

C.S.

WAR/W2H/7#7

LEGAL (Miscellaneous) NAVAL & MILITARY (Misc.) PORT & MARINE (Shipping) (Miscellaneous) POSTAL & TELEGRAPHIC (Miscellaneous)
No. 156/42.

19 42.

Naval Officer-in-Charge.

SUBJECT.

19 42.

LEAKAGE OF SECRET INFORMATION.

Previous Paper.

See S/2/41.

MINUTES.

1. Letter from Naval Officer-in-Charge of 17. 11. 42.
2. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 18. 11. 42.
3. Minute to N.O.i.C. of 19/11/42.
- 4-5. Excerpt from Stanley Broadcast No. 4 of 15.1.43.

Subsequent Paper.

The Office of
The Naval Officer-in-Charge,
Falklands.

17th November, 1942.

No. D 1/3.

The Honorable Colonial Secretary,
Falkland Islands.



G. BRECHIN.

It has been reported to me by the Rev. G.K.Lowe, as Censor, that the above person, who at your request and being cited as a Government employee was recently granted the privilege of travelling to Montevideo as a passenger in H.M.T. "HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN" has sent a telegram from there indicating the dates of Departure and Arrival of S.S. "FITZROY". This is a serious offence and I feel that no further privileges of this nature can be extended to him.

I should be grateful if during your next broadcast you gave a warning against this extremely dangerous action observing that all such messages are sent by wireless and can therefore be intercepted by enemy ships and agents. It might be pointed out that legal action can be taken and heavy penalties inflicted. Several instances of this nature have occurred from time to time and I feel that some action should be taken to put a stop to it.

RB Martin

Commander, R.N.
(Naval Officer-in-Charge)

No. _____

(It is requested that, in any reference to this minute, the above Number and the date may be quoted.)

MINUTE.

27th October, 19 42.

From

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

To The Naval Officer-in-Charge,

STANLEY.

I should be grateful if passage from Stanley to Montevideo per "Highland Chieftain" could be arranged for Mr. Gregor Brechin who wishes to proceed to that port for optical treatment. All expenses in connection with the passage will be met by this Government.


Colonial Secretary.

Office of
The Naval Officer-in-Charge,
Falklands.

18th November, 1942.



No. D 1/3.

Sir,

It has been reported to me by the Government Censor, the Rev. G.K. Lowe, that on the 16th November a telegram, which had been sent by Mr. G. Brechin from Montevideo to a person in Stanley, was intercepted by him and that this telegram contained a message indicating the date of arrival of s.s. "FITZROY" at Stanley. In view of the very serious consequences which might attend the sending of such messages by wireless telegraphy, and the fact that there have been a number of similar cases already, it is submitted that legal action may be taken by the Public Prosecutor, and that if proven guilty an example may be made of this person who, I understand, is a prominent citizen and also a member of the Committee of the Reform League and therefore should be sufficiently intelligent to be well aware of the possible results of his action.

I have the honour to be, Sir

Your obedient servant,

R.B. Marki

Commander, R.N.
(Naval Officer-in-Charge)

The Honorable Colonial Secretary,
Falkland Islands.

166/42

3

19th November, 42.

Naval officer in Charge,

Stanley.

With reference to your minute of 17th November and your letter of 18th, both under reference D 1/3, I have the honour to enclose a copy of the telegram in question. His Excellency is advised that there would be no possibility of obtaining a conviction in view of the wording of the telegram and in the circumstances no legal action can be taken.

Mr Brechin will, however, be spoken to on his return and a general warning to the public will be included in my next broadcast.

K. G. BRADLEY
Colonial Secretary.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

FALKLAND ISLANDS AND DEPENDENCIES.

RECEIVED.

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
135	Montevideo	17	19.50	14.11.42
<i>To</i>				
Lc Teresa Brechin Stanley.				

JOHN AND I ABLE TO HELP YOU ON PAYMENT LOVE TO ALL.

GREGOR BRECHIN.

Time

Excerpt from Stanley Broadcast given by
the Hon. K. G. Bradley on 15. 1. 43.

(5)

Now I have been asked to ~~give you information concerning~~ ^{say something} about telegrams. Until recently it was quite a common practice for people to send information to their friends about shipping movements. I do not of course mean that a man goes to Montevideo and then sends a telegram home that the Fitzroy will be sailing on Monday and that she will arrive at Port Stanley on Saturday. But it is quite common for people to advise their friends or relatives when they expect to arrive somewhere, in some form of heavily disguised message such as "Archibald will be in for breakfast on Friday". It is always possible in cases like this to argue, quite convincingly, that no information whatever has been given away, but people forget one thing and that is that Jerry is a very clever person. Not only does he listen to and take down all wireless messages but he has whole staffs of experts who are extremely clever at ferreting out their meaning. The odds are of course that in 99 cases out of 100 the kind of message which I am talking about would not even be suspected.

But/

(4)

But there is the odd chance that it may be interpreted correctly and that there may be a raider or submarine sufficiently nearby to justify its being sent to torpedo the ship. I do not think there is one of us who would subject our friends on the ship to even one chance in a million of being killed or injured through our selfishness and carelessness. The only safe thing to do is not to send messages like this at all, and the only way of ensuring this is to stop such messages being sent altogether. This we have done and instead we have made the following arrangements. If, when one of our ships is going round the islands, you or a friend or relative are going on her, and you want to warn people in the Camp of your arrival, or when you have arrived, if you want to report home that you have arrived safely, this is what you can do. In Stanley you can go to the Telegraph Office and tell them there whom you want to advise. The Telegraph Office will then have the advice included in the official code message which is always sent out by the Information Officer. Similarly if you are in West Falkland and you want to send a message of this kind to Stanley, all you need do is to ask the Operator at Fox Bay to include the advice in his code message. He will wire in code something like this : "Fitzroy expects to arrive Stanley six a.m. Thursday advise Smith, Brown, Jones". In this way relatives and friends will get the information they want and there will be no risk of the Axis hearing anything about it all. The system is working well, and I think you will agree that it is a sensible one.