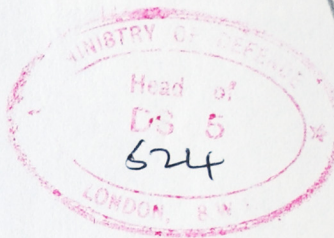


LOOSE MINUTE

TO/2304/343/5/82

NOT RECORDED



NA/1SL
Sec/VCNS
→ Sec/ACNS(0)
→ Head of DS5

emm

Copy to: DPR(N)

M. 22iii

ILLEGAL LANDING ON SOUTH GEORGIA BY ARGENTINE PARTY 20 MARCH 1982

1. At 1318 on 20th March The Governor of The Falkland Islands reported to The FCO that a group of Argentines had landed illegally in LEITH harbour, South Georgia Island, late on 19 March from an Argentine auxiliary ship BAHIA BUEN SUCESO.
2. As a contingency measure HMS ENDURANCE has sailed for South Georgia with a platoon of Royal Marines embarked including 9 men from NP 8901. ENDURANCE ETA at LEITH harbour is 0830Z (first light) on Wednesday 24 March. ENDURANCE was due to commence the roulement of NP 8901 this week. Ministerial approval was given to this contingency plan on Saturday evening.
3. There has been intense diplomatic activity including a strong protest to The Argentinian Government. They have informed us that BAHIA BUEN SUCESO and the shore party have been ordered to leave South Georgia, and are trying to play the incident down.
4. At Annex A is a brief summary of events. A meeting has been arranged at The FCO for 1100 Monday 22 March to discuss the situation. Head of DS5 and DNOT will attend.
5. The latest situation report at 211720Z indicated BAHIA may be leaving having landed sufficient fuel for shore party. FCO report that there have been as yet no Press enquiries but will consider issuing a Press statement on 22 March.

22 March 1982

J Garnier

J GARNIER
Captain, Royal Navy
DIRECTOR OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
AND TRADE

MB 5355 2866 MB

Enclosure: Annex A Summary of Events

ANNEX A to DNOT's
 TO/2304/343/5/82
 dated 22 March 1982

ILLEGAL LANDING IN SOUTH GEORGIA
SUMMARY OF EVENTS

(Letters in bracket refer to the key signals in signal folder)

Date/Time

Event

(All times Z)

Saturday 20 Mar
 1330

FLASH message to FCO (A) from HE Governor Falklands(HEGFI) reporting the incident. Base Commander of BAS at GRITVIKEN, South Georgia reported:

- (a) Party of civilians/military landed from BAHIA BUEN SUCESO
- (b) They hoisted Argentine Flag.
- (c) They changed English notices into Spanish.
- (d) They set up a radio ashore.
- (e) Shots were fired (later thought to be at game)

HEGFI intentions were to:

- (1) Order them to leave
- (2) Have ENDURANCE standby to sail for South Georgia if Argentinians do not comply.

1330-1345

D/Cdr informed Director
 Resident Clerk etc.

By end of evening the following were informed: PM, CDS, 1SL, ACDS(Ops), US of S(AF), COS to CINCFLEET, Press Desk, DS5, CGRM, ACNS(O), Head of SA Dept FCO.

Afternoon

Deliberations at The FCO.

1630

FCO send reply to HEGFI (B) agreeing with his intentions. FCO tell HMA BUENOS AIRES to protest.

1803

Port Stanley report (C) Defence capability of BAHIA BUEN SUCESO as probably nil.

1835

CINCFLEET himself passes on military judgement i.e. that ENDURANCE should sail ASAP.

1955

Prime Minister and S of S informed. Relaxed view. PM gut feeling is that ENDURANCE should sail, however will leave it to Minister's judgement.

2000 approx

Argentine Charge summoned to FCO

2030 approx

Head of DS5 and Head of South America Div. FCO (Robin Fearn Esq.) meet to consider ENDURANCE plan.

- (A) HEGFI A3A 201125Z MAR
- (B) FCO A3A 201630Z MAR
- (C) Port Stanley A3A 201803Z MAR

A-1

CONFIDENTIAL

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
<u>Saturday 20 Mar cont.</u>	
2200	US of S(AF) agrees the joint MOD/FCO view that ENDURANCE should sail for S.Georgia at 210930Z with appropriate number of RMs.
2310	This decision passed to HEGFI by FCO (D).
2327	CINCFLEET (E) orders ENDURANCE to sail. Further instructions and ROE to follow.
<u>Sunday 21 Mar</u>	
0300 (Not passed until 211410Z)	Argentine Government respond to protest(F). They play incident down and say that party plus ship will leave today (Sunday).
1125	HEGFI reports(G) that relief Field Party (BAS) despatched to LEITH Harbour. Argentine Flag now down. Party offered food by Argentines.
a.m.	CINCFLEET earmarks 2 FF/DD plus RFA from SPRINGTRAIN group if required. Ships not told.
1500 approx	ENDURANCE sails with RM at Platoon strength(H) (estimated as 12 of her own plus 9 from NP8901). Base Commander GRITVIKEN reports 50 ashore. ENDURANCE asks MOD(N) for alternative plans for changeover of NP 8901.
1720	Base Commander reports BAHIA BUEN SUCESO is preparing to leave harbour but leaving party ashore.(J)
1745	FCO gives HEGFI further advice and states we must be clear of the facts of what happened.(K) FCO tell Argentines that UK pleased with their response but need confirmation party are leaving
2012	Fuller report (L) by leader of BAS Field party.

- (D) FCO A3A 202310Z Mar
- (E) CINCFLEET EAL/LDQ 202327Z Mar
- (F) BUENOS AIRES A3A 211410Z Mar
- (G) HEGFI A3A 211125Z Mar
- (H) ENDURANCE EAL 211545Z Mar
- (J) ENDURANCE A3A/EAL 211720Z Mar
- (K) FCO A3A 211745Z Mar
- (L) Port Stanley 212012Z Mar