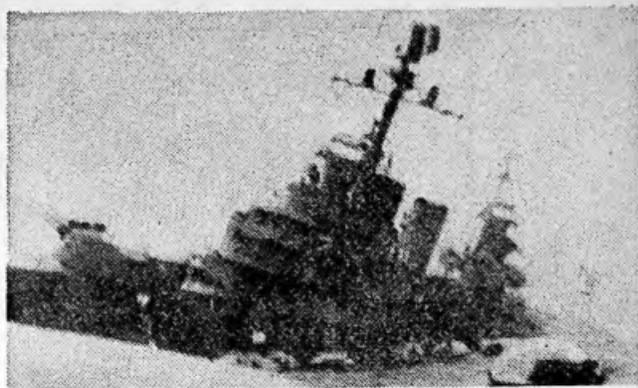
claimed by the Ministry of Defence that the cruiser was heading directly towards the British fleet.

The new investigation suggests this was not so: on 1 May, 1982 the day before the sinking, Conqueror closed to within 4,000yds of the Belgrano, surfaced, and observed the cruiser refuelling from a tanker. There was no question of attacking, since it was outside the exclusion zone.

Next day, however, when the then Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Terence (now Lord) Lewin, heard that the Belgrano was under visual observation, he went to Chequers where the war cabinet was meeting.

There (according to his own account), he explained that 'here was an opportunity to knock off a major unit of the Argentine fleet.' After a discussion, Mrs Thatcher told him to go ahead.

A number of questions about the sinking were put by the authors to Admiral 'Sandy' Woodward, commander of the Task Force, but the Ministry of Defence banned publication of his replies. The ban was imposed by the Minister of



2 May 1982: The stricken Belgrano goes down.

State for Defence, Mr John Stanley.

The authors conclude that either Mrs Thatcher's war cabinet authorised the attack on the Belgrano knowing that peace talks between General Galtieri of Argentina and President Belaunde Terry of Peru were on the brink of success; or that it was unaware of the progress that had been made, in which case the Foreign Office could be accused of gross incompetence in failing to prevent an unnecessary war which went on to cost 255 British and over 800 Argentine lives.

Last week, the authors would not reveal their sources for the detailed information about the Conqueror's movements, which shows that the first sonar signatures of what proved to be the Belgrano and her two escorts were picked up on the afternoon of 30 April, and at 4 p.m. local time the Conqueror went up to periscope depth.

The next day the submarine closed to 4,000 yds and observed the Argentine ships

refuelling—'a tempting target (say the authors) but they were outside the British Total Exclusion Zone.'

Conqueror sat on their tails while they continued westward—away from the British task force and toward their home base—unawares. The tailing continued through the night.

Next morning, Conqueror's captain, Commander Christopher Wreford-Brown, signalled to London that he had the Belgrano under observation. It was then that Lord Lewin went to Chequer's where the war cabinet was meeting.

The authors point out that the Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym, was closeted with the US Secretary of State Alexander Haig in Washington, and can hardly have failed to know the content of Belaunde's telephone call that morning that the Argentine junta's agreement to the 'Peruvian' peace plan was 'almost certain.'

At about 4 p.m. Conqueror fired three Mark 8 torpedoes. The first destroyed the Argentine cruiser's operations centre; the second took away her bows. The third hit an escort without

Daily Mail
3rd March 1984

Daily Mail COMMENT

Where is the UN?

BECAUSE of its sheer horror and the scale of its casualties, the Iran-Iraq conflict has been likened to the 1914-1918 war in Europe.

Yet the United Nations, which is supposed to be in the business of resolving conflicts between States, has done disappointingly little to resolve this one—especially of late as the war has hotted up.

What a contrast with the time when the Falklands were invaded; then UN diplomatic efforts to bring the two sides together and to stop the fighting were intense.

Yet the numbers killed in one day of some of the recent clashes between Iranian and Iraqi forces were often three times as many as were killed in the whole of the Falklands campaign.

Why is the UN so ineffectual in the present dispute?

Partly, no doubt, it is because the Iranian regime is so fanatical that it is often beyond the reach of rational discussion and the campaign is becoming more and more of a holy war.

That is why the regime's leaders can, without qualms, send children across the minefields to clear them by blowing themselves up.

All the same when the toll of human life is so great and the suffering of ordinary people so enormous surely it behoves the UN to make some really strenuous efforts to try to stop it.

Falklands bill

BRITAIN'S spending on the Falklands totalled £240,000 per islander over the past year, Chief Secretary to the Treasury Peter Rees said in a Commons reply.

Argentina and Britain

Will politeness be enough?

Britain and Argentina are edging towards renewing diplomatic and trade ties for the first time since the Falklands war. A British message about improving relations, sent through the Swiss embassy in Buenos Aires at the end of January, was answered by Argentina (which called it "insufficient") on February 17th. The Argentines sent proposals of their own, details of which have now leaked out. The British are preparing a reply.

Both sides are anxious for relations to improve. The British apparently want to start by relaxing trade controls, resuming airline flights, returning the bodies of Argentine servicemen killed in the Falklands and allowing visits by Argentine families to Falklands cemeteries. Britain would end its 150-mile protection zone around the islands if Argentina would declare formally that hostilities had ceased; talks would be held; eventually full relations would be restored.

This polite and friendly approach does not, however, face up to the central issue: the dispute over rival claims to sovereignty. For the Argentines, in their latest reply to Britain, the only question is the priority assigned to sovereignty in the talks. They say that, although they are not insisting upon the talks being primarily about sovereignty, the subject must not be specifically ruled out, as Britain wants. They also want British forces on the islands to be replaced by a United Nations force. Neither proposal is acceptable to Mrs Thatcher. Plainly, there is still a lot of sparring to go before the big match gets under way.

AMERICA'S FALKLANDS WAR

"It will be the same old story," remarked a British official at the start of the Falklands conflict in April, 1982. "Off we go to another war and the Americans will have to come along and bail us out."

A British official said his American counterpart after the Grenada invasion 18 months later: "Our boys lost their lives saving the world from Communism, and all we get from London is pissy criticism."

A relationship sweet and sour

Eisenhower and Eden, Kennedy and Macmillan, Johnson and Wilson, Nixon and Heath, Reagan and Thatcher: the Anglo-American marriage always starts well, falters and collapses in scowling and scolding. The list runs from Suez and Skybolt to Mrs Margaret Thatcher's present catalogue of woes: Pollish sanctions, the gas pipeline, extraterritoriality, Argentine arms sales, the Grenada invasion, America's budget deficit. Some argue that the special relationship's strength is a head held high through these storms. The relationship is rooted not just in past history, shared language and Rhodes scholarships. It forms the emotional core of the Atlantic alliance. The past two years have seen that alliance undergo its two most drastic tests since Suez: the Falklands war and the Grenada invasion. In what follows, we draw on new material to question what relevance the "special relationship" had to the Falklands conflict. Next week we examine the Grenada sequel.

The British operation to recapture the Falklands in 1982 could not have been mounted, let alone won, without American help. This help did not begin, as generally supposed, after the failure of the Haig peace mission on May 1st and President Reagan's public "tilt" towards Britain. It commenced before the task force even set sail, in confidential dealing between the British and American navies, encouraged and approved personally by the defence secretary, Mr Caspar Weinberger. Support was frequently concealed from senior members of both governments, to prevent embarrassment. As the task force moved south, the support was given greater urgency by Pentagon—and some British—doubts over Britain's capacity to win a conclusive victory, and concern at the effect this would have on Nato. In view of this, the Americans decided that if the Argentines sank either of the British carriers, *Hermes* or *Invincible*, they would immediately replace it. Though known to certain British naval and diplomatic officials, this was not known to the war cabinet.

Since the war's ending, both America and Britain have had an interest in concealing the scale of this help. The American state department fears for its bruised relations with Latin America. The British foreign office respects this concern. Whitehall is also understandably keen that victory should be seen as Britain's alone, and defence ministers have persistently refused to talk about the scale of American help. The record can now be set straight.

Traditionally, the British argument with Argentina over the Falklands had not been

a strain on Anglo-American relations. The United States was neutral on the issue of Falklands sovereignty—partly out of guilt at having instigated Britain's seizure of the islands in 1833. This position was reiterated in a secret state department paper prepared during the Peronist period. Both the assistant secretary for Inter-American affairs, Mr Tom Enders, and the ambassador to the UN, Mrs Jeane Kirkpatrick, relied heavily on this neutrality in seeking to minimise support for Britain during the conflict.

This inevitably coloured the American stance over the South Georgia incident which was to precipitate the Falklands war. Given the Reagan administration's carefully nurtured rapprochement with Latin America, there was a clear foreign policy motive for neutrality—overriding any historical special relationship with Britain. Any military help had to be in defiance of this policy.

The result was intense American frustration during the negotiating phase of the Falklands crisis. Both President Reagan and Mr Haig had privately told Mrs Thatcher that, if negotiation failed, public opinion would force them to back Britain. But that only increased their anger at Britain's fixation with what President Reagan termed a "little ice-cold bunch of land down there". Hence his leaked question to Mr Haig, whether Mrs Thatcher's honour might be satisfied with one sunken Argentine ship. Hence Mr Haig's Haigspeak on April 14th that as far as helping Britain was concerned "the US had not acceded to requests that would go beyond the scope of customary patterns of co-operation based on bilateral agreements".

Britain's reaction to this was ill-concealed fury. To Mrs Thatcher, how could the Americans seriously propose even-handedness between an aggressor and his victim? Mr Haig's negotiating team was treated as hostile to Britain. America was accused of subordinating friendship to narrow regional interest. The ghost of Suez and American treachery haunted Downing Street.

If foreign policy considerations led Washington strongly in the direction of non-involvement, so too did global strategic ones. The Falklands were not just irrelevant to Nato but a distraction from it. Britain had already, the week before the Argentine invasion, withdrawn nuclear submarines and support vessels from Nato patrols. Now the task force would leave the northern flank dangerously exposed. Russian intentions in the South Atlantic were obscure: the diversionary brush-fire war was a standard ploy in nuclear-crisis theory. To Washington, London's priorities were alarmingly askew.

The national security council decision to "tilt" Britain's way on May 1st was therefore bitterly contested by certain state department and Pentagon officials. However, by then the task force was already in the South Atlantic with a desperately fragile logistics tail, confronting a heavily armed and air-supported Argentine battle fleet. American navy assessments seriously doubted whether Britain could win a conclusive victory. A contested landing could be disastrous (British assessments at the time were similarly gloomy). In extremis, the United States might be called on for overt help

FALKLANDS

which would be bad for America's regional position and a godsend to the Russians. America by now could not afford to see Britain lose. But it was critically important that it win soon and without American help being too conspicuous.

The American navy's assessments were not implausible. Britain was ill-equipped to fight a sea war in the South Atlantic. It lacked air surveillance. The last aircraft carrier able to supply it had already, in the derisive phrase of an American expert, been broken up for "razor blades". Britain had inadequate satellite communications and was short of signals and other intelligence. It was also short of air-to-air missiles that would give its Harriers enough punch to fight it out with Argentina's Super-Etendards and Mirages. Above all, it had no bases in the vicinity and would need huge quantities of aviation fuel to be able to fight 8,000 miles from home and 4,000 miles from its mid-way staging post on Ascension Island. The active collaboration of America was essential.

Mr Caspar Weinberger, America's secretary of defence, is an ardent Anglophile, admirer of both Pitts and of Churchill. From the start, he realised Britain's logistics problems, as did the American navy. The key would lie in the United States Air Force's Wideawake airbase on Britain's Ascension Island. The government in London had initially planned to send the task force non-stop south from Gibraltar, but realism soon pointed to an air bridge to Ascension. Although Britain reserved the right under lease to use Wideawake in an emergency, more than just "use" would be needed.

From day one of the task force, pleas for everything from missiles to aviation fuel flooded the Pentagon from the British military mission on Massachusetts Avenue. There were also many telephone calls from British fleet headquarters in Northwood direct to friends in the United States Navy. Many of these requests were not known about by senior officials. To those intimately involved, it seemed at times as if the two navies were working as one—with the Americans delighted to see a friendly navy called on to do a real job of work. They hoped that lessons would not be lost on their own masters.

Aware of opposition from the administration's Latinists, Mr Weinberger privately cleared his approval of this help with President Reagan, though not, it is believed, with the full National Security Council. Washington observers doubt that much of it was made known, for instance, to Mr Haig, embroiled throughout the conflict in the role of honest broker between the two sides. The assistance certainly went beyond Mr Haig's "customary channels". Since the bulk of



Weinberger's war

it was sent direct to Ascension, the island had to be surrounded by a tight security net. Journalists with the task force assumed this was to prevent military information reaching Argentina. It was also to prevent the world (and the state department?) knowing the scale of American help.

At the Pentagon, Mr Weinberger set up a central clearing-house with direct access to his office. Some 15 "in-trays" were eliminated from the supplies authorisation process. The receiving officer had to give Mr Weinberger personally a status report at the end of each day. Materiel was transferred from inventories in 24 hours instead of the normal two weeks. In addition, a large quantity of equipment was moved which had been on order some time, as well as other materiel which the American navy wanted anyhow to clear.

Aid fell into three categories. First was for Ascension itself. Additional accommodation and water purification plants were supplied. Roads were repaired and fuel-pipelines built. An astonishing 12.5m gallons of aviation fuel were diverted from American defence supplies for British use. This went far beyond releasing America's own strategic stockpile already on Ascension. The British even asked for an American tanker to be turned round in mid-Atlantic. American kerosine filled the tanks of Victor refuellers, Nimrod reconnaissance planes, the Vulcans which bombed Port Stanley, the C-130s which dropped supplies to ships and troops ashore (for which 18 American drop containers were provided). Britain could have obtained this fuel on the open market, but this would have been a laborious

and time-consuming business. Time was of the essence.

Next were weapons, with pride of place going to the new Sidewinder AIM-9L missile, the single most decisive weapon of the campaign. It claimed as many Argentine "kills" as all other weapon systems together, and the threat of it forced Argentina's aircraft to come in low and to bomb low, thereby restricting their range and tactics. Britain's existing heat-seeking Sidewinders were effective only from behind. For limited combat duration over the Falklands, the super-sensitive AIM-9Ls, which could be fired sideways on, or even from ahead, were vital. These were made available from American front-line stocks immediately, as were the adaptor plates to fit them to the GR3 RAF Harriers. America sent other missiles: the Shrike radar-seekers, the Harpoon anti-shiping missile and eight shoulder-held Stinger anti-aircraft systems (at a cost of \$4.7m) for the SAS. The Stinger was a notable addition to the SAS armoury. Jealous British censors removed all mention of it from task force reports. The Shrikes came complete with intelligence on Argentine radar frequencies.

This and other American equipment poured into Ascension throughout the war. One observer estimated that, at one stage, Wideawake was the world's busiest airport—busier than Chicago's O'Hare. The Americans sent 4,700 tons of airfield matting for land-based Harrier operations, submarine detection devices, a complete Chinook helicopter engine (prudently leased for \$157,000). They sent thousands of mortar rounds to meet the land force's shortage of shells, flare cartridges and other ammunition. There were limpet mines, night vision goggles, mess heaters, 480 long-range-patrol ration packs.

One air-refuelling nozzle had to be "lifted" from an American military museum. A complete Vulcan Phalanx-anti-missile gun system, at a price of \$16m, was rushed over to be fitted to *HMS Illustrious*. There was advice on electronic counter-measures and on defusing the unexploded (American-made) bombs which lodged in British ships. Where materiel came not from American inventories but direct from suppliers, special credit was arranged overnight. The aid bill eventually totalled \$60m, excluding the Sidewinders and the fuel.

Third, and to many British sources most important of all, was intelligence aid. Early in the war, there was no useable satellite photography. High-definition military satellites were not in an appropriate orbit. Certainly no satellite material was seen by task force commanders. American Awacs surveillance

Materiel supplied to Britain

200 Sidewinder AIM-9L air-to-air missiles
 Harrier-Sidewinder adaptor plates
 8 Stinger anti-aircraft systems
 Vulcan Phalanx air defence gun system
 Harpoon anti-ship missiles
 Shrike air-to-ground radar-seeking missiles
 18 CTU-2A air drop containers
 4,700 tons airfield matting
 1 C-47 helicopter engine
 350 torpedo exhaust valves
 12.5m gallons aviation fuel
 Satellite dishes and encrypting facilities
 Submarine detection equipment
 Flare cartridges + M130 dispensing systems
 60mm illuminating mortar rounds
 40mm high explosive ammunition
 Other assorted ammunition
 Night vision goggles
 Special mess heaters
 Long-range patrol ration packs

was not available since it would have directly implicated American servicemen in the conflict.

However, it is now known that, in the later stages of the war, Britain persuaded the Americans to move a military satellite from its Soviet-watching orbit over the northern hemisphere to cover the Falklands area. This move, using the satellite's scarce fuel and thus shortening its life, did not please those in the Pentagon who already felt the Falklands was a dangerous distraction. In addition, Britain benefited from Sigint (signals intelligence) given to Cheltenham from NSA listening stations round the South Atlantic. The Americans are believed to have broken the Argentine military codes, thus adding to the British intelligence gathered by *HMS Endurance*. The Americans claim "98%" of British intelligence of Argentine movements came from them. The British prefer not to comment.

The Pentagon allocated to the task force some of its military satellite channels. (Britain had to buy \$4m-worth of special satellite dishes and encrypting equipment.) These immensely eased confidential communication between Admiral Woodward, commander of the task force, and fleet headquarters at Northwood. Northwood was also thus enabled to talk directly to its submarine commanders. The cabinet decision to sink the Argentine cruiser, *Belgrano*, was probably communicated to the British nuclear submarine, *HMS Conqueror*, over an American military satellite link.

This American assistance was partly the result of long-standing, close liaison between British and American military missions, but it depended heavily on the direct personal commitment of Mr Weinberger himself. Though much of American public opinion was on his side, his intervention ran strongly counter to policies being pursued elsewhere in Washington during and since the war—manifested most clearly in Mrs Kirkpatrick's activities at the United Nations. It was in effect Mr Weinberger's own foreign policy, and

it was strongly conditioned by his concern at the consequences of a British failure.

Most military analysts today regard the strategic balance in the South Atlantic as having been extremely close. At no point in the conflict did Admiral Woodward enjoy room for manoeuvre. His logistics tail was stretched to breaking point. He lacked air superiority for his amphibious landing. Supplies, especially of fuel and ammunition, were always critical and by the end of the campaign the ground forces were almost out of 105mm shells. The Ascension refuelling bridge and the AIM-9L were wholly indispensable to his success. It is no disrespect to the quality of British forces on the ground to judge that they could not have won without the scale and the speed of America's support. This view is supported among themselves by many of the British commanders.

A British defeat or a military stalemate would have presented President Reagan with a dilemma much discussed in Washington at the time. American inertia would hardly improve America's battered reputation for standing by its allies in distress. Yet it was hard to envisage congress authorising American marines to bail Britain out of what many in Washington regarded as a senseless colonial war. Hence perhaps Mr Weinberger's most remarkable offer of the war: to fill the most glaring gap which would open up in Admiral Woodward's armoury should anything happen to either of his carriers, *Hermes* and *Invincible*. It was proposed that an amphibious assault ship of about the same size, *USS Guam*, with capacity to handle helicopters and Harriers would simply be turned over to the Royal Navy. Given the political explosion this would have caused both in Latin America and from the war's opponents in Washington, the ship would have

had to be staffed entirely by British sailors, only a handful of whom would have seen such a ship, a risky and bizarre idea. The Pentagon dared not commit a single engineer to the war—though it might have done so in the last resort. Fortunately, Britain did not have to take up the offer.

This American support for Britain contained within it echoes of historic friendship. As one senator revealingly told Sir Nicholas Henderson, Britain's Washington ambassador, "I am for you, not because you're right but simply because you're British." Caught napping by General Galtieri, Mrs Thatcher had taken prompt unilateral action in defence of international law and order. Widespread American scepticism of the Falklands war was matched by admiration for its sheer bravura.

But did it really teach any lessons about the special relationship? Washington was never consulted by London over the sending of the task force, despite the drastic implications for the United States and Nato of a conflict in the South Atlantic. Should the operation have hit trouble, America would have been expected to help—but in the event help came initially as almost a private venture by the Pentagon and American navy. While Mrs Thatcher fumed over President Reagan's even-handedness in April, her commanders prayed her fury would not stem the flow of weapons and fuel to Ascension. Not for the first time, America was trapped by the obligations of superpower status. Britain's military victory that June was not a particular triumph for any special relationship. It merely showed how easily America's allies can involve it in conflicts not of its own choosing.

(Next week, *Grenada*: "Say something, if only goodbye".)



Sidewinders: British hands flitting American brain

Britain declined Falklands carrier offer by U.S.

By **DESMOND WETTERN** Naval Correspondent

IT is now known, from sources involved in planning the Falklands operation, that the possibility of the Royal Navy taking over an American amphibious assault helicopter carrier, had either the two British carriers *Hermes* and *Invincible* been sunk or crippled, was put forward by senior officers in the Pentagon.

But the British rapidly appreciated that Congress would never have stomached the ship, the 18,300-ton *Guam*, being manned by Americans.

Training a British crew to operate the totally unfamiliar type of ship would have taken much longer than would have been acceptable in the circumstances.

In addition, every available *Sea Harrier* the Navy then had was already deployed in the South Atlantic and the only ones that would have been readily available would have been some of those being completed for India.

Order cancelled

The American offer of a carrier to the Royal Navy is not new. In 1966, following the decision to cancel construction of the 50,000-ton carrier *CVA-01* by Mr Healey, Labour's Defence Secretary at the time, the Pentagon offered to make at least one of the 43,000-ton *Essex* class carriers available for sale or lease.

Apart from concern that a stalemate was to be avoided in the South Atlantic, the American offer of the *Guam*, which was made to Royal Navy senior officers below Admiralty Board level, also underlined how important the Americans rate the anti-submarine support of their large carriers that the British carries provide in the Nato area. If one of the two British carriers had been lost this contribution to Atlantic anti-submarine warfare would have been greatly diminished.

But disclosure of the carrier proposal and that of the many other ways in which America helped Britain in the Falklands

conflict at this time reflects the current political battle in Washington to ensure that President Reagan's plan for a 600-ship fleet by 1989 is not diminished as an election ploy to cut government spending.

Press doubts

In the American defence Press doubts are being cast on the value of small carriers with claims that Britain never gained air superiority over the Falklands and that the efforts of the *Invincible* and *Hermes* were to some extent irrelevant.

The purpose of this attempted downgrading of the Fleet Air Arm's achievements in particular and those of the British forces generally appears to have a twofold purpose: on the one hand to show how the British victory was made possible only with American weapons and other aid. Thus the American taxpayer is getting a good bargain with weapons now supplied to American forces.

But also the aim appears to be to demonstrate the dangers, even against a relatively minor power, of relying on shoestring armed forces as it is suggested the British did.

PENTAGON DENIAL 'Trying to be friends'

OUR WASHINGTON STAFF writes: Pentagon sources denied yesterday that America had offered a replacement warship for *Hermes* or *Invincible* in the event that either had been sunk in the Falklands campaign.

As one Pentagon source put it: "We'd much rather not talk about the Falklands and let bygones be bygones. We are trying to be friends to both Britain and Argentina."

The fact that America gave Britain considerable military and intelligence-gathering aid during the 1982 Falklands conflict was well known at the time. But American diplomats and Defence Department officials have always been reticent on the details, realising the sensitivity of the issue in Buenos Aires.

Troops are welcome in the Falklands

SIR—There has been so much nonsense talked about the attitude of the Falkland Islanders towards the garrison here, and about our future, that I feel it is time one of us spoke up.

We Kelpers do not resent the British servicemen among us, nor feel they infringe on our lives. On the contrary we welcome them.

They have given us a security we have not felt since attempts were made to "sell us out" in 1968. We all welcome and invite servicemen into our homes throughout the islands, and each regiment, aircrew, sailor or policeman leaves behind many new friends when his time here ends. If anything we resent the efforts being made to keep the two communities apart.

We can develop without any close association with Argentina once we have the new strategic airport: a 200-mile fishing and exploratory zone around these islands and dependencies, a wool mill and so on.

But we do need a leader, workers, and people with energy, imagination and capital to invest here.

British blood was shed in 1914 as well as in 1982 in order to retain possession of these strategically placed islands. I do not believe the British people as a whole, and certainly not the relatives of those who fought and died here, would ever countenance any British government handing over British territory and British people to Argentina.

These islands are British and so are we all.

MRS BETTY MULLER
4th Generation Kelper
Stanley, Falkland Islands.

VARLEY STAYS SILENT ON POLL RESULT

By Our Port Stanley
Correspondent

Mr Eric Varley who resigned the Chesterfield seat in the Commons so that he could pursue a business career declined to comment yesterday on Mr Wedgewood Benn's victory.

Mr Varley who joined Coalite, the Falkland Islands Company parent group, as executive vice-chairman is currently touring sheep farms in the Falklands.

A contractor, Mr William Hill, said: "Mr Varley owes it to the local community to make some comment, as we feel that the election of Tony Benn is not good for the Falklands. He should do more harm than Galtieri."

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2.3.84

Task Force Moore gets a new job

MAJOR GENERAL Sir Jeremy Moore, commander of land forces during the Falklands War and without regular employment since retiring on a £12,500 a year pension a year ago, has landed an important, albeit temporary, job.

Moore, forced to retire from the Royal Marines because there was no job senior enough for him to fill, has been appointed specialist adviser at £80 a day to the Commons Select Committee on Defence, and as such is likely to be regarded as something of a poacher-turned-gameweeper.

The committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Humphrey Atkins, is investigating the effectiveness of our weapon systems used in the South Atlantic conflict and Moore will be assessing, from the evidence of his old comrades, how those weapons performed. Such expert knowledge is a rare commodity and I'm told, the committee regards Moore as a "major catch."

That Atkins, who had to resign his job as deputy foreign secretary because of the Falklands crisis, has hired the man which the war turned into a national hero is not without irony. But Moore, who has spent a year looking for work and yet has a pub named after him and a military march written for him, is used to that.

News Round-up

Falklands papers to go back

THE Foreign Office will be handing back documents on Britain's sovereignty over the Falklands which it borrowed from the Public Record Office, the Prime Minister promised MPs yesterday.

Mrs Thatcher told Mr Steel, Liberal leader: "You will find that a number have been put back."

Some critics of the Government's handling of the Falklands issue claim that the Foreign Office has withdrawn the documents from public scrutiny because they contain opinions casting doubt on Britain's right to the islands.

But a Foreign Office spokesman said yesterday that they were among a much larger range of papers borrowed since the Falklands conflict for "departmental research."

THE TIMES

2.3.84

US 'pledge to replace UK carrier'

By Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent

The United States was prepared to supply a replacement ship if either of Britain's carriers with the Falklands task force, HMS *Invincible* or HMS *Hermes*, had been lost, an article says in today's issue of *The Economist*.

The article, by Simon Jenkins, political editor, also says that in the later stages of the conflict Britain persuaded the Americans to move a military satellite from its orbit over the northern hemisphere to cover the Falklands area.

It says the value of American material supplied to Britain was \$60m, excluding the cost of 200 Sidewinder missiles and 12.5m gallons of aviation fuel.

The Ministry of Defence said last night that it never commented on intelligence matters and was not prepared to confirm the claims about the amount of material received.

The claims in *The Economist*, which come from American sources, are likely to embarrass the United States acutely in its relations with South American countries if they are confirmed.

The report suggests that much of the assistance was given on the initiative of Mr Caspar Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, and knowledge of it was at times concealed from other members of the Administration.

Daily Mail
2nd March 1984

— U.S. 'offered ship in Falklands war'

AMERICA was prepared to hand over one of its own ships if a British aircraft carrier had been sunk in the Falklands war, it is claimed today.

Unknown to Mrs Thatcher's War Cabinet, it would have turned over the assault ship USS Guam to the Royal Navy to fill the glaring gap that would have been left if either Hermes or Invincible had gone down, according to a report in The Economist.

This 'most remarkable offer' of the conflict came from U.S. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger, it is claimed.

The report, drawing, it says, on 'new material' describes the plan as 'risky and bizarre' because only a handful of British sailors

had seen the Guam and because it would have caused a 'political explosion' both in Washington and Latin America.

But the offer was known only to certain British naval and diplomatic officials.

The Economist adds that the South Atlantic campaign could not even have been mounted, let alone won, without secret American help totalling more than 60 million dollars. Much of it was concealed from senior Government members on both sides to prevent embarrassment.

Since then concealment of the scale of aid has continued because the State Department feared for its 'bruised relationship' with Latin America, and Whitehall was keen that victory should be seen as Britain's alone.

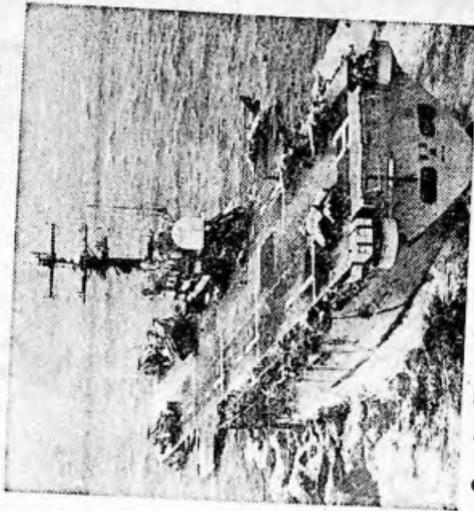
The Economist claims that U.S.

help began even before the task force set sail, in confidential dealing between the British and American navies

'There were also many telephone calls from British fleet headquarters in Northwood direct to friends in the United States Navy. Many of these requests were not known about by senior officials.'

But although it was prepared to offer USS Guam, the Pentagon dared 'not commit a single engineer to the war — though it might have done so as a last resort,' says the report.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman, asked last night if Britain had been offered the use of USS Guam if Hermes or Invincible had been sunk, said he could not answer as it was 'a hypothetical question' as they had not been lost.



On standby 7 America's assault ship Guam

RAF officer has no 'right of abode' in Britain

By NICHOLAS COMFORT Political Staff

A SQUADRON-LEADER in the R A F, now doing a tour of duty in the Falklands, has been refused a "right to abode in Britain" stamp in his passport because his father was born in India.

Mr Eldon Griffiths, Conservative MP for Bury St Edmunds, says the officer is an East African Asian with British citizenship.

He has been refused the declaration even though he has held the Queen's Commission for over 10 years, owns a house in Suffolk and lives there with his British wife and British-born children.

Mr Griffiths says the "preposterous" situation could arise of the officer returning from the Falklands by civil aircraft, being refused admission to Britain, and thus subject to court martial for being absent without leave.

"I'm not given to criticising the immigration service," said Mr Griffiths. "But if a man is good enough to serve in the Falklands giving orders to a large number of men, he is good enough to have the right of abode in Britain."

Common sense

After tabling a Commons question to Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, asking why the Passport Office had refused to stamp the officer's papers with the right of abode, Mr Griffiths said that he felt the exercise of common sense would have prevented the situation arising.

When the squadron-leader called at the Passport Office with his R A F and Nato documentation, officials had appeared ready to grant the declaration until they learned that his father was born in India. He was thus not a "patrial" under the Immigration Acts, despite his own British citizenship.

He was advised to visit the Home Office at Croydon, where he was told he could not have the declaration unless he could bring further documentation to support his case from his R A F station in Suffolk.

"The elementary thing for either office to have done would have been to say: 'There are some technical problems but your documents are in order and we have telephoned your commanding officer and of course you shall have the declaration,'" said Mr Griffiths.

GALTIERI UNDER 'RIGOROUS' ARREST

By Our Buenos Aires
Correspondent

Former President Galtieri of Argentina, who has been detained since Feb. 21 by a court martial investigating alleged mishandling of the 1982 Falklands war, was put under "rigorous" preventive arrest on Tuesday night, the Armed Forces Supreme Council's secretary said.

According to Argentina's military code of justice this may imply there is enough evidence to sentence the former Army commander to death, prison, degradation, or confinement.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

1.3.84

THE TIMES

1.2.84

Now it's jaw-jaw

The fighting may be over, but the Falklands war goes on. Monday sees the publication of a highly critical book, *The Sinking of the Belgrano*, by Arthur Gavshon, former Associated Press diplomatic correspondent, and Desmond Rice, who spent seven years in Argentina as Royal Dutch Shell's manager. That is only the first shot, though. During his researches, Gavshon discovered that Alexander Haig, the US Secretary of State at the time of the war, was also writing a book about the Falklands: it will be published on both sides of the Atlantic on April 30. Rice, meanwhile, learned that Nicanor Costa Mendez, Argentina's ex-foreign minister, is about to have his day in print - and of course our own Jim Callaghan has indicated he will have something to say about the Falklands in his forthcoming autobiography. Still, it's all weaponry for that old campaigner Tam Dalyell, who tomorrow will again put down a Commons motion questioning the Government's version of the Belgrano sinking.

Net closes on General Galtieri

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

General Leopoldo Galtieri was placed under "rigorous" arrest on Tuesday as the military court trying the officers who led Argentina into conflict moved one step closer to convicting him. The Supreme Council of the armed forces, which first arrested General Galtieri on February 21, ordered him placed under a stricter category of detention, indicating that it has found evidence to suggest he is guilty as accused.

The change in General Galtieri's status, primarily an administrative measure, implies that he will be transferred to a military prison.

The 14 former military leaders being court-martialled in the Falklands case are accused of crimes ranging from negligence to failing to provide assistance to friendly troops, and General Galtieri and three others could theoretically face the death penalty if convicted.

Admiral Jorge Anaya, the former navy commander who was one of the principal advocates of the original invasion, faces similar charges, and the Supreme Council must decide within a day or two whether to place him under "rigorous preventive detention" as well.

The former Air Force commander, Brigadier Basilio Lami Dozo and admiral Anaya were placed under the more benign category of "Preventive Detention" last week.

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