

Book details torture in Argentina

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

A book describing in horrifying detail human rights abuses committed by Argentina's military governments between 1976 and 1983 went on sale here yesterday, giving Argentinians a glimpse into their gory past.

The book, entitled *Never Again*, is a long awaited summary of the findings of the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons, which was appointed by President Raul Alfonsín a year ago to look into the fate of nearly 9,000 Argentinians who disappeared under military rule.

People wishing to obtain copies of the 500-page report were queueing at the publishers yesterday and Señor Luis Gregorich, the head of the publishing firm, reported that orders had already exceeded the first print run of 40,000 copies.

Never Again contains detailed testimony from victims who survived the military's network of torture and secret extermination camps. There are literally hundreds of descriptions of the tortures used.

"First, they stripped me naked and handcuffed my hands behind my back. Then they hung me from the ceiling, with my feet dangling 12in above the floor. It was too painful to describe and I lost track of how long I was left like this", one inmate was quoted as saying.

"Then the torturers lowered me 8in until I could stretch and try to rest by putting my feet on the floor, to take the weight off my arms. This was only an appearance, because, when I managed to touch the floor I began to receive electric shocks through my feet."

Other evidence tells how some of the 365 secret detention centres discovered by the commission operated as extermination centres.

Beagle treaty signed in Rome

Rome (AP) - Winding up nearly a century of territorial disputes, Argentina and Chile yesterday signed a Vatican-sponsored treaty to settle their claims over the strategic Beagle Channel at the tip of South America.

The Argentine Foreign Minister, Señor Caputo, and his Chilean counterpart Señor Jaime del Valle, signed at a ceremony presided over by the Vatican's Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli. It represented a diplomatic victory for the Pope, who had risked his prestige to mediate five years ago.

Foulkes asked to hand over copy of diary

A Labour front-bencher was asked yesterday by Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, to give up his copy of the diary of the former officer of the HMS Conqueror, which sank the Belgrano during the Falklands conflict.

Mr George Foulkes was summoned to the Ministry of Defence yesterday morning and interviewed by Mr Heseltine.

Publication of extracts of the diary in *The Observer* last Sunday, was referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Mr Foulkes said in the Commons on Tuesday that he had a copy of the same diary.

Yesterday Mr Heseltine told Mr Foulkes that the Ministry was trying to retrieve all copies of the diary.

But Mr Foulkes's copy was only of the same extracts of the diary that had appeared in *The Observer*.

Action man

'After "scooping" *Panorama* by securing Clive Ponting for an exclusive TV programme on his trial the *World in Action* team has been brought to a temporary halt by *The Observer* - the paper which first broke the Ponting story. It emerges that Ponting, the civil servant charged with leaking documents on the Belgrano, has agreed that a book on the trial, which publishers are currently urging him to write should be serialized in *The Observer*. All was well until, as I disclosed last week, *World in Action* also signed up Ponting. This outraged the paper, not because it feared being "scooped", but because of a bitter wrangle currently being fought between the two. Both had apparently agreed to work on a joint TV and newspaper "exclusive" on the former officer who allegedly took documents from the Conqueror after its attack on the Belgrano. Agreements broke down and *The Observer* published last week amidst a slanging match between the two. *World in Action* may now broadcast its scoop on the officer on Monday. Yesterday an *Observer* source said: "We have told Ponting that if he appears on *World in Action* it may well affect our interest in his trial experiences."

PHS

Anger in Hong Kong at loss of citizenship

By Henry Stanhope
Diplomatic Correspondent

Most of Hong Kong's 5½ million people have found the Anglo-Chinese agreement on their future acceptable, according to the official assessment of their views, which was published in the form of a White Paper yesterday.

But it also refers to an "agenda" of reservations and to bitterness, frustration and even anger among the colony's 2 million British Dependent Territory Citizens, who will lose that status when China takes over in 1997.

Of just over 1,000 people who clearly expressed their views to the special assessment office, 364 rejected the draft agreement.

But an overwhelming majority of the 679 groups and organizations which made their views known accepted its terms, which provide for Hong Kong to retain its capitalist lifestyle for 50 years after reverting to Peking.

The possibility of Chinese conscription for Hong Kong youth and the stationing of communist troops in the territory, and the question of leases

and, particularly, nationality, are the matters which are most worrying local people, according to the assessors, who studied 2,494 submissions by members of the public and 1,063 comments in Hong Kong's media.

The conclusions on the overall acceptability of the document are endorsed in a separate report by two independent monitors, Sir Patrick Nairne, Master of St Catherine's College, Oxford, and Mr Justice Simon Li Fook-Sean, who said:

"The verdict of acceptance implies neither positive en-

thusiasm nor passive acquiescence. The response to the Assessment Office has demonstrated the realism of the people of Hong Kong."

A statement by the unofficial members of the colony's executive and legislative councils said last night that China must now demonstrate its willingness to listen to the views of Hong Kong's people.

(Hong Kong: Arrangements for testing the acceptability in Hong Kong of the draft agreement on the future of the territory. Miscellaneous No. 24 (1984). HMSO, £6.)

Daily Mail
30th November 1984

BEATTIE EDNEY,
22-year-old daughter of
actress Sylvia Syms, in a
new Alan Franks' play
set in the offices of a
Sun-type newspaper
during the Falklands
war. Our Boys, opens
on December 3 at the
Falcon Theatre Royal
College Street, London.

Military rulers caused tragedy in Argentina

From Jeremy Morgan
in Buenos Aires

The special commission appointed by President Alfonsín to investigate the disappearance of thousands of people in Argentina during the 1970s has unequivocally condemned the military dictatorship for "the greatest tragedy in our history and the most savage."

In its long-awaited report, the commission, headed by the Argentine author, Mr Ernesto Sabato, sharply contrasted the methods used by other countries against terrorism and those applied in Argentina after the military coup in 1976. It said the regime had responded with a terrorism "infinitely worse" than that which it was fighting.

Much of the 490-page report's contents have already been documented by human rights organisations overseas. But it is still likely to come as a shocker for many Argentines.

International human rights organisations have conservatively estimated that between 6,000 and 15,000 people went missing during the "dirty war." Other estimates range up to 30,000.

The commission's report was accompanied by an appendix in which it listed for 485 pages the names of 8,960

people it said had permanently disappeared under the regime. The appendix contained two further lists: one naming people seen at clandestine prisons before they vanished, and another listing 365 secret torture and detention centres.

But the Government is not publishing the most dramatic list of all in which the commission is reported to name well over 1,000 members of the armed forces, the police, and the security services who were accused of leading and taking part in several years of kidnapping, illegal detention, torture and, in most cases, the presumed murder of the regime's victims.

The commission angrily refutes the defence of the "dirty war" advanced by the regime. The regime's first president, General Jorge Videla, who is now in custody at an army prison, conceded some years ago that there had been some "excesses."

Jane Walker adds from Madrid: "Spain is to be congratulated on its great diplomatic achievement over Gibraltar," the Argentine Foreign Minister, Mr Dante Caputo, said here yesterday.

Mr Caputo stressed the parallels between Spain's claim to Gibraltar and the Argentine wish to regain sovereignty over the Falklands.

DAVID FAIRHALL on the importance of keeping communications open in time of war

How discussion could be a defence

THE military assumption that our first objective in a major East-West conflict should be to destroy the enemy's means of strategic command and control may be the opposite of what is needed to ensure survival. This was the message of the former civil service head of the Defence Ministry, Sir Frank Cooper, in a speech last night. In a future war, it might paradoxically pay to leave the other side's communications intact, he told an appropriately-chosen audience at the Royal Signals Institution. Then it would at least be physically possible for the two combatants, and perhaps other countries as well, to talk to one another before the conflict got totally out of control.

Even if strategic control was not deliberately disrupted, Sir Frank argued, "it can safely be asserted that the level of human incompetence and confusion in times of crisis at the start of a war at any level of intensity will be very high."

The idea of "controlled escalation" developed by American so-called defence analysts in the 1960s was always nonsense, he said. Even in the early days it was extremely far-fetched to imagine politicians and military commanders behaving in such a cool calculating manner. Now, when the time for decision-making would be much shorter, and many of the weapons cannot be made fail-safe, it seems ludicrous.

Sir Frank Cooper knows a bit about handling the confusion of an unexpected military crisis. He was permanent under-secretary at the Defence Ministry when the Argentinians invaded the Falklands. Since then he has retired from Whitehall to take up a new career in industry. But he is now more active than he was able to be as a civil servant in trying to open up the defence debate in this country.

In last night's lecture he reminded us of another way in which a third world war would be fundamentally different from 1939-45. He does not attribute this solely to the appearance of nuclear weapons, about which, he complained last night, some people are unnecessarily obsessed. But a nuclear war is the extreme case — and potentially on an entirely different scale of permanent destruction — of which he was arguing the general proposition.

Both Nato and the Warsaw Pact, Sir Frank acknowledged, have poured vast resources into their military command and control communications, and into "hardening" them to survive even nuclear attack. But surviving war was not the same as preventing it or managing a crisis, he pointed out. Far less attention had been paid to the political side of the problem, even in Europe, where our proximity to the Soviet Union and the fact that for both of us, shorter-range so-called tactical nuclear weapons would have a strategic impact, might have been expected to stimulate

special interest.

If two such different political systems are to co-exist, Sir Frank argued, they must be able to communicate in the fullest sense. We should make urgent efforts to establish an East-West dialogue, to understand each other's security policies, and to organise those policies as far as possible on a cooperative basis.

"Hot lines" between Washington, London and Moscow, plus agreements to communicate about nuclear weapons accidents were a start, but they covered a very narrow field. A broader, more positive system was needed to ensure a measure of understanding and restraint before a situation got out of control. In a world of devastating modern weapons, the crisis could come suddenly from an unexpected quarter, and it was no use saying, in Henry Kissinger's ironic comment: "There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full."

New ideas worth investigating.

gating, Sir Frank suggested, were the advance notification of all ballistic missile launches, some kind of international information centre, or monitoring station, manned perhaps by technically qualified neutral states, and East-West agreement on facilities that could be used to confer in times of crisis. We could not run the risk of not having a convenient gap in next week's schedule. We needed some due processes already in place.

Most importantly in his view, and this was perhaps the measure which logically offered the best chance of progress, was the need to reach treaty agreements that would protect strategic communications—many of them located in space. "It would seem to make more sense," Sir Frank said, "to preserve space in such a way that it remained capable of use for both warring and communications, and that there should be a ban on the deployment and use of weapons in space."

Horrors of Argentine torture disclosed

By CRISTINA BONASEGNA in Buenos Aires

AN official 500-page account describing the horrors under Argentina's former military régime went on sale yesterday as a second edition went to press.

The book includes shocking testimonies from victims who survived torture inflicted on thousands of people during the eight years of military rule which ended last December.

Argentines queued up yesterday to buy a copy of the report. Luis Gregorich, the publisher, said orders had far exceeded the 40,000 first edition print.

Also available was a 660-page annex which includes the names of 8,961 missing people and a list of 365 illegal detention centres.

'Never again'

The book, called "Never Again," is the work of a commission appointed by President Alfonsín shortly after he took office last December. When the commission presented its report to the President on Sept. 20, more than 70,000 people called for "punishment to the guilty" outside Government House.

The report describes torture methods employed by police, military and para-military forces. They include using electric rods, razor blades and drugs plus more sophisticated techniques such as forcing the victim to swallow metal balls attached to a wire so an electric shock went right into their bodies.

There are detailed accounts of special brutal treatment given to pregnant women and Jews. Many babies born in captivity are listed as missing.

Miguel D'Agostino, one torture victim, told the commission: "If on leaving my captivity I had been asked 'did they torture you much?' I would have answered them: 'Yes, three months straight without stopping'."

"Never Again" was presented to human rights groups, diplomats and journalists by Senor Eduardo Rabossi, Human Rights Under-Secretary.

Although the report names more than 100 people involved in torturing alleged Left-wing subversives, it does not list the more than 1,300 people linked to human rights violations that the commission submitted to the President.

BELGRANO LOG INQUIRY COMPLETED

By Our Defence Correspondent

The Admiralty's Board of Inquiry on the missing control log of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentinian cruiser General Belgrano, has now been completed and a report sent to Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary.

Unofficial sources believe that the whereabouts of the missing log have not yet been discovered and Mr Heseltine is expected to make a statement to the Commons on the subject today.

The Defence Ministry now know the name of the officer who kept a diary while serving on board Conqueror at the time of the General Belgrano sinking. Extracts from the diary have been published recently and a Ministry source said yesterday that the whole matter was now one for the Director of Public Prosecutions and the police.

Argentina sees Gibraltar pact as key precedent

BY TOM BURNS IN MADRID

TUESDAY'S Anglo-Spanish agreement over the Gibraltar dispute was a key precedent that underlined the "irreversible nature of the de-colonisation process," Sr Dante Caputo, Argentina's Foreign Minister, said in Madrid yesterday.

Referring to the Falklands dispute, Sr Caputo said it would be increasingly difficult for Britain to reject negotiations. But he added: "Unfortunately, British intransigence continues and there is no sign of any immediate possibility of this changing."

Sr Caputo was speaking at Madrid Airport on his way to the Vatican for the initialling of the agreement with Chile over the Beagle Channel.

For Sr Caputo, as for Madrid officials and the Spanish public, the crucial element in the undertaking to start negotiations over Gibraltar is not the Spanish decision to lift restrictions on

the Rock, but the British counter-concession to discuss sovereignty.

Jimmy Burns in Buenos Aires writes: Argentina and Chile yesterday initialled the agreement in Rome ending the century-long dispute over the Beagle Channel.

The agreement grants Chile the three small islands of Lennon, Picton, and Nueva to the south of Tierra del Fuego. In return, Argentina gains far greater control over the potentially oil-rich South Atlantic, extensive navigational rights between the islands, and a clear-cut territorial separation in the Magellan Straits.

The agreement must be approved by the Argentine parliament and finally ratified by President Raul Alfonsin.

Chile's president, Gen Augusto Pinochet, can only ratify it once he has the formal approval of the ruling junta.

Buenos Aires releases report on human rights

BY JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES

ARGENTINA'S painful rediscovery of its recent history took a significant step forward yesterday with the release here of a detailed report on human rights violations committed by the former military regime.

The report, based on evidence collected by the National Commission of the Disappearance of Persons and formally endorsed by President Raul Alfonsin, aims to give public airing to a subject that was virtually taboo here until democratic elections were held in October last year.

Titled "Nunca Mas" (Never Again), the report recommends that abduction and torture in Argentina should be declared "crimes against humanity" and that civilian courts should use the evidence to secure an early judgment against those responsible.

"Nunca Mas" is published in a 500 page paperback coloured blood red and has an accompanying annexe with the names of the victims.

It chronicles the torture and summary execution of men, women and children who were abducted from the streets or from their homes and held on an estimated 340 detention camps around the country.

It also gives a detailed account of the organisation of the repression which was hierarchically structured by the military.

The report records 8,960 Argentines as "missing" and presumed killed, but stops short of publishing a separate list of those responsible. This minor censorship, widely seen as a further concession to the armed forces was criticised yesterday by the Mothers of May—one of the main human rights pressure groups.

Buried in the documented cases of human rights violations are, however, the names of military officers, doctors, journalists, and even priests, who are alleged to have collaborated in the repression.

BRITISH-SPANISH AGREEMENT TO DISCUSS GIBRALTAR'S FUTURE

Sovereignty is key issue for Spain

BY TOM BURNS IN MADRID

THE FACT that the UK has agreed to discuss the sovereignty of Gibraltar is what matters to Spain in the agreement reached yesterday by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Britain's Foreign Secretary, and Sr Fernando Moran, the Spanish Foreign Minister.

The point was underlined in the statement issued by the Spanish Foreign Ministry. "For the first time in the history of the dispute," it said, "Britain expressly admits that the question of sovereignty will be broached in the (negotiating) process."

"What does sovereignty mean for the man in the street, does (Sir Joshua) Hassan now become a Spaniard?" asked a Spanish reporter at a Madrid Foreign Office briefing yesterday.

"No," said Sr Fernando Schwartz, Spain's external affairs spokesman. "The devolution of sovereignty means that Gibraltar becomes once more part of Spain."

Sr Schwartz, a former ambassador and a skilled diplomat, having neatly deflected the question, made the quotable point for Spanish national consumption: "The decolonisation process has now been opened."

For Gibraltarians ears he quoted his minister: "Sr Moran has said in the past that if Gibraltar was handed to him on a plate against the wishes of the Gibraltarians he would not want it."

Sovereignty was indeed the issue but Sr Schwartz was

reasonable about it: "We have never said that sovereignty would be effective in one, in two, in five years. We know it is a long term process."

What makes yesterday's Brussels agreement palatable for Spain, while the previous Lisbon declaration was not, is that the magic word sovereignty appears. The undertaking to discuss "the whole problem of Gibraltar," as Lisbon's statement had it in 1980 leaving each side to interpret what that meant, was not enough.

In addition the Brussels document actually spells out what reciprocal rights is all about. On this point, Sr Schwartz explained, the Lisbon declaration was also vague and was little more than a declaration of

intent.

The upshot is that it is a good agreement and that Spain buys it wholeheartedly. "There is no problem about selling it," said the Spanish diplomatic spokesman. The Brussels statement does not apparently run the risk of being overturned by irate Spanish public opinion, charging the Government with a sell-out and an abject surrender, which four years ago torpedoed the Lisbon declaration.

Privately, however, Spanish officials are aware of the pitfalls that still lie ahead. Public opinion in Spain will, sooner rather than later, want progress on the actual devolution of Gibraltar with demonstrable gains and timetables in place of words and promises.

Gibraltar welcomes full opening of border

BY JOSEPH GARCIA IN GIBRALTAR

GIBRALTAR has generally sighed with relief at the full opening of the Spanish border, though there are reservations about discussions on sovereignty.

"We are not going to give way on the Spanish claim to sovereignty," said Sir Joshua Hassan, the Chief Minister, referring to the continuing British commitment to honour the wishes of the people of Gibraltar. He said that a democratic government in Spain should also have regard to Gibraltar's

wishes.

Sir Joshua considers that the agreement is good for Gibraltar and will be fruitful for people on both sides of the frontier.

He stressed that the freedom of movement for Spanish workers will be subject to the transition period that will apply to Spain on conclusion of her own EEC negotiations. However, there will be community preference for Spaniards which in effect threatens the future job prospects of Moroccan workers, who replaced the

Spanish when the frontier was closed in June 1969. There are currently about 2,000 Moroccans in Gibraltar.

The mayor of the Spanish border town of La Linea, in welcoming the deal, emphasised the economic prosperity that could ensue from a return to normality at the frontier.

The removal by Spain of her 1967 prohibition on airspace in the Gibraltar region and the agreed co-operation on aviation matters, will doubtless improve prospects for the Gibraltar air-

field which was in the past a gateway to Spain's Costa del Sol. There is hope in Gibraltar that air lines between Gibraltar and the Spanish mainland will now be possible.

Proposed laws granting rights of establishment to self-employed non-Gibraltarians is now subject to a motion carried unanimously in House of Assembly on Monday which makes it clear to Britain that such rights are the sole prerogative of Gibraltar's parliament.

Gibraltar negotiations held

BY QUENTIN PEEL IN BRUSSELS

BRITAIN AND Spain held two and a half hours of talks last night in a renewed effort to reach agreement on the future of Gibraltar and agreed to continue their negotiations today.

The talks between Sir Geoffrey Howe, the British Foreign Secretary, and Sr Fernando Moran, his Spanish counterpart, were described by both sides as "useful and businesslike" as they sought to narrow the gap over the removal of remaining Spanish border restrictions affecting the British colony.

Sr Moran, who earlier in the day had expressed some confidence over an early agreement, refused to be drawn on

any further comment when he emerged from the meeting, held in the margins of Spain's continuing negotiations to join the European Community in 1986.

The plan drawn up by officials of both governments is simply to reactivate the Lisbon Declaration of April 1980, when the two sides agreed to re-establish "direct communications" in the region.

FINANCIAL TIMES, USPS No 130640, published daily except Sundays and holidays. U.S. subscription rates \$420.00 per annum. Second class postage paid at New York NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes to: FINANCIAL TIMES, 14 East 6th Street, New York, NY 10022.

Argentina backed

President-elect Julio Sanguinetti said Uruguay would continue to back Argentine claims to sovereignty over the Falklands, and his country would allow British aircraft en route to the islands to stop over only in an emergency.

Churchmen on both sides argue Falklands stance

By Clifford Longley, Religious Affairs Correspondent

A group of 10 Protestant clergymen from Argentina met British Church leaders yesterday in London to discuss the merits of their country's claim to the Falkland Islands.

It was a friendly encounter, organized by the British Council of Churches, concluded by a joint service, but it showed that opinion in the two countries is as far apart as is the approach of the two governments. The British response was sympathetic in general but critical on many points of detail.

The Rev Paul Clifford, of the Baptist Union, commenting upon the Argentine claim to sovereignty over the islands, said all political claims were relative and only God's sovereignty was absolute; and asked the visiting Argentines to consider that right was not all on one side.

Mr Derek Pattinson, secretary general of the General Synod of the Church of England, said in response to the Argentine clergy's statement of their case: that they had failed to recognize the consequences in Britain of the Falklands conflict. They had a duty to start undoing those consequences.

Dr Jose Miguez Bonio, a distinguished Methodist theologian who led the delegation, called for negotiations over sovereignty between the two governments. The islands were part of Argentina's national territory and heritage.

Yesterday's discussions were part of a number of meetings between churchmen from the two countries aimed at reconciliation after the 1982 conflict.

Sanguinetti will not alter Falklands flights rules

From Douglas Tweedale, Buenos Aires

Uruguay's civilian president-elect, Señor Julio Sanguinetti, supports Argentina's claim to the Falklands Islands, but he is unlikely to change the policy which allows British aircraft en route from Ascension to land in Uruguay in emergency.

In an interview less than 24 hours after he won a surprisingly easy victory in his country's first election in 13 years, Señor Sanguinetti outlined some of his policies and political beliefs to half a dozen foreign journalists in his Montevideo apartment.

Asked if his government, which is scheduled to take office on March 1, would allow British aircraft to refuel in Uruguay, Señor Sanguinetti said: "We see no reason to alter the current policy, though naturally emergency landings will still be permitted. Our position is very clear on this issue. We believe in Argentina's rights to the Malvinas, but we have always criticized their use of force to recover the islands."

It had been hoped that the first civilian government since 1973 might allow British

aircraft refuelling facilities in Uruguay.

The 48-year-old leader of the centrist Colorado Party, Señor Sanguinetti won Sunday's poll largely because he offered voters a "change in peace" after 11 years of harsh military rule. In the interview he attributed the return to democracy to lengthy negotiations between military and civilian leaders which in May led to the agreement to hold elections.

"That agreement was fundamental, since it allowed a peaceful exit (from military rule) and a complete transfer of power", Señor Sanguinetti said. "In the election the voters clearly supported that agreement".

He would seek to form a government based on co-operation between the main political parties, and said it was possible he would name a coalition cabinet including ministers from other parties.

He said Uruguay would continue to negotiate its \$US 4.65 billion foreign debt under the auspices of the International Monetary Fund.

Argentine churchmen accuse British of dragging feet over Falklands

By DAVID MILLWARD

THE British Council of Churches tried yesterday, with only limited success, to bridge the gap between Britain and Argentina over the Falklands when it received a nine-strong Argentine delegation at its 21st assembly in London.

In spite of intense pleas for conciliation from all speakers, the gulf was clear.

While accepting the necessity of a peaceful solution to the Falklands problem, Argentine speakers were in no doubt that the responsibility for the diplomatic log jam lay with the British Government.

Prof. Jose Miguez-Bonino, leader of the Argentine delegation, insisted that the new Argentine government was committed to the use of diplomacy rather than force. This had been illustrated by the peaceful solution of its long-standing territorial dispute with Chile.

He added that the Argentine church was at one with its government in believing that the Falklands should remain part of the country's national heritage. He called on both governments to reopen negotiations without preconditions.

Military base

Dr Ricardo Pierrantonio, representing the Argentine Lutherans, accused successive British governments of dragging their feet in the years running up to the conflict and ignoring successive United Nations resolutions calling for the "decolonisation" of the islands.

"The present military base is not justified in its size by the capacity of the Argentine threat, as was proved by the war. We are very worried that this base could be used in conflicts in the future, not necessarily with Argentina, not necessarily with Latin America, but in an East-West confrontation."

Defending the paramount interests of the Falkland islanders was an insufficient excuse for Britain's reluctance to negotiate sovereignty, he said.

"The reason given, the well-being of the island, we do not think is adequate. We feel there are geo-political reasons—the Antarctic, plans for a fortress, fishing rights, oil and a military base.

Dr Pierrantonio, who constantly referred to the islands by their Argentine name—the Malvinas—said negotiations were the only way to resolve

term solutions which have already taken root."

The Rt Rev. John Habgood, Archbishop of York, called on Argentina to demonstrate good faith by declaring an end to hostilities.

The future of the Falkland Islands

SIR—As one whose grandparents were pioneer settlers in the Falklands, with my mother's family still very much resident in the islands, and who was senior chaplain at Christchurch Cathedral, Stanley, from 1966 to 1970, when it was obvious that the Government was about to sell us down the River Plate for a cube of Oxo, I read Mr George Robertson's letter (Nov. 23) on relationships with Argentina with great interest. It calls for a reply.

I have spent the years since 1966 putting the "Kelpers'" point of view which so often goes by default.

With all Falkland Islanders I pray for and desire a solution to the "Malvinas question" as much as anyone, but it must be a solution which is fair and agreeable to Falkland Islanders who wish to remain British.

It does us well to recall that, per capita, the Falklands gave more of her sons in defence of freedom and of these shores in two World Wars than any other Commonwealth country.

Mr Robertson writes about financial advantage, resisting any change in Government policy. Eighty per cent. of all British Government expenditure detailed "Falkland Islands" is spent in this country bringing much needed employment to the working people of the United Kingdom.

For more than a century the cash flow has been all one way and successive British governments, and therefore this nation, have profited from the efforts of hardworking Falkland Islanders. This was financial advantage if ever there was. It is only right that we should now make good our deficiencies of the past by a massive programme of investment in the islands.

The Falkland Islands waters teem with fish which are being commercially caught by Japan, Poland and Russia. There is undoubtedly oil in the offshore

waters around the islands. The alginate beds are comparable to those of Japan and California, the world's only commercial suppliers at the moment. Any one of these will be worth millions when properly exploited.

This can only be when there is an understanding and agreement with Argentina so that present harassment on her part ceases; then the Falklands economy will truly flower and flourish.

Strategically the Falklands are important to us as the gateway to Antarctica in which we have a vital scientific and research interest.

Remember Thule? If ever the Panama Canal was blocked (remember Suez?) the strategic value of the Falklands would be incalculable. Even now whoever controls the Falkland Islands controls the South Atlantic and they are proving a splendid training ground for our troops in lieu of Norway.

There are well-rehearsed arguments for Britain retaining a long-term interest in the Falkland Islands. It therefore amazes me that Mr Robertson should talk about "preparing in advance for the likely outcome." The only accommodation that the Argentines are interested in is complete sovereignty.

I agree that there has been a change of Government, that democracy is just beginning to come alive and we pray that it will flourish, but there has been no fundamental change in the hearts and minds of Argentines (many of whom are my friends).

If the only way to preserve democracy in Argentina is to sacrifice the Falklands and her people as Mr Robertson suggests I and many others, particularly the next of kin of the 253 British Servicemen who died in the recent Falklands war consider the price too great.

PETER MILLAM
St. Paul's Vicarage,
Luton, Beds.

Howe rules out Falklands talks with Argentina

SOVEREIGNTY

The Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, insisted yesterday that the Government's agreement to discuss the sovereignty of Gibraltar with Spain had no parallel with its repeated refusal to talk to Argentina about the sovereignty of the Falklands.

In exchanges after a Commons statement on Tuesday's agreement that the border between Gibraltar and Spain will be opened no later than February 15, Sir Geoffrey maintained that there was a total contrast between the conduct of Spain and that of Argentina.

Sir Geoffrey heralded the agreement over the border opening as "the development of a new stage in relations between Britain and Spain."

"I firmly believe that the agreement is in the interests of Gibraltar and its people have always been, and will remain, of central importance to the British Government."

He said that on the day the border was reopened he would begin negotiations with Spain aimed at overcoming the differences between Spain and Britain.

The Spanish Foreign Minister had told him that Spain would raise the issue of sovereignty at these talks, as it was entitled to do under the Lisbon Declaration. But the Government had made it equally plain to Spain that it would fully maintain its commitments to honour the wishes of the people of Gibraltar.

The shadow foreign secretary, Mr Denis Healey, said

Labour welcomed the commitment to discuss the sovereignty of Gibraltar "and believes it may set an important precedent for other parts of the world, like the Falklands, where it is necessary to link the reopening of negotiations with discussions on the question of sovereignty."

But Sir Geoffrey told Mr Healey: "You would be quite wrong to draw any parallel between this case and the case of the Falkland Islands. They are historically, legally and constitutionally quite different and there is a total contrast between the conduct of the two countries concerned."

Spain was an ally in Nato and a prospective European Community partner. Successive Spanish governments had said they would pursue their claim by peaceful means.

But the Social Democratic Party leader, Dr David Owen, told Sir Geoffrey he had done less than justice to President Alfonsin of Argentina, who had been a critic of the aggression to the Falklands.

Mr Ivor Stanbrook (C. Orington) told Sir Geoffrey: "The concession on sovereignty is a surrender to blackmail. We have never discussed sovereignty with them before."

"What's to stop them nibbling away at this issue, confident in the knowledge that the principle of a transfer of sovereignty has already been conceded?"

Sir Geoffrey said the principle of sovereignty had not been conceded and he had strongly reaffirmed the 1969 constitution "that we will continue to honour our obligation to respect the wishes of the people of Gibraltar."

Churches' dialogue on Falklands

By Martyn Halsall

Church leaders from Britain and Argentina yesterday reviewed the Falklands conflict in a London church hung with posters calling for international peace and justice.

Warm agreements on the need for early negotiations were chilled by sharp Argentinian statements that talks must include the question of sovereignty.

The nine Protestant leaders from Argentina were invited by the British Council of Churches. Yesterday, they addressed its Assembly and joined its communion service.

The morning's debate was remarkable and perfectly natural, said the president of the BCC, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie.

It was remarkable because of the tragic history of war between the two countries: "Perfectly natural, as we are partners together in a worldwide church."

Dr Runcie said: "We yearn for a community of nations strong enough to resolve disputes without recourse to war."

Prof. Jose Miguez-Bonino, a Methodist and a leading liberation theologian, said Argentina was committed to negotiations to resolve the conflict. "It is prepared to consider all possibilities (but) ... there has to be an open agenda."

"That cannot exclude sovereignty as that is the core of the conflict ... what is important, is that as soon as possible an open process of negotiation starts."

Dr Ricardo Pietrantono, a Lutheran, said that Argentina was worried about the "unjustified" British military presence in the Falklands and fearful of the garrison's possible role in future east-west confrontation. He called for the Argentinian bereaved to be able to visit war graves.

The Rev Bernard Green, general secretary of the Baptist Union, drew applause from the Assembly — which represents 30 Protestant denominations — when he criticised the cost of the Falklands garrison at a time when the government said that it could find no money for vital social projects in Britain or for Third World relief.

The Argentinian church leaders now begin a national tour of church meetings.

MUCH odium has descended on the Catholic University of La Plata, Argentina, for conferring an honorary doctorate last week on the Rev Sun Myung Moon, big cheese of the Unification Church. The degree was conferred in absentia since the Rev Moon is currently doing time in the US for tax evasion. Mrs Moon duly picked up the scroll.

That was last week. This week the Holy See has been busy "deeply regretting" the deed, performed in "total disregard" of its directives. The UN has voiced its embarrassment. It can't be entirely welcome news to the British Council of Churches, which has got a tame party of Argentine churchmen who began a tour of Britain yesterday to make peaceful noises to the Government. Mr Moon was honoured chiefly for his support of Argentina during the 1982 Falklands war.



Denis Healey (right) told Geoffrey Howe that talks on Gibraltar set an important precedent

Detente on Gibraltar

THE AGREEMENT in Brussels between Britain and Spain on Gibraltar is a most welcome development on several counts. Though it does not provide a final solution to the future status of the Rock, it has brought a long-awaited detente to Anglo-Spanish relations, which have remained exceptionally cool in spite of Spain's impressive transition from a right-wing dictatorship to a fully-fledged democracy.

As far as Britain and Spain are concerned, the agreement lifts one of the main political obstacles to Spain's membership of the European Community, though several other important economic problems have yet to be solved before Madrid's entry becomes a reality.

It was one of the great ironies of the Anglo-Spanish relationship that the British Government, though one of the strongest advocates of Spanish membership of the Community, was prepared to exercise its veto against Spain, failing a satisfactory arrangement on Gibraltar.

No doubt the link that had been established between the two problems spurred both sides on to an agreement. But quite apart from the tactical pressure to which Spain was being subjected, both the British and Spanish governments clearly realised they could not allow their future partnership within the European Community to be undermined from the start by the problem of Gibraltar.

To achieve the agreement in Brussels which, in essence, does no more than ensure the application of an earlier understanding known as the Lisbon Declaration of April 1980, both sides have made concessions. On paper at least, the main concession made by Britain is substantial, though it is hedged about with cast iron safeguards.

Sovereignty

For the first time, the British government has accepted that the question of sovereignty over Gibraltar will be discussed in the negotiations on all outstanding differences over the Rock, which will begin not later than February 15.

This explicit mention of sovereignty in the communique issued after the talks between Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, and Sr Fernando Moran, his Spanish opposite number, has been hailed as a

breakthrough in Madrid.

In fact, it is of more cosmetic and psychological value than of practical significance. The Lisbon Declaration, which Madrid failed to implement because it was not specific enough, already provides for negotiations aimed at overcoming all the differences between the two countries over Gibraltar. That phrase could always have been interpreted by Spain as covering the issue of sovereignty.

Of much greater importance is the preamble to the 1969 Gibraltar constitution in which the British government has stated that it "will never enter into arrangements under which the people of Gibraltar would pass under the sovereignty of another State against their freely and democratically expressed wishes."

The British government's full commitment "to honour the wishes of the people of Gibraltar," as set out in this preamble, is specifically repeated in the Brussels communique.

In practice, therefore, any discussions on sovereignty between Britain and Spain will always be subject to this final test.

Credibility

Nor should it be forgotten that Spain is on particularly thin ice when demanding that sovereignty over Gibraltar, ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, should be transferred to her.

If that should ever come to pass, Morocco's claim to the Spanish North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla could hardly continue to be rejected by Madrid, if it wanted to retain any degree of credibility or international support for its foreign policy.

What is important for the moment, however, is that the Brussels agreement promises to restore a degree of normality to a very abnormal situation.

The sorely tried Gibraltarians will be allowed to breathe again as the result of the lifting of the restrictions on the movement of people and goods in and out of Gibraltar, which is expected to give a much-needed boost to trade and tourism.

On a broader level, the agreement should restore a genuine dialogue between two important European nations who, for too long, have turned their backs on each other.

WORLD WIDE

Gibraltar comes in from the cold

By JOHN DICKIE in London
and WILLIAM BOND in Madrid

SPAIN agreed yesterday on the total lifting of the blockade on Gibraltar imposed by General Franco 15 years ago.

From next February 15 there will be free movement of people and traffic between Spain and the Rock.

In return Britain has agreed to talks on the future of the Rock—in British hands since 1704—including the tricky question of sovereignty.

But the pro-British population of 30,000 are assured that there will be no changes against their wishes.

The agreement was recognised as a triumph for the patient diplomacy of Sir Geoffrey Howe. The Foreign Secretary said after meeting his Spanish counterpart Senor Fernando Moran in Brussels: 'The agreement is good for Gibraltar because it will allow her economy to develop and diversify and it is good for Anglo-Spanish relations.'

The two ministers agreed that Britain would give equal rights to Spaniards in Gibraltar and that Gibraltarians would



The Rock . . . seen from Spain

have similar rights in Spain.

Spain realised that freedom of movement was an obligation on membership of the Common Market due to be achieved by January 1986.

But Britain made an advance concession by granting permission for self-employed Spaniards to seek work in Gibraltar and for people from Spain to be able to buy property on the Rock.

The new agreement implements the famous Lisbon Agreement worked out in 1980 by Lord Carrington, but frozen since because of Cabinet changes in Spain and differences which arose afterwards.

In Madrid the national radio stressed that Britain was prepared to discuss sovereignty for the first time since 1713 when Spain formally conceded the colony taken by British troops in 1704 during the war of the Spanish Succession.

But Spanish officials do not expect a rapid return of the Rock to Spain. The Madrid Government has already said that it would respect the wishes of the people of Gibraltar.

'We know we are not going to get Gibraltar back tomorrow. It is much rather a case of a generation,' said one Spanish diplomat.

Precedent

The negotiating sessions aimed at solving all differences between the two countries over Gibraltar, will also begin in February and cover the economy, culture, tourism, aviation, the environment and military matters.

Gibraltar's chief minister, Sir Joshua Hassan, would be directly involved in all these talks, said Sir Geoffrey. The Foreign Minister denied that the agreement, and the continuing issue of sovereignty, created any precedent for Britain regarding the Falklands and Argentina.

'The Falklands is historically, legally, geographically and in many other ways quite different,' he said.

Daily Mail
28th November 1984

Falklands troopship is raided in thefts probe

Exclusive by HARVEY ELLIOTT

A FALKLANDS troopship has been raided by detectives investigating a racket in stolen NAAFI goods on the islands.

The vessel, carrying 600 Coldstream Guards back to Britain, was intercepted at Ascension Island and all soldiers aboard were searched. Goods ranging from duty-free cigarettes to hi-fi equipment were seized.

Ministry of Defence officials believe items are being stripped from NAAFI stores in the Falklands and sold cheaply among the 3,500 troops there. NAAFI records are doctored to cover up the missing goods.

More than 40 soldiers, mainly from the Coldstreams, were held in the swoop at Ascension, two senior NAAFI officials are also being held.

The inquiry began when officers spotted soldiers with expensive radio sets, tape recorders and cameras which they had bought at cut price.

Construction

By then the 600 Guardsmen were already sailing home on the supply ship Keren after a four-month tour of duty. When Special Investigation Branch detectives moved in at Ascension, she was searched from top to bottom and soldiers were also searched and closely questioned.

The 40 men held and the rest of the 1st Battalion, sent to the Falklands in July as the main infantry unit, were later allowed to fly home.

Further checks are being made and charges could follow.

Life on the islands for soldiers and airmen is tough and boring. Their main recreation is in the six NAAFI clubs and shops offering duty-free goods.

But there has been widespread annoyance that many prices were higher than they had been led to expect following a Ministry of Defence decision to charge the NAAFI standard freight charges for carrying goods to the South Atlantic.

Cigarettes and alcohol were duty-free and consumer goods were not subjected to VAT, but the freight charges added up to 20 pc to the price.

The investigation has now shifted to the 1,400 construction workers who are building an airport for the islands.

Sovereignty issue on Gibraltar agenda

By ALAN OSBORN in Brussels

THE border between Gibraltar and Spain will be opened from Feb. 15 next year under an agreement reached yesterday by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, and the Spanish Foreign Minister, Señor Fernando Moran.

The two agreed on a new deal for the future of Gibraltar that provides for the opening of direct contacts between the two sides, the improvement of relations between Spain and Britain, and allows for the possibility of the eventual accession of Gibraltar to Spain.

Gibraltar has been isolated from Spain since the border was closed by Gen. Franco in 1969.

Yesterday's agreement provides for the re-establishment for direct communications between Gibraltar and Spain on such matters as free movement of goods and traffic and air-space.

It was also agreed that Spaniards in Gibraltar would receive common rights on the

Continued from P1

By ALAN OSBORN

Gibraltar sovereignty

across a broad range of issues as befits relations between Nato allies and prospective Community partners."

Sir Geoffrey made it clear that there would be no change in the constitution of Gibraltar before a public referendum had been held over the change.

Later, the Spanish Foreign Minister, Señor Moran, said the agreement with Britain implied that there was an eventual re-integration of Gibraltar into Spain.

He insisted that under any future régime, the Gibraltarians would have full rights of establishment, national identity and "self purpose."

There would be no question of privilege by Spanish people over the native Gibraltarians in the question of property purchased and jobs.

ment all along the diplomatic process leading to yesterday's agreement. He described the outcome as an honourable one.

Although he had his reservations on the specific mention of the word "sovereignty" he commended the agreement to the people of Gibraltar.

The leader of the Socialist Opposition in the House of Assembly, Mr Joe Bossano, expressed total opposition to the agreement. Mention of sovereignty was "a diplomatic victory for Spain," he said.

Despite the opposition the Chief Minister is confident his electoral majority will get the necessary legislation through the House of Assembly.

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purchase of property and real estate, but subject to the transitional arrangements that have been agreed between the Community and Spain over entry to the Community.

The deal also records that "the sovereignty will be discussed in this process."

Britain said on its part that it has put "firmly on record the commitment to honour the wishes of the people of Gibraltar in accordance with their constitution."

Sir Geoffrey said the agreement was good for Gibraltar as it would allow for its economy to develop and diversify.

He said it was good, too, for Anglo-Spanish relations. "The way is now clear for the development of co-operation

Continued on Back P, Col 3

SOVEREIGNTY KEY

'Opens the way'

OUR MADRID CORRESPONDENT writes: For Spain the most important part of yesterday's agreement was Britain's declared willingness to discuss the tricky question of sovereignty.

An official statement from the Foreign Ministry said: "For the first time in the history of the dispute the British have expressly agreed in these proceedings to touch on the question of sovereignty."

Señor Fernando Schwarzs, the Foreign Ministry's Senior spokesman, said "I believe for us this really opens the way towards decolonialisation."

Sinking feeling

EDWARD DU CANN, who has returned to the freedom of the backbenches after chairing the 1922 Committee of Tory M.P.s for 12 years, has joined-up with David Owen, the S.D.P.

leader, and James Callaghan, the former Prime Minister, to create one of the most powerful ginger groups at Westminster.

The all-party Maritime group, which they have established, will challenge the Government on the "catastrophic" fall in the size of the merchant fleet so that today it is just half the size it was five years ago with just 711 ships totalling 18.6 million tons.

Against such skilled Parliamentary operators, I fear that Government spokesmen are in for a hard time, particularly since the Falklands war demonstrated once again Britain's dependence on the merchant fleet.

Daily Telegraph

ROCK SOLID ON GIBRALTAR?

THE AGREEMENT REACHED yesterday in Brussels between the British and Spanish Governments on the subject of Gibraltar is not on the face of it remotely sinister. Spain has no alternative but to reopen her frontier with Gibraltar (closed by Gen. FRANCO in 1969) if she wants to join the E.E.C. Gibraltar is accounted by Community law to be an associated territory of Britain and all E.E.C. countries are required to have open borders with one another. Since Spain's entry negotiations are near completion such an agreement was wholly predictable.

What is conceivably sinister is the acceptance by Sir GEOFFREY HOWE that the issue of sovereignty over Gibraltar will form part of future discussions between the two countries. Possibly the intention behind this assurance is that the Spanish Government should not be made to look feeble in the eyes of its people, for whom Gibraltar is a matter of terrific national pride. The notion of future discussions is in any case suitably vague. Besides, Sir GEOFFREY reiterated yesterday the British Government's standing commitment to honour the wishes of the people of Gibraltar.

All the same, it is undoubtedly true that there are some in the Foreign Office who think in terms of the gradual disposal of Gibraltar. The forum of Common Market negotiations has not brought the issue to a head because Spain has essentially been in the role of a supplicant. However it is being argued that if Spain is to remain part of Nato (a goal apparently less cherished by her leaders) we will have to concede sovereignty over Gibraltar. There is here a dangerous ambiguity which may engender false Spanish hopes. The British Government must surely have the sense to see, particularly after the Falklands war, that popular opinion will not accept the shuffling off of the citizens of Gibraltar against their wishes.

The Guardian

"Beagle treaty

ARGENTINA and Chile will sign a treaty in the Vatican tomorrow to settle their century-old border dispute over the Beagle Channel, the Vatican said yesterday.—Reuter.

The Times

Conqueror log destroyed last year

The signals log of the submarine Conqueror covering the Falklands campaign was destroyed on the authority of the Defence Council sometime prior to February last year, Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, said in a Commons reply yesterday.

He added that the routine destruction of signals logs had been practice since at least 1963.

Financial Times

Key-note

The Falklands war taught the Royal Navy many lessons—not least of which, reports Computing magazine, is that its submarine computers need coffee-proof keyboards.

More than one keyboard was short-circuited when the rough seas of the South Atlantic upset cups of instant coffee. So the Royal Navy has now written into new computer contracts a demand that the keyboards being used in submarine control rooms must meet coffee-proofing specifications.

The computer rooms of the UK's fleet of subs will still use normal keyboards as the Navy feels its graduate computer officers should know better than to slop drinks over them.

But it is considered easier to provide senior command officers with special "ruggedised" keyboards than to try to change their drinking habits.

Full text of Gibraltar agreement

The full text of the agreement on Gibraltar reached yesterday in Brussels is:

1. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Right Honourable Sir Geoffrey Howe, and the Spanish Foreign Minister, His Excellency Señor Don Fernando Morán Lopez, held a meeting in Brussels on November 27 during which they agreed on the way in which the Spanish and British Governments will apply by not later than February 15, 1985, the Lisbon Declaration of April 10, 1980, in all its parts. This will involve simultaneously:

(A) The provision of equality and reciprocity of rights for Spaniards in Gibraltar and Gibraltarians in Spain. This will be implemented through the mutual concession of the rights which citizens of EEC countries enjoy, taking into account the transitional periods and derogations agreed between Spain and Gibraltar. As concerns paid employment, and recalling the general principle of Community preference, this carries the implication that during the transitional period each side will be favourably disposed to each other's citizens when granting work permits.

(B) The establishment of the free movement of persons, vehicles and goods between Gibraltar and the neighbouring territory.

(C) The establishment of a negotiating process aimed at overcoming all the differences between them over Gibraltar and at promoting co-operation on a mutually beneficial basis on economic, cultural, touristic, aviation, military and environmental matters. Both sides accept that the issues of sovereignty will be discussed in that process. The British Government will fully maintain its commitment to honour the wishes of the people of Gibraltar as set out in the preamble of the 1969 constitution.

2. Insofar as the airspace in the region of Gibraltar is concerned, the Spanish Government undertakes to take the early actions necessary to allow safe and effective air communications.

3. There will be meetings of working groups, which will be reviewed periodically in meetings for this purpose between the Spanish and British Foreign Ministers.



Brussels breakthrough: Señor Fernando Morán, Spain's Foreign Minister (right), arriving for yesterday's meeting, and Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, giving a press conference afterwards.

González hails Rock pact

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

An "historic new process" had been begun by yesterday's Anglo-Spanish agreement on Gibraltar, Señor Felipe González, the Spanish Prime Minister, said.

The agreement was reached after talks in Brussels between Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary and his Spanish counterpart, Señor Fernando Morán. Señor González said there was no place for shouting about triumphs, but the agreement did represent an advance for the whole of Spanish foreign policy.

Spain emphasized Britain's express commitment to discuss the sovereignty of Gibraltar. "For us, this really opens a process of decolonizing the Rock," the Spanish Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

The state radio and television said it was "the first time since 1713, the end of the War of the Spanish Succession, when Spain lost the Rock, that a British government had ever agreed to

tackle sovereignty." This had the effect of putting well into second place Madrid's unavoidable obligations to raise the final frontier restrictions on the Rock, before Spain joins the EEC.

From Gibraltar, Sir Joshua Hassan, the Chief Minister, speaking by telephone, said the agreement was an "honourable outcome" to lengthy negotiation and a first step towards fruitful cooperation between Gibraltar and its vicinity.

However, he reiterated Gibraltarians' opposition to any negotiations over sovereignty. "We have always placed our faith in the British Government and people and we will continue to do so."

When the Spanish Foreign Ministry spokesman was pressed by Spanish reporters to say exactly what recovering sovereignty meant, he replied: "That Gibraltar becomes just one more piece of Andalucía, of Spain."

Sir Joshua, asked to comment, said: "That's bloody nonsense, in my best Spanish."

In a note accompanying the joint agreement, Madrid yesterday clarified what questions, in its view, Britain had agreed to tackle regarding sovereignty. They covered "both the theme of sovereignty of the territory referred to in the Treaty of Utrecht as well as sovereignty of the isthmus, which was never ceded to Britain".

Spanish officials yesterday suggested that a visit to Madrid by Mrs Margaret Thatcher could occur soon, since the Brussels declaration had firmly established normal relations.

Representatives in La Linea, the nearest town on the Spanish side, yesterday expressed belief that the local economy would benefit.

And Sir Joshua spoke of "hundreds of thousands of tourists hitherto stopped at the frontier who would be able now to travel freely".

JOHN HOOPER on the background to the breakthrough over Gibraltar The Rock gives way to reality

IF IT works, the agreement on Gibraltar announced yesterday will put an end to one of the oddest situations in contemporary diplomacy.

In April 1980, Lord Carrington and Mr Marcelino Oreja — predecessors of the two Foreign Ministers who made yesterday's announcement — issued a declaration after a meeting in Lisbon committing Spain to open its frontier with the Rock and the British to start negotiations "aimed at overcoming all the differences" between the two governments on Gibraltar.

It seemed like a straight trade-off. Britain had always insisted that it could not resume discussion of Gibraltar's future while the border remained closed (as it had done since 1969). The Span-

ish had always insisted that any discussions about the Rock had to include the issue of sovereignty. Under the Lisbon agreement, Britain got an open frontier and Spain, got a formula which at least implied negotiations on sovereignty since if sovereignty was not one of the "differences" between the two countries, then nothing was.

It was only later that Madrid woke up to the fact that it had come within an ace of surrendering its only bargaining counter for very little in return. From the point of view of the Spanish, the basic flaw in the Lisbon accord was that, whereas it was by no means inconceivable that the British might break off negotiations once the frontier was reopened, it was effectively impossible for a democratic Spanish administration to re-impose restrictions introduced by Franco.

So the deadline for the re-opening of the border came and went and the Spanish did nothing. It was an unusually flagrant instance of the flouting of an ostensibly binding agreement between two ostensibly friendly powers. But the British had enough sense not to make a fuss about it and, in talks at official level they crept back towards a new agreement. Shortly before Christmas 1982, their patience was rewarded when the Spaniards opened the frontier to pedestrians without any concessions from the British side.

In a sense, yesterday's announcement is the Spaniards' reward. It may look very much like the Lisbon agreement, but it includes at least one further British concession and possibly two. In effect, what Spain and Britain are going to do once the border restrictions are lifted

will be to pretend that Spain has joined the EEC. Spaniards will be entitled to set up businesses on the Rock, invest money there and even buy property there. But, as citizens of a new member country still subject to the transitional provisions, they will not be automatically entitled to work there as employees. However, yesterday's communique also includes an undertaking that both sides should treat applications for work permits in a favourable light.

Whether that means anything in practice remains to be seen. But the concession to Spain of the right to buy into the Rock is highly significant. It has long been felt that, if the Rock ever falls to Spain, it will be in a shower of pesetas rather than a hail of bullets.

The EEC context in which the whole agreement has been set is no coincidence. British ministers—and Prime Ministers—have been saying ever since General Franco's death that it would be "unthinkable" for Spain to enter the Community while the restrictions were still in place. At one level that was simply a statement of fact. If the EEC stands for anything it is for freedom of movement across frontiers. But at another level their remarks implied quite clearly that, unless the restrictions were lifted, Britain would veto Spanish entry.

That was the ultimate strength of Britain's position and the reason why the Foreign Office could afford to take its time. But what this latest agreement shows is that, if the British plead EEC regulations as a way of securing freedom of movement to and from the Rock, they are in no position to argue when the Spanish use the same set of regulations

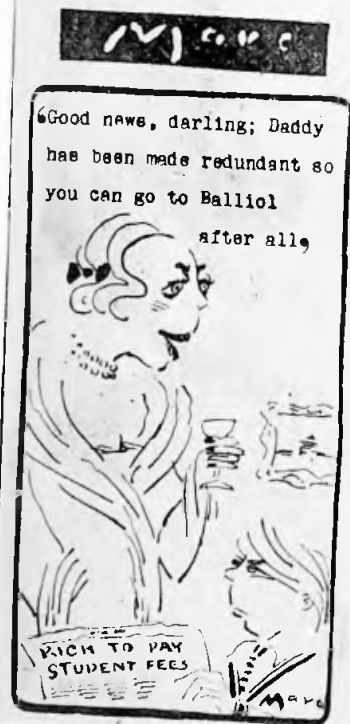
as a justification for the freedom to invest and, ultimately, work there too.

The first thing now is to see whether the Spaniards stand by their word. Rather disconcertingly, the Spanish Foreign Ministry spokesman was quoted as saying yesterday that it would be "difficult" to open the border in time to meet the deadline. Difficult perhaps. But essential for Spain's credibility.

But assuming that all goes well, yesterday's agreement should provide the long-awaited breakthrough in relations between Britain and Spain. In spite of a tradition of enmity stretching back even further than the 280 years that the Rock has been in British hands, the two nations have a lot in common today. Both are late-comers to the EEC. Both have economic interests that run counter to those of France. And Spain, like Britain, is a country with an "outsider" complex where Europe is concerned. Spaniards, like Britons, often refer to "Europe" as if it were somewhere else.

Yet it is a measure of the damage that the Rock inflicts on Anglo-Spanish relations that Mrs Thatcher is now the only EEC Prime Minister never to have visited Madrid and that, nine years after King Juan Carlos ascended the throne, he has never paid official visit to Britain, even though his wife is related to the Duke of Edinburgh and he and his wife are close personal friends of the British Royal family.

More amicable progress over Gibraltar would certainly lead to a trip soon by Mrs Thatcher and might even open the way for a more normal relationship between the two Royal families.



Argentina votes for settlement

From Jeremy Morgan
in Buenos Aires

President Alfonsín has gained a resounding referendum majority in favour of a proposed treaty ending the Beagle Channel dispute with Chile.

With all but 1 per cent of the vote counted, figures yesterday showed that 77 per cent were in favour of the terms agreed after more than five years of negotiations under the auspices of the Vatican. The vote against was estimated at 21 per cent.

The results showed that despite a campaign by the opposition Peronists urging abstention, over 73 per cent of Argentina's 18.3 million eligible voters turned out.

The "active and militant" abstention campaign was intended to scupper the treaty without putting the Peronist bosses in the position of openly calling for a vote against the Pope.

But the campaign appears to have been ignored by some prominent Peronist figures and a considerable portion of the movement's rank-and-file membership. Within hours of the first returns, the Peronist leadership was under fire from within for badly misjudging the public mood once again.

In an attempt to discredit the poll, Mrs Nilda Garre, a former member of Congress who is now an aide to Mr Vicente Saadi, the head of the Peronist bloc in the Senate, claimed she had been able to vote twice.

President Alfonsín meanwhile lauded "popular participation," as political commentators concluded that the referendum was now firmly established as part of Argentine political life.

The precedent set by the plebiscite is not without its dangers for the Government, however. It is already under pressure to call referendums on other sensitive issues including acceptance of a new accord with the International Monetary Fund and overseas banks over repaying the \$45 billion foreign debt.

Several prominent, retired military officers had campaigned against the treaty, under which Argentina will recognise Chilean rule over three islands — an issue which almost provoked a war in 1978 — and the referendum itself.

IT DOESN'T quite rival the British Telecom sale, but there is a steady trickle of applicants to fork out £26.50 for a 500 square foot "souvenir plot" of the Falkland Islands. Twenty to 30 people a day have been applying to a firm of London surveyors for the bits of grazing land — part of 50 acres bought off the Falkland Islands Company by a Bromley businessman two years ago. The land is unfenced and cannot be built on. The firm, Earl and Lawrence, won't advertise the land in Argentina, but it says it is powerless to stop any British-based Argentinians from buying a little bit of the Falklands that will be for ever the Malvinas.

Daily Telegraph 27/11/84

POLL VICTORY FOR ALFONSIN

By Our Buenos Aires
Correspondent

A referendum on a proposed solution to the border conflict with Chile was a clear political victory for President Alfonsín of Argentina.

Results yesterday showed that 78 per cent of voters were in favour of the peace treaty that will end the 100-year dispute over the Beagle Channel — a strategic waterway at the southern tip of Argentina.

Vote of approval for Alfonsín in Beagle treaty referendum

From a Correspondent, Buenos Aires

The Beagle Channel treaty and the Argentine Government which negotiated it, have both received a strong vote of approval in a referendum here. Many observers believe that Argentina has also won an important indirect victory in its continuing dispute with Britain over the Falkland Islands.

Because of its timing, almost exactly a year after the Government of President Alfonsín took office, the referendum on Sunday was widely perceived as a test of popular support for Señor Alfonsín and his administration.

With all but a handful of votes tabulated by yesterday, the proposal had been ratified by 77 per cent of those who cast their votes. They in turn represented 73 per cent of the 18.4 million electorate. The opposition Peronists had called for a boycott of the poll.

The Beagle treaty, which settles land and maritime rights at the desolate southern tip of the continent, took six years to negotiate, with Vatican mediation and was finally initialled on October 18. The quarrel between Argentina and Chile had gone on for more than a century and brought the countries to the brink of war in 1978.

The last two weeks of the debate on the proposed treaty were particularly partisan and heated, with the Peronists accusing the Government of treason, while the ruling Radicals branded the Peronist call for abstention an act of political destabilization, and comfort to "the friends of the dictatorship". There was at least one terrorist bombing and a reported plot to assassinate President Alfonsín.

Although the Government urged a "yes" vote on Sunday in the name of peace with its neighbour and Latin American unity, President Alfonsín himself became the focal point of the Government's campaign as referendum day neared.

The vote tally also attests to the divided and decadent state of the Peronists, who were unable to mount a common front against the referendum.

Throughout the campaign Señor Alfonsín and other officials repeatedly referred to the dispute with Britain over the Falklands. Many here believe that when, as expected, the Beagle treaty is approved by Congress and signed into law, perhaps as early as tomorrow it will enhance regional and international support for Argentina in the dispute.

Hammered home

Britain's former ambassador to Washington, Sir Nicholas Henderson, who told Al Haig during the Falklands War that Britain wouldn't mind sinking half the Argentine navy - and could - is to interview Argentine's foreign minister Dante Caputo in Paris on Sunday. The interview - certain to be an explosive one - is for BBC's *Brass Tacks* programme on the future of the Fortress Falklands policy. In the programme, to be broadcast on December 12, he will also be interviewing Sir Anthony Kershaw, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee; and Sir Anthony Parsons, Mrs Thatcher's special adviser on foreign affairs at the time of the Falklands. The BBC has certainly made an interesting choice in Sir "Nicko": "It's absolute nonsense, the whole Belgrano thing," he remarked recently, "Complete nonsense . . . it's now becoming a thing about whether the ministers shouldn't have been told by the chiefs-of-staff, and the military saying that they did . . . Whether in fact the ministers were informed which direction she was heading in, which is quite irrelevant. You might as well say, in the war, a German bomber that's flying back home shouldn't be shot at".

Jimmy Burns looks at whether the Beagle referendum may prove a pyrrhic victory

Alfonsin hostage to nationalist rhetoric

THERE WAS more than coincidence in the fact that Argentina's Sunday referendum on the Beagle Channel was held just a few days away from the first anniversary, in power of President Raul Alfonsín's Radical government.

One year after he was sworn in on a wave of euphoria, President Alfonsín has found himself in desperate need of reassurance.

It is in the sense that Sunday's vote had less to do with territory than with popularity that President Alfonsín can claim to have won a personal victory. There seems little doubt here among political observers that the President's intervention in the last week of the campaign was crucial to the overwhelming vote in favour of "yes", and the relatively small abstention.

Two weeks ago the Government's campaign had been showing distinct signs of failure. Early opinion polls showed that more than 70 per cent of the population was simply not interested in casting its vote even though the Government had spent \$5.4m (£4.5m) on posters and television slots.

The bubbling enthusiasm and popular participation of the presidential elections in October last year seemed to have been replaced with apathy and disillusionment, largely due to the Government's poor economic record.

There was a spirited performance by Sr Dante Caputo, Foreign Minister, in a televised debate. But the turnaround in public opinion began with President Alfonsín's first appearance of the campaign in the University town of La Plata last Monday.

It reached its climax on

Friday when nearly 100,000 people crammed into Buenos Aires Velez Sarsfield stadium and ecstatically screamed their approval of their President, with the familiar chant "Alfonsin, Alfonsín, Alfonsín."

The crowd was smaller than the huge public rallies which accompanied President Alfonsín's march to victory last year. But it had no rivals in the referendum campaign in terms of a total identification between a wide cross section of public opinion and a charismatic "leader."

For if President Alfonsín was the undisputed winner of Sunday's vote, the title of humiliated loser must go to the major opposition party, the Peronists. The referendum campaign exposed the deeply entrenched rivalries of a political grouping that under the late General Peron was, along with the military, the undisputed major force of Argentine politics.

The Peronist Party executive campaigned vociferously for an abstention. Identifying what it regarded as a Government attempt to exploit the Beagle issue for its own political gain, the opposition focused less on the terms of the treaty—as on the mechanics of the referendum—although in the last days of the campaign there seemed little to distinguish some Peronists from the extreme nationalist groupings linked to the military who supported a categorical "no" note.

The executive's campaign might have had some credibility had it reflected a consensus opinion within the party. This was clearly not the case.

On the contrary, one of the most remarkable aspects of Sunday's vote was not so much



Raul Alfonsín... his boosted personal popularity may be more a curse than a blessing

the Peronists who abstained or voted no, but the many of them who voted in support of the Government.

The split among the Peronist rank and file was a direct consequence of the contradictory public positions adopted by numerous Peronist officials. Many of them, including Maria Estela 'Isabelita' Peron, the Party's titular head, and Sr Italo Luder, the former presidential candidate took President Alfonsín's side.

Whether the treaty itself will ensure lasting peace for Argentina, as the Government's propaganda has insisted, is another matter.

On one level, the treaty reads like a perfect compromise. Argentina has lost the disputed islands to the south of Tierra del Fuego but gained instead a far more extensive control over the South Atlantic than Chile.

Finally, by binding the two countries with a commitment to economic co-operation—Argentina exporters will now have access to Chile's Pacific ports and there will be a number of joint ventures in the energy sector—the treaty in principle links Buenos Aires and Santiago in a common future. In practice, however, the referendum may have inad-

vertently set the clock of a time bomb for Sr Alfonsín. By appealing to Latin American solidarity against the "forces of imperialism" and declaring Britain and not Chile as the "real enemy," Sr Alfonsín's campaign rhetoric has paradoxically inflamed the same nationalist emotions that brought Argentina to the point of war with Chile in 1978 and to the Falklands invasion in April 1982.

From today, Sr Alfonsín's supporters, dissident Peronists included, will be watching for concrete signs that this nationalism is genuine.

To an important extent Sr Alfonsín is risking becoming a prisoner of his own rhetoric and while the peace treaty with Chile will undoubtedly allow Argentine foreign ministry officials more time to attend to the Falklands issue, the chances are that attitudes towards Mrs Thatcher will be forced to harden, making a negotiated settlement less easy to achieve.

Arguably, moreover, even Sr Alfonsín's boosted personal popularity as a result of the referendum may be more a curse than a blessing. The referendum confirmed that the survival of the Government depends on the figure of the President, and that is a fragile existence in a country prone to the violence of an unpredictable lunatic fringe.

The assassination plot uncovered in the last days of the campaign and the bombs which exploded in Velez Sarsfield on Friday left many observers here with an ominous thought—what would happen in Argentina if the assassin's bullet found its target?

Belgrano Jack in the 'imperial box-up'

C. Sir, — Lord Annan says (Letters, November 19) the claim that "the war cabinet could have known of the Peruvian peace plan" before the sinking of the Belgrano, was torn to shreds in BBC-2's Brass Tacks programme on November 14. But was it?

Members of the war cabinet knew — and some have acknowledged knowing — that discussions on such a peace plan had been going on before the sinking. First Peruvian-American contacts on a new peace initiative began in Washington April 23. The exchanges gathered momentum a week later when US mediation formally ended. Heads of government — with Alexander Haig speaking for President Reagan — became involved on the night preceding the May 2 attack on the cruiser.

If the British embassies in Washington and Lima were unaware of what was going on, they were not doing their jobs — which is hard to believe considering the calibre of their staffs.

The Government's ever-changing cover stories on the affair were labelled "an imperial box-up" by Lord Annan in his role as chairman of the Brass Tacks programme. He was less charitable to those who have questioned the reasons for "the imperial box-up" accusing them of "malevolence" toward Britain's fighting men.

Is it "malevolent" to recall that not a single British serviceman was killed before the Belgrano was attacked, and that 255 died afterwards?

In his quest as an histo-

rian for the truth, perhaps Lord Annan failed to notice what Admiral Lord Lewin told me in a June 29 interview of remarkable frankness — (published in part in the Guardian on October 2). Speaking of the situation around April 23 or 24, 1982, Lewin who at the time was incumbent chief of the defence staff and a member of the war cabinet said:

"I was convinced we were dealing with a government in Buenos Aires which could not agree to a settlement keeping them in power and Mrs Thatcher in power. Neither side was going to step down, so that was it. From my point of view that was the end of negotiations."

Lewin then went on to emphasise that others in Britain's political and military hierarchy shared his ap-

praisal: "What I want to convey is the feeling in the war cabinet, and certainly in the military by April 25 and 26, that a negotiated settlement was not on. There was no way you were going to get an agreement which would keep both governments in power, and it was unthinkable that the Conservatives would settle for something that would mean they would be defeated in Parliament and would have to go to a general election."

All this was at a time when official British policy — restated two days after the Belgrano went down on May 2 — was to seek a diplomatic settlement using only the minimum of force. — Yours faithfully,

Arthur Gavshon,
9 Stormont Road,
London N6.

Falklands revisited

Chris McLaughlin reviews
Another Story: Women and the Falklands War by Jean Carr, Hamish Hamilton, £7.50 and £3.50 paper.

THE Falklands war produced a publishing mini-boom in instant history — books, videos, diaries and magazine series.

These fell broadly into two categories — those which sought to question the reasons for the war and the political control over it; and those which set out to tell the story “as it happened”.

Yet nowhere in the writings so far — outside the odd magazine piece — has the Falklands war been recounted through the views, feelings and thoughts of women.

Throughout the Falklands conflict the role of women presented by the media was as unquestioning mothers, wives or sisters expressing their pride in the valour of their fallen men.

Whitehall did its best to ensure that this was so. As the numbers of war casualties grew, the ministry of defence was adamant: there were no relatives who wanted to be interviewed, and certainly none wanting to criticise the war effort.

Jean Carr, a Sunday Mirror feature writer was working on a paper that was as gung-ho behind our boys as any other tabloid (though not comparably with the Sun). Yet she knew there was another story going untold. She became more determined to tell it as evidence emerged of the scandalously class based system of compensation for the war wounded.

Another Story sees the Falklands conflict through the experiences of a group of women who were forced into questioning and then fighting the values laid down by the all-male military hierarchy.

The war did not turn these women into CND members or prompt them on to Greenham. But there must be a link in the common realisation of the destructive stupidity which can determine the rules once men start playing at war.

Carr writes with the conviction of a campaigner against injustice, particularly when dealing with the inadequacies and unfairness of the compensation and the off-hand attitude of the authorities. But it is the futility of it all which keeps cropping up.

Argentine President calls for co-operation



Raul Alfonsin

PRESIDENT Raul Alfonsin of Argentina appeared before Parliament at a ceremonial sitting, to appeal for closer co-operation between Europe and Latin America.

Welcoming him, Parliament's President, Pierre Pflimlin, spoke of the role President Alfonsin played in leading his country back to democracy.

But in his speech President Alfonsin said democracy, if it were to thrive, needed help; and here he spoke of his country's enormous 45 billion dollar debts inherited from the previous authoritarian administration.

His government wanted to repay them but conditions had to be right and it was economically impossible to call for greater sacrifices on the part of those with the least to hope for — to do so could threaten the very fabric of Argentina's newly-created democracy.

President Alfonsin called for more

European investment, more joint ventures and easier access to the European market.

The Community should eschew protectionism and, equally, bear in mind the adverse effects its common agricultural policy is having on world trade.

On international controversies, he said: "Our will to resolve them by peaceful and diplomatic means is clearly shown by the case of the dispute with our sister nation Chile. This is an example and proof of the attitude with which we are tackling and shall continue to tackle our international problems."

President Alfonsin made no reference to the Falklands.

Missing log 'linked to GCHQ ban'

By Our Political Reporter

The Government is to be asked this week to publish information contained in the navigational logs of other submarines which were in the vicinity of the General Belgrano at the time the Argentine cruiser was sunk by HMS Conqueror during the Falklands war.

A Labour front bench spokesman, Mr George Foulkes, yesterday linked the banning of trade unions at the Government's communications headquarters at Cheltenham with the disappearance of the Conqueror's control room log, and alleged they were both part of a plot to conceal that the war Cabinet knew, when ordering the sinking of the Belgrano, that the vessel had been ordered to return to port.

Speaking yesterday in Ardrossan, Ayrshire, Mr Foulkes

recalled that on January 12 this year Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, had said that Mrs Thatcher knew of the Argentine orders because they had been intercepted by GCHQ.

MPs have tabled questions to Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, about the logs of other submarines, notably the HMS Splendid which was believed to have been trailing the aircraft carrier, 25 de Mayo.

Mr Foulkes described as "a panic move" a decision by the Ministry of Defence to refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions the possibility that classified information has been disclosed in a diary kept by a former officer of HMS Conqueror, extracts from which was published in *The Observer* yesterday.

Beagle vote

Buenos Aires. — Argentines voted in a referendum on the Vatican-backed treaty proposal to settle differences with Chile on the Beagle channel. The plebiscite was also the first big test of the Alfonsín Government's popularity.

Argentina votes on Beagle treaty

From Jeremy Morgan
in Buenos Aires

Argentina yesterday voted on a treaty aimed at ending the Beagle Channel dispute with Chile, which has divided the two countries for more than a century and nearly led to war in 1978.

The unprecedented referendum called by President Alfonsín will not be binding on the Government, which is clearly committed to backing the treaty terms reached after more than five years of negotiation led by the Pope.

But, after arguments over the legality of the plebiscite,

opposition claims that the Government is trying to use the planned treaty to distract public attention from more urgent problems, the President now says he will abide by the result.

The Government is predicting a substantial majority in favour of the proposals, and recent opinion polls tend to lend weight to its claims. The Government's main worry is the impact of a mass abstention called by the opposition Peronist movement.

Critics of what the President describes as "the treaty proposed by the Holy Father," have faced an apparently in-

surmountable obstacle in Catholic Argentina: a vote against the treaty might be taken as a rejection of the Pope and the Church.

The proposals have offended nationalist sensibilities because they include Argentine recognition of Chilean sovereignty over Lennox, Picton, and Nueva, three tiny islands in the Beagle Channel that are the focus of the quarrel.

The close of the campaign was overshadowed by the explosion of a bomb and the discovery of another device at a stadium only hours before President Alfonsín was due to speak there on Friday night.

Officer's Belgrano diary for DPP

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The Ministry of Defence said yesterday that the diary written by an officer of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Belgrano during the Falklands conflict, had been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

It said the diary contained classified information which had apparently been made available to unauthorised people. This, it added, "might involve an offence against the Official Secrets Act." The announcement was immediately criticised by Labour MPs as a move designed to divert attention away from the ministry's embarrassment over official documents — notably the Conqueror's control log — which have gone missing.

The ministry has known the identity of the officer who wrote the diary — extensive extracts from which were published in the Guardian on April 17 — for at least three months, and possibly since the beginning of the year.

The ministry is clearly worried that the diarist, along with many other members of the submarine's crew, may have information which could be severely embarrassing if revealed. This includes information about the extent of the Government's knowledge of Argentine orders to the Belgrano to head for home

well before it was attacked, and orders to attack the Belgrano's escorts after the cruiser was hit.

But it is now understood, contrary to suggestions in the press, that the diarist did not take the control room log from the submarine. It is believed that this log was delivered intact to the ministry or to naval HQ after the Conqueror's voyage.

The ministry said yesterday that it has now received the report of the board of inquiry into the missing control room log from the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir William Staveley. It said the report would be examined "with some urgency" though it had not yet been passed on to the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine.

A specimen copy of a nuclear submarine's control room log, deposited in the Commons library, shows that the document is a far more significant one than Mr Heseltine suggested in his evidence to the foreign affairs committee.

Under the general instructions that control room logs must be carefully preserved, it says that the navigating officer must give detailed entries of the "arrivals and departures and meeting at sea . . . of ships of war of all nations, transports, and fleet auxiliaries and strange ships observed."



Sir.—In Richard Norton-Taylor's article on the missing Conqueror log (November 21) no mention is made of an unknown number of other logs which could help to shed some light on the tragic occurrences of early May, 1982. Surely a Ministry of Defence anxious to put the record straight would be glad to produce any evidence which would do this.

If Conqueror sent a message, as well as details being recorded in its signals log (destroyed) and the helmsman's logs (misplaced) and the Captain's official record (withheld on security grounds) there are many other records of signals traffic which could be traced. It follows that if a ship records messages received and sent then the command or outstation with which they are in communication must also keep a log. All traffic is recorded in at least two places.

In addition to logs on Conqueror and at Northwood, it is highly probable that the Task Force command ship would monitor all traffic; GCHQ at Cheltenham certainly would — both ways; who knows what other secret

listening posts of British intelligence monitored and logged the traffic. The fact that monitoring stations cannot decode does not stop them monitoring. Other friendly and not-so-friendly powers will have monitored all traffic and logged times, duration and persistence of all this traffic. All of the relevant evidence is out there somewhere, much of it within the power of the MoD to gather. None of it is of a "sensitive" nature and none of it can endanger security. A log-book does precisely what its name implies.

I would guess that there are at least half a dozen places where logs of one form or another could be traced which will, by analysis of times, reveal details which could confirm or deny any MoD evidence to the Commons Select Committee.

Hurry, someone, before the MoD draws attention to the forthcoming Yuletide and we find that the season of burning logs is upon us. — Yours sincerely,

Brian Pollitt.
26 Seymour Road,
Bristol.

By HUGH DAVIES in Canton

A DISTURBING picture emerged yesterday of the people of Hongkong being plagued by doubts and fears about their future under Chinese Communist rule.

It emerged less than a month before Mrs Thatcher is due to visit Peking to sign the declaration handing Hongkong back to China in July, 1997.

The first major opinion poll since the draft document was initialled in September showed that nine out of 10 people favoured an agreement rather than no pact at all.

And most of the 6,140 Hongkongers interviewed emphasised that they did not view the declaration as a "sell-out" by the British Government.

But many voiced grave misgivings about the continued stability of China, doubting that the successors to Teng Hsiao-Ping, 80, the mainland leader, would continue his pro-Western policies.

More than half those interviewed felt that the document failed to provide adequate and workable assurances that the terms would be honoured.

Yet to be decided

As one person pointed out, much depended on the law to be implemented by the new Communist rulers.

This has yet to be decided. The draft pact says that the law, currently based on British precedent is to be enacted and promulgated by the National People's Congress in Peking.

Ke Zaishuo, one of the Chinese negotiators of the pact, has said that Hongkong people will take part in the drafting. But observers note that China, the scene of a multitude of summary executions of late, is to have the final say.

The survey, carried out by an independent research firm, was commissioned by the English-language SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST, three other news organisations, and members of the Legislature.

Individual replies varied enormously. One person was "very satisfied" at hearing of the Chinese plan to maintain the colony's life style for 50 years. Another commented: "Negotiation is better than confrontation."

A third rejected the pact outright. He said: "The withdrawal of Britain indicates that they retreat when they have amassed great wealth. That amounts to betraying the people of Hongkong."

Seventy-seven per cent. thought the pact was not very good but the best that could be expected in the circumstances.

Key areas of fear included worries about possible military conscription, supposed corruption in China, the exact legal process to be followed if the pact's guarantees were breached, the numbers of troops to be stationed by Peking in the territory, and the practicability of capitalism working in the Marxist system.

Summing up the survey, the MORNING POST said that people were torn between a feeling of national loyalty to China and a sense of distrust of the Chinese Communist Government.

Grudging acceptance

There was a grudging acceptance of the pact and "at the very least" a feeling of resignation.

Results of another analysis, that of 2,400 submissions to the British Government's Assessment Office in Hongkong, are to be released on Friday, six days before M Ps debate the issue at Westminster.

The Lords then confer on Dec. 10.

Both Houses of Parliament are considered certain to support the agreement, leaving the way clear for Mrs Thatcher's trip to China, planned for Dec. 18 and 19.

She is then expected to give a Press conference in Hongkong before a flying visit to Washington for talks with President Reagan.

RE-SELECTION FOR CHINA'S PARTY MEN

The Chinese Communist party has announced the second phase of a campaign to weed out corrupt members and ultra-left sympathisers. It says that all its 40 million members will face re-selection during the next two years.

The object is to ensure that the party is fully behind the pragmatic policies of Ten Hsiao-ping, China's ageing strong man, who has abandoned some of the egalitarian dogma of Maoism that caused such chaos in the so-called Cultural Revolution.

The first phase of the shake-up covered central and local local party organisations and the Armed Forces. The second phase is to cover grass-roots members.

The shake-up is said to differ from a Soviet-style purge and to put the emphasis on repentance and self-criticism. The party's secretary-general, Hu Yaobang, said in the summer that only 5,000 people had actually been expelled from the party.—Renter.

CHANNEL DISPUTE

Argentines agree

Argentines voted overwhelmingly yesterday in favour of a proposed solution to a border dispute with Chile over the Beagle Channel, Argentina's most touchy foreign policy issue after the Falkland Islands.

Provisional results released last night reported that 54.8 per cent. of the 18.5 million eligible voters had voted. According to incomplete results 85 per cent. of the voters were in favour of a peace treaty with Chile that will put an end to a century of conflict which took both countries to the brink of war in 1978.

Hongkong plagued
by doubts and
fears for future

'I can hardly believe the enormity of it'

29 April

WE ARE now over 9,000 miles since sailing. A day of fast passage to our new area around the Falkland Islands and Tierra del Fuego. The weather is relatively calm up top — for the first time since we got here!

Communications are a hell of a problem and this morning we got out traffic via New Zealand, which is closer than the UK.

We seem to be surviving, though defect after defect is arising and the boat is clearly screaming out for a refit. It is amazingly cold on board and we are all wandering around in heavy pullovers.

30 April

CONTINUING passage to an area where the threats are from the cruiser, Belgrano — an ancient ex-US World War ship with no sonar or ASW [anti-submarine warfare] capability, two equally decrepit destroyers, and an oiler. However, we still don't know where the two 209-type diesel boats [modern German-built submarines] are.

Arrived in area in the afternoon — we are about 200 miles south-west of the Falklands and about 120 miles east of Tierra del Fuego. The weather today has been incredibly good — very calm clear skies, sunny and excellent visibility; perhaps the calm before the storm!

In the evening we received a signal stating that HM Government has decided to 'use more military force' and has authorised the 'destruction' of the [cruiser carrier] Veinticinco de Mayo — it would be great if she went down on 25th May! In fact she is in Splendid's area.

We are managing to get signal traffic in. Still no sign of the enemy, though we picked up some faint signatures in the afternoon. At periscope depth from 1600 onwards.

1 May

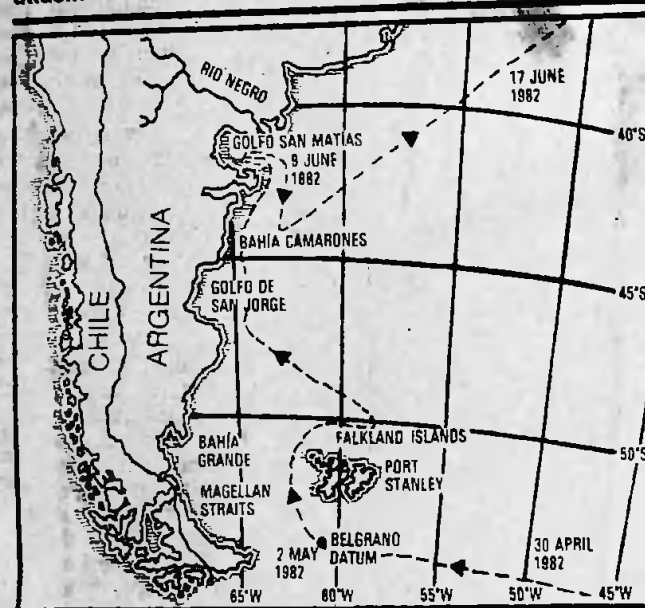
THE signatures we held earlier turned out to be the Argentine surface group, and we closed to within 4,000 yards of them in the forenoon.

There is one cruiser, the Belgrano, two destroyers and an oiler — we caught them in the middle of an RAS [replenishment at sea], which would have made a superb target; but unfortunately they were south of the exclusion zone.

Spent most of the day trailing them discreetly from about 10,000 yards as they headed west, hoping that our intelligence reports are accurate and that they are going to turn north.

Not the carrier yet, so one presumes it is still floating.

Controversy has surrounded the voyage of the nuclear submarine Conqueror ever since it attacked and sunk the Argentine cruiser Belgrano on 2 May 1982. 'The Observer' has now obtained the complete diary kept by one of the Conqueror's officers during those momentous days. It is a remarkable document, revealing the fear as well as the intense excitement which the crew experienced as they closed in for the attack.



Conqueror's route as drawn by the diarist.

Excitement before going to bed tonight, as we believe we will be going to action stations overnight to loose a couple of Mk24s [torpedoes]!

2 May

WELL, they're not so stupid — they spent the night meticulously paralleling the exclusion zone, about 18 miles to the south of it. Frustrating! They're doing about 13 knots, and only the occasional radar sweep. We hope they're not heading for South Georgia! No external news updates for 24 hours now, though we are still surviving with all our [communications] problems.

On the home front, my diet seems to be working at last. This afternoon I knew what fear was. At 1400 we received a signal authorising us to sink the cruiser Belgrano, even though it was outside our exclusion zone. We had been trailing her for more than 25 hours and held her visually at PO [periscope observation].

After tracking her for a while, we went to action stations around 1500 and shut off for attack. The tension in the control room was mounting steadily. We went deep and opened [moved away] from the cruiser's port side to about 4,000 yards. She was flanked by two destroyers.

At about 1600 we fired three Mk8 torpedoes at the Belgrano. The atmosphere was electric as

the seconds ticked away: 43 seconds after discharge we heard the first explosion, followed by two more — three hits from three weapons. The control room was in an uproar, 30 people shouting and cheering.

The captain, at the attack periscope, was screaming out orders — 10 down, starboard 30, half ahead, 130 revs. Everyone was hysterical, stamping and cheering, and it became quiet only after two or three minutes.

Sweating palms

We went deep then, after about five minutes, there was a loud bang — a depth charge. Everyone froze, but the skipper ordered shut off for counter-attack and we took evasive measures, hurtling down to [deleted] feet.

There was silence throughout the boat — suddenly it was no longer fun to be doing what we were. We were at the receiving end.

For an hour we hurtled along at full speed. Palms were sweating. You could hear a pin drop. The tension was almost unbearable. We then slowed down for coming to PO [periscope observation] 18 miles from where we attacked. After five minutes another loud bang, possibly a depth charge. We

had just begun to relax, thinking we were clear, and this brought us back to our senses.

Again, evasive manoeuvres and complete silence throughout the boat. I think we were all very frightened — the destroyers were not transmitting on sonar, so how had they found us, 18 miles from the datum [scene of the action]? Did they have a Neptune aircraft, dropping Jezebel [listening] buoys?

Suddenly it seems that we were hunted. I felt scared, almost trembling, sweating and nauseated. I thought of what we had done — of the men we had killed. Although we may not have sunk the cruiser, the captain said he had seen flashes of orange flames as the weapons hit.

Scared but determined, we kept going, praying that their destroyers weren't still on to us. We went on for another hour and finally slowed down some 26 miles from the datum. To our relief we had no further contacts and were then able to return to periscope depth to transmit [a report of] what we had done.

As I write, I am still overwhelmed by it all. I can hardly believe the enormity of what we have done. We can't go back and apologise now — it's too late. I wonder how many died. I wonder, even more, what the reaction will be? The lads have taken it very well — a couple were frightened outwardly, and the rest of us made do with being frightened inwardly.

It was all over by 1915 local — I came out of the bandstand [control room] after 6½ hours of concentration, mentally and physically drained. We had a glass of wine in the wardroom and spent the evening discussing what had happened.

I don't think that most of them really realise it yet — they are still, as I am, a bit 'high.' However, everyone is smiling nervously, expanding on the rights and wrongs, recalling the tension and the feelings.

I went to bed at 2130, my heart pounding against my chest. Every little noise made me start — my ears have become sensitive to the slightest bang and we are all of us finding that we jump when there is a bang.

A signal was received when we informed [Northwood battle HQ] of our attack, stating that 'Her Majesty's Government has authorised the destruction of all Argentinian warships.' Captain SM3 signalled to us 'Brandy is for heroes' — from



Winners and losers: Conqueror with Jolly Roger at Faslane and (top) last minutes of Belgrano.

Oscar Wilde's 'Port is for gentlemen, brandy is for heroes.'

Our task now is still an anti-shiping patrol, and by 2100 we are heading back to the west at 12 knots. Twice the destroyers were heard searching and dropping the occasional charge. Perhaps they are looking for survivors? It was, all in all, a very long day.

I think now most of us want to go home. We never really thought, on the way down, that we were actually going to do this. Now, I think we are all stunned — the little things in life now seem relatively unimportant. As the prospect of death becomes so real, the only consolation, I suppose, is that the end would be cold and quick. We still don't know where the S209 diesel boats are!

3 May

THE start of week five. There are an awful lot of very nervous

people on board, including myself. I slept very badly dreaming of bombs and explosions. I find myself starting at the slightest bang and my head has been pounding at an incredible pace.

All the time we seem to be waiting for the next bang — and we are praying it won't be a torpedo. I am waiting for the sound room to scream 'torpedo, torpedo, torpedo' or to say they hold a destroyer at close range.

What a catch

Whilst at [periscope observation] we were harassed by a Neptune aircraft, which forced us deep on occasions. We headed west and at 2000 started edging back towards the datum, the aim now being to have a go at the destroyers — Bouchard and Bueno.

The news today is that the Belgrano is still floating but

drifting without steerage. Apparently two of our weapons hit her and exploded; the third ran on, hit the Bouchard but failed to detonate. God, what a catch that would have been, had we got two in one go!

We caught the BBC World Service overnight, in which it was stated that an unknown submarine had attacked the Argentines' second largest warship, outside the exclusion zone; the Argentines apparently denied that damage had been serious (of course they would). However, after the attack yesterday, we heard loud banging noises... which sounded like breaking-up.

4 May

WE REACHED the datum last night, and, after intensive searching, found no sign either of the Belgrano or of the two destroyers. It looks, therefore, as though the cruiser may well have gone down. At about 0400 we gained a surface

contact. At sunrise we came up for a look and discovered she was a hospital ship, supported by one of the destroyers.

Shortly afterwards, we received a signal saying that we had sunk the Belgrano. There were 1,000 men aboard, though we weren't told if there were any survivors, which I think extremely unlikely. We were not authorised to attack the hospital ship, or the destroyer, as she was assisting the search for survivors. So we opened at high speed to the north.

Later in the day we received bad news [of the Argentine Exocet attack on HMS Sheffield]. We think one of the destroyers may be on its way to finish Sheffield off, so we are head off to intercept and sink if that is so.

There is much talk of 'when we get back home,' but we are still very nervous and a bit subdued. Odd that we haven't

had any diplomatic updates for a while — perhaps everything has broken down?

5 May

THE FIRST news of the day is not good. Firstly, Sheffield was indeed hit by Exocet. She is reported as a 'floating hulk' some 70 km south of the Falklands. The other particularly bad news for us is that we have a steam leak on one of the steam generators.

This could be disastrous — suicidal — if attempting evasive manoeuvres after an attack. Christ! — I hope the politicians see sense and call it a day.

6 May

THE LATEST news is that it has been confirmed that there were over 800 survivors from the Belgrano, including their CO. So I suppose around 200 must have gone down with her.

Does it make one feel any better, knowing that we killed less than we originally thought? Can we believe that things are not so bad as only 200 died instead of 1,000? Do the numbers make the deed any less terrible? I think not.

On 9 June she was ordered to go inside the Argentine 12-mile territorial limit to take a look at a task group consisting of two destroyers and a tanker; but there were no more engagements.

An entry on 17 June says: 'Today a crowd of about 20 gathered in the Control Room to listen to the tape recording of our attack on Belgrano — it was amazing! The orders become crisper until at the moment of fire, they are being shouted out. The cheering afterwards is phenomenal!'

After an uneventful voyage home, Conqueror, flying the 'Jolly Roger', berthed at Faslane submarine base on 3 July.

Spectre of coup haunts Alfonsín

by Maria Laura Avignolo
Buenos Aires

SCARCELY 11 months after democracy returned to Argentina, coup fever has gripped Buenos Aires. Last week it was the favourite topic of political columnists, worried political activists and retired soldiers.

It is hard to believe that anyone would want to return to an authoritarian regime which made 30,000 people disappear, launched a war with Britain with the sole objective of maintaining its own power and left an external debt of \$43,000m.

But there are those who would welcome a coup; for a start, those generals who enjoyed splendid salaries and almost infinite opportunities for graft when they were in government and who now face the "humiliation" of picking up a standard pay packet of only about £240 a month.

Speeches are being made by the military portraying reds under every bed. This is being seen as part of the psychological warfare which the military started waging three months ago and it has steadily increased. "They're trying to create a climate similar to the 'dirty war'," said Raul Galvan, under secretary in the interior ministry and ultimate commander of the federal police. (Thousands of people disappeared during the "dirty war" staged by members of the security forces against suspected left-wingers following the military coup of 1976.)

President Alfonsín, in an attempt to counter this campaign, constantly dismisses the possibility of a coup. But recent events have reawakened public anxiety.

In Rosario, some 150 miles up the River Plate from Buenos Aires, an investigation is under way into the theft of evidence against military officers who had mounted a "parallel intelligence service" which spied on government officials.

In Buenos Aires, a paramilitary group, similar to the one which operated in Rosario, took over the first-class Hotel Salles and calmly robbed the guests, including some British tourists, of \$1m and 50 passports. Police say the groups operated with the cool efficiency of the notorious "task squads" of the "dirty war."

Next day a similar commando group "selectively" stole 50 weapons and military equipment from an armoury in Buenos Aires and repeated the operation the following night to remove a further 30 weapons. To this haul were added 105 US passports stolen from a Mormon religious centre. Inexplicably, the police kept this information from the press for 10 days.

The most popular explanation for all this is that some paramilitary groups are arming themselves. But one of the rare "constitutionalist" generals diagnosed the process as "the military feeling Alfonsín's pulse to see how he reacts to so much provocation".

Alfonsín's government is also facing pressure from the church, which is speaking out with a determination which was never visible under the military dictatorship. The church accuses the government of exercising "ideological discrimination in schools and universities" (in favour of the left).

Belgrano log officer may be disciplined

By OUR DEFENCE STAFF

THE Naval Board of inquiry into the loss of the control room log of the nuclear attack submarine Conqueror, which covered the period when she sank the General Belgrano, is believed to have recommended disciplinary action against one of the Conqueror's officers.

This could either take the form of a court martial or even a charge under the Official Secrets Act. The Conqueror had a complement of about 100, including 18 to 20 officers.

The inquiry findings are expected to reach Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, in a few days.

Although the proceedings of such boards are never published, in case they prejudice subsequent disciplinary hearings, Mr Heseltine will be under strong pressure to make an early statement in the Commons.

Opposition MPs critical of the Belgrano sinking want to know how the Royal Navy lost a classified document relating to the critical period of the Falklands conflict.

There have been persistent reports that the log was stolen and is now in "safe-keeping." The inquiry is expected to disclose whether the pale green exercise book went missing from the submarine or after dispatch to the naval records office at Hayes, Middlesex.

The log is classified as "Confidential" rather than "Secret" and would be of little use to MPs seeking to show that the Belgrano was sunk needlessly, because it does not include the position of other vessels. But the Navy has admitted that it would be valuable to an enemy analysing British submarine procedures.

The Commander-in-Chief, Fleet, has been studying the board of inquiry findings before it goes to Mr Heseltine.

Modern warships have to carry a mass of classified documents and the loss of a few less sensitive papers is not uncommon. But all classified documents are required to be logged on and off the vessel in the classified-books record. This would include the control-room log of the Conqueror.

ARGENTINA can review its military budget and tackle the "more serious issue" of the Falklands now its border conflict with Chile has been settled, President Alfonsín has told a crowd of 70,000 Argentines, writes Cristina Bonasegna in Buenos Aires.

The President, speaking before today's referendum on a peace treaty which grants three disputed islands to Chile after a century of discord, said that the Falkland Islands had "become a continental problem."

He added that Latin American unity is the only option available to overcome the region's social and economic problems "and counter discrimination by industrialised nations."

First Falkland trawler due

By DAVID BROWN, Agriculture Correspondent

THE Grimsby trawler Coastal Pioneer is due to arrive in the Falkland Islands today to carry out trials aimed at exploiting rich fishing grounds which until now have been plundered by Eastern-bloc, Japanese and Spanish fleets.

The trawler, the first commercial fishing vessel to be based in the Falklands, will operate from the settlement at Fox Bay East as part of a £790,000 project funded by the Falkland Islands Development Corporation to help the local economy.

With Delano Jennings, a Falkland islander with wide experience of fishing off Scotland as skipper, the Coastal Pioneer carries a crew of four. The trawler, which is only 30 feet long, has taken two months to complete its voyage.

Unlike the large deep-sea trawlers from Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, Taiwan and Spain, which exploit vast shoals of hake, blue whiting and squid in the South Atlantic, the Coastal Pioneer will operate within three miles of the islands.

PROFITABLE MARKETS

The aim is to find rich catches of high-value crab, scallops and crayfish which can be flown to profitable markets in Europe or the United States. The catches have to be moved quickly because there are no suitable cold store facilities in the Falklands.

The arrival of the trawler is seen as a major step towards improving the local economy in the Falklands. Strategy for an island-based fishing industry will be one of the main topics discussed at a full board meeting of the Development Cor-

poration in Port Stanley on Thursday. Mr Alistair Cameron, the official Falkland Islands representative in London, who is flying out tomorrow to attend the meeting, said: "It is an exciting project. If the fishing resources warrant it, it may be possible to ship the fish by sea to Montevideo in Uruguay."

The fishing venture follows the successful boost to the island's farming industry from the "Noah's Ark" shipment of animals to help replace losses suffered in the wake of the Argentine invasion.

Thirteen months after their arrival most of the cattle, sheep, pigs, horses, goats, sheepdogs, budgerigars and cats shipped out from Britain have survived one of the worst winters in living memory and many have bred successfully.

BREEDING STOCK

The shipment, which was funded largely from public donations in Britain, the United States and other countries, has provided valuable new breeding stock.

Six rare Shetland cattle, one bull and five cows, have survived and produced seven calves.

Major-General Alan Mills, secretary of the Falkland Islands Association which organised the shipment, said in London after returning from a fact finding visit to the islands: "The whole thing has been a resounding success despite the doubts of those who said the death rate would be high."

"New blood lines have been introduced and the animals have, in the main, come through a very, very hard winter. The general opinion is that they can now survive anything."

Conqueror officer's war diary revealed

by DAVID LEIGH and ANDREW WILSON

THE OBSERVER has identified a former officer who took documents from the submarine Conqueror after its attack on the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano during the Falklands fighting.

The officer, whose identity we are not disclosing, is the author of a day-by-day diary kept on the submarine, which shows with extraordinary clarity the mixture of emotions felt by the crew as they followed orders to sink the cruiser.

On page four we publish for the first time complete extracts from the diary.

The diary shows its author to be an officer of some courage, with a sense of fun and loyalty to his shipmates.

But it also reveals him to have been gravely disturbed — as was another Falklands officer, the late Lieutenant David Tinker — by the conduct of the war.

The Ministry of Defence has been aware for at least three months of the identity of the author. Brief extracts from the diary were referred to by the authors of the book 'The Sinking of the Belgrano' earlier this year, but the Ministry took no steps to pursue it.

Not only were the author's experiences politically embarrassing; he had also left the

Navy and the jurisdiction of the British courts.

Since his retirement from the service in 1982, he has been running a business in the Caribbean.

In the last 10 days a board of inquiry has been set up into the disappearance of the control room log of the Conqueror.

It is not known whether this officer has any light to shed on that document. He did remove copies of orders and navigational data before he wrote up his diary.

While MPs have been kept in the dark about the inquiry board's finding, a small team headed by Rear-Admiral William Lang, head of naval security, has been questioning the officer's friends as to his whereabouts.

A member of his family in England told *The Observer*: 'I cannot disclose his whereabouts, although I have been in touch with him.'

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, is in an embarrassing position. The officer knows the contents of the missing log book; that is clear from his diary.

Even if he is traced, the Ministry of Defence will not be able to question him abroad without his co-operation. Nor can they compel him to remain silent.

'Enormity of it,' page 4.

NOTT TO ANSWER BELGRANO QUESTIONS

By VALERIE ELLIOTT
Political Staff

ADAMIRAL of the Fleet Lord Lewin, and Sir John Nott, former Defence Secretary, are to appear before the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs to answer questions about the sinking of the General Belgrano.

It will be the first time those directly involved in the order for the sinking of the Argentine cruiser will have been questioned by MPs about the incident.

Until now it has been Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, who has had to answer for the Government.

The hearing is expected to take place in public on Wednesday week. Lord Lewin, former chief of Defence Staff during the Falklands crisis will give evidence at 10.30 a.m., and Sir John at 5 p.m.

They are certain to face detailed questioning by MPs who are compiling a report on the sinking of the cruiser and the failure of the Peruvian peace proposals.

The MPs will be particularly interested to hear evidence from Sir John, who has not often spoken in public about the Falklands conflict since his decision to leave politics.

The Guardian 24/11/84

Falklands free mail threatened

TREASURY cuts in defence spending could stop the free mail of the forces in the Falkland Islands, writes Colin Brown. The Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, is understood to be fighting Treasury demands for the service to be suspended.

Stopping the free mail service could save £200,000 a year, but Tory backbenchers are urging Mr Heseltine to resist the Treasury.

ARGENTINA BOMB

By Our Buenos Aires
Correspondent

A bomb exploded yesterday at a soccer stadium where President Alfonsín of Argentina was to close a nationwide campaign in preparation for a referendum tomorrow on a solution to the century-old Beagle channel border dispute with Chile. There were no casualties. No one claimed responsibility.

FALKLANDS FREE MAIL FACES AXE

The Ministry of Defence said last night that the Government was considering an end to free mail home from Servicemen in the Falklands, saving £200,000 a year.

Doubts on Beagle treaty

Chilean military attack channel pact

From Florencia Varas, Santiago, and Douglas Tweedale, Buenos Aires

The settlement of the century-old dispute between Chile and Argentina over the Beagle Channel has been placed in some doubt by attacks on the treaty from two leading military men in Chile.

While the population of Argentina prepares for a national plebiscite on the issue tomorrow, Admiral José Toribio Merino, the head of the Chilean Navy, demanded that changes be made to the treaty before it is approved.

The draft treaty was announced last month after more than five years of negotiations, with the Vatican as mediator, and Chile indicated agreement with the terms.

However, Admiral Merino's statement suggests divisions within the Chilean government, and it was followed by similar comments from General Gustavo Leigh, a former member of the Chilean junta.

He said: "The treaty is detrimental to Chile, which is giving away something and is not receiving anything in exchange. The Argentines only recognize the sovereignty of Chile over the Picton, Nueva and Lenox islands, but Chile surrenders half of the Beagle Channel."

In Argentina, the national referendum tomorrow on the proposed solution to the dispute is seen as an important test for President Raúl Alfonsín's year-old government.

The referendum, unprecedented in Argentine history, has surpassed the geographical details of the dispute to become a battle of wills between Señor Alfonsín's Radical Party and the opposition Peronist party.

Formally, the referendum asks voters to approve or reject the treaty that would end the dispute. But the actual terms of

the treaty have been all but forgotten in the feverish campaign.

President Alfonsín has energetically campaigned across the country, as if he were repeating his successful campaign for the presidency last year, asking supporters at rallies to get out and vote in favour of the treaty.

The faction-ridden Peronist party has led the opposition to the treaty, but internal dissent and the fear of a political setback led the party leadership to call on voters to abstain from the referendum.

Ex-President Isabel Perón, who has remained aloof from Argentine politics in self-imposed exile in Madrid, was quoted in a rare interview as saying: "We must support President Alfonsín's democracy", a phrase interpreted as support for the official position.

In the referendum, voters will choose between a "Yes" vote for acceptance of the treaty, and a "No" vote for rejection.

A high rate of abstention could be interpreted as a political defeat for the Alfonsín Administration. But polls taken last week indicated that the "Yes" position favoured by the Government would win easily, and that a surprisingly high turnout could be expected.

BOMB BLAST: A bomb exploded at a Buenos Aires football stadium yesterday where 80,000 people were expected to hear President Alfonsín close the referendum campaign. Federal police said (Reuter reports).

The bomb blew a 3 ft hole in an outside wall of the stadium. Another bomb, placed near a ticket window, was defused by police.

Sinking of Belgrano

From Mr Tam Dalyell, MP for Linlithgow (Labour)

Sir, Where is Lord Annan's evidence for his endorsement (November 19) of the Government's position - "It is also now clear that the Peruvian peace proposals were received in London well after the Belgrano was sunk"?

Haig and other Americans in a position to know, such as Goldberg, Gompertz, and Dean Fischer, Belaunde, Ulloa, Arias Stella, and other Peruvians, have given a different version of events. And indeed on television Cecil Parkinson and Cranley Onslow have let the cat out of the bag that the Foreign Office knew about the Peruvian proposals on the morning of Sunday, May 2.

By no stretch of the imagination can what they say tally with Mrs Thatcher's response to Denzil Davies that the "first indications" of the Peruvian peace proposals reached London three hours after the Belgrano was sunk at 11.15 pm. If Lord Annan is concerned about protecting the sources of intelligence, why should not the signals and intercepted signals be produced to judges in a tribunal under the 1921 Act?

Yours faithfully,
TAM DALYELL,
House of Commons.
November 19.

Daily Star
24th November 1984

FALKLANDS FREE AIRMAIL IS AXED

EXCLUSIVE

By ANTHONY SMITH, Political Editor
BRITISH Servicemen on lonely duty in the Falklands are to have their free airmail letters home axed.

Chancellor Nigel Lawson is ending the "perk" to save the Treasury a measly £200,000 a year. It means the lads having to fork out 26p for every letter to their loved ones.

The decision has angered the 4,000-strong garrison and led to a storm at Westminster. Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine is desperately trying to reverse it, for he believes it will be a shattering blow to Falklands morale.

Tory MP Anthony Beaumont-Dark, who has just returned from the islands, revealed he had received a protest from all ranks.

He said: "It would be a devastating blow. I am amazed and appalled it is even being considered."

"I have told Ministers to their faces that on humanitarian and commonsense grounds the proposal should be scrapped. I believe just about every MP in the House will oppose it."

YOUR FIGHTING
STAR GETS
ACTION FAST

Home
cheap
home!

By ANTHONY SMITH

YOUR BATTLING STAR GETS ACTION

SAVED - TROOPS' 'FIRING LINE' CASH

By ANTHONY SMITH
Ulster Telegraph
EXCLUSIVE

THE DAILY STAR has won two major victories for the troops. Last year we revealed a plan to end free Christmas phone calls home for the Falklands lads. Result: British Telecom offered a special cheap rate. Then a Star campaign made sure troops in Ulster kept "danger money."

'Lunacy'

Mr. John McWilliam, a senior Labour Whip specialising in defence matters, said last night: "This is penny-pinching lunacy."

"Has this Government gone totally raving mad?"

"The next thing they will do to save money is to ask the lads to put messages in a bottle and throw them in the Gulf Stream."

Senior defence sources confirmed that there would be a backlash of resentment.

One explained: "It is a great boost for the lads who are away on long tours of duty without their wives and families."

"Some of them are prolific writers and send half a dozen letters a week to their loved ones."

The service is so efficient that letters posted in Port Stanley on a Monday can be delivered in Britain by Friday.

The "perk" is not available to servicemen elsewhere, and the Treasury wants it to be scrapped in the Spring.

Warning on Falklands airfield cost

By Anthony Bevins
Political Correspondent

The House of Commons was yesterday told that the final cost of the Falkland Islands airfield could far exceed the current estimate of £250m.

Sir Gordon Downey, the Comptroller and Auditor General, said in a report on Falkland defence works that although the Property Services Agency had been tackling the "unique and difficult project" energetically, the final cost of contracts could not be confidently forecast even during construction.

He said: "The airfield contract contains substantial elements of work for which only provisional sums have been included; shipping costs are subject to currency fluctuations; transport and catering costs will rise if the workforce is increased; and any delays attributable to Property Services Agency or Ministry of Defence could give rise to claims by the contractors.

"The final cost of the airfield contract is therefore vulnerable to considerable risks."

He also reported that the contractors' consortium, Laing-Mowlem-Amey Roadstone, were likely to continue to be severely stretched and although the PSA had expressed confidence that the main runway could be completed by next April, the scale and complexity of the operation suggested that targets "will not easily be met".

In July, the PSA's estimate of the cost of works in the Falklands was put at £359m.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTINA

by **GEORGE ROBERTSON, M.P.**
(Lab.)

SIR—As a Member of Parliament who supported the sending of the task force to the Falklands two-and-a-half years ago, being in Buenos Aires in the last few days was a strange experience.

Riding in a mini-bus with the "Malvinas" sticker on the front window, passing the "Malvinas are Argentine" hoardings on the roadside brings one up short.

The sight of the battleship "Kill" sign on the plane of the new Air Force chief was a startling reminder to me of the moving funeral in my constituency of the young Hamilton paratrooper who fell at Goose Green.

Yet Argentina has changed, and so must we. We have forcibly to remind ourselves precisely why we sent that task force, why these young men died and what we owe their memory.

The sacrifice was not to fly a flag over Port Stanley; it was to re-assert the right of a free people to have their say and not be bulldozed by an authoritarian despotism with a foul human rights record.

That objective can in the long run be guaranteed, not by gunboats and war planes 8,000 miles away from their proper rôle, but from a peaceful settlement based on a secure relationship with South Atlantic neighbours.

After meetings with the most senior Argentine Government officials yet to talk to British politicians, I am convinced that we must start moving soon to rebuild our relationship. The present drift is so damaging to Argentina, to us and crucially so to the islanders.

There is a deep lack of comprehension of respective views in all camps and that has contributed to the present diplomatic stalemate. Argentina fails to understand the genuine apprehensions of the islanders who still distrust the stability of Argentina's new democracy.

We have not yet grasped the fact of the fundamental change which has occurred in Argentina. The Generals have gone and many are on trial. The new elected President and Parliament are getting down to deal with mind-boggling economic and social problems.

The new rulers of Argentina have as brave and as prominent a record in fighting the Falkland adventurers as the task force, and certainly the pre-

invasion Mrs Thatcher. Their chances of preserving a civilised democratic country would be immeasurably improved by the removal of the constant nationalistic upstaging over the "Malvinas."

While we drift, new forces will make a settlement less easy. Hardliners in Buenos Aires will gain in strength as economic restraints about to be imposed by the International Monetary Fund begin to bite. The present genuine desire to be flexible could also be inhibited by the swallowing of the Chile-advantaged Beagle Islands deal.

On our side continuing expenditure on Fortress Falklands breeds new habits and new vested interests in the *status quo*. Financial advantage will resist any change. On the military front the very necessity to be in the South Atlantic encourages long-term strategic temptations.

There is a stirring of radicalism in the new Latin America bred out of the poverty, hunger, the inequities and the financial crisis, and that radicalism can provide unpredictable results. Remember Weimar Germany, if we dare.

Hongkong is often quoted in Buenos Aires. They think it implies a hand-over by Britain which we should emulate over the Falklands. It is a convenient but wholly erroneous conclusion, but some parallels are helpful.

In Hongkong Mrs Thatcher said the agreement must be acceptable to the people—but the people of Hongkong were well prepared in advance for the likely outcome. That could be the case in the Falklands too.

We could start talking—at parliamentary, academic and journalist level about forms of solution to the status of the Falklands: lease-back, joint sovereignty, trusteeship, guarantees tied to the continuation of Argentine democracy; all should be a matter of debate and the debate alone will reduce the tensions.

Hostilities which still exist technically, despite President Alfonsín's denunciation of the use of force, must be rapidly lifted along with the exclusion zone. Visa restrictions can be eased, direct travel reinstated, fishermen allowed back to their old grounds.

More than every other thing, both nations and the islanders must start looking for signals and reading them correctly, without suspicion.

GEORGE ROBERTSON
Dep. Opposition spokesman, Foreign
and Commonwealth Affairs,
House of Commons.

Coming to terms with the Malvinas

Shirley Williams

"THE Malvinas are Argentina's" says a big sign on the side of the road in Misiones province, in Argentina's northern savannah. The butterflies and toucans are told what every schoolchild in Argentina learns from the cradle. The maps in Buenos Aires show a border around Argentina, an Argentina that extends to the Falklands, South Georgia and the Sandwich Islands. No Argentinian doubts the soundness of the claim.

It's strange to be in Argentina two years after the sending of the Task Force, which my party, like myself, then a Member of Parliament, supported. The country is very European in style; attending the Atlantic Conference organised in Iguazu by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, George Robertson, the Labour Party's deputy spokesman on Foreign Affairs and I were able to meet there and in Buenos Aires the most senior politicians any British politicians have met since the war. All spoke English well; many had been educated here.

The defeat of the Argentinian bid to take over the Falklands discredited the military regime and helped to elect a democratic government under President Alfonsín. But the danger is that continued frustration may undermine democracy too. Supporters of the extreme nationalist right are only too ready to make capital out of the Government's inability to reopen the Falklands issue.

Argentina has suffered a lot of blows recently. Apart from defeat in the Falklands, the historic dispute with Chile over the Beagle channel has been resolved largely in Chile's favour.

The standard of living of the average Argentinian fell by 16 per cent between 1979 and 1982, and will not return to 1979 levels before the end of the decade. The new democratic Government has fought a long rearguard battle with the IMF to get easier conditions for rescheduling the debt the military regime incurred.

Spare a thought for Raul Alfonsín, who has ended the tortures and the murders and the "disappearances" of those who dared to criticise General Galtieri and his cronies. As some of his supporters pointed out to us, he and they opposed the military action against the Falklands, as they had opposed the military dictatorship.

The Argentine government has renounced force as a way of resolving disputes and has cut the defence bud-

get by 25 per cent. At the July conference between British and Argentinian officials in Berne carefully prepared in advance by Swiss intermediaries, it was understood that Argentina would raise the issue of sovereignty and Britain would say that it could not be discussed. The Argentine government would then be able to explain to its public that it had tried to reopen the question. In fact, the British thanked the Swiss government and then immediately went on, reading from a written statement, to rule out any discussion of sovereignty.

We met the Chairman, Senator Grass, and members of the Senate Foreign Relations committee and told them that it was unrealistic to seek to discuss now a transfer of sovereignty. From senior Government officials we gained the strong impression that they would welcome the chance to discuss an international solution, such as UN trusteeship status, joint sovereignty or any other arrangement that would recognise Argentina's interest in the islands. Repeated references were made by them to the Hong Kong settlement as an example of the way sovereignty disputes can be resolved.

The alternative to Fortress Falklands, costing £684 million a year — more than the housing programme — is a rapprochement with the Alfonsín government. For the Argentines, sovereignty over the Falklands is a mystical issue in which their national pride is deeply involved. Who administers the islands and what guarantees are given to their inhabitants are matters on which agreements can be reached. But recognition in some form of their historic claim to the islands is a central preoccupation, even obsession, of the Argentinian public.

At a resumed Berne conference, which the Argentine Government hopes can be arranged, the Argentines could declare the end of the state of hostility simultaneously with Britain lifting the protection zone around the Falklands.

The conference could go on to consider how to resolve the conflicting claims of Britain and Argentina, taking into account the islanders' interests (to which the resolution drafted by Argentina for the UN referred).

As the new democracy battles with its enemies inside Argentina and with the demands of the bankers outside, it needs the understanding of those who claim to care for democracy. It cannot be in our interests to destroy the best hope we have of creating a lasting and just Falklands settlement.

Shirley Williams is president of the SDP.

Falklands sovereignty

From Mr Julian Amery, MP for Brighton Pavilion (Conservative)

Sir, Mr David Steel, in his article of November 16, has no right to say that "it has been declared British policy to secure a transfer of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands to Argentina".

Certainly British governments have had talks with Argentina on the subject. In each case, however, Parliament has refused to contemplate a handover of the islands unless this was the wish of the islanders. The islanders have invariably made it plain that they wished to remain British. Their experience of Argentine occupation, as I can attest from a recent visit, has only strengthened this resolve.

Mr Steel also implies that Britain should cede the islands to Argentina to strengthen that country's fragile democracy. Everyone must welcome Argentina's return to democracy, but this is hardly a cause for which we should sacrifice British interests, let alone British people.

Would it not be better, instead of giving in to Argentinian demands, to approach the problem more constructively?

The South Atlantic is potentially important strategically. If the Panama Canal were closed or the Suez Canal closed again, a major part of world trade would have to come through the South Atlantic. Its

waters and the adjacent Antarctic continent are also potentially valuable economically.

Britain happens to be present in the South Atlantic thanks to Ascension Island, St Helena, Tristan da Cunha, the Falklands, the Falkland Islands Dependencies and our claims on Antarctica.

Now that a full-size modern airport is near completion on Mount Pleasant (which incidentally will allow a major reduction in the present garrison and its cost) should we not consider inviting Chile, Argentina and other interested parties both riparian and non-riparian, to join us in using the British Falkland Islands under the British flag as a base for developing the resources of the South Atlantic and in due course Antarctica?

Sir Winston Churchill's oft-quoted phrase "in victory magnanimity" did not involve surrendering to German democracy what we had refused to Hitler. It did involve taking Germany by the hand and leading her into the wider concept of the European Community.

Should we not approach a defeated and bankrupt Argentina on similar lines and lead her into a South Atlantic community in which we would continue to play our full part as one of its sovereign components?

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN AMERY,
112 Eaton Square, SW1.
November 19.

Daily Telegraph 23/11/84

AIRPORT DELAY IN FALKLANDS

By Our Political Staff

The target date of next April for completion of the main runway at the new Falklands airport may well not be met, Sir Gordon Downey, Comptroller and Auditor-General, warned MPs yesterday.

The reason was the scale and complexity of the task. He said every week's delay in getting the airport operational would cost the taxpayer £500,000 in troop transit and accommodation costs.

Falklands defence costs 'risk'

By John Ezard

The cost of defence-linked projects being built on the Falkland Islands has risen to £391 million and may go higher, the Comptroller and Auditor General, Mr Gordon Downey, says in a report issued yesterday.

He discloses that supervision, design and administration work on the projects by the Government's Property Services Agency will cost £22 million, a figure which has not previously been announced. About £16 million of the PSA's estimate is for consultants fees.

The rest of the bill covers £250 million for the new strategic airport at Mount Pleasant, East Falkland, plus £119 million for other army facilities, including senior ranks' accommodation and a harbour near the airport. The figures have not been officially presented as a total sum before.

Mr Downey says in an analysis of the PSA's work on the Falklands that the airport cost figure is "vulnerable to considerable risks" that could increase it. The civilian contract covers "substantial elements of work for which only provisional sums have been included." Shipping, transport and catering costs may go higher.

Mr Downey warns that the Government's target of next April for opening the main runway to wide-bodied jets "would not easily be met." The PSA was confident about this timetable but the scale and complexity of the task suggested otherwise.

The airport cost estimate has already risen, first to £240 million and then to £250 million from the £215 million announced by the Government 17 months ago.

Governor outlines plans for Legislative Council elections

Hong Kong takes first step towards democracy

By John Gittings

Hong Kong took its first tentative step towards democratic self-government yesterday, when the Governor, Sir Edward Youde, presented a White Paper on representative government to the Legislative Council.

The plan will mean indirect elections to the Council from next September, although the majority of members will still be officially appointed. A proposed review has been brought forward by two years to 1987, with a cautious hint that this might lead to direct elections for some new members.

The Hong Kong Government is torn between fear of the unknown, as it licenses political participation, and the desire to begin a process that establishes an effective system of home rule before 1997 when Hong Kong is returned to China.

After publication of a Green Paper last July, the Hong Kong Government received only 360 written submissions which, it says, generally supported "the gradual and progressive" proposals.

The most contentious issue has been direct elections. The governor admitted yesterday that there was substantial support for these from some sections of the community. The White Paper says that "other types of electoral arrangements including the possibility of direct elections," may be considered in the 1987 review. This was criticised last night by pressure group leaders as an inadequate response.

The argument on democratic change overlaps with the final move towards sealing the

Anglo-Chinese agreement. This will be debated by Parliament in the first week of December, and Mrs Thatcher is expected to visit Peking and Hong Kong when the agreement is signed on, or around December 20.

A total of 24 "unofficial" members of the Legislative Council will be elected next September, half by an electoral college composed of the urban and regional councils and district boards, and half by constituencies representing business and professional groups. Another 32 members will include 10 "officials" and 22 appointed "unofficials."

The number of elected members has been doubled from the original proposal. The result is a mosaic of constituencies of unequal size. The electoral college will be split into 10 district board constituencies, each electing one member and representing half a million people, plus constituencies for the urban and regional councils which claim a much wider potential franchise.

The functional constituencies include a "commercial" group composed of the two chambers of commerce which will elect two members, a "financial" group whose single member will be chosen by the Hong Kong Association of Banks, and a "labour" group comprising all registered trade unions, which will supply two members.

The White Paper proposes no immediate change in the role of the governor, and offers no suggestions for the future transformation of the Executive Council or the introduction of responsible ministers.

Hongkong prepares for democracy

From Henry Stanhope
Hongkong

Hongkong began its preparations for the takeover by Communist China with the publication yesterday of a White Paper on democracy for the colony.

The much-leaked document, which introduces indirect elections to the Legislative Council, will disappoint those impatient with the pace of change.

The Governor, Sir Edward Youde, however, described it as an important step forward in the constitutional development of what remains for the next 13 years a British colony.

The council, which now consists of 44 members all appointed by the Governor, will have 56 members from next year, 24 elected by a complicated system of electoral colleges. Twenty-two more will be appointed as at present,

while the remaining 10 will be civil servants, so-called "official" members; whose number is being cut from 15.

The White Paper includes several small concessions since last July's Green Paper which did not allow for 24 elected council members until 1988.

But no changes are being made in Hongkong's other ruling body, the Executive Council, which advises the governor on policy.

Financial Times 22/11/84

HK White Paper speeds pace of political change

BY DAVID DODWELL IN HONG KONG

THE WATCHWORDS of Hong Kong's White Paper on political reform, published yesterday after four months of debate, were "caution" and the "gradual approach." It did, however, include modest changes from the original Green Paper in response to public opinion.

Most significantly, the pace has been accelerated at which indirectly elected members will replace appointees and government officials on the Legislative

Council, the territory's law-making body.

The electoral college that will choose half of the indirectly elected members will be based on nine geographical constituencies. A review of reforms, originally planned for 1989, has also been brought forward to 1987.

The Government resisted pressure for direct elections. It said there was support for the idea but not in the immediate future.

No proposals have been made about reforms affecting the Executive Council, equivalent to an inner Cabinet, about appointment of the Governor, or about the introduction of a ministerial system under which executive and legislative council members would wrest powers from government officials.

It has nevertheless proposed that elected members of the Legislative Council should be paid—to allow them "to devote the proper amount of time and attention to their duties" and to make sure that no-one is prevented from standing for office for financial reasons. Levels of pay have still to be decided.

China loan, Page 4

Nott to break silence on Belgrano sinking

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Sir John Nott, who was defence secretary during the Falklands conflict, is to give evidence to the Commons foreign affairs committee on the Government's handling of the Belgrano affair.

Sir John resigned at the end of 1982, and has since refused to comment on the sinking of the Argentine cruiser. Lord Lewin, chief of the defence staff at the time, will also give evidence.

The two are due to appear before the committee on December 5. Some MPs on the committee also want to recall Mr

A case of signal failure,
page 21

Francis Pym, then foreign secretary, in the light of disclosures since he was first questioned in the summer.

Mr George Foulkes, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman, whose question led to a disclosure that the signals log of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Belgrano, had been destroyed as a matter of routine, described the destruction of the document as "a sinister act by an irresponsible government."

He added: "The Government knew of the controversy surrounding the Belgrano, and proceeded to destroy the evidence. Coupled with the disappearance of the control room log, I am becoming increasingly suspicious."

Asked on BBC Radio 4's World at One if the destruction of the log would make any difference to the Commons committee's inquiry, Lord Lewin replied: "Absolutely none."

He said that all operational signals, as well as all documents relevant to the sinking of the cruiser, would be referred to in the captain's official record, which is in the Ministry of Defence.



Sir John Nott: called by committee

A question of malevolence

Sir,—Could I ask Lord Annan (Letters, November 19) if he deems it "remarkably malevolent" that an MP should insist that the elected representatives of the people faced with acknowledged inconsistencies, be given the truth about the Belgrano? Should we fail to insist on the truth, and allow falsehood to go unexplained, others than Lord Annan might then more justifiably write to the Guardian, and chide us with not doing the job for which we are paid.—Yours,

Tani Dalyell MP,
(Labour West Lothian)
House of Commons.

Sir, — Lord Annan's attack on those who deplore the sinking of the Belgrano cannot be allowed to pass. "Malevolence (against those who fought the war)"? I am sure none of us has anything but admiration and sympathy for those who fought the war. "Astonishing disregard for the lives and success of the British Task Force"? It is possible that more lives, both British and Argentinian, would have been lost if the Belgrano had not been sunk; but that is conjecture. What is fact is that up to May 2 no British lives had been lost, and after it 256 young Britons died.

As for "success," that depends on what one thinks the Task Force was intended to achieve. Very many of those who rejoiced in its

sailing believed that it would not have to fight, that its mere presence would be enough to bring Galtieri to terms. (That is proved by the opinion poll quoted by Dr Rogers in the debate.)

So the great question is still whether by the night of May 1 the Junta was prepared to accept a reasonable settlement — and that in turn depends on what one thinks a reasonable settlement might have been. Was the bombing of Port Stanley a demonstration or the preliminary to an already determined outright assault? — Yours faithfully

C. C. Wrigley,
37 Highdown Road,
Lewes,
East Sussex.

Daily Mail
21st November 1984

Secrets case No to MPs

By JOHN DICKIE

SIR Anthony Kershaw, chairman of the Commons inquiry into the sinking of the Belgrano, is expected to resist any pressure to have accused Civil Servant Clive Ponting brought before his committee.

Parliamentary experts feel it would be inappropriate for Mr Ponting to be questioned while waiting to go on trial charged with leaking secrets about the torpedoing of the Argentine cruiser.

The 38-year-old assistant secretary at the Ministry of Defence is due to appear at the Old Bailey in the New Year.

The committee will, however, be able to question two witnesses with first hand experience of the early days of the Falklands war: Lord Lewin, then Chief of Defence Staff, and Sir John Nott, who was Defence Secretary.

● The disclosure that the signals log of the submarine which sank the Belgrano had been destroyed aroused 'mounting fury' among Labour MPs yesterday said Opposition spokesman George Foulkes.

Bracknell factor

GOOD grief, log books from HMS Conqueror—the submarine that sank the Belgrano — are disappearing faster than key witnesses in a whodunnit. First the navigator's log vanishes. ('Simple explanation, my dear chap, probably a souvenir hunter swiped it.')

Now the signals' log has been destroyed. ('Absolutely routine, old boy, always happens in the Navy').

We are assured, furthermore, by the man who was Chief of the Defence Staff during the war in the South Atlantic that the key documents are the ship's log and the commanding officer's patrol report and that, so far as he knows, neither of these has been purloined or pulped.

No doubt Lord Lewin knows everything there is to know about seafaring. But when it comes to the comedy of coincidence the last word must surely go to Lady Bracknell in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*:

'To lose one parent may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness.'

Thatcher unrepentant on Belgrano

By Anthony Bevins
Political Correspondent

The Prime Minister said yesterday that she would still have ordered the sinking of the General Belgrano on May 2, 1982 even if she had been told that the Argentine cruiser had reversed course and had been sailing away from the British task force for 11 hours.

Mrs Margaret Thatcher said in a letter to Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow: "No evidence has at any time become available to the Government which would make ministers change the judgment they reached on May 2 that the Belgrano posed a threat to the task force."

She told Mr George Foulkes, an Opposition spokesman, on September 19, that the fact that Belgrano had reversed course at 9 am on May 2 and had been sailing away from the task force for six hours had been reported to Northwood naval headquarters at 3.40 pm. The Belgrano was torpedoed by the submarine HMS Conqueror at 8 pm.

Mrs Thatcher said, however, that because of "clear and unequivocal indications available to the Government" that the Argentine Navy posed a real and direct threat, the cruiser's position and course were irrelevant.

She told Mr Dalyell yesterday: "That was why the report that the Belgrano had reversed course was not made known to ministers at the time." Mrs Thatcher was finally informed of Belgrano's course last March.

The fact that the Prime Minister stands by the war cabinet decision even in hindsight, raises a number of questions. Her letter underlines the strength of the intelligence on the intentions of the Argentine Navy - "clear and unequivocal indications".

Meanwhile, Lord Lewin, Admiral of the Fleet, yesterday tried to damp down the reaction caused by Monday's Commons disclosure by Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, that Conqueror's signals log had been destroyed.

Lord Lewin said in a BBC radio interview: "All the documents relevant to the sinking of the Belgrano will be annexed to or referred to in the commanding officers' patrol report."

Daily Telegraph 21/11/84

THATCHER SIDESTEPS LOG ISSUE

THE Prime Minister resisted a call to provide details yesterday of what records of signals to and from the Conqueror, the submarine which sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, were kept or destroyed.

She said she wished "to check precisely before giving a specific reply."

The overnight row over the Government disclosure the day before that the Conqueror's signals had been destroyed was raised in the Commons by Mr TAM DALYELL (Lab., Linlithgow) the most persistent critic of Government policy in the Falklands conflict.

He asked Mrs Thatcher at Question Time, whether "all the signals to and from H M S Conqueror have been retained other than those that were in the missing log book?"

Rescue of survivors

After deferring her answer on the signals Mrs Thatcher denied that the Conqueror was under orders to return to the scene of the Belgrano sinking following the May 2, 1982, attack.

"Early in the morning of May 4, 1982, H M S Conqueror signalled her intention to return to the area where the Belgrano was sunk. She was then ordered not to attack warships engaged in rescuing survivors from the Belgrano."

The controversy over the signals log follows recent disclosures that the Conqueror's navigation log for the period had been lost.

Nine weeks of the Fortress

For a nation so peculiarly dependent on foreign trade and burdened with so many knotty diplomatic problems, Britain's level of expenditure on its relations with the rest of the world is remarkably small: just over half of one per cent of GNP. The Foreign Office has been told that its budget for 1985-86 will be limited to £1,870m, including foreign aid (which usually accounts for about 60 per cent of the total). After allowing for inflation in Britain, this represents a cut in real terms of about 3.5 per cent; since inflation in the outside world, where the FCO does its business, is running at 8.5 per cent, the real cut is seven per cent. Only 30 per cent of its budget, equivalent to just 0.45 per cent of Government spending, goes on what most people understand by diplomacy (everything from cocktail parties to house-arrest in Libya).

If the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, is open to attack for apparently waking up to the threat of cuts rather late in the day, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Nigel Lawson, is surely not to be

congratulated for ignobly passing the buck of aid cuts to the FCO, just as the Ethiopian famine has thoroughly aroused public and parliamentary opinion. But unless Sir Geoffrey, who does have a good track record when it comes to budgetary wrangling (just ask around in Brussels), can bring off a last-minute miracle, something is going to have to go. As overseas aid gets the lion's share (although the lion is severely undernourished), it is the most likely victim.

To argue at this late stage for a real increase in the FCO budget so that all its constituent parts benefit sounds like special pleading. And so it is. The amount of money involved is very small, out of all proportion to the potential if unquantifiable return. Apart from foreign aid and a diplomatic service which has been cut by 20 per cent in 20 years, there are also threats to the BBC World Service and the British Council. If the Government really cared about Britain's standing in the world, as it says it does, it would double its investment in these wholly admirable institutions. The amount involved (remember) is equivalent to nine weeks' expenditure on Fortress Falklands (which even steals £9 million from the miserly "aid" budget).

Those who support the Prime Minister and her Chancellor with ritual incantations that there can be no special cases in the relentless hunt for cuts will discover from Hansard for November 15 that Mrs Thatcher herself has severely dented their argument. Answering Mr James Callaghan's plea for a rethink of the whole FCO vote, she said only two departments had precisely the same figures in Mr Lawson's autumn statement as they had been given in February's White Paper on spending. One survivor is Defence; the other is the Foreign Office. Thus the battered FCO is a special case after all. That being so, it seems niggardly in the extreme not to make a proper job of it, instead of once again putting the fear of God and the dole into the hearts of the BBC French-language service.

A case of signal

THE MORALE of the Ministry of Defence, already damaged by the Belgrano affair and its handling of the Posing secrets case, has suffered a new blow from the revelation that the signals log of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser during the Falklands conflict, has been destroyed.

The Ministry says it was destroyed as a matter of routine just like any other signals log, after three months. Although Lord Lewin, chief of defence staff at the time, insisted yesterday that all significant items on the log would have been included in the Captain's official record — which the Ministry still has — the destruction has stretched the credibility and patience of MPs of all parties.

The events surrounding the Belgrano's sinking was a matter of public controversy even before the Conqueror had returned to the Clyde

early in July 1982. The submarine's long patrol in the South Atlantic was anything but routine: indeed, as the Royal Navy told the crew at the time, the Conqueror was the first nuclear submarine ever to carry out an attack and the first British submarine to carry out an attack since the Second World War.

Mr Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, is having to reply to increasingly specific parliamentary questions about the Belgrano to which the answers, drafted by civil servants and naval staff, come as an unwelcome surprise, not least to himself. Though he has openly acknowledged to the Commons foreign affairs committee that he was party to the earlier cover-up about the Argentine cruiser's movements and about changes in the rules of engagement, he was not told about the fact that the Conqueror's other log — the control room log — was

failure

missing until a month after his official advisers knew. And he was not told that the Ministry had set up a board of inquiry into the loss until nearly a week later.

Throughout this long-running controversy, ministers, including Mrs Thatcher, have consistently argued that they were not told precisely what was going on, while at the same time continuing to withhold information from MPs claiming that whether or not they knew certain facts — for example, that the Belgrano had changed course away from the Task Force 11 hours before it was attacked — is irrelevant.

A crucial issue, according to an increasing number of MPs, is the degree of political control over the military and whether senior naval staff were encouraged to make the assumptions they did about not having to inform ministers about messages they were receiving from the Conqueror.

RICHARD NORTON-TAYLOR on logs and naval moves

There were three distinct groupings involved in the Falklands campaign: the naval chiefs who were naturally cavalier and who had a bad relationship with Mr John Nott, the then Defence Secretary who had just cut their budget; a war cabinet of ministers which, though sometimes split, was dominated by Mrs Thatcher, and civil servants who were more cautious and circumspect. Of the three groups, the naval was the least politically sensitive, ministers the most determined to mislead Parliament. On the personal level, Mrs Thatcher had a particularly close working relationship with Lord Lewin.

After losing contact with the Argentine aircraft carrier the 25 de Mayo, on May 1, 1982, navy commanders went for the Belgrano, whose escort group was first detected by the Conqueror on April 30. The next day — May 1 — the Conqueror sighted the cruiser and sent

a message to fleet headquarters at Northwood at about midnight. Lord Lewin was informed on the following morning.

In 20 minutes, the war cabinet agreed to change the rules of engagement and ordered the Conqueror to attack. At 3.40 that afternoon, the submarine reported to London that the Belgrano had reversed course early in the morning. That message was not passed on to the war cabinet. Yet Northwood — which, according to Lord Lewin, could communicate relatively swiftly with the Conqueror on that day — repeated its order to the Conqueror to sink the cruiser at about 4 pm and again at about 6 pm.

This explains why the destruction of the signals log, which would have contained important evidence about times, is such sensitive issue and has provided a further ingredient to the Belgrano affair.

The Times 20/11/84

Hear, hear

Francis Pym is to be hauled back for further grilling by the Foreign Affairs Select Committee investigating the Belgrano sinking – the first witness to appear twice. The former foreign secretary will be asked to clarify statements he made during his first hearing in June which have since been challenged by other witnesses. The committee is also summoning its first military witness – Lord Lewin, Chief of Defence Staff during the Falklands War – who has said privately that Pym has little understanding of “rules of engagement”. Both men, however, have a brief respite. The committee has set aside the Belgrano inquisition for a couple of weeks to investigate government handling of another delicate subject: the Ethiopian famine.

Argentine clergy for UK talks

By Clifford Longley
Religious Affairs
Correspondent

A party of Protestant clergymen from Argentina are to take part in a public discussion of problems in Anglo-Argentine relations, including the Falklands issue, at next week's meeting of the British Council of Churches.

The meeting will also discuss the present economic situation and the miners' strike. It will be asked to support a call to the Government, other political parties, and both sides in industry to adopt a conciliatory and tolerant approach.

The visiting Argentine churchmen are continuing a number of exchanges with the British Council of Churches, initiated on the British side.

Last year a British delegation went to Montevideo for an initial round of talks, and further contact took place at Vancouver during the World Council of Churches.

Dr Philip Morgan, secretary of the council, said it had not been practicable to invite representatives of the majority Roman Catholic Church. He pointed out that the Protestant churches had played a significant role in liberalizing the climate in Argentina, out of all proportion to their relatively small numbers.

The debate on economic policy and the miners' strike will be based on a paper by Dr Stephen Orchard, of the Division of Community Affairs. The Government's reaction to mass picketing had made it inevitable, he stated, that there would be violence, injury, and death on the picket lines.

The British Council of Churches periodically debates political and economic questions, but has not previously considered the dispute in the mining industry. Its membership includes the main denominations in Great Britain

Signals log of sub destroyed

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The signals log of the submarine HMS Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser the General Belgrano during the Falklands war, has been destroyed. Mr Michael Heseltine, Defence Secretary, said last night.

The signals log would contain crucial information about the times of communications transmitted to London by the Conqueror as well as messages sent to the submarine from fleet headquarters at Northwood.

It could provide evidence about the times the War Cabinet's order to sink the Belgrano — given at about 1.30 pm on May 2, 1982, more than four hours after the cruiser reversed course away from the task force — was sent to the submarine.

That order to HMS Conqueror was repeated twice during the afternoon of May 2.

Mr Heseltine, who had already said that signals logs were not retained permanently, disclosed that it had been destroyed in a written Commons answer to Mr George Foulkes, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow said last night that it was difficult to believe that the signals account had been destroyed as a routine matter.

The Conqueror's missing control room log was the subject of a board of inquiry whose findings are now with the Fleet Commander-in-Chief.

Daily Telegraph 20/11/84

SIGNALS LOG OF CONQUEROR 'DESTROYED'

By Our Political Staff

A second log book from the nuclear submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, is believed to have been destroyed.

Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, last night confirmed that the signals log was missing, adding that records indicated it had been destroyed. Signals logs were not retained permanently, he said.

The disclosure is certain to bring a new political storm about the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano.

The signals log would have contained detailed information on her course and movements.

Parliament—P6

Daily Mail
20th November 1984

Second log from Belgrano sub was destroyed

By GORDON GREIG, Political Editor

THE Belgrano affair took another dramatic turn last night when the Government revealed a second log from the Conqueror has been destroyed.

This time the missing log contained all the vessel's signals traffic with Navy HQ at Northwood and detailed coded messages flashed via satellite before Conqueror sank the Argentine cruiser in 1982.

The new mystery was revealed by Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine in a Commons reply only ten days after he had admitted the Conqueror's navigation log was missing, possibly stolen.

Mr Heseltine, who is keeping secret the Navy Board of Inquiry's report on the loss of the first log, asserts in the case of the signals log that this type of record is not currently kept by the Navy.

The new admission is certain to galvanise critics of the Belgrano affair. It means that the only detailed record of the Conqueror movements as it shadowed the Argentine ship in its final hours are contained in the captain's narrative, the main log which gives a detailed story of the submarine's movements without going into deep technicalities.

ACCORDING TO the old song, a policeman's lot is not a happy one. But evidently Major Ken Greenland, late of the Royal Military Police, cannot get enough of it.

Having left his desk at HQ UKLF, Ken is about to embark on the daunting prospect of policing an area roughly the size of Wales.

As police chief designate of the Falkland Islands he will have a force of 15 men to help him keep the peace in that remote part of the South Atlantic.

Ken is the son of a policeman who advised him — "don't join the force simply because I've been in it." He took this to mean — make up your own mind. And after a six year spell with the 1st Battalion, the Staffordshire Regiment, he did just that.

"I realised that actually I would quite like to be a policeman," he said, "and thus I transferred to the RMP."

Ken Greenland thoroughly enjoyed his 10 years with the military police. He served with the Special Investigation Branch — "you spend all your working time doing investigation of crime which is tremendous". And he specialised in close protection, the security of diplomats and others, which took him to such places as Beirut and Uganda.

"I have done general police duties as well with all that this entails," he said. "For example in BAOR with a Divisional Provost Company I did operational traffic control in the Division."

"It was all good stuff and quite interesting. But the fact is now I have reached a stage in my career when I can no longer expect to do pure police work because I am going to become a staff officer whether I like it or not. And that's the same as getting your hands

After 10 years with the Royal Military Police...



A lonely beat

dirty which is the thing I have always appreciated.

"So the only way I could continue to do police work was to come out and join the police."

It was a six month tour of the Falklands last year that really provided the opportunity. As Force Provost Marshal, Ken was also effectively deputy police chief as all members of the military police, whether Army, Navy or Air Force, are sworn in as constables.

In this capacity Ken got to know the present police chief very well. This officer, on secondment from the Metropolitan police, was due to retire after 30 years service, and he expressed to Ken some worries about who would replace him.

This planted the germ of the idea and when Ken was eventually approached and asked if he would care to take on the job he had his answer ready.

"I had already said that I was destined to become a staff officer and that I wasn't too keen on that," he recalled. "So it all happened at the right time, one thing after another, until I decided: Yes, that

is what I would do."

Ken's enthusiasm wasn't shared by his wife, Liz. In order to persuade her he promised to commit himself for no more than the initial three year tour. After that they would think again.

"The children, on the other hand, think it is a tremendous idea," he said. "They are really over the moon about it. Though perhaps they are a bit too young (ages ranging from eight to two) to appreciate what it is all about. But I've told them about the Falklands and shown them photographs and they seem to think it is a good idea."

The family will have the use of a new prefabricated Swedish bungalow which will at least keep them warm while Ken gets to grips with his new responsibilities.

Before the war, he said, what little crime the Falklands produced tended to be the product of high spirits. There was the rare murder but that was well within the capabilities of the local police.

"Since the war, of course, you have a very large garrison down

Major Ken Greenland... and Fitzroy — just a small part of his new manor.

there — large in relation to the local population — which has brought some problems," Ken said. "Although really to be fair, we have to say that the troops have been incredibly well behaved."

On top of this there was the presence of a large number of contractors working on the airfield and approach roads, and there was also the prospect of another influx of workers if the recently granted oil exploration licences produced commercially viable results.

"You are faced with the problem of unaccompanied men who are receiving quite a good salary, bored out of their minds and really with nowhere to let off steam."

"So you've got all the problems that that is going to bring."

In addition to normal police work, the Falklands force is also responsible for helping out with Customs and Excise, controlling immigration, issuing licences for vehicles, firearms and so forth, and acting as conservation wardens.

"We are talking about a local population of some 2,000 with a transitory population of 8,000 in an area approaching the size of Wales," Ken explained. And 15 men to cover that is really asking quite a lot — to do it efficiently and get out and about.

"If we have to send someone off to South Georgia, for example, which is also part of the patch, to do a two day inquiry, he could well be gone for three weeks because that's the time it takes to get there, do the job and come back again. That means, with very limited manpower resources, I have really got to be careful how I deploy them, otherwise I simply won't be able to carry on doing the job."

The sappers have now cleared most of the mines, but some problems don't go away — like long distances and poor communications.

Soldier Magazine 19.11.84



Story: Robert Higson



FALKLANDS fire rescue hero, Corporal Malcolm Crawford of the Royal Corps of Signals has returned home from the South Atlantic outpost with a very special certificate packed in his case.

It is a certificate of commendation presented to him by Major General Peter de la Billiere, Commander British Forces Falkland Islands.

The award arises from an act of bravery while Malcolm was a detachment commander at a remote site on the Falklands. He found dense smoke filling a narrow corridor leading to a radio room.

Unable to open the door he forced it from its hinges by brute force. Behind it were two unconscious soldiers who he carried to safety to give them first aid before calling for a rescue helicopter.

The citation reads: "His ability to make instant decisions in an emergency and his leadership and coolness under stress were magnificent examples to others."

ARGENTINA ARMS SALE INQUIRY

By IAN BALL
in New York

A FEDERAL grand jury in New York is investigating how several million dollars worth of American-made "night-vision" devices were acquired by Argentina during the Falklands war in violation of an American embargo.

Britain, which seized many of the night-vision goggles after the surrender of Argentine units, has been working closely with American Federal agents investigating the case.

The captured devices, which sell for \$6,850 (£5,436) apiece, have been made available in London for an inspection by a United States Customs official.

According to American Press reports the focus of the investigation is a Manhattan firm called H L B Security Electronics Ltd and its president, Mr Leonard Berg, 48. Mr Berg was charged earlier this year for allegedly trying to ship arms to Poland.

British and American intelligence are reported to have been surprised the devices were found in the Argentine arsenal. Requests by Buenos Aires to buy the devices had been rejected in Washington.

'Shipped to Mexico'

There has been no official word in Washington or London on how many of the devices were captured.

But investigators in New York are said to have located an export licence showing that more than 1,000 of the goggles, sold to Mr Berg's company by the makers, Litton Industries, were shipped to Mexico during the Falklands war.

The Customs investigators suspect that from Mexico there were clandestine shipments urgently needed by the Argentine junta.

Mr Berg is reported to have shown American officials documents indicating that H L B Security Electronics Ltd. sold the equipment to an individual in the United States.

Last month a former H L B vice-president, Mr Grimm Depanics, was charged with having conspired to ship 400 night-vision goggles illegally to the Soviet Union.

MPs to press Heseltine on missing documents

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, will come under strong pressure from MPs this week to reveal whether the Government knows how many sensitive documents are missing from the submarine which sank the General Belgrano during the Falklands war.

The board of inquiry has completed its report into the Conqueror's missing control room log and the navy is expected to tell Mr Heseltine that its whereabouts are unknown.

Ministry of Defence officials have told Mr George Foulkes, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman, that Mr Heseltine did not know that the board of

inquiry was set up (on October 27), let alone that the log was missing until at least five days later.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, will today ask the Defence Secretary if the signals log of the Conqueror has been destroyed.

Mr Dalyell last night issued a statement asking why the Conqueror was ordered back on May 3 1982 to the area the Belgrano was sunk with the loss of 380 lives to hit the destroyers that had escorted the cruiser.

There was no immediate military necessity for this instruction, he said, adding that the order was given after the Government had heard about the American-Peruvian peace plan.

BULK OF FOREIGN OFFICE CUTS FEARED BY DIPLOMATS

By DAVID ADAMSON Diplomatic Correspondent

THE uncertainty in the Foreign Office caused by the cuts in its budget which Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, is expected to announce this week has caused a crisis in morale worse than that which followed the recriminations over the Falklands invasion.

Officials who have seen the Diplomatic Service steadily whittled away in recent years believe the burden of the cuts will fall on them.

"No politician is going to complain if the price of maintaining the aid budget is to eliminate consulates or diplomatic posts," said an official.

Another scoffed when it was suggested that cuts might be made in the BBC External Services and the British Council, to which the Foreign Office makes grants-in-aid.

"There will be fewer recruits for the Foreign Service and longer hours to make up for the shortages by those in it. We are already a laughing-stock abroad because of our economies."

The officials have noted that while the aid lobby has been active in Parliament, no one has spoken up for the Diplomatic Service.

The BBC External Services can usually rely on the backing of the leading Fleet Street papers, while the British Council was given an additional £4 million in the spring following the personal intervention of Mrs Thatcher.

Inflation problem

The Foreign Office accounts for more than half the £600 million (not including aid) to which Sir Geoffrey is expected to devote most of his pruning. Its problems have been created by the fall of the pound against the dollar and inflation abroad which have sent costs soaring above the 3.9 per cent. increase allowed by the Chancellor.

No information has been available from the Foreign Office or its Ministers on how much

will have to be cut, but outside estimates put it at services and contributions worth about £60 million.

Inflation abroad has hit the British Council particularly hard, too. In the past five years its grants from the Government have been cut in real terms by 20 per cent.

This year inflation in the countries it serves averages around 15 per cent., and if it is not to reduce its services still further, it will require £7 million more than on present showing it is likely to get.

Major reductions

A freeze of its current £78 million (including Mrs Thatcher's supplementary £4 million) budget will mean major reductions in its services.

Among other things, it could lead to the loss of 160 scholarships, a 50 per cent. reduction in academic visits in both directions, and cuts of between one-third and a half in many other cultural and educational services.

The alternative would be to close many of its smaller offices abroad, sacking between 30 and 35 British staff and several hundred local staff. But a move of that sort would be practically impossible in the short time available.

HESELTINE'S TALKS

Prince Sultan Ibn Abdulaziz, Saudi Defence Minister, had talks in Riyadh yesterday with the British Defence Secretary, Mr Heseltine. — Reuter.

January pact on Gibraltar

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

THE full reopening of the border between Spain and Gibraltar now seems unlikely until the late spring or early summer of next year.

The agreement between Britain and Spain, which will precede the ending of Spanish restrictions, will probably be signed in January.

Earlier this month, Señor Fernando Moran, the Spanish Foreign Minister, said he thought the agreement could be completed when he met Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, in Brussels on Nov. 27.

A British concession has been an agreement to bring forward to the beginning of next year an E.E.C. rule which would enable Spanish self-employed and professional people to work in Gibraltar.

Sovereignty now

Spain is due to enter the Community on Jan. 1, 1986, but it seems that this may be delayed. Whatever the date, the border would have to be reopened before Spain's entry as Gibraltar is part of the Community.

The approaching Anglo-Spanish agreement marks a return to the principles of the April 1980 Lisbon agreement. This ran into political difficulties in Spain because it contained no cast-iron guarantee that Britain would negotiate on a transfer of sovereignty.

Implementation next year will open the way for talks, but Britain has always emphasised that there can be no transfer of sovereignty unless it is the wish of the Gibraltarians.

ARGENTINA LINK TO BE RESTORED

By Our Auckland Correspondent

Flights between New Zealand and Argentina are due to resume on Dec. 19.

Resumption of the Aerolineas Argentinas service, which ceased after New Zealand broke with Argentina during the Falklands conflict, has been delayed for technical and political reasons, but airline officials say a fortnightly service between Buenos Aires and Auckland will definitely go ahead next month.

Missing Conqueror log moved out of Britain

by ANDREW WILSON and DAVID LEIGH

THE MISSING log of the submarine Conqueror, which *The Observer* last week disclosed was taken by a member of the crew, has been moved out of Britain.

A Navy board of inquiry had failed by the end of last week either to find the log, or to trace all members of the crew who have since left the Navy. The Navy's security directorate has been searching without success for more than three weeks, questioning former members of the Conqueror's crew.

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, admitted in parliamentary answers last week that intensive efforts to find the control room log at the archives in Hayes, at Navy HQ at Northwood, and on the boat itself, which is undergoing repairs at Devonport, had been going for a month before he was informed of the loss.

He also said that the signals log, which would have recorded the timing of highly-classified radio intercepts about Argentine intentions, had been destroyed. The MoD said the signals log was routinely shredded after three months.

As *The Observer* disclosed, the control room log was taken

because the crew member concerned wanted to preserve evidence. He described its contents to a friend as 'injurious to the Government.'

The log, classified 'confidential,' indisputably shows that the Argentine cruiser Belgrano was steaming away from the task force, not towards it, when it was tailed by the Conqueror and sunk on Mrs Thatcher's orders with the loss of 368 lives.

This contradicted claims made by the Government to Parliament at the time. Since then, government statements have been admitted to be 'inaccurate' by Mrs Thatcher, in the wake of the leaking of MoD documents, for which a senior official, Clive Ponting, currently faces Official Secrets Act.

The contents of the log may resolve the continuing controversy over whether radio intercepts made clear before the sinking, that the Belgrano was not attacking the task force.

Last week's *Observer* report was incorrect in one detail. We said that a copy of the log itself had been made available to us last year. In fact the document we inspected, which was shown

to us by Mr Tam Dalyell MP, was the personal log or 'diary' written by an officer of the submarine, who had access to the control-room log, and who based the diary on it and on other naval documents.

The identity of this officer is known to a number of people — and, it must now be assumed, to Naval Intelligence. The small group of people long aware of the log's disappearance has been at pains to protect their sources.

Mr Dalyell told *The Observer*: 'I have never been able to believe that the document was shredded, or that it vanished into thin air, without copies

being kept. That is why, for 25 months, I have been demanding that a copy be put in the library of the House of Commons — or, if that is impossible for security reasons, before Privy Counsellors or judges of the Court of Appeal.

In the past few days I have been given information that would appear to confirm that the log exists. It is of vital national importance that the log, with details of naval movements before and after the sinking of the Belgrano, be produced to the proper authority and laid before an impartial tribunal.'

Britain buys time for Gib

by Stephen Milligan and Joe Garcia, Gibraltar

THE BRITISH and Spanish governments hope to announce an agreement on Gibraltar before the end of the year.

The agreement, discussed in Madrid last Thursday during the latest round of secret talks, would provide for full opening of the border between Spain and the Rock next year. In return, Britain would not veto a Spanish bid to join the common market.

Spain, it seems, is willing to shelve its claim of sovereignty over Gibraltar for the immediate future, but the Socialist government has vowed to persist in seeking its return through diplomacy.

The Spanish foreign minister, Fernando Moran, had indicated that an agreement could be concluded this month when he meets Sir Geoffrey Howe, the

foreign secretary, in Brussels. But negotiations are still bedevilled by legal details.

After the two delegations had met, in a small room at the Santa Cruz palace, a senior Spanish diplomat in Madrid said: "We don't want to generate excess optimism, but there is only one direction we can go - and that is further."

As for Spain's claim to ownership of the Rock, he added: "We realise we're not going to regain Gibraltar tomorrow, it is rather a case of a generation."

Spain has claimed the Rock ever since it was captured by the

British in 1704. Under the 1980 Lisbon agreement, Spain agreed to open the fence surrounding Gibraltar once Britain promised to discuss "all outstanding issues" - including sovereignty. But the Spaniards re-locked the gate because they believed Britain was stalling on this crucial issue.

Mrs Thatcher retaliated by threatening to stop Spain from entering the common market, which it wants to join by January 1986.

Negotiations over Gibraltar

were revived in September 1983, and have been carried out in great secrecy. It was agreed that the talks would be as detailed as possible.

According to Spanish diplomatic sources, the first sign of a breakthrough on Gibraltar - and on whether Britain would back Spain's entry into the EEC - came from Mrs Thatcher in a reply to a message of condolence sent by Felipe Gonzalez, the Spanish prime minister, after the Brighton bombing.

Now it seems a deal is in

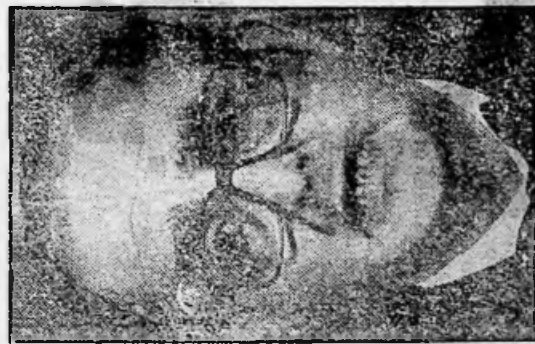
Gibraltar's chief minister, meets Sir Geoffrey Howe in London this week he will be assured that appropriate measures will soften the impact of the border-opening on the Rock's fragile economy.

Although EEC rules on free movement of workers will be introduced as early as next spring, they will be subject to a seven-year transition period. Gibraltarians fear that Spain may take advantage of EEC membership to gain control of the Rock by buying up property.

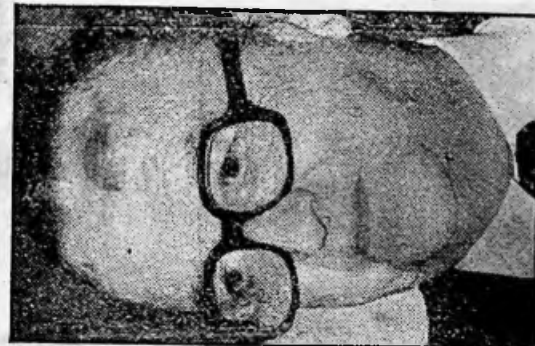
Spain's former dictator, General Franco, slammed the border shut in 1969 to force Britain into negotiating ownership. But the blockade succeeded only in stiffening the Gibraltarians' resolve against becoming part of Spain.

sight. Britain has offered to comply speedily with EEC regulations which would allow Spaniards the right to move to Gibraltar and seek work there. In practice, this will be a small concession since it will apply only to the self-employed. The same right will have to be granted to Gibraltarians who want to work across the frontier - where the unemployment rate is, at 35%, the highest in Spain.

However, the British are anxious to keep Spanish job-seekers out. The Royal Navy no longer needs a dockyard, and unemployment is growing. When Sir Joshua Hassan,



Brussels meeting ahead for Fernando Moran



London briefing this week for Sir Joshua Hassan

The Observer 18/11/84

Hidden fears of Hong Kong

by JONATHAN MIRSKY

CHINA is making it as easy as possible for Mrs Thatcher to sign Hong Kong away in Peking just before Christmas.

Parliament, too, will rubber-stamp its approval on the final agreement next month.

Only in Hong Kong, despite Chinese claims that 'the broad masses' are enthusiastic about the transfer of sovereignty, is there apathy, resignation, and a fear of exhibiting public disagreement.

Last Thursday, the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress (China's 'parliament') endorsed the Sino-British Joint Declaration, already initialled by both sides, which must be finally signed before the end of the year.

Foreign Minister Wu Xue-qian emphasised that the final declaration — Peking avoids the word 'treaty' because it regards Hong Kong as an

internal matter — 'has the form of an international treaty with the force of international law and legally binding power at the same time.'

British officials regard this statement as the most profound Chinese guarantee of Hong Kong's essential autonomy after 1997.

It is plain that Peking is determined to reassure Mrs Thatcher, the Commons, and Hong Kong that it intends to adhere to the declaration.

Speaker after speaker at last week's People's Congress emphasised a fundamental point: Peking must not put a foot wrong during the 13-year run-up to 1997. Otherwise Taiwan, the mainland's ultimate prize, will be lost forever. Yesterday, Premier Zhao Ziyang said that the Hong Kong formula of 'one country, two systems' could also resolve the Taiwan question.

The Times 17/11/84

Cayman upset

Georgetown (Reuter) — Mr Benson Ebanks, unofficial parliamentary opposition leader in the Cayman Islands, a British colony and tax haven, is expected to head a new administration following the election defeat of the Unity Party Government.

Falklands plots for sale

Tiny plots of land on the Falkland Islands are for sale at £36.50 as souvenirs or presents.

The plots, about 50 ft by 10 ft, the size of a small suburban garden, are to be sold by a Bromley businessman who has about 50 acres of grazing

land near the new Stanley to Darwin road, close to Fitzroy Bridge.

The purchaser will receive a registerable conveyance of freehold land. Details from Earl and Lawrence, Marylebone Lane, London, W1.

The Observer 18/11/84

Sailing home from war

I wish to protest in the strongest possible manner at your article on HMS Conqueror (News, last week). I am an aunt to one of the members of the crew who you have branded as cruel and heartless.

I am very proud of my nephew—war is war, but your paper, and those of similar ilk, seem to think it would have been all right if the Conqueror had been sunk instead.

Cynthia B. Kerre,
N1.

★
It was with profound relief that I learned that there are

Navy personnel sufficiently concerned about the Belgrano incident—and all that it entails—to risk violating the Official Secrets Act by removing a copy of the Conqueror's log to safety.

Subsequent action, or non-action, with regard to this log, will demonstrate irrefutably to each and every member of our armed forces whether or not the British public and its MPs care about what happens to them between the time they are flag-waved off abroad and flag-waved back again.

Nina Coyle,
Dunblane.

The Times 19/11/84

Sinking of the Belgrano

From Lord Annan

Sir, You report me (November 15) as calling for a White Paper to resolve the conflict of evidence about the sinking of the Belgrano. This might suggest that I have some sympathy for those who declare that the Government is covering up and attempting to justify a wicked action; I have none whatsoever.

The BBC producer of the television debate on the Belgrano asked me not to give my own views but to summarise the issues and let the audience make their judgement of the arguments put to them by Mr Dalyell and Mr Mates. Had this not been so Mr Dalyell could properly have protested that I could not be impartial since for the past year I have intervened at question time in the House of Lords to counter the interminable line of questions asked by Lord Hatch of Lusby who puts the worst construction on the sinking.

Resolute as Mr Dalyell's witnesses were, to my mind Mr Mates's cross-

examination of them was devastating. Even more devastating, I thought, was Admiral Lord Lewin's exposure as rubbish the contention that the sinking of the Belgrano was an unprovoked attack. It is also now clear that the Peruvian peace proposals were received in London well after the Belgrano was sunk.

I do myself believe that the Government would be well advised to issue a reasoned account after the Select Committee has heard evidence. Some of the inconsistencies are due to the fog of war; some to the excessive zeal of those who draft for ministers' replies designed to give as little information as possible; and some, of course, to the need to protect our sources of intelligence.

Such an account would dispose of the issue except for those who are determined whatever the evidence to question the courage and good judgement of the Prime Minister, War Cabinet and Chiefs of Staff.

Yours truly,
NOEL ANNAN,
27 West 44th Street,
New York City, New York.

Daily Mail
17th November 1984

SLOW BOAT TO THE CAPE

IF YOU book well ahead—a year, maybe—you could be lucky enough to sail with 70 other voyagers from Avonmouth to Cape-town on the passenger-cargo ship St Helena. The mail ships have gone, but she keeps the flag flying on the Cape route, most nostalgic of them all.

WHERE: Seven-week round trip to South Africa, calling at Atlantic Islands and including a week on St Helena while the ship makes a side-trip to Ascension.

VALUE: Fare is partly subsidised by the British Government to keep the St Helena colony alive, so great value, especially the 53-day round trip to the island, staying for three weeks.

PRICES: Start at £2,040 to the Cape and back, plus £125 for your hotel on St Helena for a week. Details from Curnow Shipping (03265-2471).

FINANCIAL TIMES
17/11/84

FALKLAND ISLANDS

A unique opportunity to acquire a
FREEHOLD PLOT OF LAND

(Size 0.011 acres). It is situated on
the New Stanley-Darwin Road in the
famous Fitzroy Ridgeway area. The
ideal gift for a friend, family mem-
ber, business associate or your-
self! Price includes Land Certificate
and Location Map — for the sum

of £36.50. Contact:

EARL AND LAWRENCE
Chartered Surveyors
63/65 Marylebone Lane, London W1

THE TIMES
17/11/84

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For details:

EARL & LAWRENCE
(Chartered Surveyors)
63/65 Marylebone Lane
London W1M 8GB.
Tel.: 01-486 4711

Inquiry finishes into lost Conqueror submarine log

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The board of inquiry set up to investigate the disappearance of the control room log missing from the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, during the Falklands conflict, has completed its report, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday.

The ministry — which said that the report is now in the hands of the fleet commander in chief, Admiral Sir William Staveley — declined to say whether the log has been found or if its whereabouts are known.

But it is now believed that a copy of the official record of the Conqueror's captain, Commander Christopher Wreford-Brown — a document which the ministry says contains much more sensitive information than the control room log — has been made.

This record is understood to give full details of the Belgrano's change of course before it was attacked, as well as important information about the conduct of the military operation.

It also contains information about how Argentine signals were intercepted during the conflict.

That Britain was able to intercept signals — partly with the help of GCHQ, whose staff was congratulated after the conflict by the Government — is confirmed in yet another document, a diary of one of the Conqueror's crew.

But what is more important, the captain's record is also understood to contain crucial information about how Commander Wreford-Brown reacted to orders from London, repeated three times on the afternoon of May 2, to attack the Belgrano, which was outside the total exclusion zone and heading away from the task force.

The captain's record contains information which could be embarrassing for the Government as well as information of a genuinely sensitive nature relating to military operations.

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, has already said he could not lay a copy of the captain's record in the Commons library.

But he is certain to face questions about the findings of the board of inquiry into the missing control room log. He has so far said only that he would consider making a statement.

Committee Corridors

A regular feature in which Watchman highlights the proceedings in one or more of the week's Committees.

The Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee again found itself in Greenland on Wednesday – in other words, in the torrid, somewhat sinister world of South American diplomacy, immortalised by the Grand Old Man of British fiction.

The Committee was continuing its investigation into the Peruvian peace proposals and the sinking of the *Belgrano*; indeed, into all the relevant events of the weekend of May 1–2, 1982. (The Argentine cruiser was sunk by the British submarine *Conqueror*, at 8 pm London time on Sunday, May 2, with the loss of 368 Argentine lives.)

Wednesday's witnesses were, in the morning, Mr Arthur Gavshon and Mr Desmond Rice, who together have written a book about the sinking of the *Belgrano*. Quite early on, the Committee's Chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw (C, Stroud) caused merriment when he had a perfectly understandable slip of the tongue, and referred to their book about 'the sinking of the *Belaunde*.' (For the uninitiated, President Belaunde Terry of Peru is the man whose peace proposals the Committee is investigating.) At the afternoon sitting, the witness was Mr Charles Wallace, British ambassador to Peru at the time of the Falklands Conflict, and now Our Man In Uruguay.

The quietly-spoken and very English Mr Gavshon was diplomatic correspondent in Europe for the Associated Press of America until 1981. Mr Rice, who seemed more mercurial, revealed that he had once been president of the Royal Dutch Shell Company in Argentina and had lived there for six years. (Certainly, the despatch with which he rattled off Spanish words and names indicated that he was well-acquainted with that part of the world.) He also disclosed that he held a South African passport, which had enabled him to visit the Argentine without difficulty during the conflict, to gather material for the book.

Mr Rice said the sinking of the *Belgrano* with the loss of so many Argentine lives must have jeopardised the entire question of peace negotiations, 'because it provided for the first time an immense impact on Argentina's pride. Before that date, not one single British life had been lost.'

He said the British had been the ones to draw first blood on May 2, when an RAF Vulcan bomber bombed the runway at the Port Stanley airport at 4.23 am followed by an attack on it by RAF Sea Harriers. This raid had resulted in fifty-six Argentine dead or injured.

At this point Mr Gavshon observed, 'At no stage in our book did we take the position that we were attempting to excuse the action of the *Junta* in invading the Falkland Islands. We took the view that it was not really a desirable regime, and this view has been endorsed by the Argentine people.'

He and Mr Rice had had a long interview with Admiral Lord Lewin, who had been Britain's Chief of the Defence Staff at the time of the Falklands Conflict. Lord Lewin had said quite specifically that by April 23, 1982, there had been no hope of a negotiated settlement that would result in both governments staying in power, and that this had been the feeling of the British War Cabinet as a whole by April 25.

The Committee then had a complex discussion about who said or did what in high places in South America, Washington and London, during that fateful weekend. The different time zones between the countries did not help, and the most enduring impression left with *Watchman* was how strangely reminiscent of pre-war dance band leaders and film stars, the names of certain South American luminaries are!

At the end of this discussion, Mr Gavshon observed, 'All these contradictions and differing perceptions of what happened among the men in charge on both sides strengthen, in our view, the case for a judicial inquiry into this affair. There have been many

questions left unanswered.'

A few hours later Mr Charles Wallace arrived to give evidence, and *Watchman* warmed instantly to him. He was a short, balding, courtly figure, with an air of quiet authority. In short, he was exactly what *Watchman* expected a British ambassador in Greenland to be like. One had no difficulty in visualising him, imperturbable in a beige Airey and Wheeler tropical suit, going about his business while grapeshot and revolution rage about his head.

Mr Wallace said he had been Britain's ambassador to Peru from 1979 to 1983. Having been summoned to appear before Dr Arias Stella, the Peruvian Foreign Minister, on May 2, 1982, he was headed there by car at 6 pm (11 pm London time), when he first heard of the Peruvian peace proposals on his car radio. When he saw Dr Arias Stella, he was officially informed of the proposals, and he dispatched these to London as soon afterwards as possible. The report reached London about one and a half hours later.

He had at no stage been involved in the production of the proposals. He had however gained the clear impression from Dr Arias Stella that the proposals had been transmitted previously by telephone to the then American Secretary of State, General Haig, in America, who had passed them on to the British Government.

Sir Anthony Kershaw told Mr Wallace that other witnesses had suggested to the Committee that he, Mr Wallace, had been very close to the Peruvian negotiations, and that General Haig had actually been under the impression that Mr Wallace had sometimes been sitting in President Belaunde's room while the Peruvian proposals were being formulated.

Mr Wallace replied that this had not been the case, though he did not like having to publicly contradict General Haig, to whom Britain owed a great debt of gratitude. It could be that what the General had said had simply been an acknowledgement of the close working relationship he, Mr Wallace, had with all the members of the Peruvian government.

The announcement of the Peruvian peace proposals had however come as a complete surprise to him at 6 pm on May 2. The *Belgrano* had been sunk a few hours earlier on that day, but he had only heard of the sinking about seven or eight hours after his meeting with Dr Arias Stella.

Mr Robert Harvey (C, Clwyd SW) asked whether Mr Wallace had got the impression that, in the minds of the Peruvian government, the sinking of the *Belgrano* and the failure of the Peruvian peace proposals were linked.

Mr Wallace replied that during the remaining eighteen months of his term of office in Peru, after the conflict ended, many people there had observed what a pity it was that their president's proposals had not prospered, as a result of Argentina's rejection of them following the sinking of the *Belgrano*. 'But throughout this period, no one suggested to me that the *Belgrano* had been deliberately sunk in order to prevent the Peruvian proposals from prospering', Mr Wallace added.

CHRISTMAS FUND

The Sub-Committee on the Lords' Refreshment Department have, according to custom, established a Christmas Fund to give Peers the opportunity to express their appreciation to the Staff of the Refreshment Department for their services during the past year.

Contributions may be handed to the Cashier in the Dining Room or sent to: A Bibbiani (Superintendent), Refreshment Department, House of Lords.

Cheques should be made payable to 'Refreshment Department Christmas Fund'.

Treasured islands

By Kim d'Arcy

A YORK Army major fell in love with the beauty of the Falkland Islands during a six-month tour of duty.

As the force conservation officer of the military garrison, Maj Patrick Chambers discovered a "stupendous array" of wildlife.

A large population of sea mammals includes elephant and leopard seals, and sea-lions.

The islands also boast 63 different species of bird, including penguins, albatrosses, falcons and hawks.

Maj Chambers worked closely with the Falkland Islands Trust, designating nature reserves and making sure military personnel and operations did not abuse or interfere with the wealth of wildlife.



Maj Patrick Chambers: Islands incredibly beautiful.

"The islands are incredibly beautiful. The climate and environment is nothing like as harsh and desolate as it is made out. There are forests and even some palm trees," he said.

Maj Chambers, who is currently based at the headquarters of the 2nd Infantry Division at Imphal Barracks, York, said: "I very much enjoyed my stay, and even though I had only one day off in 23 weeks, it did not really matter as my work was so interesting."

Banned

He introduced restrictions on aircraft and helicopter training, as well as the siting of army mortar fire on hilltops where hawks and falcons breed.

Maj Chambers, aged 38, who lives in Heworth, said: "Before I went out there, I certainly was not a keen bird-watcher or anything, but I have always been interested in wildlife, particularly sea mammals."



King penguins and their chicks in the rocky at Volunteer Beach, an area put out of bounds by Major Chambers to prevent disturbance of the only breeding colony in the islands.

After the Argentine conflict: ***Fighting for a future . . .***

GRIMSEY MP MR. AUSTIN MITCHELL has just returned from a visit to the Falklands, where several local people are serving with the forces or working on the new airport. Trying to run a distant colony presents serious financial and logistical problems, as he reports in this special article . . .

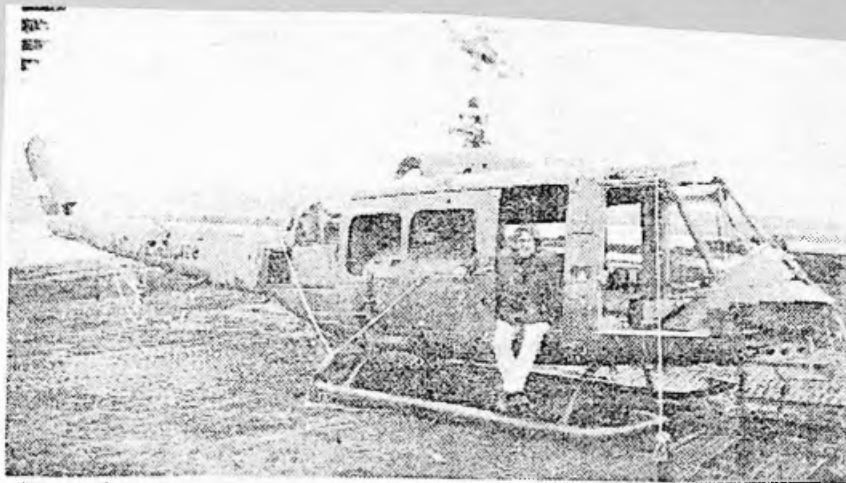


Planning for the future — Grimsby construction worker Mr. Corrigan working on the new hangers for Mount Pleasant airport.



it could be a conservatory in Surrey . . . Mr. Mitchell with the leader of the delegation, MP Mr. Julian Amery and the former Falklands Governor — now Civil Commissioner — Sir Rex Hunt.

Cont.../



War relic — Mr. Mitchell on board a shot-down Argentine helicopter at Kelly's Gordon Army base in San Carlos.

IN THREE years the Falkland Islands have gone from benign neglect, through full-scale war, to frenzied activity — a disorientating, confusing experience for the 1,830 inhabitants of islands with a total size of Northern Ireland.

Our job as a Parliamentary delegation was to assess the effects of all this. We set out to ask the basic question: What next for this lovely land too far away?

Tramping over the battlefields of San Carlos, Goose Green, Mt. Langdon and Tumbledown, seeing the memorials to the 255 dead, I had no doubts about either the courage and effectiveness of the British military operation or of the rightness of our cause.

Yet recovery of control was only the beginning of our problems. It changed none of the facts of geography: the Falklands are 8,000 miles from Britain, only 400 from Argentina; under both Tory and Labour Governments Britain has done little for them for years except receive a handsome dividend from the Falkland Islands, allow the government to finance itself by selling postage stamps, and generally pay that the problem would go away, preferably towards Argentina.

Vast expense

The Government's immediate response was Fortress Falklands, as if we were still an imperial power with a massive Army and Navy that could be sent anywhere in the world at a moment's notice and kept there.

It could never work. We're not strong enough and the strain is beginning to show.

Some 5,000 men and women in the Army, Navy and Air Force are tied down there with two frigates, a destroyer, a submarine, a flock of Phantoms, Harriers, Hercules and helicopters, as well as all the hired equipment, from troopships and tankers to Bristol helicopters.

The expense is enormous: It must be a million or two a day, paid by you and me.

Our huge defence effort looks increasingly unnecessary, and that mood communicates itself to many of the troops out there on four-month tours of duty watching radar screens, manning radio stations and Rapier missile sites in remote corners of the islands in all the bitter weather, the Navy patrolling endlessly and finding nothing, and the RAF flying over (no complaints about low flying here, an officer from Binbrook told me).

It may be useful training; it's certainly good exercise; and it has produced superb co-operation between the three services in a way they never get in NATO.

Yet it all looks increasingly expensive and rather pointless with no threat to counter.

Potential

The real need is to shift the balance from military spending to development. Britain has neglected the Falklands for far too long.

We have let it be run as an almost-feudal society with only 40 sheep farms, nearly half of them owned by the Falkland Islands Company. The company has a stranglehold on trade, the farming effort has concentrated on growing sheep for wool and then, instead of exporting the meat, feeding it to the

dogs, or the islanders, or now to the troops in muttonburgers.

Geraint Howell, a Liberal MP in our party and himself a farmer, told me: "These people don't farm. They don't improve the grass. They don't grow trees. They just turn sheep loose on the hills."

Yet the potential is enormous.

It requires sub-division, smaller farms, more intensive agriculture, new freezing facilities, intense research to get the yield up.

There is probably oil beneath the storm-tossed waters, for which only Argentina is currently looking.

There are rich fishing grounds which only the Poles, the Russians and the Spaniards are looting — 60 ships were there in our visit with huge factory trawlers ransacking the grounds while the Navy watched.

The islands are the gateway to the possible riches of Antarctica.

Aid wasted

None of this is being tapped. The only test drillings for oil are on West Falklands and are small-scale. Our Government is so unconfident of its claim to sovereignty that it has refused both my own constant pressure and, more importantly, the unanimous view of Falklanders, to take a 200-mile limit to build up a local fishing industry and charge foreigners for licences.

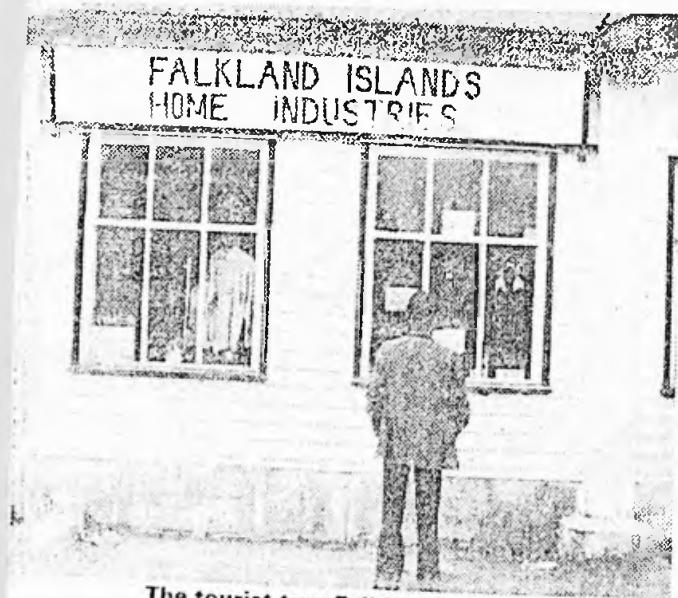
And our own British fishing industry has been backward. "Where are your trawlers," they kept asking me.

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Grimsby Evening Telegraph 16.11.84



Bmdr. K. in Watson, from Grimsby, pictured in a spartan-looking office at Kelly's Gordon Army base.



The tourist trap Falklands-style.

Antarctica remains in dispute. Instead, the £31-million so grandly announced in aid has been spent on improving the roads, the key one of which was cracking on the day it opened last April and is now a rubble heap; rebuilding the hospital (which we burned down); on new "Brewster" houses — prefab houses which cost £30,000 to erect here, £130,000 there, and some of which are still unusable because they were built on solid rock.

Some smaller projects look more likely. The in-shore fishing effort in which Grimsby is involved in Fox Bay will use a small seine-netter with a crew of three locals and three expatriates, to survey the resources of the island, particularly shellfish and crab.

A woollen mill is being set up by the engineers from the Scottish School of Textiles in the same place, and designers are inventing "traditional" Falkland patterns, though it is still not working because the spinning machinery was sent to Pakistan by mistake (the "Falklands Factor" here means delays and mess ups).

Yet the surge of immigrants, possible after the war when several people wrote to MPs like me asking about the prospects, has not materialised.

Ineffective

There was no accommodation for them. Some of those who came have gone back, including the two who brought out fish and chip vans and found they could get neither potatoes, nor fish, nor even gas.

The Falklands Islands Company refuses to sell its land and the Government will not compel it.

The locals have proved remarkably ineffective even at supplying the huge military market with anything from mutton through fish to trinkets, souvenirs and even stuffed penguins to send home for the kids. They're imported.

The Falklands Islands Development Corporation has money to offer for any worthwhile project from dry cleaning businesses to shoe repairs or hotels. So far they've hardly been besieged with offers.

The population ratio, six men for every one women in the marriageable age groups, bodes ill for future growth.

The only major success story is the new airport at Mount Pleasant.

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Grimsby Evening Telegraph 16.11.84

Begun only last December when the equipment began to arrive, the airport is now moving ahead by leaps and bounds: runway almost complete, hangars up, accommodation ready.

When it starts to take traffic next May, the airport will allow a reduction — down to around two thirds — in the military garrison.

It should and could be even more. It will provide the opportunity of commercial flights, even top-bracket tourism.

It will allow development along the 45 kilometres of road to Stanley, the best — indeed only — long road on the island.

I came away both im-

pressed and depressed.

Impressed because the military are doing a superb job in extremely difficult, at times impossible, circumstances and the new Falklands Development Corporation is struggling to reverse years of neglect.

Depressed because the first job is so expensive and the second so huge and the balance we have drawn between them is wrong.

The Falklands are still a semi-feudal economy and the strength of the Falkland Islands Company inhibits development. Everyone has jobs and although wages are low, they don't particularly care; there's nothing to spend the money on, anyway.

The boost needed in new jobs, new people, new development, new forms of agriculture, will have to be huge.

It will disturb and revolutionise their quiet, contented way of life, and there is no indication that the islanders want this. They prefer to go on as they are. They associate being British with keeping out of the modern world.

Yet these islands have no future as a colony protected against the outside world.

The islanders cannot be a protected species threatened constantly with extinction in the hard, evolutionary race. They must make the islands work, with our help, or face the consequences.

Falkland factors

we can no longer ignore

by David Steel

The Government has consistently mishandled relations with Argentina since the fall of the military junta and the election of President Alfonsín. Our quarrel was with the repressive junta who invaded British territory, not with the Argentines as a people.

When President Alfonsín was installed we should have sent a high-powered representative to the celebrations to underline our determination to restore good relations. Instead we sent a telegram of good wishes. A few weeks ago, when President Alfonsín addressed the European Parliament, most of the British MEPs stayed away, according to some reports on direct orders from Downing Street.

Democracy is a fragile commodity in Argentina. Raoul Alfonsín is unusual in that he has never held office under any military regime, but opposed them. As a *Times* leader said of his government a year ago: "It may be unpopular, given the enormous and painful tasks of reconstruction which face it. It is all the more important therefore that Britain shows that it is easier to talk to a civilian government about the Falkland Islands than it was or would be with a military one."

On four distinct occasions during the last 20 years, two of them during the dictatorship, it has been declared British policy to secure a transfer of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands to Argentina. It would therefore be a remarkable turnaround to refuse to contemplate any conditions for such transfer to a democratic Argentina. Yet British policy is vague and ambiguous. Prior to the Berne talks this

summer, the Argentines were happy to leave the issue of sovereignty well down the agenda, to allow time to heal wounds. Unfortunately the British infuriated not only the Argentines but also the Swiss hosts by expecting the issue to be raised formally and then forgotten. The British issued a declaration that "we are not prepared to discuss sovereignty" - a phrase capable of meaning either "we are not ready to" or "we are not willing to". Missing from the statement was either the word "yet" or "ever". Subsequent statements by ministers have failed to clarify the matter.

This intended ambiguity cannot serve as a long-term policy. Mrs Thatcher is wrong if she believes that support for the task force applies also to a dead-end policy over the islands' future. The policy first went off the rails when she declared the wishes of the islanders to be "paramount", echoed foolishly by Labour's then foreign affairs spokesman, Peter Shore.

As the *Financial Times* put it in a recent leader: "The wishes of the Falkland Islanders are not paramount: they are subservient to the wishes of the British Parliament and ultimately to the readiness of the British people to sustain them in a strange and highly unsatisfactory situation. It is neither realistic nor honest for the British Government to hide behind the notion of absolute self-determination which can only be applicable to a territory that is potentially independent".

A more sensible doctrine has been embraced in the case of Hongkong, where the impracticability of hanging on after the New Territories lease expires in 1997 was the main consideration. So the interests of 5 million people have been protected as far as possible in negotiations between the two governments and their wishes confined to a realistic choice between take it or leave it.

Yet the 1,800 people on the Falklands are apparently for ever more to dictate a ludicrous dent in

our defence and other budgets - at a time when every other area of public spending is under constraint - and to dictate a hostile attitude to a major democracy in Latin America.

A willingness to put sovereignty back on the agenda could lead to fairly swift restoration of diplomatic ties, formal cessation of hostilities, the lifting of the Falklands protection zone and a return to normal trade. A fair deal on the Falklands would substantially reduce public expenditure in Britain and help stabilize the Alfonsín government.

What would be a fair deal? The agreement between Argentina and Chile on the Beagle Channel gives hope that a distinction could be agreed between the Falklands and the other islands, South Georgia and the Sandwich group, where the British title is generally accepted as stronger.

As to the Falklands themselves, the interests of the islanders and their way of life (disrupted by the Fortress Falklands policy) must be protected. The islanders would also have to be demilitarized under some international guarantee.

There was something rotten in the state of Argentina which lay at the heart of the Falklands invasion. The military junta had an appalling record on human rights at home as well as in this foreign adventure. We should wake up to the fact that it has gone. We should not repeat the aimless vacillation towards the Falklands which characterized the two decades before the tragedy and which, as the Franks Report clearly indicates, helped bring it about.

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Argentina backed on Falklands

THE Organisation of American States yesterday again gave overwhelming support to Argentina in the dispute with Britain about the Falkland Islands.

The OAS general commission in Brasilia approved a resolution, by 12 to one, supporting Argentina's call for renewed negotiations with Britain regarding the sovereignty of the islands. There were six abstentions.

It was presumed the OAS General assembly would endorse the commission's position. The head of the Argentine delegation, and Jorge Sabato, said his country was not interested in a British proposal to re-establish diplomatic relations without discussing the Falklands. — AP

OUR man in Peru produced a book by three Argentine journalists, called simply Malvinas, in support of his evidence (and the Government's case) to the Foreign Affairs Committee this week. This was most frustrating to Tory members, who would dearly like to get their hands on such material, but are unable to due to the restrictions on importing Argentine books into this country. Urgent inquiries are now being made of the Foreign Office to try and smuggle some copies by diplomatic bag if necessary.

Second Belgrano log 'not retained by MoD'

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Another document belonging to the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, may no longer be in the Ministry of Defence.

The document — the signals log — is separate from the vessel's control room log which is missing, and the much less detailed captain's record which is still in the ministry.

This emerged yesterday in a Commons reply from the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, to Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Mr George Foulkes. Mr Heseltine said that the signals logs of nuclear submarines are not retained permanently. He also said that the captain's official record would rely for detailed information on the missing control room log.

Last night, the Ministry of Defence said it could not add to Mr Heseltine's answer.

A specimen control room log deposited in the Commons library suggests that the missing document is a more important document than the Ministry of Defence originally suggested. It would give the depth and direction of the vessel every hour and would also record the sighting of any other ship, and the time of those sightings.

Mr Foulkes also asked Mr Heseltine to publish the report of the board of inquiry into the missing log. Mr Heseltine has said he would consider whether to make a statement about it once it is completed.

Mr Francis Pym, the foreign secretary during the Falklands conflict, reacted sharply yesterday to criticism by Lord Lewin, then chief of the defence staff about a statement he made in Washington the day before the Belgrano was sunk.

During a BBC-2 Brass Tacks television programme on Wednesday night, Lord Lewin said that Mr Pym was not justified in saying on May 1, 1982, that "no further military action is envisaged at the moment, except to keep the exclusion zone secure."

But Mr Pym told the Guardian: "In the circumstances that was a perfectly reasonable thing to say." Mr Pym had made his Washington statement after raising questions, in a minute to the war cabinet dated May 1, 1982, about whether attacks on the Argentine carrier, the 25 de Mayo, outside the exclusion zone were compatible with international law in the absence of a new public warning.

Peter Montagnon reports on growing optimism among leading bankers

Argentine debt talks regain impetus

TALKS between Argentina and its leading commercial bank creditors have moved into a crucial phase this week as both sides intensify their efforts to implement a solution to the country's \$45bn (£35.4bn) foreign debt problem before the end of the year.

The current visit to the U.S. of Sr Bernardo Grinspun, Economy Minister, provides a clear indication of fresh impetus to the two-month old talks. Sr Grinspun is due to meet leading bankers in New York within the next few days to examine plans for Argentina to reschedule some \$17bn in public and private sector debt due between 1982 and 1985 and raise a large new loan from commercial banks worldwide.

Mr William Rhodes, the senior Citibank executive who heads the banks' negotiating committee, said earlier this week he hopes an outline agreement on the proposals can be reached by the end of this month. Bankers hope this might come in time for the International Monetary Fund formally to approve Argentina's request for a \$1.4bn standby credit before the end of December.

But even as they work on a draft proposal for Sr Grinspun to take back to Buenos Aires next week, both sides are acutely aware of the pitfalls that remain. Despite mounting optimism that a breakthrough could be close there are still grave doubts over whether agreement can be reached within the tight schedule now envisaged.

Not least of the problems is the size of the new loan from commercial bank creditors. Argentina has asked for \$5.45bn but this was flatly rejected by the banks as too large. Given the mounting frustration of many smaller banks over delayed interest payments by Argentina, they say the amount has to be much smaller — between \$2.8bn and \$3.5bn.

Panama is to meet its top bank creditors in New York next week for talks on rescheduling more than \$600m in debt falling due in 1985 and 1986.

Present at the meeting will be representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank from which Panama is expected to seek a structural adjustment loan.

The meeting is expected to concentrate initially on the economic outlook for Panama as part of an assessment of its need for additional bank loans as well as rescheduling.

Panama, with total debt of about \$4bn, refinanced this

year's debt maturities in a deal totalling \$278m which also included \$93m in fresh finance. Bankers say that it has been helped by its scrupulous adherence to this agreement and to its current IMF programme, which will be renewed as part of the package.

Also due to talk to its bankers is Uruguay, though the main rescheduling negotiations on its \$4.7bn debt will not start till a new civilian government takes office next spring. Meanwhile Uruguay is expected to ask for a temporary deferral of about \$100m in debt falling due in the first half of next year.

rescheduling. Argentina for its part will not want a deal that is conspicuously worse than Mexico's and claims it should be rewarded for agreeing to a politically difficult IMF economic programme and for its promise to eliminate interest arrears once the new money starts to flow.

Haggling over terms and conditions for Argentina has been further complicated by confusion over the \$7bn private sector debt that is to be rescheduled—the banks have set up a special committee chaired by Credit Suisse to deal with this—and by the fact that Argentina has already once agreed to reschedule debt falling due in 1982 and 1983.

Much to the irritation of creditor banks the new radical government repudiated this agreement when it entered office in 1983, which makes many bankers even less inclined to look favourably on a new package which covers debt falling due between 1982 and 1985.

But one bright spot is that, contrary to many expectations, Argentina is now showing signs of implementing its tough programme to reduce inflation, now running at more than 700 per cent a year. The monthly inflation rate fell to 19.2 per cent in October from 27.5 per cent in September. Real wages have begun to fall and the trade surplus is likely to exceed the \$4bn officially forecast for this year.

In many ways these developments offer the best grounds for optimism on a debt settlement yet, but the attitude of senior bankers remains extremely cautious.

Mr Rhodes used to round both publicly and privately on sceptics who believed rescue packages for Mexico and Brazil would never work, describing them as "doom-mongers." In Argentina's case he has always been much more sanguine. "Time will tell" is still his favourite verdict.

But this has caused a headache for the government of President Raul Alfonsín because it threatens to undermine the delicate calculations on which its economic stabilisation programme was worked out with the IMF. Unless extra money can be found from somewhere else there is a danger that the programme might fall apart through lack of funds.

Mr Jacques de Larosiere, IMF managing director, has always insisted that sufficient new loan commitments are available to a debtor country before he submits its economic recovery plan to his executive board. As banks have become more and more reluctant to put up fresh money, this condition has become increasingly hard to meet.

Approval by the IMF of a recent debt package for the Philippines was held up for several weeks because the banks had agreed to contribute only \$925m, much less than the \$1.6bn originally envisaged. In the intervening period Mr de Larosiere had to satisfy himself that the balance was available from other creditors such as governments.

A similar process is now in full swing for Argentina. Sr

Grinspun spent most of Wednesday in Washington, meeting mainly with U.S. government officials with whom he is thought to have discussed the possibility of new credits. Bankers say a lead from the U.S. would help, not just because it means more government loans for Argentina; U.S. support for Argentina's economy would also give a psychological boost to the new loan from commercial banks, which is seen as the most difficult to syndicate of any credits raised for debtor nations since the debt crisis started in 1982.

Even when the amount of Argentina's new loan is fixed, other serious obstacles remain. Interest payments on Argentina's public sector debt are current only up to May 15, creating some of the most serious arrears yet seen for a Latin American country, and U.S. government agencies responsible for supervising the banking system have recently declared most of the country's debt as officially sub-standard.

All this means that banks will shrink from giving Argentina favourable terms such as the 14-year maturity and average interest margin of 1½ per cent agreed on Mexico's new \$48.7bn

THE POINT about the Belgrano affair seems to be emerging at last. It is that the government of the day didn't seem to have the slightest idea of what the military was about.

Poor Thatcher had to admit only a few months ago that *for at least six months after the sinking* she had no idea that the cruiser was going away from the Task Force when she was sunk. If she didn't know *that*, perhaps there were a lot of other things she didn't know either.

Did she know, for instance, that GCHQ, the top secret and very technological British signals outfit at Cheltenham, intercepted and decoded the message from the Argentine High Command *to the Belgrano to get back to port as quickly as possible?*

The news came into GCHQ early in the morning of 2 May 1982. It seemed to suggest that if the old cruiser ever had been a threat to the Task Force, it certainly wasn't after the order.

Did Thatcher, Nott, Parkinson and the others know?

The answer to that question, and to others of similar importance, might never have been known, had it not been for the amazing decision to prosecute former top Ministry of Defence civil servant Clive Ponting under the Official Secrets Act.

It is now certain that the truth about the signals to the Belgrano *will* come out at the trial.

Ponting intends to come out fighting. His defence will be that the government have been lying through their teeth about the Belgrano, and any responsible civil servant was obliged to tell Parliament of the deception. His defence is certain to disclose the intercepted orders to the Belgrano.

Anyone could have foreseen that they would do so: anyone, that is, who knew about the messages. Why then did the government go ahead with the prosecution instead of allowing Ponting to retire gracefully? Could this be proof that the government did not know of the messages to the cruiser, and therefore went ahead with the prosecution oblivious of the awful truth which it might reveal?

The decision to prosecute was, after all, a purely political one, taken by Thatcher, Heseltine and Attorney General Havers. The Navy and the Defence Ministry, who were not consulted, are believed to be horrified at the prospect.

The trial opens on 21 January 1985.

Daily Mail
15th November 1984

Belgrano charge crushed

BRITAIN'S former Ambassador to Peru, Mr Charles Wallace, last night crushed the charge that Mrs Thatcher had the Argentine warship Belgrano sunk because a Peruvian peace plan was offering a way out of the war.

He told a Commons committee that he knew nothing of the proposals until more than three hours after the sinking.

The 58-year-old envoy said he was not, as American Secretary of State Haig claimed, 'in on the Peruvian peace plan negotiations.'

He emphasised: 'There were no negotiations that took place in which I was involved.'

MPs hear Falklands peace plan details

By Richard Evans
Lobby Reporter

Britain's Ambassador to Peru during the Falklands conflict told MPs last night that he first heard of the Peruvian peace initiative aimed at averting the war three hours after the General Belgrano was sunk.

But Mr Charles Wallace told the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs that when he was informed by Dr Arias Stella, Peru's Foreign Minister, he was given a clear indication that details of the peace plan had already been forwarded to Mr Francis Pym, then Foreign Secretary, and the British Government by Mr Alexander Haig, US Secretary of State.

"Dr Stella said the plan had been discussed in telephone conversations with Mr Haig in Washington and there was a clear implication in the conversations I had with him that these proposals had been transmitted by Haig to the British Government."

● A call for a White Paper to be published to sort out the conflict of evidence over the sinking of the Belgrano was made on television last night by Lord Annan, chairing a debate on Mr Tam Dalyell's demand for a tribunal of inquiry (a Staff Reporter writes).

Mr Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, said after the *Brass Tacks* programme on BBC 2 that he would "certainly welcome" such a White Paper.

Lord Annan said it was clear there had been "an imperial boxup" over times, movements, and conflicting stories around the period the cruiser was sunk in 1982, all attributed to "the fog of war".

Mr Cranley Onslow, a Foreign Office minister of state at the time, told Mr Dalyell that he deeply resented accusations by him that he had lied to the Commons.

The Guardian 15/11/84

Argentine military tribunal resigns

Buenos Aires: All 10 members of the Armed Forces Supreme Council, Argentina's highest military court, resigned yesterday in apparent reaction to criticism of their handling of the courts martial of former junta members accused of human rights violations.

The official news agency Telam said that the resignations of the three army generals, three navy admirals, and four air force generals, all retired, had been handed to Defence Minister Mr Raul Borras.

The contents of the letters of resignation were not made public, but sources close to the council indicated that the resignation decision followed Mr

Borras' failure to listen to their complaints about press criticism.

The council sent the Defence Minister a note 10 days ago protesting at what it called a "defamation campaign" by the press. Mr Borras, in reply, said the Government respected press freedom, and that the council members could resort to the civilian courts if they felt offended.

The press criticism centred on the tribunal's failure to reach a decision in the cases of nine members of three military Juntas that ruled Argentina between 1976 and 1982.

The court was also hearing the cases of 16 military officers accused of criminal conduct during the Falklands war.—AP.

'In search of a long term South Atlantic solution

Sir, — Hugo Young's article (November 12) rightly calls for concerned efforts "to remove ministers' heads from the Falklands sand" and to think about the long term future in the South Atlantic. The South Atlantic Council, which contains MPs from all the main political parties (including Mr George Foulkes) has been trying to do just this since its formation just a year ago; indeed your newspaper reported the visit in June this year of three Council members to Buenos Aires on a fact-finding mission.

The function of the Council is to talk to all parties in the dispute and to put forward new ideas and policy options. This demands serious consideration of the political future of the islands and, inevitably, this means at some stage discussing sovereignty. However, "discussing sovereignty" is not necessarily the same as "discussing the transfer of sovereignty", as seems to be too easily assumed by many people in London, Buenos Aires and Port Stanley.

Results of a recent Gallup Poll in the Financial Times (November 12) suggest that a majority of voters in Britain favour normalisation of relations with Argentina and a move away from Fortress Falklands as strategy. Mr Steel and Dr Owen have also argued for such a shift in official British policies. No one can pretend that finding an acceptable long term solution to all parties will be an easy matter, but, like Hugo Young, we would argue that it is important to consider options for the future, which we can affect, rather than events in the past, which are over and done. Yours faithfully,
C R Mitchell
Hon. Secretary
South Atlantic Council
City University
London EC1

Sir, — Hugo Young's article on the Belgrano inaccurately assumes that revelations over the last few months disprove Tam Dalyell's view that the Belgrano was sunk to torpedo the Peruvian Peace Plan.

On May 10th 1983 I had an extended conversation with the Peruvian Head of Mission at the UN, Dr J. Arias Stella, Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1982, who told me that once the Peruvians moved in he summoned the then British Ambassador, C. Wallace, to his office to officially notify the existence and contents of the peace plan. He took the view that according to diplomatic practice an ambassador would have informed his Foreign Office.

Arias Stella also drew my attention to the existence of a memorandum written by Peruvian officials summarizing who said what to whom during the negotiations involving the Peruvians. It is a confidential document that the Peruvians might only release if the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of

Commons made an official request

In October 1983 I travelled to Lima along with Mr Dalyell and saw President Belaunde Terry and former prime minister, M. Ulloa. Belaunde stressed that he had repeatedly emphasized that no military action should be allowed to take place during the negotiations. Ulloa concluded that the Peruvians had been used to allow Britain to appear as negotiating. According to Mr Gavshon's interview to Lord Lewin, published by yourselves, the war cabinet decided on 23rd April that a negotiated solution was not possible.

There are too many instances relating to the genesis and development of the conflict indicating that information originating beyond Britain is poorly evaluated, if at all. Therefore, far from being disproved, the current situation is that further information must be sought in Lima.

Guilhermo Makin
Social and Political Sciences
Committee,
University of Cambridge

ARGENTINA'S FALKLANDS TALKS PLAN

By RICHARD HOUSE
in Brasilia

ARGENTINA yesterday released in Brazil its draft resolution to the Organisation of American States calling for a resumption of negotiations with Britain to resolve the Falklands issue.

This is the first sign of a possible break in the deadlock which has persisted for months. The resolution said the situation in the South Atlantic affected the security of the entire American continent. It urged the OAS to encourage both parties towards a peaceful solution based on the United Nations resolutions of Nov. 1983 and Nov. this year.

Argentina's resolution, to be put before the 31 OAS members, meeting in Brasilia, said that since the adoption of successive resolutions by international organisations, "there has been no progress in this grave controversy" two years after hostilities ceased.

It requested that approaches be made to the UN Secretary-General to bring the two sides back to negotiations to resolve the sovereignty issue. Since talks in Switzerland broke down on July 20, when Argentina suddenly pulled out, there has been little progress.

'Clear signs'

In his opening speech to the OAS on Monday, Senhor Baena Soares, the newly-elected Brazilian Secretary General of the group, said Argentina was "now giving clear signs of its willingness to negotiate clearly and objectively," with Britain.

At the meeting, foreign ministers of the "Contadora" group also presented new proposals for peace in Central America. They suggested that informal consultations could be widened to include both super-powers.

The foreign ministers of Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela seek a "verification commission" which would ensure that a timetable for combatants in the region to lay down their arms would be strictly obeyed.

Meanwhile America continued to resist the possibility of Cuba being readmitted to the OAS. Washington delegates had sharp exchanges with Nicaragua about inviting Havana to the 500th anniversary celebrations of America's discovery.

The OAS also discussed proposals to set up a fund to help fight international drug traffickers.

BELGRANO SUNK BEFORE NEWS OF PEACE PLAN

By ANTHONY LOOCH

MR CHARLES WALLACE, British Ambassador to Peru during the Falklands conflict, told MPs yesterday that he first heard of Peruvian peace proposals on his car radio three hours after the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was sunk.

He was called on the morning of May 2, 1982, to see Dr Arias Stella, Peruvian Foreign Minister, that evening, and on his way at 6 p.m. (11 p.m. London time) the Peruvian proposals were announced in a broadcast by President Belaunde Terry.

Mr Wallace was giving evidence to the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, which is investigating the Peruvian proposals and the events of the weekend of May 1 and 2, 1982.

The General Belgrano was sunk by the British submarine Conqueror at about 8 p.m. London time in May 2 with the loss of 368 lives.

Mr Wallace said that when he saw Dr Arias Stella half an hour after the proposals were broadcast, he was officially informed of them. His report on the proposals reached London about one and a half hours later.

At no stage involved

At no stage had he been involved in the production of the proposals. He had, however, gained the clear impression from Dr Arias Stella that the proposals had been transmitted by telephone to the then American Secretary of State, Mr Haig, in America, and that he had also passed them on to the British Government.

The committee's chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw, Conservative MP for Stroud, told Mr Wallace it had been suggested to the committee and in the Press that he, Mr Wallace, had been very close to the negotiations.

Mr Haig had actually been under the impression that sometimes he, Mr Wallace, had actually been sitting in the President's room while they were being formulated.

Mr Wallace replied that this had not been the case, though he would not relish being in the position of having publicly to contradict Mr Haig, to whom Britain owed a great debt of gratitude.

A complete surprise

It could be that what Mr Haig had said had been a reflection of the close working relationship he, Mr Wallace, had with all members of the Peruvian Government.

"I can state categorically that I was never in any room at any time when anyone was speaking to General Haig on the telephone," he added.

Mr Wallace said the announcement of the Peruvian proposals had come as a complete surprise to him. His primary reaction had been to report them to London.

NO LIGHT FROM LOG Heseltine replies

Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, said in a Commons reply yesterday it was unlikely the missing navigation log of the Conqueror would cast any light on the Belgrano's course after she was sighted.

More rights trial delays

Buenos Aires: The resignation of all nine judges of Argentina's Supreme Military Tribunal will add to delays in holding already long overdue human rights trials.

The judges quit after the tribunal was harshly criticised by human rights groups for failing to take action against hundreds of officers accused of abducting, torturing and killing thousands of people in the 1970s "dirty war."

The resignations will also delay trials of officers blamed for Argentina's defeat in the Falklands conflict.

The judges had been appointed during military rule, and no officer has yet been tried in civilian or military courts for rights violations.

Financial Times

OAS supports Buenos Aires

THE ORGANIZATION of American States yesterday again gave its overwhelming support to Argentina in the dispute with Britain over the Falkland Islands, AP reports Brasilia.

The Oas General Commission approved a resolution supporting Argentina's call for renewed negotiations with Britain regarding sovereignty over the islands, by a vote of 21 to one, with six abstentions.

New court will try officers in Argentina

Buenos Aires (Reuter) - The government of President Alfonsín has shrugged off the resignation of all nine members of Argentina's Supreme Military Tribunal despite suggestions that it could delay trials of officers accused of kidnapping, torture and murder.

The military judges announced their resignations on Wednesday, but gave no reasons for their decision.

Human rights groups said the move showed the failure of Señor Alfonsín's policy of allowing the military to conduct its own trials of officers accused of crimes committed during eight years of military rule.

But a spokesman for Señor Alfonsín's administration said the resignations would clear the way for the President to appoint a new court for the human rights trials.

The military judges were also trying high-ranking officers for their part in Argentina's defeat by Britain in the Falklands.

The tribunal said in September that orders issued by military leaders in power from 1976 to 1983 were beyond reproach; it could only find the officers guilty of failing to control their men.

Flying kitchen

... fast food in the field

A NEAT SOLUTION to the problem of mobilising a field kitchen as rapidly as possible on deployment is being evaluated by 18 Squadron, RAF Germany's Chinook operators, following a successful first trial. Essentially the idea consists of putting the kitchen into a container as a permanent fitting and flying it out.

Wg Cdr Tony Stables, the Squadron CO, who conceived the idea when he was in the Falklands, said: "It's so simple. Instead of having to load all the bits and pieces into a four-tonne

lorry, drive to the field site, get all the gear out again and set it up, you just hook up a container and take it away."

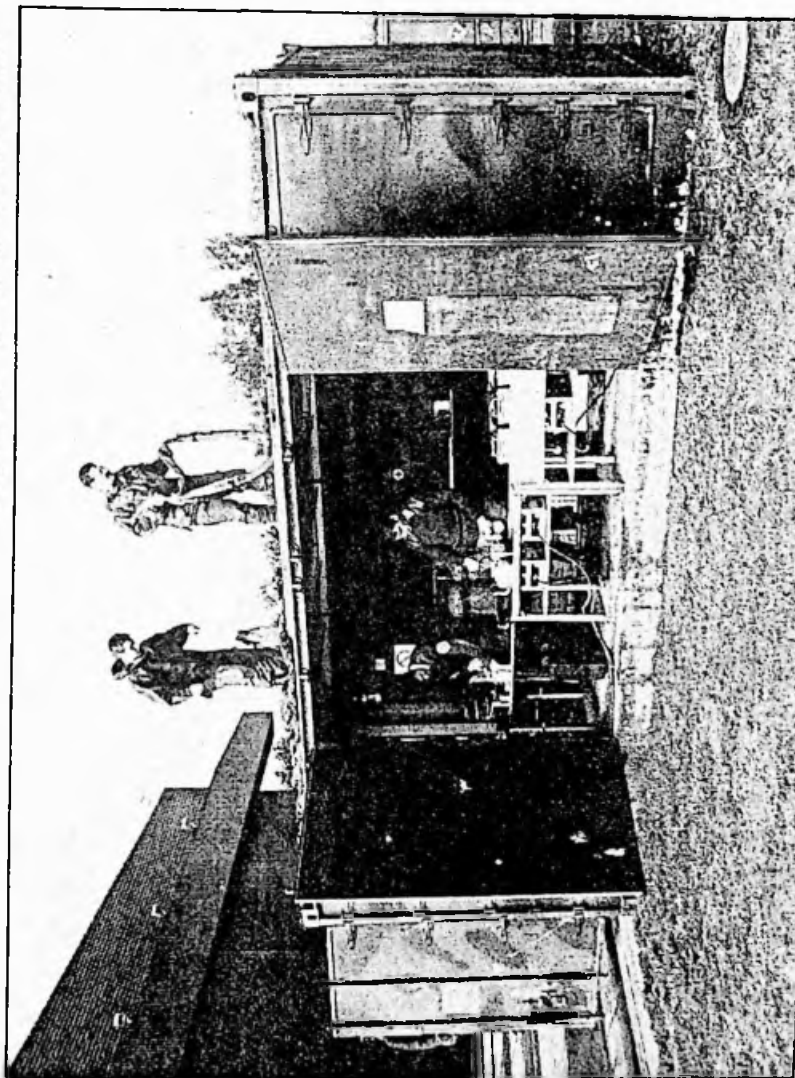
The advantages are immediately obvious: packing and un-

Lionheart, the kitchen provided hot meals on the day it was moved.

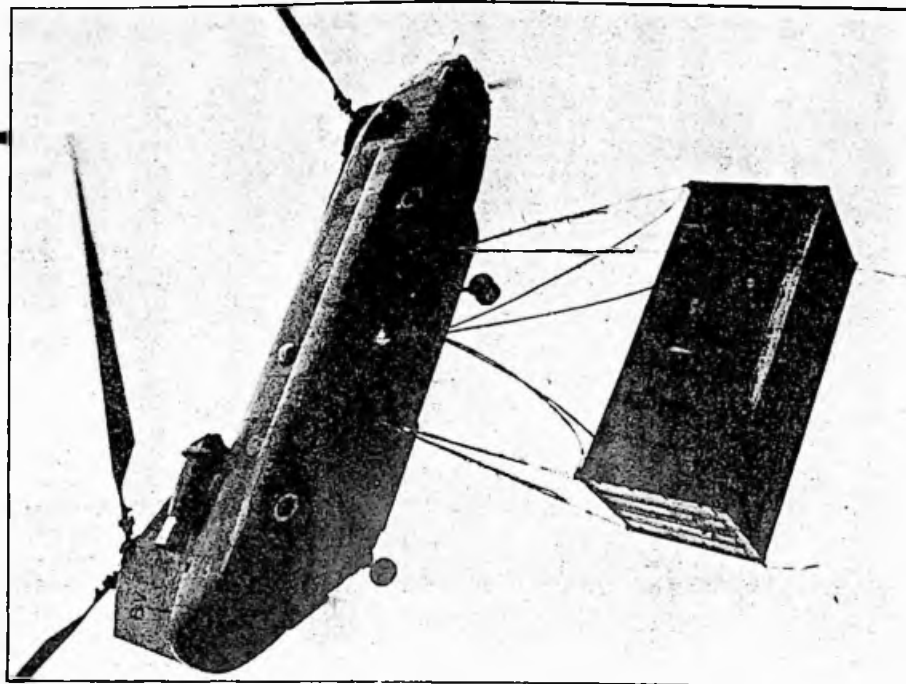
Even the crate, an ISO container of the type used extensively in the Falklands, lay ready to hand at Gutersloh, the squadron's base. Sturdy and weatherproof, it offered about as much space as a suburban garage.

The man who converted the dreams into nuts and bolts. No 18's chef, Sgt Barry Suckle, built

By John Dalling



With the big double doors open, Sgt Barry Suckley (left) and Cpl Billy Adams demonstrate the servery while on top Cpl Jimmy Hicks (left) and SAC Donald Armstrong of the Joint Helicopter Support Unit rig the container for airlift. (Photograph by Barry Ellison)



It may look like an ordinary container but inside is a fully operational field kitchen. (Photograph by Barry Ellison)

was the first RAF cook to set foot on the islands — worked the kitchen on Lionheart and described it as superb, enabling him "to make light work of the deployment." He especially appreciated a firm floor between his feet and the mud.

The officer commanding Gutersloh's Field Catering Flight, Flt Lt Ian West, said: "We were consulted on this right from the start and we've watched it at every step. In my opinion it has proved itself without any doubt."

He foresaw many other uses for the idea, for instance where the cookhouse at a small station was

undergoing repair or when work was being done at a remote part of an airfield.

Sqn Ldr Peter Norton, who flew the kitchen on deployment, said it was triple-hooked giving fore and aft stability for fast transit, up to 100 knots. For manoeuvring into precisely the right position at the field site, the slinging was changed to single point suspension on a long strop, 100-150ft, to lift the helicopter clear of obstructions and minimise the downwash.

Fully stocked with company the kitchen could support 90 men in the field for eight days.

The Times

Explosive

Two years of persistent questioning have clearly rubbed raw the nerves of those responsible for the Belgrano sinking. During the recording of last night's *Brass Tacks* programme on the subject Lord Lewin, Chief of Defence Staff during the Falklands, twice lost his temper during off-camera exchanges. "It's a lie! It's a lie!", he retorted furiously when Tam Dalyell suggested the task force had insufficient air cover. And when Paul Rogers, of the Bradford School of Peace Studies, suggested further discussions Lord Lewin exploded: "It's no use me talking to you. You're too biased. I don't want anything more to do with you. I don't want anything more to do with the Belgrano." "That's not going to be very easy", replied Rogers, at which Lord Lewin stomped from the studio. He returned to finish the programme, but left straight afterwards with no farewells and looking "very, very angry".

Peace plan 'presented after sinking of Belgrano'

By Robert Graham

MR CHARLES WALLACE, who was British Ambassador to Lima during the Falklands War, first heard of Peruvian peace proposals three hours after the Argentine cruiser the General Belgrano was sunk on May 2 1982, the Commons Foreign Affairs committee heard yesterday.

At that time, the Ambassador had no indication of the ship's sinking; neither did Dr Arias Stella, the Peruvian Foreign Minister.

Mr Wallace was questioned closely by the committee about his view of the seriousness of the peace proposal and its possible relevance to ending hostilities. His version of events coincided with that previously given to the committee by Mr Francis Pym, the then Foreign Secretary.

The committee called Mr Wallace in an attempt to clarify whether the sinking of the Belgrano directly affected the Peruvian peace plan, and made serious fighting in the South Atlantic inevitable.

Mr Wallace insisted that he had no prior knowledge of the Peruvian peace plan, whose seven points were first put to him by the foreign minister at 1830 local time on May 2.

He informed the foreign minister that the proposals could form the basis for further discussions with the British Government, and quickly passed on the Peruvian view that the Argentine Foreign Ministry was endorsing the proposals and that General Galtieri, the Argentine leader, was "well disposed, but had to consult the members of his junta."

The first Mr Wallace heard of the sinking of the Belgrano was early the following morning, and his impression was that the Peruvians had no idea the cruiser had been sunk when he had been brought in to hear the peace proposals.

Mr Wallace went on to say that, in Peru, there was no suggestion that the sinking of the Belgrano was responsible for the fate of the Peruvian peace plan.

Financial Times 13/11/84

Havers 'will answer for Ponting decision'

SIR MICHAEL HAVERS, the Attorney General, told the Commons yesterday he would have to answer for his decision to prosecute Mr Clive Ponting, the senior civil servant accused of leaking documents to an MP, once the case was dealt with.

He repeated comments about the Ponting case which he made in a radio interview last month

and which led to him being criticised by Mr Ponting's solicitor.

"Once the case has been disposed of, I shall have to answer for my decision, and I am not frightened to do it," Sir Michael told MPs at Question Time.

Mr John Morris, the shadow Attorney General, challenged Sir Michael's prudence in

making remarks in a BBC radio interview about the decision to prosecute Mr Ponting.

During the interview, the Attorney-General told the House, he had said: "It was simply a case of a very senior civil servant who had disclosed matters which I say he had no right to disclose. But that would be a matter for the court."

Daily Telegraph 13/11/84

Polar post

China has announced plans to establish a new post office in Antarctica, selling commemorative stamps and envelopes. It will be built in December.—
U.P.I.

Ministers under all-party pressure over Falklands

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

The Government yesterday came under renewed all-party pressure to reconsider its refusal to engage in negotiations with Argentina about the future of the Falklands Islands.

As Mrs Shirley Williams, president of the Social Democratic Party, and Mr George Robertson, Labour foreign affairs spokesman, returned from a weekend visit to Argentina to call for talks over a long-term settlement, Mr Cyril Townsend, Conservative MP for Bexleyheath, urged the Government to move away from the "sterile and costly" Fortress Falklands policy.

Mr Townsend, chairman of the South Atlantic Council, set up to promote better relations between Britain and Argentina, called for the restoration of diplomatic links and the resumption of talks on the Falklands.

Mr Townsend's remarks came after the publication of the first Gallup poll on voters' attitude to the Falklands. A total of 74 per cent of those questioned wished to restore diplomatic relations with Argentina, and only 37 per cent believed that the islands could remain permanently British.

The long-stated view of the Government, most firmly voiced by the Prime Minister, that no aspects of the islands' sovereignty can be discussed with Argentina, is expected to

receive a further rebuff next month in a report by the Tory-dominated Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs.

It is expected to argue that discussions on sovereignty cannot be ruled out for ever and that the failure of the Alfonsín Government to make any progress on the issue could pose threats of a military takeover.

Mrs Williams and Mr Robertson met Argentine businessmen, academics, and politicians on their visit. They are to see Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, to emphasize the importance of starting negotiations.

Mr Robertson said yesterday: "We found a flexible attitude in Argentina and a genuine desire for better relations".

The democratic Government was well based, but there was a lot of nationalistic feeling on the Falklands issue.

Mr Townsend, whose views are shared by many Tory MPs, said the Gallup poll confirmed other indications that there was a growing desire to reduce spending on Fortress Falklands and to restore normal relations.

In the recent United Nations debate, Argentina obtained a large majority for a motion pressing Britain to negotiate and until the vote was taken it remained uncertain whether the EEC partners would stand by Britain.

The Times 14/11/84

Clive alive

Television producers are queuing up to turn Clive Ponting, the civil servant alleged to have leaked Belgrano documents, into a star. Ponting's solicitor, Brian Raymond, says he has been approached "by every current affairs programme you have ever heard of and some you haven't" to sign up Ponting for a post-trial exclusive. Ponting, who will not be accepting a fee, has yet to decide which, if any, offer to accept. The waiting is particularly harrowing for *Panorama*, desperate for the story after having been scooped by *World in Action* for Sarah Tisdall's tale of woe.

Heseltine causes new Belgrano controversy

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The Belgrano affair was the subject of a new controversy last night when the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, said that his officials knew that the navigator's log of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentinian cruiser during the Falklands conflict, was missing a month before he was personally made aware of the loss.

In a series of parliamentary answers to Mr George Foulkes, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman, he said that the first indications that the log was missing came in early October.

An intensive search was made, he said, at Northwood fleet headquarters and on board the submarine, which has been at Devonport for repairs since July, 1982.

"I was not personally involved at this stage," Mr Heseltine said, "though my office was aware a search was under way." The "apparent disap-

pearance" of the log was formally reported to his office and senior Ministry of Defence officials on October 17, he said.

On October 25, a board of inquiry was set up. Mr Heseltine said: "I myself was informed of where matters stood shortly after my return from the Middle East at the beginning of November." That was when reports that the log was missing first appeared in the press.

Mr Heseltine said that the navigator's log would give full details of the submarine's movements on May 2, 1982, when the Belgrano was sunk.

He was considering whether to make a statement when the board of inquiry reported, probably later this week. But he said it was not normal to publish such reports.

Mr Foulkes said last night that Mr Heseltine's answers, especially on how he was likely to respond to the board's report, were "totally unsatisfactory."

The Guardian 13/11/84

YET another crime wave, I am sorry to say, on the Falkland Islands. Two islanders have been fined £200 each for giving a sailor a broken nose and eight stitches to the leg. One construction worker has been fined £250 for assaulting a female construction worker, while yet another worker has been sent back to the UK after knocking two teeth out of his manager's mouth. The workers — not to mention the soldiers — seem not wholly to be appreciated by the locals. One worker writes in the letters column of Penguin News how an islander "said he did not care how many of the troops died." The writer remarks: "We do not expect to hear derogatory remarks about the young boys from home who died." The islander got a punch on the nose.

Alan Rusbridger

The Times 13/11/84

Falklands cost £1m an islander

Since the Argentine invasion of the Falklands the Government has spent just over £1m per islander, the Prime Minister said yesterday in a Commons written reply.

She said that the total extra cost of all government operations on the islands since the invasion in April, 1982, including their recovery, and up until the end of the current financial year, was £2,100m.

Steady irritant

Front Rear Adml JOHN

HARRIS-BURLAND

SIR—It seems inconceivable that we should continue to pay our members of Parliament to argue such issues as the sinking of the Belgrano when far more urgent debates should be on the agenda.

As this event of two years ago is still being used as a steady old irritant (or distraction) to the Government by the opposition, I cannot understand why Mrs Thatcher does not put an end to it all by showing a film clip of the Argentine admiral of the fleet, as shown on television when he openly stated that the Belgrano was out to sink British ships; and when asked what he would have done in the place of the Conqueror, said: "I would have done exactly the same—sunk the cruiser."

The fact that the navigation officer's log book has now gone adrift is quite irrelevant — it's only a load of chart fixes—and how many of those are still in existence? Nobody's normally interested in them after an operation is over. In the old days they were just chucked away and replaced with a clean log. Of course the Skipper's log is confidential, and usually kept *ad infinitum* in the Admiralty archives.

JOHN HARRIS-BURLAND

Little Chalfont, Bucks.

Daily Telegraph 13/11/84

£2.1 bn COST OF FALKLANDS

By Our Political Staff

Total Government spending on the Falklands from April 2, 1982 to the end of this financial year is forecast to amount to £2.100 million, the Prime Minister yesterday told Mr David Young, Labour MP for Bolton South East, in a Commons written reply.

Mrs Thatcher said the figure, which includes the cost of recapturing the islands from Argentina was the equivalent of just over £1 million per head of their population.

Financial Times 13/11/84

Argentina debt deal in sight

By William Hall in Philadelphia

ARGENTINA is expected to reach a preliminary agreement with its foreign creditor banks on plans to reschedule nearly half of its \$44bn (£34.7bn) foreign debt and on provision of new loans by the end of the month, Mr William Rhodes, the Citibank executive who heads the creditor bank working committee, said yesterday.

Argentina has been asking for \$5.45bn of new money and the rescheduling of \$17bn of public and private sector debt.

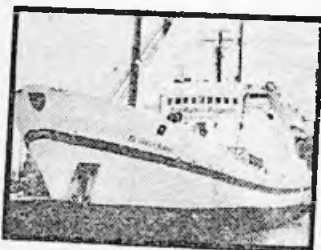
Daily Mail
13th November 1984

TERRA NOVA

BBC 1, 9.25: This highly stylised play by American Ted Tally lives out the last days of Scott's ill-fated expedition to the South Pole. Scott (Michael N. Harbour) emerges as a cantankerous, insecure snob, haunted by a know-all Amundsen (Knut Husebo) who looms out of the snow to tell Scott he hadn't planned his expedition properly.

He probably hadn't — but that doesn't detract from the horrors of this suicidal mission and the terrible shock of finding that the smug Norwegian had beaten them to their goal.

SHIP-SHAPE YOUNGSTERS GET ROYAL SEND-OFF



A GROUP of 20 youngsters today set sail on the voyage of a lifetime.

After a send-off by Prince Charles from Hull docks, Operation Raleigh's first volunteers, six of them British, will head for North Carolina as their first port of call in a three-month adventure aboard the flagship Sir Walter Raleigh (above).

By Christmas Day they should be searching for the wrecks of German U-boats in the Caribbean.

Between now and 1989, 4,000 venturers from around the world will be involved in projects from scientific research to danger-laced missions spanning several continents.

Money's worth

The politicians were giving money away again in Buenos Aires the other day. Not just padding some friendly bank balance with a discreet cheque or adding a percentage on to some friend's contract with the government. But handing out banknotes in the street.

The UCD or right-wing monetarists in Argentina were distributing brown 1,000-peso notes to passers-by on the main Avenida. But nobody was rushing to collect them.

As always, there was a catch. They were old peso notes, worth a small fraction of 1,000 new pesos (currently about \$8). And a handbill clipped to the bank note carried this message:

"Do you remember this bank note? When it was first issued in 1973, it bought 390kgs of bread or 67 kgs of beef. In February 1984, it bought eight grams of bread or one gram of beef." It went on to attack pub-

lic spending as the cause of Argentina's wild inflation.

Some of the banknotes lay on the pavements. Argentines were too inflation-drunk to bother to pick them up.

Heseltine to face grilling on Belgrano

by DAVID LEIGH

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Heseltine will face a barrage of hostile questions when he appears before the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee this week to answer in public allegations of a Government cover-up over the sinking of the Belgrano, with the loss of 368 lives.

Confidential Ministry of Defence documents reveal that Mrs Thatcher was twice consulted by Mr Heseltine and his deputy—Armed Forces Minister John Stanley—over statements to MPs.

They also show that the statements were made against the advice of senior civil servants and that incorrect replies to parliamentary questions were drafted within the department 'after discussions with No. 10.'

Documents to which we have had access show that when the shadow cabinet put questions to Mrs Thatcher in March, Mr Stanley ordered civil servants to compose a 'second draft' reply.

This concealed the true date on which the Belgrano had been first sighted. It was submitted for Mr Heseltine's consideration, but two weeks later, a further letter arrived from Labour MP Tam Dalyell asking detailed questions.

Mr Heseltine ordered a full-scale investigation into the truth about the Belgrano, before any more statements were made. The sinking had happened under his predecessor, John Nott, and Mr Heseltine was not in the war cabinet at the time of the Falklands crisis.

The investigation was carried out by Clive Ponting, the Defence Ministry official who faces charges under the Official Secrets Act. His secret report was handed to Mr Heseltine on 29 March.

It revealed that previous Ministerial statements about the sinking of the Belgrano had been untrue. The Belgrano had been heading away from the British fleet for 11 hours when sunk, and had been attacked not only because it was wrongly thought to be 'closing on the task force,' but also because the Navy could not find its real target, the aircraft carrier *25 May*.

An urgent high-level meeting was called in the Defence Secretary's office to discuss Mr Ponting's report, known in the department as the 'Crown Jewels.' Also present were Mr Stanley, Mr Ponting and the permanent secretary Clive Whitmore. The civil servants argued for truthful disclosure.

Mr Heseltine, accompanied by Mr Whitmore, then took the report personally to Mrs Thatcher.

In a parliamentary answer last week, she claimed that this was the first time she had realised the truth about the Belgrano's course. On their return from this meeting, Ministers instructed the civil servants to work on a new draft answer to the shadow cabinet, eventually sent on 13 April.

It revealed that the Belgrano had first been sighted on 1 May — not the following day as originally claimed. But the answer concealed the Belgrano's true course and claimed the sighting date was only being revealed because 'events have lost some of their original operational significance.' On Mr Stanley's insistence, a further detailed reply to Tam Dalyell, also drafted by civil servants, was withheld from the MP.

Mr Dalyell put down further parliamentary questions and the Ministry of Defence files show that Mr Stanley then consulted Downing Street again.

On 9 May, Mr Heseltine received a minute, signed by Mr Ponting, saying: 'You asked for advice... Stanley has suggested after discussion with No 10, that all the parliamentary questions should be answered: "It is not our practice to comment on military matters."'

Ponting minuted: 'I do not believe it is possible to sustain this line.' Much similar material had been released and it was unclassified. In accordance with the normal rules, he wrote: 'There is no reason for withholding this information.'

In July, inaccurate testimony was drafted, with Mr Heseltine's endorsement, and submitted to the Foreign Affairs Committee.

A memorandum from Mr J. S. Legge, head of the Ministry of Defence department concerned, noted that truthful information 'would provide more than Ministers have so far been prepared to reveal over the Belgrano affair.'

That document was leaked to Mr Dalyell, who showed it to the committee. It privately agreed to alert Mr Heseltine to the leak within his department, but also to insist that he explain his position.

Mr Heseltine ordered his own departmental security officials to mount a 'leak inquiry.' The chief constable of the Ministry of Defence police recommended against any prosecution under the Official Secrets Act, because no damage had been done to national security. A letter of resignation from Mr Ponting was accepted by his departmental superiors.

Once again, official advice was overturned. Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General, ordered a prosecution. Mr Heseltine has denied influencing him. Ministry of Defence records show he told Sir Ewen Broadbent, the second permanent secretary at the Ministry, at meeting on 13 August, that if Sir Michael would not prosecute, he (Heseltine) at least wanted the culprit dismissed.

It was the decision to prosecute Mr Ponting, who now faces trial at the Old Bailey — and who denies having committed any crime — which led to *The Observer's* disclosure of the background to conflicting Government statements on the sinking of the Argentine cruiser.

Yesterday in Parliament

SOVIET ARMS IN NICARAGUA FEAR CAUSES CONCERN

By WILLIAM WEEKES and ANTHONY LOOCH
Parliamentary Staff

GOVERNMENT concern that Soviet MiG fighter aircraft might have been sent to the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua was voiced by Sir GEOFFREY HOWE, Foreign Secretary, in the Commons yesterday.

It would, he said, be most regrettable if any steps were taken at this stage to introduce weapons systems which would inevitably be seen as a threat to other countries in the region.

Sir Geoffrey added in terms which appeared to include any possible reaction by the United States: "The situation is one which, in our view, calls for the greatest possible restraint on all sides."

The Foreign Secretary, speaking in the resumed debate on the Queen's Speech, insisted that the Government had been right not to send observers to Nicaragua for the elections.

There was no possibility of a genuinely free and fair contest, however orderly the polling might have appeared to visitors who spent the last few days in the country.

Mr HEALEY, Shadow Foreign Secretary, said Sir Geoffrey had a duty to warn the United States how Europe would regard American military intervention in Nicaragua.

Tragic events

Observers had borne out the view that the support received by the Sandinista Government represented the overwhelming view of the people of Nicaragua.

Sir Geoffrey said the first foreign affairs debate of the parliamentary year was overshadowed by two tragic events in Ethiopia and India.

Britain had taken the lead in the EEC, to expand and speed up famine relief to Ethiopia and this prompt response had been followed by many countries in East and West.

Many MPs had already expressed their feelings at the "senseless, cowardly assassination of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs Gandhi."

"The British Government and people totally condemn the tiny minority of people here who have sought to exploit, and still more shocking to rejoice, at this evil deed."

Major obstacle

But the incident at Britain's Durban Consulate, and the South African Government's refusal to return the four men to face charges in the Coventry court, showed that its policies could be a major obstacle to stable relations.

Britain welcomed Argentina's return to democracy, but the previous week's debate in the United Nations General Assembly showed that the country's failure to take any account of the wishes of the Falkland islanders was still a fundamental obstacle to any solution.

"The Argentine resolution insisted on the resumption of negotiations, aimed at transferring sovereignty, as if the brutal invasion of the islands had never taken place."

The British Government was not prepared to discuss sovereignty over the islands.

The greatest challenge facing the West's foreign policy-makers, however, was to establish stable, peaceful relations with Eastern Europe.

He said that whenever he met President Chernenko, the Soviet leader, he had been struck not so much by the differences between Russia and the West—although these were real and substantial—as by the similarity of what we say are the basic aims of our people.

"Time and again, I have found that we are separated, not so much by the words we use as by the meaning we attach to them."

It should be the West's task to try to bridge that gap and to reconcile differing approaches.

The Foreign Secretary said he had had several discussions with the Spanish Foreign Minister about Gibraltar, and expected to meet him again shortly.

The talks had focused on the Lisbon Statement which provided for the lifting of restrictions on communications between Spain and Gibraltar, and for the start of negotiations to end the differences between Britain and Spain over Gibraltar.

Most regrettable

He said the roots of the conflict in Central America were indigenous to that region, but they had been exploited by those who had little interest in the establishment of truly democratic government.

"In recent days there have been reports of further arms supplies to Nicaragua. We share the concern that has been widely expressed about the possibility that this shipment included high-performance fighter aircraft."

"It would be most regrettable if any steps were taken at this stage, to introduce weapons systems which would inevitably be seen as a threat to other countries in the region, and which would set back the hopes of a successful outcome to the Contadora negotiations."

Britain was glad to welcome El Salvador's "return to democracy" but the two main opposition parties had been effectively harassed by Sandinista mobs, into withdrawing from the election.

"In those circumstances, there was no possibility of a genuinely free and fair contest, however orderly the polling may have appeared to visitors who spent the last few days in Nicaragua."

There had been some encouraging new developments in southern Africa, including the Lusaka Agreement on troop withdrawals from Angola, and the Nkomati Accord between South Africa and Mozambique. There also seemed a greater prospect now of progress over Namibia.

'Dangerous world'

The EEC had now found a sound and durable basis for its financial arrangements. In the coming years, practical measures and tangible benefits for the peoples of the Community were required.

Sir Geoffrey added: "In a dangerous and unstable world, we have shown that our country stands for civilised and democratic values. That is the basis on which we shall continue to promote British interests in the coming year."

Mr HEALEY said the Nicaraguan elections were regarded as fair and free by the all-party group of British MPs who went there and by the 400 unofficial American observers.

"There is no doubt—all observers have borne this out—that the support received by the Sandinista Government represented the overwhelming view of the people of Nicaragua."

He "deeply regretted" that the Government had not joined its European partners in speaking out against United States intervention in Nicaragua in recent months.

The American administration had violated the ruling of The International Court in the Hague. By mining Nicaraguan harbours it had violated the United Nations Charter and the treaties of the Organisation of American States.

'Disastrous foray'

"Many of us can remember how, in the aftermath of another American election, the CIA bounced the new President into a disastrous foray against Cuba in the Bay of Pigs affair."

"All the indications of the last two days are that something similar has been happening in the United States."

Nicaragua had the same right to self-determination and sovereignty as the Falkland Islands or any other part of that great sub-continent.

He issued a warning that further cuts in Britain's overseas aid would expose the "odious and cruel hypocrisy" of what the Government had been saying in the wake of the famine in Ethiopia.

There was also anxiety on the Conservative benches about possible cuts in the aid programme in the review of public spending.

Mr ROBERT RHODES JAMES (C., Cambridge) said it was inconceivable that cuts were being proposed not only in aid but in the BBC's overseas budget and British Council funding.

The House rose at 2.57 p.m.

Cabinet papers query Britain's Falklands claim

By Richard Norton-Taylor

British claims to the Falkland Islands are not as solid as the Government has suggested, according to a cabinet memorandum of 1927 which has just been placed in the Public Record Office.

It also helps to explain why the Foreign Office is considering plans to sever the administrative link between the Falklands and South Georgia.

The memo was written by a Foreign Office official in December 1927 after a brush with Argentina which Stanley Baldwin's cabinet wanted to smooth over as quickly as possible. It states that as far as the Falkland Islands were concerned: "Our rights of possession were not so incontestable as to render a renewal of the old controversy desirable from a British point of view."

The immediate cause of the cabinet's discussion in 1927 about the long-running controversy was a decision by Argentina to erect a wireless station on the South Orkney Islands, about 400 miles south-east of the Falklands. It refused to apply to Britain for a licence, insisting that the station was on Argentine territory.

The Foreign Office considered whether a protest to the International Telegraphic Bureau in Bern would be "useful or desirable." The conclusion was reached, the memo

says "that such action would not greatly tend to strengthen the British claim to the islands and might precipitate a controversy."

No good could arise, the Foreign Office added, from bringing matters to a head so long as the islands remained "de facto British possessions."

"At the same time," the memo adds in a significant passage, "any controversy about the South Orkney Islands would inevitably involve the Falklands Islands question too."

The Foreign Office has consistently taken the view that Britain's claim over the Falklands themselves is not as strong as that over the dependencies, including South Georgia. As the 1927 memo, classified as "very confidential," puts it: "The British title to South Georgia and South Orkneys appears to be indisputable, and Argentina cannot treat all three (these two dependencies and the Falklands) as a unit."

The Foreign Office said the islands were discovered by an Englishman in 1592. The first settlement was French, but in 1770 the Spanish captured the new British settlement at Port Egmont and sent all the inhabitants back to Britain.

But a deal was made — and criticised by MPs at the time as an "ignominious compromise" — whereby Spain agreed to restore Port Egmont "without prejudice to the question of sovereignty of the islands as a whole."

Britain did not object to the action of the Spanish, who "continued in undisturbed exercise of all the rights of sovereignty over the islands until about the year 1808."

In 1820 Argentina took formal possession of the Falklands; 12 years later, the British sent HMS Clio to turn out the Argentine governor.

The following year Argentina told Lord Palmerston that "settlement, and not discovery was the important factor in determining the rights of sovereignty, and the Spanish settlement had been established before and had lasted longer than the British."

Palmerston retorted that Britain's right to the islands had been "unequivocally asserted" in 1771.

This was the account given to the 1927 cabinet. Ministers were clearly impressed. They decided to soften their reaction to Argentina about the South Orkney incident and omitted the phrase "unfriendly act" in a draft telegram to Buenos Aires.

The Cabinet Memorandum is Available from the Public Records Office (Kew Gardens) on personal collection only. (Mon - Fri, 9.30 - 3.30)

Other possible source - Foreign Office

The fruitless struggle to keep the Belgrano campaign afloat



Hugo Young

AS A TACTICIAN involved in the Belgrano case, Mr John Stanley, the minister for the armed services, is a dangerous man to have around. He is one of those politicians with only a glancing allegiance to the truth. He tells bits of the truth, and has never been known to tell a lie. But bits of the truth are not the truth. The whole truth is a commodity he goes to exceptional lengths to conceal.

He acquired this habit early when in opposition he ran Mrs Thatcher's private office. Later, when he became minister of housing, concealment became his hallmark.

He was in fact a quite effective minister. Politicians and officials give him almost sole credit for pushing through the government's council-house sales programme. But if communication is the first art of the top politician, Stanley has

reached his ceiling. He simply doesn't believe in it. John Carvel, in a memorable piece in these columns two years ago, chronicled his persistent refusal to answer questions from either a journalist or a select committee. "The charge levelled here," wrote Carvel, "is not that he influences the flow of information, but that he strangles it."

Applied to the Belgrano saga, this talent may have superficial attractions. Certainly Mr Stanley was quick to deploy it. Every time he appears in the leaked documents revealing ministers' discussions on how to handle the case, it is as censor, varnisher, gravedigger of the truth. At the crucial point last May, when ministers had to come to grips with the discovery that they had misled Parliament about the course the Belgrano was steering, Stanley was clear enough how every question should be answered: "It is not our practice to comment on military matters."

If this approach had been followed, it would have been disastrous. We know this because to an extent it was followed, and to that extent it put the government into an ever deeper hole. It is what led to the release into the public domain the documents which showed what has been going on. Whoever leaked them couldn't stomach the Stanley style with which Defence Secretary Heseltine, Stanley's patron at both his departments, went along.

style which has alone caused all the government's problems. There has never been much mileage in what actually happened to the Belgrano. Only the official reluctance to talk about the details, and admit it got some of them wrong when talking in the heat of battle in May 1982, has made this into a *cause celebre* — and made one missing log-book seem like an almanac of infamy which would do for Mrs Thatcher what Profumo did for Macmillan.

THE OPPOSITION'S conduct, however, is no more convincing. It seems hugely overblown. Dr Owen talks about the Tories' Watergate, and Mr Hattersley demands a judicial inquiry. Both seem to have overlooked the fact that Stanley's counsel was ultimately not accepted.

Mrs Thatcher has said a great deal about the Belgrano. It was one of the benefits of the parliamentary recess. Had Parliament been sitting when the Belgrano Papers broke, it is hard to imagine the prime minister responding with anything like the detail she produced in letters to MPs. The letters were a vastly improved substitute for Question Time.

In a letter to Mr George Foulkes, she gave a specific account of the legal and strategic background to the sinking, as well as a detailed record of how the decision was taken. To any fair-minded person, this threw impressive light on Day One of the Argentinian attack, and it justified the Belgrano's sinking.

In a letter to Dr Owen,

Mrs Thatcher admitted that she should have been more candid — an exceedingly rare confession of error. The Belgrano's change of course might have been admitted as soon as it was discovered by the politicians, she said. Since this admission is what the opposition parties have wanted all along, is there not a case for closing the book on what Mrs Thatcher has now said?

Admittedly, she wouldn't have said so much if the leaks hadn't occurred. The Stanley philosophy is scarcely aberrant in governing circles. Most ministers tell half-truths when they can get away with them. Many might like to imitate Mr Stanley if they had his brass neck. In the Thatcher letters there remain necessary gaps, particularly about signals and intelligence. And the confession of error is couched in dismissive and ungracious terms.

But all this is pretty irrelevant. Not only are the opposition underplaying what the prime minister had disclosed, they conjure up a quite unrealistic picture of how war can and should be fought. Having written subversively in the run-up to the Falklands war, it never occurred to me, after war had begun, that the Brits should fight with a hand tied behind their back. Every Exocet attack hardened this feeling. Everything since discovered about the sinking confirms that it had to be done.

Only one discovery might have changed that picture: the one Mr Tam Dalyell was seeking when he set out on

his admirable quest to get the Belgrano decision, as it were, reopened. He believed the sinking scuppered a peace plan, and was intended to do so. But no evidence has since substantiated that. Rather the opposite.

The Dalyell campaign has had good results. It brought forth the Ponting Papers. It forced the Government to speak. It established that the Belgrano had indeed changed course. But its central target has not been hit. Under the guise of principled concern, Dr Owen, Mr Kinnock and the rest are flogging a horse already close to death.

WHAT, THEN, should they do? This is the real tragedy of the Belgrano affair. 30 months after the hulk went to the bottom. It is Dalyell's tragedy, and Owen's and the British taxpayer's and possibly the British fighting man's.

Embarrassed though the Government had contrived to be by the entire saga, and vulnerable though it is to the Stanley technique for turning victory into a kind of defeat, the truth is that the Belgrano lets them off the hook.

Far more important than the number of knots the Belgrano could or could not make is the extent to which Argentina is rearming now. This appears to be considerable. Such inhibitions as there were among Britain's allies against selling aircraft, missiles, submarines and other armaments have vanished. Argentina is re-equipping for war, even though it may not be immi-

nently preparing to fight one.

This puts in a menacing context the sheer inanity of British policy. In one sense it may justify the colossal military presence we maintain on the Falklands.

At the same time, it's a reminder that not all the military arguments are on one side. Argentina is equipping itself to return: an expedition which must become an increasing possibility unless a serious attempt is made to settle the issue by diplomatic means.

Since ministers, for a host of political and psychological reasons, don't like addressing themselves to that fact, the Belgrano is an exquisite distraction. It poses only the smallest political risk. It consists of thrashing round a set of facts which, even were they to turn against the Government, would evoke little threat. What the public thinks is that we won a war and we might easily have lost, and that's about the end of it.

How much more fruitful it might be if the energy being invested in this futile campaign were directed to the future and not the past. Mr Dalyell, a justly famous backbencher, has scored all his previous triumphs with efforts to change the world. The Belgrano will change nothing. Concentrated efforts by opposition leaders to remove ministers' heads from the Falklands sand might change something. For there, too, the Stanley approach to democracy is in the driving seat, says nothing, deny everything, and tell the questioner to go to hell.

MP SEEKS BELGRANO FINDINGS

By DAVID MILLWARD

MR HESELTINE, Defence Secretary, will be under strong pressure this week to disclose the findings of the Board of Inquiry into the disappearance of a log book from *Conqueror*, the submarine which sank the *Belgrano*.

The Defence Secretary could even be recalled by the Foreign Affairs Select Committee which questioned him at length on Wednesday.

Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cunnock and Doon Valley, has tabled written questions to Mr Heseltine asking him to release the findings, and to disclose when first he knew of the log's disappearance.

The Ministry of Defence is believed to have discovered the log's disappearance when Mr Foulkes tabled a question on Sept. 27 regarding the *Conqueror's* movements. It set up a Board of Inquiry on Oct 25.

Lost for 2 years

The control room log—a pale green exercise book containing routine navigational information—formed part of a bound volume covering six months of the submarine's operations. It should have been at the Common Services Record Office in Hayes, Middlesex.

The log appears to have been missing for two years and Mr Foulkes said the MoD had been trying frantically to find it ever since.

The log's disappearance was finally admitted on Tuesday night as Mr Heseltine was preparing to face the select committee of seven Conservative and four Labour MPs the next day.

Mr Foulkes said yesterday that he had been told that the log had been removed by a crew member who was horrified by the 368 deaths involved in the sinking of the *Belgrano*.

Pirate flag flown

"He and other crew members did not like the blood-thirsty attitude of the return of the *Conqueror*, flying the skull and crossbones, with all the implications of that.

"In view of these revelations I shall be tabling further questions demanding a full statement by Mr Heseltine," said Mr Foulkes.

According to reports yesterday, the log is in safe-keeping "somewhere outside London." But the Ministry of Defence said last night that this was "mere speculation."

Posterred abroad

NOW THAT DAYS of heavy rain have ended the West Country's drought problem for at least another year, officials at the South-West Water Authority have cheerfully agreed to an unusual export request.

Surplus supplies of their "Save It" posters are to be sent to the Falklands to encourage islanders, both permanent and temporary, to be more careful in the use of water.

This unexpected market opened up after one of the senior officials working on the Mount Pleasant airfield project in the Falklands had spent his summer holiday in Cornwall, when the water shortage was at its height.

He was so impressed by the efficiency of the campaign in persuading people to be thrifty with their dwindling supplies that he asked the S W W A for help.

Argentina to pay overdue interest

BY PETER MONTAGNON, EUROMARKETS CORRESPONDENT

ARGENTINA will pay tomorrow a further \$75m (£60m) in overdue interest on its \$45bn foreign debt, Citibank said over the weekend as head of the creditor banks' negotiating committee.

The payment follows two days of talks late last week between the committee and an Argentine delegation headed by Sr Enrique Garcia Vazquez, its central bank governor. It will bring interest payments on public sector debt substantially up to date to May 15 this year.

But the amount will not be sufficient to persuade U.S. government agencies responsible for supervising the banking system to lift the damaging

substandard classification placed on the bulk of Argentina's foreign debt earlier this month.

Most of Argentina's debt, on which interest is more than 30 days overdue has been declared substandard in a move which has complicated talks on a new \$20bn debt rescheduling package.

Bankers who attended last week's talks said the new interest payment was conceived more as a gesture of good will than as any attempt to reverse the official downgrading of Argentina's debt.

Argentina wants to do as much as it can to improve relations with creditor banks before

launching new loans of between \$3bn to \$5bn. It sees any interest payments, however small, as a step in the right direction.

Mr William Rhodes, the senior Citibank executive who heads the banks' committee, said on Saturday that talks on the new loan will resume this week.

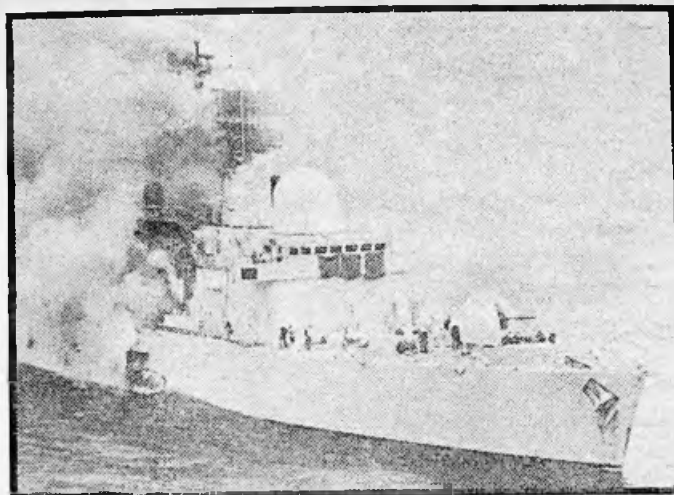
A clear effort is now under way to move ahead with the discussions which have made little progress since Argentina announced in September that it had reached agreement with the International Monetary Fund on an economic stabilisation programme.

Argentina's last interest payment was on October 24 when it paid \$58m. On September 28 it paid \$100m.

● Peru is to propose a renegotiation of interest payments on its \$12.7bn foreign debt in talks with creditor banks and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in New York later this month, Prime Minister Luis Percovich said yesterday, Reuter reports from Lima.

Sr Percovich told reporters after a weekly Cabinet meeting that a Peruvian mission would begin formal talks with the committee and IMF officials in the last week of the month.

The Standard
12th November 1984



CAN anyone tell me whether the Argentinian government is holding an inquiry into the sinking of HMS Sheffield (above) or the use of Exocet missiles during the Falkland conflict? What price patriotism? — Jack Saragoussi, Onslow Gardens, South Kensington.

Just 30 Months After We Sent The Argentinians Packing

WHAT'S GONE WRONG IN THE FALKLANDS?

Below—Terry at Buckingham Palace when he was awarded the MBE for services rendered during the Falklands war.

ALTHOUGH born and bred on the Falkland Islands, Terry Peck, at 46, is planning to pull up his roots and return to Scotland, the land of his ancestors.

Few men know the Falklands better. He was in the local police force for 21 years—14 of them as Chief Policeman.

Recently he's made some bitter criticisms of the way the Falklands are being run. We talked to him at his home in Port Stanley.

YOU say you're disenchanted with the Falklands. Why?

A number of us fear we're not going to get the support and encouragement we need from London, and that we'll end up simply a grant-aided colony. We could be totally viable, for the seas around the Falklands are the richest untapped resource in the world—teeming with excellent fish. If London granted us a 200-mile fishing limit and we could run a deep sea fleet, we'd soon be self-supporting.

We also understand South Georgia is to be separated from the Falklands administration and run from London. It's the only deep water harbour for a fishing fleet and we can't afford to lose it. The current projects, such as roads and the airport, will not bring extra income to the islands. Our local budget is already running into deficit.

WHAT do you see as the Falklands' major problem?

Money. Trying to balance the islands' budget. There are so many things to do, but so little cash. In the last 12 months, however, the military has tightened up on wastage. The new airport, for example, is good news. It's basically military, but will serve the Falklands well.

HOW has life on the islands changed as a result of the war with Argentina?

Socially it's gone backwards, mainly because there are so many extra civilians and



military. There are a number of activities — Scouts for the youngsters, a badminton club twice a week, rugby union, soccer and darts during the winter. But locals are finding themselves swamped by contractors' men and soldiers.

A big change for the better is in farming, where the subdivision of land is giving the islanders a chance to put a stake in their own land.

The population of 1800 is almost all British and mainly occupied in farming 650,000 sheep. The wool produced is of very high quality because of the clean air.

IS morale higher or lower now than it was before the Argentinians landed?

Life on the farms is virtually unchanged. But in Port Stanley, where half the population live, people are despondent. They see the only hope as a strong fishing industry.

YOU'VE alleged some of the money allocated to building up the Falklands is being badly spent. Can you give an example?

Our budget is £4½ million a year. We raise that from harbour dues, by selling wool and stamps, for they can bring in 20 per cent. of the economy and are cherished worldwide.

But we're going into the red. At the end of the war £15 million was provided for

rehabilitation. Of the 54 houses built only half are occupied. Services to them haven't been completed. We need new houses badly.

Over £6 million was for roads, but the standard of work was poor. They'll have to be dug up eventually and built all over again.

Some of the cement for our new power station was lost during unloading and hardened by being left in the open. An electrician was flown out from Britain at an estimated cost of £160 a day, but is unlikely to be able to start work on the power station until next year.

WHAT about a new hospital following the disastrous fire?

That's a sore point. We have been waiting some time for a new hospital. It's a must. The conditions are atrocious, with only a makeshift hospital. The site of the hospital which went on fire is a horrible eyesore and has yet to be cleared.

WHERE do you think savings could be made in the running of the Falklands?

Everything hinges on deep-sea fishing. A great deal more money needs to be spent on such development, rather than wasting money on open-ended contracts. They swallow up a lot but do little for the islanders. Too much is dictated from London. None of the money is going into the pockets of the islanders.

I'd like to see a new style of government based on the



method used in the Isle of Man. We need more control of our own affairs. But the Foreign Office have done nothing for 18 months now.

WHAT is the cost of living like?

Wages are about half those in the UK, but the cost of living is roughly double. In Stanley, a labourer might get around £58 a week. On the farms about £300 a month. A loaf costs 90p. A 19p tin of beans is 52p here. Washing powder is £1.40 a packet, as is breakfast cereal. The only advantage, if you can call it that, is cigarettes are half UK prices.

HOW many people are on the islands at present?

About 1800 islanders, 3500 military and 2000 civilian workers with contractors. About 8000 in all. Despite fears of problems with so many soldiers, workers and few women, we've had no unpleasant incidents. Everybody mixes well.

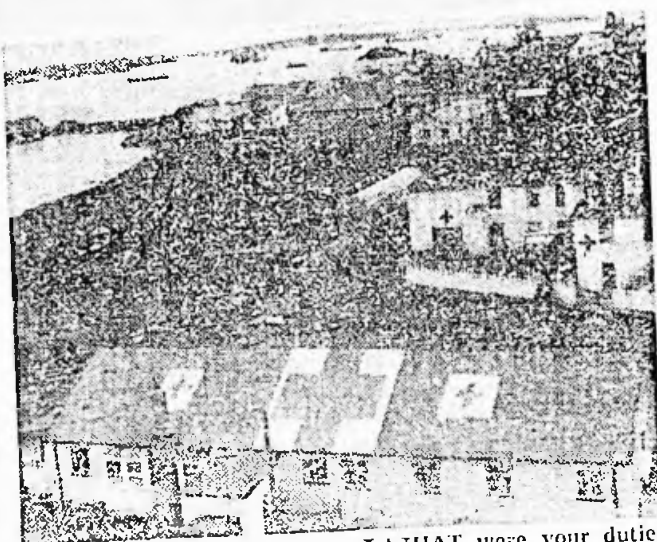
One thing does annoy islanders—the level of duty free concessions to the mili-

cont..

Cont..

The Sunday Post 11th November 1984

⊙ Right — Port Stanley — home to Terry Peck, but he's leaving it for good. The hospital in the foreground was gutted by fire in April this year. Eight people died.



lary and many of the contractors, which the islanders aren't allowed. And the wages of incomer workers are much higher than ours. Workers on the new airport, for example, get about £11,000 a year, compared with a farm worker's £3600.

IS there still danger from mines, unexploded bombs, etc?

Large areas are still dangerous. The Royal Engineers have gone out of their way to make as many areas as possible safe. And often in terrible weather. But there are still beaches we can't go near.

WHAT'S the present feeling of the islanders towards the Argentinians?

One hundred per cent united—they want nothing to do with the Argentinians. All 1800 of us think Mrs Thatcher was absolutely right to send the Task Force and kick them out. She has our full support.

HAVE you had many new immigrants?

About 30. Not a great deal of help has been given to them. Accommodation is a problem. Sadly, some have returned to the UK after only a short time. We are in desperate need of tradesmen such as joiners and bricklayers.

WHAT were your duties in the police?

I retired from the police four years ago after 21 years' service. There was me, an inspector, a sergeant, and four constables. It's very much the same as any small town police force. There's little crime, more often domestic disputes.

WHAT will you do when you move to Scotland?

I don't know yet. After 21 years in the police, security work could be a possibility. I'm also a plumber and heating engineer by trade. I've been working in that line since leaving the police.

WHAT links have you with Scotland?

My great grandfather was Scottish. His name was Craig, and he moved to the Falklands in 1852. My mother had Scots ancestry, too. I was born in the Falklands and have lived here all my life, though I've spent a holiday in Britain. My sister married a lad from Glasgow while he was in the Falklands. They live in Glenrothes and have two children. I'll be heading their way at the end of November.

I've four children from my first marriage. The youngest lad is coming to the UK in the New Year with the hope of joining the Services.

Observer
11th November 1984

Belgrano details held as evidence

Missing log was taken by crewman

by ANDREW WILSON and DAVID LEIGH

THE missing log of the submarine Conqueror, detailing the circumstances in which she was ordered to torpedo the Belgrano, was removed by a member of the crew two years ago.

Our inquiries have disclosed that the log did not disappear because it was 'lost' by an embarrassed Government, as suspected by MPs. It was removed because some of the Conqueror's crew, aware of the public controversy, felt the need to preserve independent evidence.

They knew that the control room, or navigator's log, contained proof that the Belgrano, trailed by the Conqueror for more than a day, was heading away from the British task force rather than moving in to attack.

The green paper-covered log was removed from the nuclear submarine when, after her Falklands patrol ended in July 1982, she went into Devonport for lengthy repairs.

The Observer was able to inspect extracts from the log in the course of 1983. We saw handwritten entries relating to the first sighting of the Belgrano, its replenishment by an oil tanker while under observation, and the timing and other details of the torpedo attack.

On the way home to Faslane in the Clyde, after the Argentine surrender of the Falkland Islands, there were mixed feelings aboard the Conqueror over the re-playing for 'entertainment' of acoustic tapes which had automatically recorded the horrifying sound-effects of the attack.

According to a former crew member, two tapes were recorded in parallel. One remained in the hands of the skipper, Commander Christopher Wreford-Brown. The other was with the boat's chief weapons officer.

According to the crewman, the Conqueror's very sensitive hydrophone equipment picked up a large volume of noise in the 20-30 minutes following the twin torpedo blasts. In the silence following the explosions and the stopping of the cruiser's engines, sounds were heard which some of the crew believed to be the screams of Argentine sailors as they drowned or burned.

One officer is said to have vomited when he heard the tape. But other crewmen, proud of their achievement and congratulated by Northwood battle HQ, called for re-plays at 'Saturday night parties' on the voyage home.

It was only as the submarine neared home, and after she docked in the Clyde flying the

'Jolly Roger,' that the crew learned the full implications of the sinking, including the loss of 368 lives.

The log is now thought to be in 'safe keeping' somewhere out of London. The other two logs aboard—the main captain's log based on the navigator's document, and the signals log—went in to MoD store.

During 1983, the authors of a book 'The Sinking of the Belgrano,' Desmond Rice and Arthur Gavshon, obtained military information from their own confidential sources, one of whom also had access to the missing log.

The Ministry of Defence appears to have discovered the loss through a fortuitous question by a Labour MP, Mr George Foulkes, on 27 September, calling for detail of the Conqueror's 'movements.' This obliged them to inspect the detailed control room log. A major investigation began in secret, with crew members recalled for interrogation.

Mr Foulkes, MP for Carrick, said last night that he would table new questions in the light of this 'startling new allegation.'

Although the Ministry is anxious to play down the log's potential value to an enemy, it is now known that the Conqueror had been engaged in two top-secret exercises designed to gain information about Soviet submarine capabilities, and the effectiveness of ship-borne missiles against them, before she was sent to the South Atlantic.

During his cross-examination by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee last week, the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, conceded that key facts about the Belgrano had been deliberately concealed from Parliament after he had consulted Mrs Thatcher.

Mr Heseltine told the Committee that, after meeting Mrs Thatcher on 29 March, he gave orders to his civil servants to withhold information about the Belgrano's true course on the day she was attacked.

As a direct result, Mr Michael Legge, an MoD official, wrote a memorandum in July, outlining ways to avoid disclosing 'more than ministers have so far been prepared to reveal about the Belgrano affair,' Mr Heseltine said.

Mr Legge knew when he wrote the minute, Mr Heseltine testified, that 'I had taken certain decisions in the March period . . . he knew of those particular general approaches . . . they were political judgments.'

IT'S ALL very well for Tam Dalyell to explain nobly that he missed the Belgrano show at

the Commons on Wednesday because it would have meant cancelling previous engagements. But, strangely, he wasn't that adverse to cancelling previous engagements last week, when something more interesting came up.

On Thursday he was due to go to the Department of Energy for a meeting attended by members of the Lothian Council to discuss some aspect of heating policy for local councils. He said that he couldn't be there, however, because he had been invited to speak in a debate at the Oxford Union.

MAN OF THE WEEK

Just two-and-a-half years ago Jeremy Moore became one of this country's most distinguished soldiers of recent times when he took his men from San Carlos Bay to Port Stanley to become one of the principal architects of the British victory on the Falkland Islands. Immediately after having received the official surrender of the Argentine forces, he greeted the newly liberated people of the Falklands with the memorable words, "Hello, I'm Jeremy Moore and I'm sorry it took us three weeks to get here". In an age deprived of heroes he seems one of the few who can command the title by right.

Yet, sadly, the world has not done its best for Major-General Sir John Jeremy Moore, KCB, OBE, MC and Bar, in return. For while other generals successful in war have been promoted and revered, this neat 56-year-old Royal Marine was retired from the service and then spent more than 15 months unemployed. The General, who has had a road named after him in Port Stanley, a pub named after him in Plymouth and has even had a military march written in his honour, found himself apparently forgotten.

In fact this small, wiry commando, whose experience in battle stretches from Malaya to Northern Ireland, only found a full-time job again in July of this year, when he became the first Director General of the newly amalgamated Food Manufacturers' Federation and Food and Drink Federation.

He has never complained - "and I don't want to give the impression I'm embittered, because I'm not".

But at his new job, Jeremy Moore has stopped using his military title, "because I have always believed in the future rather than the past".

It is the comment of a dedicated and remarkable professional soldier, who until retirement devoted his life to the Royal Marines and became their most decorated officer. When the battle for the Falklands came he was also the most experienced active soldier available to take command of the Land Forces there, a task he discharged with "supreme ability", in the words of one British field

marshal. His reward was a knighthood... and redundancy.

Nearly killed in an air attack on the day before the last battle on the Falkland Islands, Moore has borne his fate with dignity. "The rules of the service are the rules", he can say now. "There was nowhere for me to go". But he adds, "I do miss the Marines, the soldiers themselves".

No matter how urbane and reflective Moore may appear, he is also, according to a friend, "quite fanatically brave". Certainly his career has been distinguished by acts of remarkable courage. At 24, when he was a troop subaltern with 40 Commando, he won his first

Military Cross in a jungle ambush in Malaya.

Ten years later, in 1962, he won his second MC in one of the most renowned Royal Marine battles of modern times. As a company commander of 42 Commando he successfully led 100 Marines in boats up the Brunei River at night to free a group of civilian hostages held by about 350 rebels.

The action epitomised his philosophy of "hit hard and move quickly". A decade later he was awarded a military OBE for operational service in Northern Ireland. He was Commanding Officer of 42 Commando during Operation Motorman to clear "no-go" areas in Ulster.

Yet Moore has never been only a fighter. Born in Staffordshire, the son of a colonel who had himself won the MC on the Somme in 1916, Moore was educated at Cheltenham College. He joined the Marines as a probationary second lieutenant in 1947, when he was 18.

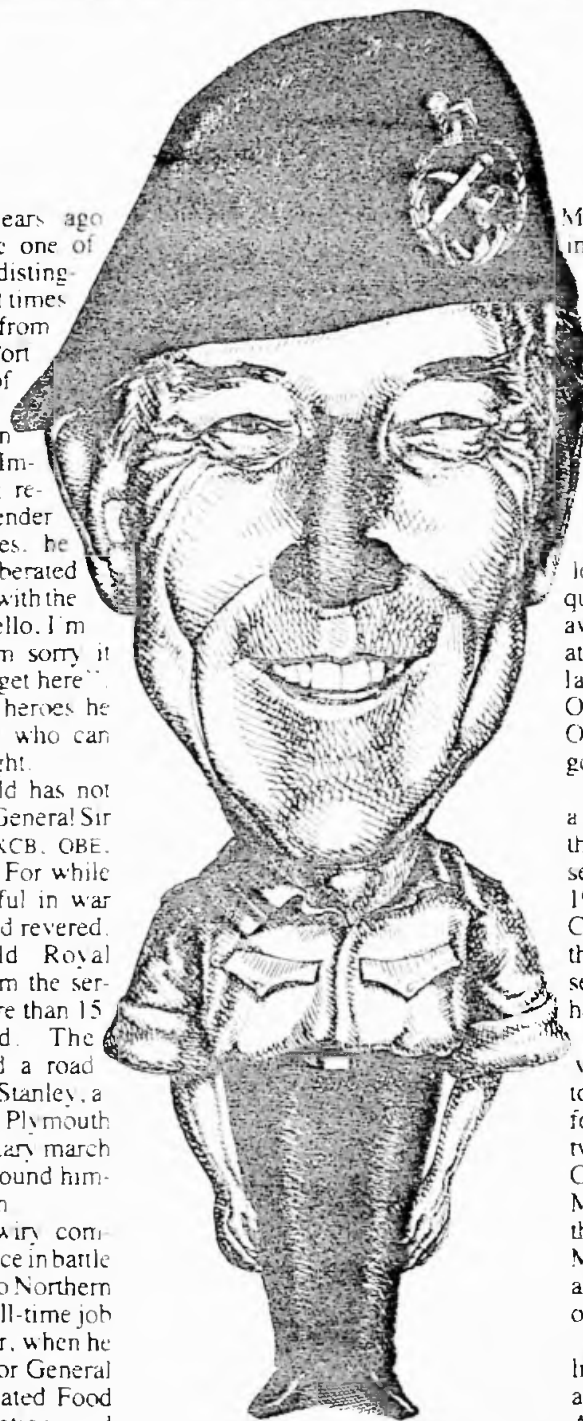
Then, apart from active service, he also served as an instructor at Sandhurst, was responsible for commando training and, between 1973 and 1975, was even Commandant of the Royal Marines School of Music (and thereby officially Purveyor of Music to the Royal Navy). He adores music "even though I can only play the gramophone".

A popular commander and a lifelong Christian, Moore married a clergyman's daughter, Vervan Acworth, in 1966, when he was 38.

They have three children, Helen, now 17, Sarah, 15, and Andrew, 13. All three are still at boarding school.

This cultivated, precise officer, who carried Shakespeare's sonnets with him into battle, who still runs to keep fit and who builds painstaking models of the ships and planes he knew, may have become yesterday's hero, but he can still say firmly, "The important thing to remember is that there has to be a preparedness to make sacrifices for what is right; and to accept that there are principles, ideas and people that are worth dying for".

On this Sunday of all Sundays, he and that are worth remembering. T



JEREMY MOORE

By Geoffrey Wansell

Mail on Sunday
11th November 1984

Galtieri's luck

GENERAL GALTIERI and eight members of his junta may get off lightly when they come to trial.

A judge has ruled that a military court should hear charges of murder and torture during their seven-year rule, and of failing in the Falklands war. Their

ARGENTINA

fellow soldiers are expected to be sympathetic.

Meanwhile, the families of murdered Argentinians are demanding the extradition of two of the regime's torturers arrested in Switzerland.

Rethinking the sinkings

I CANNOT understand why the Belgrano bores who are so determined to question this country's conduct during time of war should confine themselves to the battle for the Falklands.

What about the Bismarck, sunk by us in 1941,

with more than 2,000 hands, while heading home for Germany?

Or the battleships Scharnhorst and Tirpitz, both sunk — with a combined loss of more than 4,000 lives — while being refitted in Norwegian ports in 1943?

For, although Britain was officially at war with Germany at the time, Norway was not — having been forced to sign a 'peace treaty' with Hitler in 1940.

Surely these are matters which also cry out for an official inquiry?

Belgrano warning by Stevas

By Richard Evans
Lobby Reporter

Mr Norman St John Stevas, Conservative MP for Chelmsford and former Leader of the Commons, last night publicly criticized the Government's handling of the General Belgrano controversy.

He said the Government was at fault because of its "unwillingness" to take Parliament fully into its confidence and because of the "secretiveness" adopted by ministers.

The failure to inform MPs or the press about the issue was ill-judged.

Mr Stevas's criticism, the first by a Conservative MP, came two days after he requested, as a member of the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, the publication of a comprehensive and detailed account of the events surrounding the sinking of the Argentine cruiser.

Mr Stevas, interviewed last night on Channel Four's *A Week in Politics*, also criticized Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, for his "ill-judged" remark that very few people in Britain were interested in the Belgrano controversy.

He believed the Government was totally justified in sinking the Belgrano, but agreed there could be a case for the select committee subpoenaing the commanding officer of HMS Conqueror, which sank the Belgrano, or calling for logs of the submarine which were not missing.

A sinking feeling about misinformation

In this, Armistice it is a mockery to who laid down their for this country to have Heseltine use pseudo-patriotism in the Commons in yet another furtherance of the original misstatement to the House by the then defence minister, John Nott.

That is the basic issue; not the red herring now being trawled by ministers that the Belgrano was sunk to save British lives. That in itself is a hypothetical argument; what is factual is that 258 British lives were lost — and many other servicemen horribly burned and disabled — in the Falklands war after the Belgrano was sunk.

Those who died in all wars did so to preserve our democracy and freedom. It is fundamental to those privileges that our elected representatives to Parliament are not given false information by ministers or a civil service department, whose apparent highest moral principles are to use a discredited Official Secrets Act to prosecute a man for allegedly supplying the evidence to an MP that he had been given wrong information by a civil service department and a minister.

The Home Secretary assures Parliament that he is in control of telephone-tapping; that the sensitive, confidential information on all citizens of the UK being daily fed into Government computers will be "protected" and will not be used against them. Can he be believed? How can we discriminate between what Government statement to believe and what not to believe?

MPs must not be distracted by the hypothetical argument; such misstatements by senior civil ser-



vants and ministers to the Commons are unacceptable in a democracy. — I am, Jock Kane, 20 Hengistbury Road, Barton on Sea, Hants.

Sir, — The Prime Minister has said that the War Cabinet was not told that the Belgrano had been steaming away from the task force for many hours before the decision to change the rules of engagement of HMS Conqueror was taken, although this information was in the possession of the Ministry of Defence in London some three hours before the time when this decision was taken.

Yet clearly this information was at the least, potentially relevant to the decisions which might have had to be taken by the War Cabinet in general, and to the decision to change the rules of engagement in particular.

It has therefore been suggested that the statements of the Prime Minister and other ministers about what they were told and when have been inaccurate. However, the circumstances and what has been said raises the alternative suspicion that someone in the Ministry of Defence deliberately did not

trust the War Cabinet with the information about the course of the Belgrano — fearing perhaps that if ministers were given this information, they might endanger the lives of members of our armed forces, or reach some unsatisfactory compromise with Argentina.

This suspicion demands an inquiry. Bearing as it does on the democratic control of the armed forces and of government in general it is the most serious permanent issue raised by the Belgrano affair. — Yours faithfully, J. D. C. Turner, 95 Cloudeley Road, London N10.

Sir, — In your Leader (November 8) about the Belgrano, you ask: "What is the Government trying to hide?"

I suggest that the answer is simple. As not a single British serviceman had been killed before the sinking of the Belgrano, it follows that the Government is trying to disguise the fact that its decision guaranteed acts of practically suicidal revenge by the Argentinian forces. faithfully.

Lee Challenor-Chadwick, Meadow Lane, Denton, Lancashire.

Sir, — When I was researching my recent novel, Falklands Fighter Pilot, I had to dig quite deeply into the Belgrano incident. It was painfully obvious that full disclosure would benefit the Government and the Conservative Party. Why then has an inquiry been refused so persistently?

There is a clue in the statements. Although more than 200 miles from the Falklands, the Belgrano was endangering "elements of the task force." Note: elements, not the task force itself. The implication is that these elements were not with the main body of ships, but were well south-west, in the immediate vicinity of a cruiser that, albeit antiquated, was sudden death to a thin-skinned destroyer or frigate.

Why else did admirals risk their careers by not informing the War Cabinet of the notorious change of course? And why did that Cabinet not sack them for this?

What were our ships doing there? It is easy to speculate: remember that helicopter mysteriously lost in Chile? But it is unwise to insist on knowing. Inference is one thing; hard, admitted fact another. Our friends, and our diplomacy, could all too readily be compromised by probing too deep.

In seeking a truth that may, at worst, embarrass a few ministers, the national interest could be damaged. This is an occasion for trust, and for leaving the final verdict to history.

Noel Falconer, 223 Bramhall Moor Lane, Stockport, Cheshire.

MP presses Heseltine on lost log

By Rodney Cowton

Opposition MPs believe that the missing navigation log-book of HMS Conqueror, the nuclear submarine which sank the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano, could cast light on whether the submarine commander knew before he sank her that the Belgrano had been instructed to return to base.

Mr George Foulkes, a Labour frontbench spokesman, yesterday tabled about half a dozen questions to be answered by Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence.

Mr Foulkes's questions are designed to establish, among other things, whether HMS Conqueror returned to the scene of the sinking, possibly to finish off the Belgrano in the belief that she had not sunk.

If that was the case, it is argued that this impression could have been gained only from an interception of Argentine messages, because the Belgrano's escorting ships had reported to their headquarters that the cruiser had not sunk.

The significance of this, in the eyes of the Government's critics, is that if it were established that this Argentine message had been intercepted, it would also be likely that other messages, on the day before the sinking, had also been intercepted.

MPs seek help for St Helena

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

An emergency grass landing strip for a Hercules aircraft is recommended for the remote island of St Helena in a report by two MPs.

Mr John Marek, Labour MP for Wrexham, and Mr Jonathan Sayeed, Conservative MP for Bristol, East, who spent seven days in the British colony last month (and took about as long to get there and back) say that economic viability will not come about in the foreseeable future.

But, although St Helena will have to go on relying on British aid, money should still be spent on trying to make it self-sufficient.

The MPs, who praise recent decisions to encourage forestry and carry out an offshore fisheries survey as steps in the right direction, now want electricity extended throughout the island for its 5,500 people.



THE TIMES DIARY

Ponting's choice

Contrary to popular belief, I can reveal that the Old Bailey trial of Clive Ponting, the civil servant accused of leaking documents on the Belgrano affair, will not be the political bonanza once thought. In what my sources at the Bar hailed yesterday as a "clever piece of casting", Ponting's solicitors have retained QC Bruce Laughland to defend him in the case, opening on January 28. The retention of Laughland - neither a tub thumper nor a member of the radical bar - heralds a change in tactics for Ponting's lawyers, who, I understand, had at first considered briefing a QC with some experience in the "political" arena. For Laughland, a Recorder of the Crown Court, the trial will certainly be his most high-profile case and one of considerable constitutional importance. Until now, his work has been relatively run-of-the-mill - murders, insurance and planning cases. Polite and elegant, Laughland recently won the heart of a client who, despite the QC's valiant efforts, was jailed for armed robbery. Six months into his sentence at Dartmoor, the man sent a giant teddy bear for Laughland's son. So touched was Laughland, he dropped in to thank him - only to have more gifts for the child pressed on him.

About turn

Discussing possible American reprisals against Nicaragua over the MiG fighter issue, bellicose Tory backbencher Julian Amery told the *World at One* yesterday: "In the real world one really can't attach too much importance to this concept of sovereignty." A novel view from a former Foreign Office minister who, during the Falklands crisis, demanded that the Government "make the Argentinian dictator disgorge what he has taken" in order to "wipe the stain from Britain's honour".

Ⓢ Fortress Falklands has been infiltrated - and Liberal MP Geraint Howells, just returned from the islands, has photographic proof. His picture shows an inner wall of a new RAF canteen just outside Port Stanley daubed with a giant CND symbol.

Claim to Falklands

From Mr M. R. Meadmore

Sir, Your perceptive editorial on the obstacles to Anglo-Argentine talks (October 31) contains one statement that it seems right to question, viz, "no Argentine government can ever renounce the essential claim" to sovereignty of the Falkland Islands.

In 1927 the Argentine foreign minister examined the British title to the islands and concluded that it was "exceedingly strong". Further, he would have known that the Argentines expelled from the islands by the captain of HMS Clio in January, 1833, comprised only those on the Sarandi, which had arrived four months earlier and subsequent to Britain's decision to reassert sovereignty. The Argentines among the multinational civilian population remained.

Yet Argentina can claim in her 1964 Statement to the United Nations that "under the threat of its guns the British Fleet evicted a peaceful and active Argentine population". It is on misleading information such as this that the UN General Assembly resolution 2065 (1965), which initiated the process of negotiation under duress and on false premises, is based.

Argentina *can* one day renounce her essential claim, which presently includes South Georgia, South Sandwich Islands and parts of British Antarctic Territory.

Yours faithfully,

M. R. MEADMORE,
8 Pennard Road, W12.
November 6.

TI

FALKLAND JAMMER BUILT IN 15 DAYS

By Air Cdre G. S. COOPER
Air Correspondent

A "BLACK BOX" radar jammer built in 15 days to protect RAF Harriers in the Falklands conflict would have been four times as expensive if the normal time of two years had been spent on the contract, according to the Defence Ministry officer in charge of the project.

The story of the Blue Eric jammer is told by Sqn Ldr Eric Annal, an electronics warfare specialist, in "Harrier and Sea Harrier," a further account by Alfred Price of action in the South Atlantic to be published later this year by Ian Allen of Shepperton.

The RAF's Electronic Warfare Operational Support Establishment at Benson in Oxfordshire provided detailed information on the Argentine radar that posed a threat to the ground attack Harriers.

With help from the EW department at Farnborough, Sqn Ldr Annal was able to tell Marconi Defence Systems at Stanmore what was wanted.

"There were about 30 people at Marconi involved in putting Blue Eric pods together. The firm was magnificent. We were in a wartime situation, with everyone pulling together."

Full testing

From the initial conception of the jammer to delivery of nine production pods took only 15 days. This included full air testing against special ground receivers in position at an RAF electronics warfare test range.

The cost of the Blue Eric programme was about £500,000, with everyone working flat out.

"In the normal way, this contract could have taken about two years and cost £2 million," said Sqn Ldr Annal.

Submarine missing log 'will surface in a newspaper'

By DAVID MILLWARD

THE missing log book of the Conqueror, the submarine that sank the Belgrano, "will surface soon in a national newspaper," Mr Ian Mikardo, the veteran Labour MP for Bow and Poplar, claimed yesterday.

On Tuesday night the Navy admitted that the control room log was missing, to the embarrassment of Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, who faced the Foreign Affairs Select Committee the next day.

On Wednesday night Mr Mikardo, a member of the committee which had spent the morning questioning Mr Heseltine on the Belgrano, claimed on television that the Defence Secretary had seen a photocopy of the missing log the previous evening.

This was denied last night by the Ministry of Defence who claimed that Mr Heseltine had been shown a copy of the DAILY MIRROR, which "splashed" the story of the missing log.

Exercise book

The control room log is a pale green exercise book which contains details of a ship's course but would not contain operational information, which is kept in the captain's log.

On the completion of a voyage the control room log should be sent to the Common Services Record Office in Hayes, Middlesex.

Mr Heseltine has insisted that the control room log does not contain any important information.

The Government has resisted appeals for the captain's log to be put in the House of Commons library, on the grounds that it does contain sensitive information.

Last night the Ministry of Defence Officials said that the missing log book was in a six monthly volume in one bound cover.

A Ministry statement said: "Each book in a batch forming the log covers one month. There are therefore six months of the log which have been mislaid. This amounts to six volumes of the one control room log."

PONTING TRIAL IN JANUARY

The Old Bailey trial of Clive Ponting, the senior Defence Ministry civil servant accused of leaking confidential documents on the Belgrano affair, will begin on Jan. 28, his solicitor said yesterday.

Ponting, of Islington, is charged under Section Two of the Official Secrets Act.

Inquiry into Conqueror log nearing completion

By Richard Norton-Taylor

The board of inquiry investigating the disappearance of the navigator's log of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the General Belgrano during the Falkland war, will complete its work next week, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday.

By then, a spokesman said, the ministry would hope to establish when it disappeared.

The fact that the log was missing became known on September 27, when the Labour MP, Mr George Foulkes, asked a specific question about it.

The board is continuing to interview members of the submarine's crew, some of whom have left the navy.

The log would show that the submarine returned on May 3 1982 to the area where it sank the Belgrano on May 2 and that it entered Argentina's coastal waters in early June.

The Old Bailey trial of Mr Clive Ponting, the senior ministry official charged under the Official Secrets Act with sending documents about the Belgrano affair to the Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell, will begin on January 28 before Mr Justice McCowan.

It relates to two documents which provided the basis for the Commons foreign affairs committee's questioning on Wednesday of Mr Heseltine. Mr Ponting's counsel, named yesterday as Mr James Laughland, QC, is expected to demand that the prosecution call Mr Heseltine as a witness.

Mr Heseltine made it clear during his appearance before the Commons committee that he knew of attempts over the past eight months to withhold information about the Belgrano affair from MPs.

Mr Brian Raymon, Mr Ponting's solicitor, said yesterday: "In view of past comment regarding the choice of judge I feel I should make clear that in our respectful view Mr Justice McCowan is known as independent and fair-minded."

Those who had expressed the wish for a tough and prosecution-inclined tribunal were likely to be disappointed, he added.

Envoy for Belgrano inquiry

The British ambassador to Peru at the time the Argentinian warship, the General Belgrano, was sunk is to give evidence about the Peruvian peace negotiations at the time of the Falklands war to the Commons foreign affairs committee next week.

The committee confirmed yesterday that Mr Charles Wallace, now ambassador in Montevideo, will be questioned in public session on Wednesday.

This will form part of the committee's inquiry into the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser and allegations that the

Government ordered its destruction by the submarine HMS Conqueror so as to scupper the proposals put forward by the Peruvian Government for a settlement of the Falklands war.

On the same day evidence will also be given by the two authors of a book which links the sinking with the peace moves — Mr Arthur Gavshon, former European diplomatic correspondent of Associated Press, and Mr Desmond Rice, former president of Royal Dutch Shell in Argentina.

Mr George Foulkes (Lab.

Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) yesterday tabled eight commons questions about the Conqueror's missing navigational log.

It was shortly after Mr Foulkes tabled a series of questions to the Prime Minister last month about Conqueror's movements at the time of the sinking of the Belgrano, that the disappearance of the log came to light.

Mr Foulkes is trying to determine the Conqueror's exact movements before and after the sinking of the Belgrano on May 2, 1982.

Daily Mail
9th November 1984

Falklands hero gets his father's old job

FALKLANDS hero Lieutenant-Colonel Dair Farrar-Hockley, MC, is to follow in his famous father's footsteps.

The newly promoted lieutenant-colonel, 37, who won his Military Cross as a company commander with Colonel 'H' Jones' 2 Para at Goose

Green, is to be the new commanding officer of the 3rd Battalion the Parachute Regiment.

His father, General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley, commanded 3 Para in 1962.

General Farrar-Hockley was adjutant of the 'Glorious Glosters' in the action on the Imjin River in Korea.

Chay Blyth rescue drama

By LIN JENKINS

YACHTSMAN Chay Blyth was rescued yesterday from his capsized trimaran after a massive air and sea search in the South Atlantic.

Last night he was in hospital in Chile, reported to be suffering a broken arm. His crewman Eric Blunn was said to be unharmed.

There had been fears that the pair, who were attempting to break the sailing record from New York to San Francisco via Cape Horn, had been swept overboard and lost when distress signals were picked up by a satellite station early yesterday.

Aircraft from the Argentine and Chilean air forces were alerted by Falmouth coastguard and RAF planes in the Falklands stood by. After several hours the men were spotted sitting on the bottom of Blyth's 53ft yacht Beefeater II, 50 miles south of Cape Horn.

Wreckage

Blyth's wife Maureen and his daughter Samantha, 17, were told of the rescue at their home in Liskeard, Cornwall.

The case of the drama was not clear last night, but it has wrecked Blyth's hope of breaking the record which has stood at 89 days 21 hours since 1851. Beefeater II was two days ahead of schedule when disaster struck on Day 50 of the 14,500-mile trip.

Blyth had rounded Cape Horn, the half-way mark and considered to be the most dangerous stage of the journey. But satellite tracking showed the yacht had drifted back past the Cape before it was spotted.

The Belgrano affair

Up to a point minister

The appearance of the defence secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, before a live broadcast commons select committee has added little to public knowledge of events surrounding the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the *General Belgrano*, during the Falklands war. But it spoke volumes on the government's obsession with secrecy. Mr Heseltine had been summoned following leaks about his department's failure

to provide more information on changes in the naval rules of engagement during the conflict.

Mr Heseltine discussed the *General Belgrano* affair with considerable frankness—a welcome change. He pointed out that the sinking of the cruiser was made in ignorance of the fact that the ship had turned towards home, and that a new peace initiative was under way in Peru. It was therefore a "monstrous distortion" to link it to the peace initiative. The legal justification was article 51 of the UN charter, authorising self-defence when under threat. Given the strong advice of the war cabinet's military advisers, he said, Mrs Thatcher would have been "culpable" had she not agreed to the changed rules of engagement under which the ship was sunk. The Argentines had been clearly warned a week before that any threat to the task force anywhere in the South Atlantic would be met appropriately.



Heseltine came a bit cleaner

Mr Heseltine was less convincing when pressed to define the exact nature of the threat presented by the *General Belgrano*, an ancient cruiser well out of gunnery range, whether it was sailing towards or away from the task force. Mr Heseltine has similar problems with his claim that the sinking was the result of emphatic military advice, which Mrs Thatcher would have been culpable to overrule. This hardly tallied with his protest that the rules of engagement were always subject to political review. He would have done better simply sticking to his strongest point: the British task force was highly vulnerable and anything that sent Argentina's surface fleet back to port—which sinking the *General Belgrano* did—"saved British lives".

But the biggest handicap to Mr Heseltine's frankness was the government's aversion to admitting that it ever dis-

agrees with itself. It is public knowledge that there were furious rows within the war cabinet over rules of engagement. There was deep concern over the sinking of the *General Belgrano*, followed by disquiet at inaccurate ministerial statements about it. It has taken Mr Heseltine's department two years to admit at least to the inaccuracies—and then, only as a result of persistence by an eccentric MP, Mr Tam Dalyell. The ministry still refuses to explain the basis of the legal disagreement over rules of engagement between itself and the foreign office—essential background to the select committee's enquiry. It persists in behaving as if it had something embarrassing to hide, which is a gift to critics of the war.

None the less, the hearing—nourished by leaks—should do something to clear the air, which is now further clouded by the apparent disappearance of the log book of *HMS Conqueror*, the submarine whose torpedoes sank *General Belgrano*. It vindicated the select committee principle of questioning ministers at length in a non-partisan context and with adequate research support. The inaccuracies and red herrings which civil servants draw across the public's path go unnoticed at question time in the commons, while excusing ministers for not holding press conferences at which they might face sustained cross-examination.

Heseltine grilled on Belgrano sinking

THE log of the British submarine which sank the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, may have been destroyed as part of a cover up, Labour's shadow defence secretary Denzil Davies claimed this week.

The only other explanation — which he said few would believe — was "gross incompetence".

Davies' claim came in a short commons exchange on Wednesday shortly after defence secretary Michael Heseltine gave evidence on the affair to a meeting of the

BY CHRIS McLAUGHLIN

foreign affairs select committee.

During a two-hour grilling by Labour and Tory members of the committee, Heseltine rejected the suggestion that there had been an attempt to cover up details of the sinking of the Argentine cruiser — with the loss of 368 lives — at a time when peace proposals were being prepared to prevent an open conflict.

The select committee had asked Heseltine to provide details of

changes in the rules of engagement that led to the sinking of the Belgrano and the scuppering of the peace proposals.

They also wanted the reasons for the changes.

But instead it had been given a general statement, signed by armed forces minister John Stanley.

This had been prepared on the advice of a senior civil servant who advised that most of the information requested should be withheld from the MPs.

The memo including this advice

was then leaked to Tam Dalyell and is the basis of a prosecution by the government of senior ministry of defence civil servant Clive Ponting.

As Ponting looked on in the Grand Committee Room of the commons, Heseltine claimed that it had not been possible to translate the information required by MPs into "layman's language" within the time available.

But Labour MP Ian Mikardo insisted that if the rules of engagement were good enough for the war cabinet to understand then they

were good enough for MPs.

Denzil Davies later described the loss of the submarine Conqueror's log book as: "Another extraordinary episode in the government's attempts to explain the circumstances of the sinking."

Tam Dalyell, whose persistent questioning has exposed most of the government inconsistencies on the issue, was not present at the select committee hearing because of a prior engagement. But he said he would be examining a transcript "very closely".

Committee Corridors

Like Banquo's ghost, the spectre of the *Belgrano* simply will not go away. It rose again, like some terrible earth-bound spirit stubbornly defying exorcism, to stalk the Grand Committee Room off Westminster Hall on Wednesday.

Nor was the shade summoned up on this occasion by Mr Tam Dalyell (Lab, Linlithgow), though he has shown more than a passing interest in it, over the past two years.

The Peruvian peace proposals and the sinking of the *Belgrano* are in fact the present remit of the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, which sat in the large Grand Committee Room on Wednesday, to accommodate the accurately anticipated crowds of journalists and the public. The latter included a certain Mr Clive Ponting, who looked rather pale and drawn, and listened to the proceedings with great interest.

The witness on Wednesday was Mr Michael Heseltine, Defence Secretary. In fairness to him, and to remind those with short memories, it must be pointed out that he did not occupy that role during the Falklands Conflict (Mr – now Sir – John Nott was the then incumbent), nor was he ever a member of the War Cabinet.

Poor Mr Heseltine looked somewhat harassed during the gruelling two and a half hours of questioning to which he was subjected. At times – despite the presence of a microphone which was not really close enough – his voice was inaudible to the journalists straining frantically to hear, from distant seats behind.

One simply longed for the Minister to show some of his party conference *brio*, and *bellow*, but alas, this was not to be!

At the start of proceedings, Sir Anthony Kershaw (C, Stroud) said there had been widespread speculation and comment in the Press, and on radio and television, about the circumstances which had led up to this meeting, and about the nature of the inquiry which the Committee was now conducting.

Sir Anthony pointed out that the Committee had been investigating various Falkland Islands matters since its appointment in December, 1983, after the General Election of that year. At one hearing, Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, had provided the Committee with a short paper providing a general commentary on the rules of engagement during the Falklands Conflict, but not the specific information on this subject which the Committee had asked for previously.

Almost simultaneously, the Committee received from a Member of the House a copy of a document purporting to be an internal MOD memorandum, in which advice is offered to Ministers about how the Committee's request for information should be answered. A transcript of this paper has since been published in a weekly journal.

Sir Anthony said that on receiving the two papers, the Committee had decided to invite Mr Heseltine, or another Minister nominated by him, to attend to give evidence, to provide amongst other things, an explanation of the reasons for the MOD's decision not to answer the Committee's request for specific information about the rules of engagement.

The Minister had also been provided with a copy of the purported internal MOD memorandum, and another document which had been submitted to the Committee in evidence at the same time, and purported to be a draft ministerial letter to Mr Tam Dalyell.

'It may well be that the Secretary of State will wish to defer some of his answers until his private session with this Committee, and this we understand. A transcript of both the public and private sessions will however be published in due course, and it will be for the Committee to decide what passages, if any, of the private session should not be included in that published transcript,' Sir Anthony said.

He added, 'I must stress that it is no part of our inquiry to investigate the circumstances in which the papers concerned came into the possession of the Member who submitted them to us, or

the motives of those who may have been responsible.'

The Committee then got down to business, and there were times, it must be said, when the complexity of the discussion about the various memoranda defied comprehension, resembling Agatha Christie at her most arcane, with just a touch of Graham Greene thrown in!

Explaining why the MOD had not revealed full details of the rules of engagement during the Falklands Conflict, Mr Heseltine said some of these rules were still in force in the South Atlantic, to enable the British military forces there to maintain political control and know clearly the remit which was their responsibility. He warned that if the Committee received consultative internal memoranda to Ministers, without having the whole picture in front of them, it would be very easy for incorrect impressions to be created. He also knew of no military practice whereby rules of engagement were revealed in public.

The key test he had to apply was whether there were any operational reasons for not giving details of the rules of engagement. 'Publication of these rules would undermine their effectiveness if they were published and openly debated by this Committee,' he said. 'For a Minister, that would be an overwhelming reason for proceeding as my Department is proceeding.'

Mr Michael Welsh (Lab, Doncaster N) asked whether Mr Heseltine agreed that it was better to be consistent in answering questions, irrespective of whether one was telling the truth or not.

Mr Heseltine replied this was manifestly not the view he held. In his examination of this subject, where he found things which were inconsistent with the truth, he had done all he thought proper to put the record straight. When he had drawn the Prime Minister's attention to such inconsistencies, she had agreed with him that they should be rectified.

He said Mrs Thatcher had acted in the only responsible way open to her, as far as sinking the *Belgrano* was concerned. The military advice given to her was sound, and it was her responsibility to accept that advice. This, in the clearest military terms, was that the *Belgrano* posed a threat to Britain's task force.

Mr Heseltine said the Peruvian peace proposals had not been available in London when the sinking of the *Belgrano* was ordered, and it was a 'monstrous distortion' of the events, to suggest that there had been a link. He denied emphatically that the ship had been sunk, to 'torpedo' the Peruvian peace proposals.

He said the log book of HMS Conqueror, which sank the *Belgrano*, and which had been reported missing that morning in the Press, was only the 'helmsman's log,' which was a mere technical record. The captain's log, relating to the ship itself, was not missing and was now at the MOD. The Ministry did not want to make either document public.

Asked whether the two decisions had been compatible with the use of minimum force by Britain, he said both decisions had been essential for the protection of the British forces. Any British government which allowed the *Belgrano* to get within range of Britain's task force, would have been culpable. If that had happened, because the government had not acted on the advice of the military, the matter would have been the source of an inquiry on a quite different scale from the present Committee.

Mr Norman St John-Stevs (C, Chelmsford) asked whether the government would now publish a detailed account of the events leading up to the sinking, in view of the public debate which was otherwise likely to continue. 'Unless something like that is done, this controversy will continue unsatisfactorily to simmer,' he said.

The Minister rejected the proposal, because he said he did not think it would end the controversy. The more information was provided, the more it would fuel demands for further information about areas of national security which could not be made public. He believed the vast majority of people in Britain already believed that the government had done what it had to do, when it ordered the *Belgrano* to be sunk.

The Times 8/11/84

Safety zone

Tam Dalyell rang me hurt to the quick yesterday by jibes that after boring everyone to distraction over the Belgrano, he couldn't be bothered to witness Michael Heseltine being grilled before the Commons' foreign affairs committee. He had a prior engagement at Bath University, and, as his leader told Scargill, one can't just break diary dates willy nilly. Just the sort of form one expects from an Etonian.



Request for Belgrano details rejected

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, yesterday categorically rejected publishing a White Paper to try to clear up the continuing controversy surrounding the sinking of the General Belgrano during the Falklands War.

To do so, he told the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, would only fuel demands for further information - inevitably involving national security - from those who had pursued the Belgrano campaign, which no Government could conceivably provide.

Mr Heseltine, who was questioned for two hours on the torpedoing of the Argentine cruiser 30 months ago, told MPs: "I think in the minds of the vast majority of people in this country the Government did precisely what it had to do in a timely way".

The request for a government publication on the events

surrounding the sinking was made by Mr Norman St John-Stevas, Conservative MP for Chelmsford, and echoed by other committee members. Unless a comprehensive and detailed account was published "this controversy will continue unsatisfactorily to simmer," he said.

But Mr Heseltine, while acknowledging he had considered such a plan, told MPs: "The people who have nursed this campaign for further information based on the assumption either that the Prime Minister enjoyed the conflict or was seeking to disrupt the Puruvian peace initiative, are not going to be satisfied with the publication of a document."

He had been profoundly aware from his first detailed consideration of the Belgrano affair that the more information the Government provided, the more it would fuel demands for

information "trespassing very rapidly into areas which the Government would not be prepared to go".

"My judgment has been more than justified by the sort of letters that are now flying into my department from exactly the same source that began this particular campaign."

He was asked constantly for information which it would be unthinkable for ministers to provide, on grounds of national security. There was no further public information to add.

Earlier Mr Heseltine has insisted that the sinking of the Belgrano had been essential for the protection of British forces in the south Atlantic.

And he strongly resented a claim by Mr Dennis Canavan, Labour MP for Falkirk West, that Sir John Nott, Secretary of State for Defence during the Falklands crisis had "deceived" the Commons over the course

of the Belgrano when she was sunk.

The "one or two" inaccuracies in reporting the sinking to MPs were due to the intense pressure and responsibility on Sir John, which meant he did not have all the information now available.

● Mr Clive Ponting, the senior Ministry of Defence official charged under the Official Secrets Act with the unauthorized disclosure of documents on the Belgrano to an MP, sat four rows behind Mr Heseltine throughout the hearing.

Mr Heseltine confirmed for the first time during the hearing that Mr Ponting had drawn up the detailed internal MoD account of the Belgrano affair, known as the "Crown Jewels".

● After sitting through the committee's questioning of Mr Heseltine, Mr Ponting and his solicitor called on the Attorney General to discontinue the prosecution.

Log-book missed after MP's letter

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

The loss of the log kept in the navigating control room of HMS Conqueror is understood to have come to light last month when Ministry of Defence officials asked for it while preparing a reply to a letter from Mr George Foulkes, a Labour Party foreign affairs spokesman, to the Prime Minister.

In his letter Mr Foulkes had listed 15 questions regarding the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano, of which the ninth was whether Mrs Margaret Thatcher would have the log of HMS Conqueror placed in the library of the House of Commons. This the Government has refused to do.

Although the exact timing of the loss of the log-book will be one of the factors to be established by a board of inquiry, it seems possible that it could have occurred a year or more ago, according to Whitehall sources. The log would normally have been sent from HMS Conqueror to the Ministry of Defence's records office at Hayes, west London.

Although the log would have borne a security classification, possibly at the second lowest level of "confidential", one source referred to it yesterday as "an essentially trivial document".

The reason for giving it a security classification is that anyone obtaining it would be

able to derive information about the way in which Britain's nuclear-powered submarines operate, because it gives hourly information on such things as depth and distance covered, and the vessel's position.

The log kept in the navigation control room is only one of several records kept in naval vessels, and is much less important than the commanding officer's narrative or the official ship's log.

It is said that in normal peacetime operations it is seldom referred to, except perhaps to double-check some doubtful point in one of the other records. It was being said yesterday that because most if not all the information contained in the navigation control room log was duplicated in other records, there had been some consideration of discontinuing the navigation room log.

It tended to be a "coffee-stained" document, filled-in in blunt pencil by several people, which contained basically technical information, and perhaps a routine record of the completion of ships' "rounds". It was being repeated both officially and unofficially that such logs contained no tactical information or facts about the movement of other ships.

Heseltine attacks Labour campaign over Belgrano

By Anthony Bevins and Richard Evans

Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, angrily denounced Labour's campaign on the General Belgrano yesterday after an Opposition spokesman suggested that one of the logs of HMS Conqueror, which torpedoed the Argentine cruiser, had been stolen and destroyed to protect the Prime Minister.

He told the Commons that he had been asked to "come clean" about the sinking of the Belgrano, which sank with the loss of 368 lives on May 2 1982. "Unhesitatingly I do it," he said.

He added to mounting Conservative cheers: "The decision was taken in order to protect British lives and this House and this country is sick and tired of Labour MPs, for narrow and inexplicable reasons, pursuing a campaign against the national interest."

Sir John Biggs-Davison, Conservative MP for Epping Forest, said that the desire to exculpate Argentina and damage the Royal Navy and the nation was part of Labour's "death wish". Earlier, during a two-hour session with the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, Mr Heseltine had rejected a request that the Government

should try to kill the controversy by publishing a White Paper on the sinking.

Mr Heseltine's protest came in direct response to an emergency question about the loss of the Conqueror's log book, disclosed in yesterday's *Daily Mirror*.

Mr Denzil Davies, Labour's defence spokesman, said that few would believe that it had been lost through gross incompetence on the part of the Royal Navy. The alternative was that "it had been stolen and maybe destroyed by someone who thinks that details contained in that log book are embarrassing, not only to the Government but to the Prime Minister personally".

Mr Heseltine told the House that the log was not important evidence in an examination of the submarine's tactical judgments, but it could be important to potential enemies because it would reveal the disposition of Royal Navy ships and the way in which they negotiated an attack. A board of inquiry is being held into the loss.

Parliament, page 4
'No White Paper', page 2

Heseltine explains value to Britain's enemies of missing log book

THE BELGRANO

If the Opposition were suggesting that the Royal Navy should publish the technical details of its military tactics, that would be a major breach of the national interest. Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, said in the Commons after he had reported that a board of inquiry was being held to discover how the logbook of the submarine HMS Conqueror containing details of its movements during the Falklands campaign in which it sank the Argentine cruiser the Belgrano, came to be lost.

Mr Denzel Davies, chief Opposition spokesman on defence, had suggested it had been lost either through gross incompetence on the part of the Navy, which few would believe, or it was stolen and maybe destroyed by someone to whom the details were embarrassing not only to the Government but to the Prime Minister personally.

Mr Heseltine said the country was sick and tired of Labour MPs for narrow and inexplicable reasons, pursuing a campaign against the national interest. He found it extraordinary that so many MPs should apparently be more interested in views provided by Argentinian sources than by the Government.

He told MPs that the main log book of HMS Conqueror containing detailed and classified information was in the possession of the Ministry of Defence.

The submarine's navigating officer (he added) also kept a log book giving the latitudes and longitudes, the distance run and the speed and depth. The document contained no technical information. It has been mislaid. And as it too is classified, a board of inquiry is being held.

Mr Davies: His astonishing admission that he, his department and the Navy apparently have lost - and some unkind souls may say conveniently lost - the navigational log book, not of some cross-channel ferry but of HMS Conqueror, is another extraordinary episode in this Government's pathetic attempt to explain away all the circumstances of the sinking of the Belgrano.

This highly classified document contained all the details of the movement not only of the Conqueror but possibly of the Belgrano as well on April 30, when the rules of engagement were changed, on May 1, when we are now told, but not originally, that the Conqueror spotted the Belgrano and on May 2, when the Belgrano was sunk.

Would not the log book, which Mr Heseltine has tried to downgrade, contain all the movements of those two ships over these three days?

Will the Government at last come clean and treat the House with some respect and give a full, clear, honest and truthful account of all the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano?

Mr Heseltine: Mr Davies will realize that once an inquiry has been set up within the Ministry of Defence, it is incumbent on us to find out what it reveals before making our own judgment about it. The decision was taken to protect British lives.

Mr John Wilkinson (Ruislip-Northwood, C): Whilst agreeing that the loss of any classified document is serious and deserving an inquiry, would he not agree that the sinking of the Belgrano by HMS Conqueror put the Argentine navy out of the war and so protected British lives and ensured the success of the Falkland Islands operation?

Mr Heseltine: There were undoubtedly consequences, although the House will be aware that we

sustained serious losses after the sinking of the Belgrano, particularly the Sheffield. But I accept the linkage he makes.

The main point is that the Government took military advice in connexion with the sinking of the Belgrano, which was expeditious and in my view unavoidable, and if Labour MPs had rejected such military advice they would have put lives at risk.

Dr David Owen, Leader of the SDP: I have never sought to attack, and I do not intend to seek to attack, the decision taken by the war cabinet to sink the aircraft carrier. Nor do many of us believe there was any intention by sinking the Belgrano on April 2 to sink whatever peace initiative may or may not have been underway with the Peruvians.

But we are not sick and tired, and not is the country, of insisting that the truth is said to this House.

We now find ourselves in a situation where the Prime Minister, a former Secretary of Trade and a number of other junior ministers in this Government are on record in *Hansard* with statements we now know not to be true.

We have the right and the duty to demand that the Government corrects the record of *Hansard* in



Rees: Something untoward is happening

any way they see fit, preferably through a White Paper which could then be debated, and the sooner the better.

Mr Heseltine: I accept that Dr Owen adopts a different approach. As minister now responsible for advising the Prime Minister on this matter, I have meticulously been through the records and wherever, having regard to the national interest, I thought the record should be changed, it has been changed in order to correct that record.

The Prime Minister, in letters well publicized and well known, has always accepted the advice given if inaccuracies have been found and she has been meticulous in adjusting the record.

Sir John Biggs-Davison: (Epping Forest, C): Is it a sign of the death wish of the Labour Party that they should be so anxious to exculpate Argentina, the aggressor against our British fellow subjects in the Falklands, and to damage the reputation of the Royal Navy and the British nation which unitedly repelled that invasion?

Mr Heseltine: I totally accept his views. I find it extraordinary that so many MPs should apparently be more interested in views provided by Argentinian sources than by their own Government. When he refers to a death wish, that is a curious contradiction because it is very difficult for corpses to die twice.

Mr Merlyn Rees (Leeds, South and Morley, Lab): Those of us who have been in war know what happens in war. But statements made in good faith and then withdrawn have created an attitude of mind outside that something untoward is happening.

Given that, and given the loss of this log book which has added to that feeling, it would be a good idea to publish a White Paper with all the facts.

Mr Heseltine said his conclusion, reluctantly, had to be that the Government had meticulously checked information, and in the light of the widest interest of national security, had corrected wherever possible and appropriate the record of events, said to the House with the best of intentions - information that was often difficult quickly to achieve in wartime.

Despite all that, the Prime Minister had set out the scene in the widest possible context. But still the same persistent inquiries continued to try and obtain information which the Prime Minister had rightly made clear no responsible government would consider publishing.

Intelligence sources from Argentina were being used by various parties in this country to try to elicit from the Government information which could only be against the national interest. No Government would do this.

Mr Robert Adley (Christchurch, C): Does he not think the Biblical text "Love thine enemy" has reached ridiculous proportions in which the Opposition swallow everything that comes in favour of Argentina and does all it can to denigrate the British Government and the Royal Navy?

Mr Heseltine: The overwhelming majority of people believe the Prime Minister acted rightly. The only criticism would have been had she taken any other decision than the one she did take.

Mr Russell Johnston (Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber, L): asked what was the classification of the document and if Mr Heseltine could confirm that he did not know when it was lost.

Mr Heseltine said he did not yet have the full facts on the loss of the document. That was a matter for the board of inquiry. As Secretary of State, he preferred to rely on the Royal Navy than on her Majesty's loyal Opposition.

Mr Jonathan Sayeed (Bristol East, C) said the log was nothing more than a jotting pad used by the navigator, for fixes and other navigational information, and not the ship's log of Conqueror about what that ship was doing, where it was, where it was going to and what exercise and undertaking it was on.

Mr Heseltine: That is correct. I have here one of these documents. It is a technical record kept by the navigator of the ship and the duty officers. It is in no way a record from the captain or CO dealing with the wider issues.

Certainly the document is important and that is why it is classified. But it is not important in the context of trying to see judgments reached by the Commanding Officer in a tactical sense but important to our enemies in trying to see the way the Royal Navy disposes of its ships at sea.

Mr Richard Douglas (Dunfermline West, Lab): Will Mr Heseltine be a little more circumspect with the House and indicate clearly that this log, though a helmsman's log, would be of vital significance in determining the position and manoeuvring characteristics of the boat when it was going into action?

Mr Heseltine nodded assent.

Mr Douglas: What instructions has he given to secure all the logs of all the ships that took part in this campaign so we do not have any repetition of their loss or misplacement?

Mr Heseltine: If there were to be a revelation of the way in which our ships negotiate pending an attack that information would convey nothing to the Admiralty because they would have designed that tactic, but it would tell our enemies and potential enemies how we pursue that activity.

HESELTINE DENIES COVER-UP

By JAMES WIGHTMAN
Political Correspondent

FACED with renewed Labour accusations of a political cover-up, Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, yesterday played down the importance of the navigation log missing from the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Belgrano in the Falklands conflict.

He told MPs that the log-book was a "routine" document of technical information

Details—P8

such as course and speed. It had "no tactical information about the warship Belgrano or other Argentine ships.

The more important captain's log, which held operational details, was in the hands of the Defence Ministry.

He also said that the missing log, which was kept by the navigation officer, was a classified document and a board of inquiry was being held into its disappearance. He did not know when it had gone missing.

Mr Heseltine faced questions about the log's disappearance in a scheduled appearance yesterday morning before the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee and later after making a special Commons statement at Labour's request.

Labour used the disclosure of the disappearance to mount another attempt at wounding the Government—and especially the Prime Minister—over the prolonged Belgrano controversy.

But Ministers were confident last night that, embarrassing

Continued on Back P, Col 6

COVER-UP DENIED

By JAMES WIGHTMAN

Continued from Page One

though the log's disappearance was, the Belgrano affair was still nowhere near being the Watergate-type scandal which Opposition MPs were trying to make out.

In the Commons Mr Denzil Davies, Labour's Shadow Defence Secretary, said that some unkind souls might say the log-book had been "conveniently lost."

It was "another extraordinary episode in this Government's pathetic attempts to explain away" the Belgrano sinking.

One possibility was that it had been lost through gross incompetence by the Navy—and very few people would think that.

"Or it has been stolen and maybe destroyed by someone who thinks the details contained in it are embarrassing not only to the Government but to the Prime Minister personally," he added.

Mr Heseltine, who was not Defence Secretary or a member of the Falklands "War Cabinet" during the conflict with Argentina, was cheered by Conservative MPs when he rebutted Opposition criticism.

He declared: "The decision (to sink the Belgrano) was taken in order to protect British lives.

"This House and the country are sick and tired of Labour MPs, for narrow and inexplicable reasons, pursuing a campaign against that national interest."

He gave similar answers to the Commons select committee which is investigating the Peruvian peace proposals for a Falklands settlement and the Belgrano sinking.

Among those who attended yesterday's meeting—as a member of the public—was Mr Clive Ponting, the Defence Ministry official charged with leaking documents on the Government's handling of the Belgrano issue.

During the hearing Mr Heseltine confirmed that Mr Ponting, an assistant secretary, now awaiting trial at the Old Bailey, had drawn up the detailed internal Ministry account of the Belgrano affair, now known as "the crown jewels."

Parliament—P9

The Telegraph 8/11/84

WHERE was Tam, come
yesterday's big name
appearance before the
Foreign Affairs Committee?
The man who has lived, ate
and drunk the Belgrano for
the past two years was
listening to snippets of the
Radio Four debate while
meeting a couple of
professors at Bath University
before addressing students
and going on to a Labour
Party meeting at Stroud. "It
was all arranged months
ago," said Mr Dalyell
between engagements
yesterday. "I couldn't go
and call meetings off because
of this."

Daily Telegraph 8/11/84

Committed response

PARLIAMENTARY broadcasting's latest innovation — the BBC's live relay of Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine's evidence to the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee on the Belgrano sinking — was not achieved without careful preparation.

Quite apart from managing to get the location of the hearing changed to the Grand Committee Room, to facilitate the first-ever live broadcast of a Parliamentary committee, the Chairman Sir Anthony Kershaw was also given a rehearsal to put him through his paces.

Not one of the Commons' most frequent media performers, Kershaw was assiduously coached to make sure he started the proceedings on time, spoke clearly into the microphone, identified speakers and did not fluff his lines.

'Majority backed Government decision to sink Argentine cruiser'

HESELTINE DENIES

BELGRANO

COVER-UP

By ANTHONY LOOCH

THE Government was not staging a "cover-up" over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, under the cloak of national security, Mr Michael Heseltine, Defence Secretary, told the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee yesterday.

Mr Heseltine said his inquiries since taking office had convinced him that the Prime Minister had no alternative but to take the action she did against the Belgrano, on the advice of the military.

"Any British government which had allowed the Belgrano to get within range of our task force would have been culpable," he said.

"If that had happened, because the Government had not acted on the advice of the military, the matter would have been the source of an inquiry on quite a different scale from this committee."

Wrong impressions

would be easy

The Committee is investigating the Peruvian peace proposals and the sinking of the Belgrano. The chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw (C, Stroud) said Mr Heseltine had been invited to give evidence to the Committee to explain why the Ministry of Defence had decided not to answer an earlier request by the Committee for specific information about the rules of engagement during the Falklands Conflict.

Referring to internal Ministry of Defence documents which were submitted to the Committee by Mr Ian Dalrymple (Lab., Linlithgow), Sir Anthony said: "I must stress that it is no part of our inquiry to investigate the circumstances in which the papers concerned came into Mr Dalrymple's possession, or the motives of those who may have been responsible."

Mr Heseltine, who was not Defence Secretary during the Falklands conflict, nor a member of the War Cabinet, told

so far been prepared to reveal. The document was "leaked" to the Committee, and Mr Heseltine was asked yesterday about his reaction to the document when he originally received it.

The key test he had to apply was whether there were any operational reasons for not giving details of the rules of engagement. "Publication of these rules would undermine their effectiveness if they were published and debated openly by the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. For a Minister, that would be an overwhelming reason for proceeding."

Mr Heseltine said there was only one conclusion to be drawn over why the Belgrano was sunk. The Prime Minister had acted in the only responsible way open to her, and she would have been culpable not to have done so.

"The military advice given to her was sound, and her responsibility was to accept that advice."

'Distortion of events'

He denied that the ship had been sunk to "torpedo" the Peruvian peace proposals. These had not been available in London at the time, and it was "a monstrous distortion of the events" to suggest that there was a link.

The advice given to Mrs Thatcher, in the clearest military terms, was that the Belgrano posed a threat to the task force.

Asked about reports that the log book of submarine Conqueror, was now missing, Mr Heseltine said it was "the helmsman's log" which was missing, a technical record kept by the helmsman.

The captain's log was not missing and was at the Ministry of Defence. It was not a document which the Ministry wanted to make public.

He added, however, that he would not want to see the helmsman's log published either. When Mr Norman St John-Stevens (C, Chelmsford) asked him about the ship's computer print-out, Mr Heseltine said he was not aware of any source of information from any of these areas that would change the advice he had received, and of which he had already advised the Committee.

Mr Ian Mikardo (Lab., Bow)



Sir Heseltine: challenged on submarine's missing log.



Sir Anthony Kershaw: chairman of the select committee.

and Poplar) suggested that sinking the Belgrano without warning, outside the 200-mile exclusion zone, was in breach of international law.

Mr Heseltine replied that under international law, Britain was entitled to act in self-defence. It was doing so when it changed the rules of engagement, and sank the Belgrano.

Asked whether these two decisions had been compatible with the use of minimum force by Britain, he said they had both been essential for the protection of the British forces.

He "strongly resented" the suggestion that Britain could have taken some other course. Britain had not invaded the Falklands but had set out to regain them. Argentina should have been aware of that when it invaded.

Mr Dennis Canavan (Lab., Falkirk W) said Mr John Nott, Defence Secretary during the Falklands Conflict, had told the Commons on May 4, 1982 that the Belgrano had been closing in on the task force when it was sunk. Had there been criticism in the Department of the person responsible for that statement, which had deceived the Commons?

Mr Heseltine replied that he strongly resented the use of the word "deceive." At the time, the destroyer Sheffield had just been sunk and the Department was engaged with serious, immediate problems, not things that had already happened.

There was enormous pressure on Mr Nott, and he had not had available to him all the facts that had now come to light with hindsight.

Controversy

will simmer

Mr St John-Stevens said that in view of the public debate that was taking place over the Belgrano, and was likely to continue, would the Government now publish a detailed account of the events which led up to the sinking?

"Unless something like that is done, this controversy will continue unsatisfactorily to simmer. Publication of a document of that kind would put the whole matter into context and would be of material help to the public," he said.

Mr Heseltine replied that he had considered this, but he did not believe that such a publication would end the controversy. It would not satisfy the people who had been pursuing the controversy.

He added that it was "quite apparent" to him that the more information was provided, the

MISSING

LOG CLAIM REJECTED

By PETER PRYKE
Parliamentary Correspondent

LABOUR insinuations that the log of the submarine which sank the Belgrano had been "lost" because it contained information embarrassing to the Government, were robustly rejected by Mr HESELTINE, Defence Secretary, in the Commons yesterday.

Replying to a demand by Mr DENZIL DAVIES, Labour Defence spokesman, to "come clean" on the sinking, he declared "The decision was taken in order to protect British lives."

"This House and the country are sick and tired of Labour MPs, for narrow and inexplicable reasons, pursuing a campaign against that national interest."

Mr HESELTINE stressed that the missing navigator's log from the submarine Conqueror, was a "routine" document, containing technical information such as course and speed.

"It would have no tactical information and no reference to the position of Argentine ships."

But questioned by Opposition MPs as to why it should be secret, he conceded that it could be useful to an enemy.

Routine details

As Labour MPs shouted "You've lost it," he said: "If it were to be revealed how we handle our ships engaged on a task force, that information would be of great tactical value to an enemy."

In a statement, Mr Heseltine said that Conqueror's detailed operational account of its Falklands campaign, used to compile its formal report, was held by the Defence Ministry.

The mislaid document was that kept by the navigation officer, a control room log. It was classified and a board of inquiry was being held.

Mr DAVIES said that some unkind souls might say the document had been "conveniently lost."

This was "another extraordinary episode in this Government's pathetic attempts to explain away the sinking of the Belgrano."

Perhaps destroyed

One possibility was that it had been lost through gross incompetence by the Navy—and very few people would think that.

"Or it has been stolen and maybe destroyed by someone who thinks the details contained in it are embarrassing not only to the Government but to the Prime Minister personally."

Dr DAVID OWEN, SDP leader, said Ministers were on record in Hansard with statements now known to be untrue, and that should be put right, preferably in a White Paper.

Mr HESELTINE said he had been through the record meticulously, and inaccuracies had been adjusted, having regard to the national interest. He turned down the request for a White Paper.

Peterborough—P18

Joy leaves Argentina

The posting back to London this week of David Joy, Britain's man in Buenos Aires, marks the end of an era in Anglo-Argentine relations.

More than two years have elapsed since the Falklands campaign. During that time Joy, working from the Swiss Embassy as head of the British interests section, has managed against considerable odds to repair much of the damage wrought on Britain's old alliance in Argentina.

He has led a subtle campaign by the British Government to re-establish its presence and influence in what, in the absence of full diplomatic cultural and trade relations, can only be officially classified as a hostile country.

Joy, who is being given another trouble-shooting role as head of the central American department at the Foreign Office, has had to weather the criticism of hardliners in Whitehall, and among Argentine nationalists who have objected to any detente between the two countries.

MPs batten down the hatches

THE controversy over the sinking of the General Belgrano seems to have reached the stage where it is about to enter the realm of mythology, along with the Mary Celeste and other great mysteries of the sea.

By yesterday morning, much of the media had switched its attention away from the Government's slender legislative programme to concentrate on the latest revelations about the missing log on HMS Conqueror, the submarine which sank the Argentine cruiser.

One irreverent theory was that it had been sent to the vehicle licensing centre at Swansea, where it had disappeared among the millions of other log books.

But Defence Secretary, Michael Heseltine, who appeared before the defence committee and then answered a private notice question, was naturally eager to play down the importance of the embarrassing disclosure.

It was just a navigator's log containing no information of tactical importance. The commander's log was the really important one and that was safely under lock and key.

With the politician's genius for reconciling contradictory statements, he added that the matter was grave enough to justify an investigation by a board of inquiry.

A minor mystery was the absence from the House of Tam Dalyell, Mr Belgrano himself, who has harried Mrs Thatcher over the affair with a single-minded passion. To commence



hostilities without the Labour Member for Linlithgow was rather like starting the Battle of Trafalgar without Nelson. Apparently Tam had a prior engagement.

It was left to Denzil Davies, Labour's defence spokesman, to lead the attack, using his strong Welsh accent to underscore words and to create an impression of innuendo and suspicion.

The loss of the log was an astonishing admission. The Conqueror wasn't just a cross-channel ferry, was it? Some might even say that the log had been conveniently lost.

Perhaps it had been stolen, and destroyed by someone who did not want the Government and the Prime Minister to be embarrassed by its contents.

Mr Heseltine spluttered with indignation at such underhand suggestions. Nonetheless, he soon proved that he was quite capable of a few smears of his own.

He professed to be deeply shocked at the way Argentine intelligence was using parties in this country to get information which could only be used against the national interest.

The endless exchanges on the

Belgrano have now become as formal as the old naval battles, when the great sailing ships manoeuvred for position.

As the storm blew itself out, Mr Davies, together with Labour leader Neil Kinnock and Kevin McNamara, the party's other defence spokesman, left the Chamber in a conspiratorial huddle. Obviously we can expect more revelations in this great saga of the sea.

Russell Johnston then jumped up from the Liberal benches declaring that his party seldom made trouble in the House. With that ominous preface, he launched a 30-minute mutiny backed up by other members of the Alliance.

The burden of their complaint is that, although the Alliance received 26 per cent of the vote, compared to Labour's 28 per cent, at a general election, it does not get its fair share of time for parliamentary debates.

For his part, Labour's Allan Roberts was tired of hearing about the rights of the Alliance, and listening to Liberals making speeches just so that they could get their names in the local papers. He wanted to know what was being done about the parliamentary rights of that other oppressed minority, the Labour Merseyside MPs.

All of which shows that the barometer is dropping and that we can expect more nasty squalls in what promises to be a tetchy session of parliament.

John Hunt

Labour using 'enemy aid' —Heseltine

Some Labour MPs are using information from "former enemies" of Britain in pursuing their campaign over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine told the Commons yesterday.

He denied a suggestion from Labour defence spokesman Denzil Davies that the missing log kept by the navigating officer of the submarine which sank the Belgrano might have been stolen or destroyed to save embarrassment to the Government or Mrs Thatcher. Page 10

Heseltine accuses critics of using 'enemy information'

BY IVOR OWEN

ME LABOUR MPs are using information provided by "former enemies" of Britain in pursuing their campaign over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict, Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, claimed in the Commons yesterday.

He denied a suggestion by Mr Denzil Davies, the shadow Defence Secretary, that the missing log kept by the navigating officer of the submarine HMS Conqueror, which sank the Belgrano, might have been stolen—and possibly destroyed—by someone who thought the details contained in it were an embarrassment not only to the Government but to the Prime Minister personally.

Mr Heseltine said the log had been "misplaced" and confirmed that, because it was a classified document, a Board of Inquiry had been appointed.

Insisting that he had no hesitation in responding to a demand to "come clean" over the sinking of the Belgrano, he declared, to Government cheers, that the decision had been taken "in order to protect British lives."

Mr Davies accused the minister of trying to down grade the

importance of the missing log which, he argued, might contain details of the movement not only of HMS Conqueror but of the Belgrano during the period when the Government's critics claimed it was heading for an Argentine port and did not constitute a threat to British forces.

Mr Heseltine insisted that it would be wrong to reach judgments about what had happened to the log in advance of the findings of the Board of Inquiry.

He said the Government had acted on military advice—"in my view unavoidably"—in deciding that the Belgrano should be sunk expeditiously. He challenged Labour MPs to make it clear that they were saying that they would have rejected the military advice "and put our lives at risk."

Mr Heseltine assured Dr David Owen, the leader of the Social Democrats, that the Prime Minister had already taken every opportunity in correspondence with MPs to correct any inaccuracies in earlier Government statements about the sinking of the Belgrano.

She had been "meticulous" in immediately accepting advice that it was appropriate to adjust the record to accord with the facts.

Calls for White Paper on Belgrano sinking rejected

BY ROBERT GRAHAM

THE Government is unwilling to issue a White Paper on the controversial sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, torpedoed by the submarine HMS Conqueror on May 2, 1982, during the Falklands War.

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, yesterday resisted pressure from members of the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee to issue a White Paper. Mr Heseltine, invited to appear before the committee to clarify Defence Ministry statements on the sinking, also vigorously denied suggestions of a cover-up.

The committee, chaired by Sir Anthony Kershaw, has been taking evidence on the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, and seeking to determine whether it was linked to the failure of Peruvian peace proposals being pursued at the time.

"Linking the sinking of the Belgrano with attempts to undermine the Peruvian peace initiative is a monstrous distortion of events as I understand them," said Mr Heseltine.

He strongly defended the decision to sink the Belgrano, pointing out that as early as April 23, Britain had informed the UN Secretary-General that it reserved the right to take appropriate measures against Argentine warships.

The May 1 change in the rules of engagement to permit an attack on the Belgrano was entirely justified, he insisted. He said the vessel was a threat to the British forces.

Thus, although the War Cabinet was not aware that the Belgrano had changed course to head away from the exclusion zone when the decision to sink her was made, the decision itself was entirely justifiable, he said.

Pressed to give details of the change in the rules of engagement, Mr Heseltine agreed to do so only in private in writing to the committee. He was adamant that details of the rules of engagement could not be made public, since these

could be of assistance to a future enemy.

On June 20, this year the committee asked the Government for full details of changes in the rules of engagement, but by yesterday it had received only a brief paper giving very general information signed by Mr John Stanley, the Armed Forces Minister.

Several members of the committee yesterday suggested to Mr Heseltine that the vagueness of the memorandum was the result of a political decision to draw a veil of secrecy over the sinking and cover up for a series of inconsistencies in Government statements.

The mood of the committee was strongly influenced by the earlier leaking of an internal Defence Ministry memorandum and a draft letter to Mr Tam Dalyell, a Labour MP who has consistently campaigned to clarify the Belgrano affair. These two papers suggested that the ministry was anxious to restrict information.

The documents were allegedly leaked to Mr Dalyell by Mr Clive Ponting, a Defence Ministry official. Mr Ponting yesterday attended the committee session and heard Mr Heseltine identify him as the author of a special paper on the Belgrano sinking, which the minister had ordered. This investigation has not been published, and Mr Heseltine said that it could not be released.

Mr Heseltine also insisted that mistakes in accounts of the Belgrano incident provided by Mr John Nott, the then Defence Secretary, were due to pressure of the Falklands conflict and in no way by a desire to mislead the House.

After the session, Mr Ponting's lawyer issued a brief statement saying that the extensive use made by the committee of the documents alleged to have been leaked by Mr Ponting showed their public interest. He called on the Attorney-General to drop all proceedings under the Official Secrets Act against Mr Ponting.

Now, a Belgrano White Paper

Two and a half years after the sinking of the Argentine cruiser Belgrano in the South Atlantic the nagging questions remain. Yesterday, at the invitation of the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, had the opportunity to clear the air. He failed dismally, and an unsatisfactory state of affairs becomes more so, compounded by the revelation of the mystery of the missing log. There are two distinct aspects to the Belgrano affair. The first is the initial decision to sink the ship. The great majority of the population endorsed the sending of the task force to prosecute what they believed to be a just, if undeclared, war to recapture occupied sovereign territory. Sinking an enemy ship would appear to them a likely consequence of such an action.

But the second, increasingly perplexing, aspect is the Government's failure to be open or consistent in its explanation of the detail of that military encounter. Far from receding, the episode causes growing and more widespread concern. That is entirely the Government's fault.

It fell to Mr Heseltine, who was not a member of the War Cabinet, to defend the Government's actions, and more importantly, subsequent words. Not this time to

Mr Tam Dalyell, whose interest in the matter cannot be exaggerated, but to a group of less single-minded MPs. Again, as has happened repeatedly when the Prime Minister has appeared reluctant to answer very straightforward questions about the Belgrano, the Government's posture appeared thoroughly defensive and further underlined the question, "Why?" The greater the obfuscation the greater the suspicion. When a government minister defends secrecy with the observation that providing information only fuels demands for more information he is being very defensive indeed.

Mr Heseltine endorsed the latest version of events, as laid out in letters from the Prime Minister, but they themselves have represented changes of position. When a committee member raised the matter of whether the then Foreign Secretary and the Attorney-General had questioned the legality of a change in the rules of engagement, Mr Heseltine said first that they did not question it, then corrected himself to say that they did not demur from the decision. Further cause for disquiet.

As was the disclosure that the navigation log from the Conqueror, the submarine which sank the Belgrano, had been mislaid in the Ministry of Defence. This log gave details of changes of course and position, all relevant to the continuing Belgrano questions. Ships' logs do not, in the normal course of events, go missing like paperbacks in a lending library.

Mr Norman St-John Stevas, a former Conservative Cabinet minister, yesterday proposed that the Government should publish a White Paper giving a comprehensive account of the events leading to the sinking of the Belgrano. Dr David Owen, the SDP leader who has suggested that the Belgrano affair represents the early stages of a Watergate, also wants a White Paper. As the fog surrounding the affair thickens, this would seem an eminently reasonable way of clearing up a mystery which fewer and fewer people, apart from the Government, believe is not there. Mr Heseltine turned down Mr St-John Stevas's suggestion. He should think again. The longer the Belgrano affair goes on the more insistent grows the question "What is the Government trying to hide?"

Stevas joins cross-party demands for White Paper

Heseltine fails to still doubts over Belgrano

By Richard Norton-Taylor and Colin Brown

Mr Norman St John-Stevas, the Conservative former Leader of the Commons, yesterday added his voice to growing cross-party pressure for a comprehensive government explanation of the Belgrano affair.

Twice yesterday the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, attempted to quiet the controversy. But — with the twist of the missing log book of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser to fuel the mystery — he seemed last night to have failed.

Mr Heseltine dismissed calls from MPs, including former ministers of both main parties, for a white paper on the affair.

He could, he insisted, add nothing to what the Prime Minister had already said. And he did not think the vast majority of people were interested in a campaign to seek more information, he told the Commons foreign affairs committee.

But Mr Stevas — asking for a white paper — retorted that he was thinking precisely of the majority of people.

"Since we still are a country governed by public opinion and by a parliamentary process," he demanded, would it not be of help if the Government set out objectively the events surrounding the sinking and list misstatements made to the Commons?

Westminster pressure was also being exerted last night to demand the submission of the captain's log from the Conqueror.

Labour MPs believe that al-



Michael Heseltine: critics will never be satisfied

though the navigator's log is missing the captain's log covering the tactical deployment of the submarine could hold vital clues to the alleged cover-up of the sinking of the Belgrano. The captain's log is classified as "secret" but Labour MPs believe that the select

Heseltine's replies frustrate MPs, page 2; Parliament, page 12; Leader comment, page 14

committee should use its powers to demand the submission of papers.

Alliance leaders, too, are convinced that the Government is in danger of inflicting a serious wound on its own credibility over its continued mis-handling of the affair.

In pressing for a White Paper to set the record straight, they believe that the Belgrano affair cannot be ignored by the Government. The latest discovery that the log is missing is regarded as one more mistake which could have been avoided

but one which will be extremely damaging and viewed with suspicion by the public even though there is support for the Government's decision to sink the cruiser.

Mr Heseltine yesterday morning faced more than two hours of questioning in the Commons Grand Committee Room where MPs quoted at him at length from two internal Ministry of Defence documents allegedly sent to the Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell, by Mr Clive Ponting, the senior ministry official facing Official Secrets Act charges.

For the first time — and contrary to normal parliamentary convention whereby ministers do not refer to Cabinet discussions, the Defence Secretary confirmed that two Ministers — Mr Francis Pym, Foreign Secretary at the time, and the Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers — raised the issue of whether changes in the rules of engagement were acceptable.

As the Commons committee continues with its inquiry — it will question Mr Charles Wallace, Britain's ambassador in Peru during the Falkands conflict, next week — the missing log provoked further angry exchanges on the floor of the Commons.

Mr Denzil Davies, Labour's defence spokesman, described Mr Heseltine's confirmation that the classified document had been mislaid as an extraordinary admission. A government department had lost, and some might say conveniently lost, a log book "not of some cross-Channel ferry, but of HMS Conqueror."

The ministry has set up a board of inquiry into the af-

Turn to back page, col. 4

Continued from page one
fair and is interviewing crew members who operated in the submarine's control room. The navigator's log would reveal details of the course of the Conqueror and its depth. It will show that on June 9 it closed to within six miles of the Argentine coast.

At the time the task force commander, Admiral Sandy Woodward, had a request to sink the Argentine destroyer, Hippolyte Bouchard, inside the 12-mile coastal limit refused by London. The log could also indicate which signals the submarine had received from London and the way it responded to those signals, informed sources said yesterday.

Mr Heseltine, who said that the log would have contained no reference to the position of Argentine ships, told the Commons that he was sick and tired of the Opposition campaign about the sinking of the Belgrano. But Dr Owen, the Social Democrat leader, said there were many MPs who had never sought to attack the decision taken by the war cabinet.

"What we are not sick and tired of and what this country will never be sick and tired of is insisting that the truth be said to the House of Commons," he said.

Mr Ponting's solicitor, Mr Brian Raymond, said yesterday

that the Commons foreign affairs committee's discussion involved the acceptance that two documents relating to the charges against his client were suitable subject matter for MPs to base their questions and for ministers to answer them. He wondered why the Official Secrets Act prosecution was continuing.

Mr Heseltine, who fumbled over some of his explanations during his testimony to the foreign affairs committee about why the Government could give no further information, also failed in the Commons to answer questions about when it was discovered that the Conqueror's log was missing.

Missing nothing

log contained vital—Heseltine

BELGRANO

The missing navigator's log from the Royal Navy submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentinian warship General Belgrano would have contained no reference to the position of Argentinian warships, the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, told the Commons yesterday.

Answering a demand by the Shadow Secretary, Mr Denis Davies, for a statement to the Commons on the disappearance of the log, Mr Heseltine was cheered by Tory MPs when he said the country and the House were sick and tired of the Opposition campaign about the sinking of the Argentinian vessel.

In his Commons reply to Mr Davies, Mr Heseltine stressed that the captain's log, containing detailed operational information used to compile the submarine's formal report of proceedings, was held by the MoD.

"The submarine's navigation officer kept a control room log containing longitude and latitude, course speed and depth at hourly intervals, with other routine details.

"This document contains no tactical information. It has been mislaid. As it is also classified a board of inquiry is being held."

Mr Davies said: "This is an astonishing admission, that he and a department of the Government has lost, and some unkind souls might say conveniently lost, a log book, not of some cross-Channel ferry but of HMS Conqueror.

"This is another extraordinary episode of this Government's pathetic attempts to explain away all the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the General Belgrano. There are two explanations to what has happened to this log book — either it has been lost through gross incompetence on the part of the Navy (and, frankly, very few believe that the Navy loses log books of this kind) or it has been stolen, maybe destroyed, by someone who thinks that the details contained in that log book are embarrassing not only to the Navy but to the Prime Minister personally.

"It is not a fact that this is a highly classified document and would contain all the details and the information not only on the Conqueror but also on the Belgrano as well, on April 30 when the rules of engagement were changed, on May 1 when, we are now told, we were not told originally, the Conqueror spotted the Belgrano, and of course on May 2 when the Belgrano was sunk.

"Would not this log book, and the Secretary of State tries to play it down, contain all the information on these two ships?

"Will the Government at last come clean and treat this House with some respect — come to this House and give us a full, clear, honest and truthful account of all the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano?"

Mr Heseltine replied: "Once an inquiry is set up by the MoD it is incumbent upon us to find out what the inquiry reveals before we reach judgments about it.

"But you make a more serious allegation when you invite me to come clean about the sinking — unhesitatingly I do: the decision was taken in order to protect British lives." Loudly cheered by Tory MPs, Mr Heseltine added, "This House and this country is sick and tired of Opposition MPs who for narrow and

inexplicable reasons pursue a campaign against British national interests."

Mr Heseltine insisted: "The Government took military advice in connection with the sinking of the Belgrano expeditionally and, in my view, unavoidably." He challenged Labour as to whether they would have rejected military advice "and put our lives at risk."

Dr David Owen, leader of the SDP, said there were many MPs who had never sought to attack the decision taken by the War Cabinet, to sink the aircraft carrier May 25, which was the first major military decision of the conflict. Nor did many believe that there was any intention to sink whatever peace initiative which might have been under way.

"But what we are not sick and tired of, and that this country will never be sick and tired of, is insisting that the truth be said to the House of



Sir John Biggs-Davison: 'Labour's death wish'

Commons. We now find ourselves in a situation where the Prime Minister, the former Secretary of State, and a number of junior ministers are all on record in Hansard in this House of Commons for statements which we know not to be true.

"We have the right, and indeed the duty, to demand that the Government correct the record in Hansard in a way in which they see fit, preferably through a white paper, which could then be debated — and the sooner the better."

Mr Heseltine said: "As the minister now responsible for advising the Prime Minister on these matters I have meticulously been through the record and whenever I thought it was possible to so advise, having regard to the national interest, to change the record, it has been changed to correct that record."

"The Prime Minister has always accepted the advice she has been given if inaccuracies have been found. She has been meticulous in adjusting the record to come to the facts of the matter."

Sir John Biggs-Davison (C, Epping Forest) said it was a sign of the death of the Labour Party that they should be so anxious to exculpate Argentina, the aggressors against our British fellow subjects in the Falklands, and to damage the reputation of the Royal Navy and the British nation which unitedly repelled that aggressor from those British islands."

Mr Heseltine said he found it extraordinary that Labour MPs "should apparently be more interested in the views provided by Argentinian sources than in those provided by their own Government. In your reference to the death

wish of the Labour Party I find the very curious contradiction: it is very difficult for corpses to die twice."

Mr George Foulkes (Lab, Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) said that Mrs Thatcher had answered two parliamentary questions of his on October 22 and 29 which had apparently involved consulting the log.

He challenged: "Can you say when you or your officials from your department last saw this log?"

Mr Heseltine said the Prime Minister's replies would have been made with reference to "general classified rules which would apply to all logs of this sort. I very much doubt if ministers have seen this log."

Labour backbenchers shouted: "Officers and officials."

Mr Heseltine said: "I would have to inquire into that. I believe this log, and I will have to verify it, would be in the hands of the Navy and would not have come into the hands of officials in my department. I will check that situation. It is by nature a routine document which all submarines and all ships carry and would not normally come to officials in the MoD."

Agreeing with Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman (C, Lancaster) that there was a vast difference between the captain's and the navigator's logs, Mr Heseltine said, "The log we are considering would have no tactical information and no reference to the position of Argentine ships in it. The record of the log of the commander would be a very different sort of document, and that document is in the secure keeping of the MoD."

The former Labour Home Secretary, Mr Merlyn Rees, called for a white paper putting all the facts down. He claimed that statements made to the Commons in good faith and then withdrawn had created an attitude of mind outside that something untoward was happening. The loss of the log had added to this feeling.

Mr Heseltine said he took the point seriously, but the record had been corrected and the Prime Minister's set out the scene in the widest possible context.

In reply to a question from Mr Russell Johnston (L, Inverness Nairn and Lochaber) about when the log was lost, Mr Heseltine said: "I can confirm that I do not yet have the full facts as to the loss of this document and that is one of the matters to which the board of inquiry is appropriately addressing itself."

Mr Jonathan Sayeed (C, Bristol E) described the missing log as a "jotting pad" used only for navigational fixes and other relevant information. It was the ship's log, he said, which had all the information about what HMS Conqueror was doing.

Mr Heseltine agreed that the missing log contained only technical information. He said he had already seen a copy of other navigator's logs. He said he had one with him. It was a technical record kept by the navigator and it was not a record dealing with wider issues.

Labour MPs shouted: "Is it important?"

Mr Heseltine said, "Certainly the document is important. That is why it is classified — not important in the context of trying to see the judgments reached by a commanding officer in a tactical sense but important to our enemies in seeing the way in which the Royal Navy disposes of our ships at sea. If it is the suggestion of the Opposition that we should publish military tactics, that would be a major breach of national interests."

November 8 1984

CONCERN that the missing log from the submarine Conqueror has been deliberately got rid of grew today.

As pressure mounted on the Government for yet another explanation of events surrounding the sinking by Conqueror of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, it was widely feared the log

by Keith Dovkants
and Neil Darbyshire

contained potentially damaging evidence.

The green-covered exercise book containing the submarine's navigation notes is a detailed hourly record of its positions and courses.

And, it was believed, it could seriously undermine the Government's contention that the cruiser was sunk because it posed a threat to Britain's Falklands Task Force.

Another possible embarrass-

ment to the Government, verifiable by the log, was a secret mission by Conqueror during the Falklands campaign, but after the Belgrano sinking.

Opposition MPs have long maintained that sinking the ship, with a loss of 368 lives at the beginning of the Falklands conflict, wrecked any hopes of peace.

Now, with news of the log's disappearance, there is mounting suspicion that the Government ordered the Navy to get rid of it.

Defence Secretary Mr Michael Heseltine played down the significance of the log yesterday when he rejected a

new, wider-ranging investigation of the Belgrano affair.

But later in the Commons he conceded that the log was important. He said it would reveal to enemies the Royal Navy's tactics at sea pending an attack.

Mr Heseltine added: "If there is a suggestion from the Opposition that the Navy should publicise the technical details of its military tactics that would be a major breach of national interest."

Critics of the Government's Falklands policy, including several Labour MPs who believe the Belgrano was sunk to wreck a peace initia-

tive by Peru, are still pressing for a white paper.

Leader of this group is MP Mr Tam Dalyell who told The Standard: "Potentially the log contains damaging evidence. It would reveal the actions that followed from intercepted signals sent by the war cabinet."

Mr Dalyell has been campaigning for two years for the log to be published, if only to MPs or Privy Councillors or a selected judge to maintain defence secrets.

This pressure was being seen as possibly providing a motive

for the deliberate loss of the log.

Mr Arthur Gavshon, co-author of The Sinking of the Belgrano, said today: "Who realises its political importance has taken this log book lance."

"The Conqueror's course and activities would have been recorded in it and it would also show, I believe, that it entered Argentine territorial waters at one stage."

"The commander sought permission to sink ships within these territorial waters. It was refused but the fact itself would be very damaging."

Another aspect of the navigation element, Mr Gavshon said, is that the log would disprove the claim of Sir John Nott, the former Defence Secretary, that the Belgrano was zig-zagging before it was sunk.

This explanation was offered by Sir John when it was steaming away from the 200-pointed out that the ship was mile exclusion zone set up around the Falklands by Britain.

Log jam

WE have never been inclined to join those making a song and dance about the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser Belgrano two and a half years ago.

Our view was, and remains, that it did not matter whether the Belgrano was steaming north, south, east or uphill at the time she was attacked. We were at war, she was an enemy capital ship at sea and the Government was right to order her to be sunk.

The worry now is different. It is over the extraordinary way ministers have ducked and dodged and weaved and contradicted each other amid all the questions that have been asked since then.

Yesterday brought two new puzzles: the news of the disappearance of the navigator's log of the Conqueror; and the blustering but unconvincing performance of Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary.

Ministers and Whitehall were going flat out last night to diminish the importance of the vanishing log. Just a routine technical document, they were saying, listing course and depth changes, carrying a low security classification (though, on the other hand, too high ever for it to be published). Why said the Navy, they had even considered dropping the things altogether.

Yet it is quite extraordinary that a log from this submarine, of all submarines, covering that time, of all times, should have gone missing.

There are only three possibilities. The document was genuinely mislaid, which really is stretching the arm of coincidence too far. Or someone purloined it to make mischief or make a profit, in which case it will surface sooner rather than later. Or it was removed by someone who believed that the information it contained would embarrass the Navy or the government.

We hope that the MPs on this particular watchdog committee will hold on like terriers until they get the answers they want. For the real question, growing more pressing by the day is *why* all the mystery if there is nothing to hide?

Defence Secretary explains the submarine's missing log

'It's no cover-up'

By JOHN DICKIE
Diplomatic Correspondent

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Heseltine yesterday angrily dismissed claims that the missing navigation log of the submarine that sunk the Belgrano had disappeared as part of a political cover-up.

This logbook from HMS Conqueror contained 'no tactical information', and the crucial captain's log which held vital operational details was in the hands of the Ministry of Defence, he told MPs.

The vanished log was, however, classified information and could show our enemies how the Royal Navy sends its subs into attack, he revealed.

Shadow Defence Secretary Mr Denis Davies, who raised the issue in an emergency question in the Commons, described the disappearance of the helmsman's log as 'another extraordinary episode in the Government's attempts to explain away the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the General Belgrano.'

But Mr Heseltine, to loud Tory cheers, retorted that the Argentine cruiser was torpedoed 'to protect British lives.'

The navigation log had been mislaid he said. 'As it is also classified, a Board of Inquiry is being held.'

Official

If the log had not been an important document it would not have been classified, he said.

'It is important in particular to our enemies, who would see the way the Royal Navy disposes its ships at sea.'

Mr Davies suggested that the helmsman's log had been lost either through 'gross incompetence' within the Navy—which few would believe—or 'stolen and maybe destroyed by someone who thinks the details contained in that log are embarrassing—not only to the Government, but to the Prime Minister, personally.'

The book could have included an account of the events between April

30 and May 2 when the warship was sighted and sunk, said Mr Davies, and he accused Mr Heseltine of trying to 'downgrade' its importance.

Mr Heseltine insisted: 'The Government took military advice in connection with the sinking of the Belgrano expeditiously and in my view unavoidably.'

And he said: 'The House and country is sick and tired of Opposition MPs who for narrow and inexplicable reasons pursue a campaign against British national interests.'

Earlier in the day, Mr Heseltine was questioned for more than two

hours by a Commons committee inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano.

He told the committee that the 'jewels in the Crown' document prepared to enable him to know all the facts was drafted by Mr Clive Ponting, the official facing trial for allegedly leaking details of documents to MP Tam Dalyell.

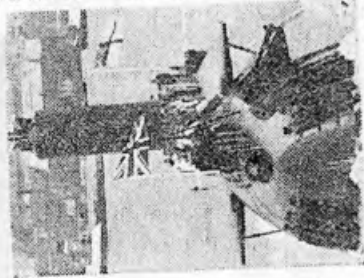
He was asked why MPs had not been told of significant changes in the rules of engagement in the Falklands War and admitted there had been inaccuracies and inconsistencies.

But he was adamant: 'Of course, there wasn't a cover-up.'

He also said: 'When the British Government took its decision to sink the Belgrano it did not know she had changed course—and even if it had known there was reason why she should not change course again.'

'Warships are not pleasure vessels. His former Cabinet colleague, Mr Norman St. John Stevas, suggested that a detailed account of events should be published by the Government.'

But Mr Heseltine rejected that on the grounds that the more information given, the more people would ask for further information, leading to areas which would involve national security.



HMS Conqueror: Riddle

Heseltine attacks Belgrano 'campaign'



Heseltine: Questioned

Daily Mail
8.11.84

What could have happened to Conqueror's little buff book from the Falklands

AN inquiry team is now trying to piece together just what happened to the missing navigational log from the time it was brought back to Britain by HMS Conqueror.

So far, however, they have had little success.

Conqueror sailed into Faslane, on the Clyde, on July 3, 1982 flying the skull and cross-bones after her successful attack on the Belgrano.

Even as she was docking, the boat's crew of 11 officers and 88 ratings, under the command of 37-year-old Commander Christopher Wreford-Brown, were

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
Defence Correspondent

packing up the mass of documents and classified papers which had accumulated during the five-month voyage to the South Atlantic.

Among them was the slim buff-coloured book containing a detailed account of the sub's movements, kept by the helmsman.

Such documents were taken ashore in canvas bags and handed to staff officers from the 3rd Submarine Squadron.

For days they remained in a locked safe in one of the offices

of the base. Then they were taken out for sorting to be sent to Ministry of Defence and naval establishments around the country.

One possible explanation is that the missing log was among documents 'borrowed' for training or for evaluation and was mislaid among millions of pieces of paper being ferried to and from naval establishments.

Another theory is that it may have been taken as an illicit souvenir of the war.

Naval experts were openly scornful of suggestions that it had been deliberately destroyed or 'mislaid' on official orders.

Daily Mail 8.11.84
Parliamentary Comment

The loss of one of the submarine Conqueror's log books also produced much ridiculous Labour speculation: They can't help hoping that Mrs Thatcher has popped this supposedly incriminating document into her reticule.

I do honestly grieve for all the poor Argentine sailors who went down in the Belgrano; but still I think, along with Mr Donald Stewart (Scot Nat. W. Isles), that Gen. Galtieri not Mrs Thatcher, is to blame for their tragic deaths. What did he (and Labour) expect us to retaliate with — blanchmanges?

MPs are keen to question Lewin

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Members of the Commons foreign affairs committee—which will hear evidence today in private and public about the Belgrano affair from the Defence Secretary, also want to question other participants in the events surrounding the Falklands conflict in 1982.

These include Lord Lewin, then chief of the defence staff and Mr Charles Wallace, the British ambassador to Uruguay, who was ambassador to Peru at the time. Mr Alexander Haig, then US Secretary of State and Peruvian ministers have said that Mr Wallace was kept closely informed of the Peruvian peace proposals on May 1—the day before the Belgrano was sunk.

This has been vigorously denied by Mr Wallace and the Foreign Office.

The committee's scepticism of the Peruvian/Haig version is reflected in the press statement about its inquiry which refers to "the alleged relationship between the sinking and the failure of the so-called Peruvian peace proposals."

The committee is concerned more about the consistent attempts by the Government, and in particular the Defence Ministry, to mislead the Commons about the events surrounding the sinking. It has recognised the public interest in the cover-up by choosing the Grand Committee Room in the Commons, normally used for large lobbies of Parliament, for Mr Michael Heseltine's testimony.

Mr Heseltine is unlikely to discuss in public evidence that Britain was intercepting Argentine signals during the conflict. According to Argentine sources, the naval commander, Admiral Juan Lombardo, signalled his fleet to return home the day before the Belgrano was sunk.

United Nations documents also show that Britain believed—wrongly—that the cruiser was severely damaged, but not sinking, after it was hit. The Argentine junta also announced that the Belgrano was hit but still afloat, and the suggestion has been made to the Commons committee that Britain's information was received from decoded Argentine signals.

Sub's log missing

THE MINISTRY of Defence said last night that the operations log of the submarine HMS Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, is missing.

A Board of Inquiry is investigating the disappearance of the log, which contains details of the boat's movements and operations such as the opening of torpedo tubes and the time of the sinking.

The Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, is to give evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee about the Belgrano today. MPs seek Lewin evidence, page 3.

BELGRANO LOG IS MISSING

By GRAHAM PATERSON

THE Navy has lost the log of the nuclear submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser Belgrano during the Falklands conflict, it was reported last night.

The log is said to contain crucial details of the submarine's voyage in the South Atlantic which has been at the centre of political controversy since the Belgrano went down with the loss of more than 300 lives.

The report in the DAILY MIRROR today, that it has been lost could prove seriously embarrassing to Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, who is due to appear before the Commons Foreign Affairs committee today to answer questions on the Belgrano sinking.

'Is it bungling?'

Mr George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, asked last night: "Is it bungling, lost by accident or has it disappeared for some other reason?"

Labour MPs are expected to claim that the log—which could provide crucial evidence on the background to the sinking—may be missing because it could prove to be inconsistent with the Government's argument that the Belgrano had to be sunk because it posed a threat to the Task Force.

Argentina may face new loan difficulties

By Tom Burns in Madrid and
Robert Mauthner in London

ARGENTINA'S difficulties in negotiating new loans may intensify after a U.S. decision to downgrade some of the country's existing foreign debts.

The country is seeking between \$3bn and \$5bn (£2.4bn and £4bn) from commercial bank creditors as part of a plan to reschedule about \$20bn in public and private sector foreign debt.

Sr Bernardo Grinspun, Argentina's Economy Minister, said yesterday that some of the country's public sector loans had been declared sub-standard by U.S. bank regulatory authorities because they are long overdue.

Such a classification does not require banks to set aside reserves to cover potential losses on loans, but it is taken as a clear warning that such reserves will become mandatory if interest and principal payments are not quickly put on a regular basis.

Bankers on the advisory committee which has been spearheading debt negotiations with Argentina say they have yet to see details of the regulators' decision to downgrade some of foreign debts.

The move was made late last week at a meeting of the Inter-Agency Country Review Committee, which includes representatives of the Federal Reserve, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Comptroller of the Currency. The committee meets twice a year to review the status of sovereign loans on the books of U.S. banks.

Bankers had been worried that any downgrading might give many small creditors the excuse they have been looking for to back away from granting new loans to Argentina.

Initial indications from the regulators suggest, however, that only part of Argentina's \$46bn debt is included in the downgrading. This might be interpreted as an attempt to persuade the country to speed-up negotiations on its new debt.

Sr Grinspun told a press conference that the downgrading would not affect Argentina's credit rating and denied local press reports of growing difficulties in the country's foreign debt negotiations.

The downgrading comes at a very sensitive time for Argentina, which is beginning to demonstrate a clear determination to stick to its recently negotiated International Monetary Fund economic stabilisation programme.

Inflation fell to 19.2 per cent in October from 27.5 per cent in September and real salaries are estimated to have declined by 6 per cent since August. The first nine months have also produced a record trade surplus of \$3.56bn, which means that the IMF forecast of a \$3.8bn surplus for the year as a whole should be easily exceeded.

Argentina pressed to buy
Soviet goods Page 5

Argentina pressed to buy Soviet goods

BY JIMMY BURNS IN BUENOS AIRES

THE SOVIET UNION is pressing for Argentina to import more Soviet goods before committing itself to a renewal of the five year grain and meat supply agreements between the two countries which are due to expire next month.

The future scope and scale of the agreements are understood to have been at the centre of talks between local officials and a high level Soviet mission led by Mr Alexei Manzhulo, the Soviet Deputy Minister for Trade.

Mr Manzhulo, formerly a commercial counsellor in Buenos Aires, is understood to have forcefully voiced his country's dissatisfaction with the continuing imbalance in Soviet-Argentine trade and to have suggested concrete ways of narrowing the gap.

One idea apparently mooted was that the current supply agreements should only be renewed if they include a commitment from the Argentinians to increase their annual purchase of Soviet goods to a minimum value of \$300m. In 1983 Argentine exports to the Soviet Union were \$1.6bn compared to imports of \$31.5m.

Although no firm agreements appear to have emerged from the talks, Argentina is understood to be considering speeding up a decision on a \$400m turbines contract for the Piedra de Aguila hydroelectric project.

The current supply agreements between the two countries guarantee Argentine farmers a minimum annual sale of 4.5m tonnes of coarse grains and oil seeds to the Soviet Union in addition to meat sales

Falklands log inquiry

A naval board of inquiry will investigate the loss of the classified log kept by the navigating officer of the submarine HMS Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano in the Falklands conflict.

Spectator sport

Michael Heseltine doesn't know it, but when he arrives to be publicly grilled tomorrow before the Commons' foreign affairs committee he will come face to face with one of his former Belgrano advisers - Clive Ponting, the MoD official now awaiting trial at the Old Bailey accused of leaking ministry documents on the affair. He will be in the audience of the Grand Committee Room, with his solicitor Brian Raymond. As author of the secret official report on the Belgrano affair - known in MoD circles as "the crown jewels" - Ponting probably knows more about the subject than anyone in the country. Indeed it was he, as Heseltine's close adviser, who urged the Defence Secretary to reply with maximum frankness to questions by MPs and the committee. For the moment, however, Heseltine can relax: Ponting has no plans to give evidence before the committee - he will have his chance at the Old Bailey.

RICHARD NORTON-TAYLOR reports

Belgrano engagement

IN A Commons committee room tomorrow — the first full day of the new session of Parliament — the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, will make a long-awaited appearance before five Tory and four Labour MPs determined to succeed where over 80 parliamentary questions and a series of letters from the Prime Minister have failed.

He will be the first witness in an attempt by the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee to discover the precise circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, during the Falklands conflict. What to many MPs is more important, he will also be asked why, along with other ministers, he has persistently tried to mislead the Commons over what Dr David Owen, the Social Democrat leader, has described as the early stages of a Watergate.

Mr Heseltine will appear before the committee as a result of an extraordinary sequence of events in the summer. It started one day in July when Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, received two documents allegedly sent to him by Mr Clive Ponting, a senior Ministry of Defence official, who now faces charges under the Official Secrets Act.

One document showed how a ministry official, Mr Michael Legge, advised ministers on how to brush off de-



Mr Heseltine: first witness

mands from the committee for information about changes in the rules of engagement during the Falklands conflict. The other was a draft letter — which was never sent — from Mr Heseltine to Mr Dalyell giving details of the Belgrano's movements.

Mr Dalyell, believing he was doing the Commons a favour in the search for the truth, immediately sent the document to the committee. He did not bargain for what happened next. After consulting his colleagues, the committee chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw, Tory MP for Stroud, personally handed the documents back to Mr Heseltine. But after pressure from the Labour committee members in particular, he agreed that the Defence Secretary should be summoned to give evidence about their contents.

Other internal ministry documents show that for at least five months — between March and July — there were a series of anguished meetings involving both officials and ministers about what MPs should be told about the Belgrano affair. On at least two occasions both Mr Heseltine and Mr John Stanley, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, consulted Mrs Thatcher on how to reply to parliamentary questions and advised that they should not be answered.

In a minute written in May, Mr Ponting told Mr Heseltine that there was no reason to withhold the information. "I do not believe it is possible to sustain this line," he said. But ministers continued to resist; in September, Mr Stanley sent a cursory memo to the Commons committee about changes in the rules of

engagement.

Crucially, it made no mention of the fact that the May 2, 1982, change — agreed by the War Cabinet in a 20-minute discussion in the ante-room at Chequers that lunchtime, nearly 24 hours after the cruiser was first sighted by the submarine, Conqueror — was not communicated to the Argentine government until May 7.

The Legge minute, written in early July, says that "the appropriate warning" was delayed for five days. But, as the Guardian revealed exclusively last week, that information had been available in the House of Commons Library since May 1982.

Unbeknown to the Ministry of Defence, the details in documents which Mr Ponting was charged in August under the Official Secrets Act, with leaking had been deposited in the Commons Library by the Foreign Office more than two years earlier.

The papers in the Commons Library confirm information in Mr Legge's note and other confidential ministry documents which the Government has persistently refused to disclose to the Commons committee — not only that the Argentine government was not warned about the May 2 change until May 7, but also that the change meant that the British task force could attack any Argentine warship anywhere outside Argentina's 12-mile coastal limit.

This significant change in the rules of engagement was made less than 24 hours after Mr Francis Pym, then the Foreign Secretary, stated in Washington that "no further military action is envisaged at the moment, except to keep the exclusion zone (around the Falklands) secure."

Earlier that day, May 1, Mr Pym had already expressed concern — which also existed inside the Ministry of Defence — in a written note about whether proposed changes were compatible with the UN charter covering self-defence on which Britain was relying.

Mr Heseltine, who was then Environment Secretary, was not a party to these decisions. But in March this year he asked a senior official for a full written account — referred to in the Ministry of Defence as the crown jewel — of the Belgrano affair. The official he asked was Mr Ponting.

Yes, madam, we have three restaurants, bathrooms en suite and Mrs Thatcher

never stays here,



Daily Mail
7.11.84

Navy loses Belgrano sinking log

THE Royal Navy has lost the Operations Room log of the nuclear submarine Conqueror, showing its movements as it sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano.

The log, one of four kept by Conqueror, should have been in the Records Department of the Ministry of Defence or at

Fleet HQ at Northwood.

But when Ministry officials asked for it to help them frame an answer to a Commons question it could not be found.

News of the loss has come at an acutely embarrassing time for Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine for today he faces questioning by a Parliamentary Committee

The remaining three logs—including those kept by the captain and the officer of the watch—have constantly been referred to by Ministry officials

But this is the first time it was necessary to refer to the Operations Room Log which records the submarine's hourly course, speed and depth, plus many technical details

Labour Foreign Affairs spokesman George Foulkes said he found it 'really quite amazing' that the log had gone missing.

Tory MPs, however, remain unimpressed. They said the navigational details contained in the missing log would have had no relevance to the strategic questions involved in the Belgrano sinking.

SEA Classic INTERNATIONAL

**Battleships are back
SS Great Britain • USSupercarriers
Sinking of the Royal Oak**

**HMS Exeter
v
Graf Spee**

**Captain Cook
-the great
explorer**

**Ironclads in the
American Civil War**

**Buried Battleships
from history • SS Olympic**



WHEN *Capitän zur See* Hans Langsdorff, Commanding Officer of the German Pocket Battleship, KM *Admiral Graf Spee*, informed his officers on the 24th of November 1939 that they were returning home after their very successful anti-commerce cruise in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean, little did he realise that with this decision he was embarking upon the last stage of this great ship's, and eventually his own, life.

The cruise of the *Graf Spee* in the Southern Oceans, had not only accounted for the destruction of valuable Allied shipping, but in the widespread disruption of sea-borne commerce.

Deutschland (later the *Lutzow*) and the *Admiral Scheer*, were designed and built. They were conceived from the outset as commerce raiders, ships well able to disrupt the maritime trade of any nation, even that of Great Britain, guarded by the Royal Navy. The effective deployment of the *Graf Spee*, and later her sisters, clearly illustrated their qualities and suitability for such operations.

Supported by an equally effective supply ship organisation, such anti-commerce cruises in the far seas, were able to extend their range and therefore offensive operations deep into seemingly safe Allied waters, while all the time

would like to carry out a brief investigation of each unit's specifications and qualities, to enable the reader of this article to understand the nature of the British victory, a victory of a number of lightly-armed and protected ships over a much heavier opponent.

KM *Admiral Graf Spee*

With the apparently simple objective of creating a class of warships 'stronger than anything faster and faster than anything stronger', the *Kriegsmarine* in the mid twenties started to build a trio of revolutionary capital ships, ostensibly within the severe restrictions of the Versailles Treaty, which limited the size

battlecruisers, the 'Mighty' *Hood*, the *Repulse* and her sister the *Renown*; the four Japanese battleships of the *Kongo* class and the French battlecruisers *Dunkerque* and *Strasbourg*. It could be said that only these vessels possessed the necessary high speed and 'heavy punch' needed to catch and sink a *Panzerschiffe*.

The intended role for this new generation of light capital ships was to be in the vital role of commerce raiding. It was briefly mentioned at the time that they were to be replacements for some obsolete pre Dreadnoughts retained by the Germans after the First World War, that were serving as coastal defence

ships. The new replacements were never intended for such limited duties, with their operational range of 20,000 miles at a cruising speed of 18 knots, they were clearly intended for long range deployments.

This high figure for endurance and speed had been obtained primarily through the adoption of a diesel engine main propulsion installation. The eight double-acting nine cylinder two-stroke plant, designed and built at the *Maschinenfabrik Augsburg - Nurnberg*, could produce up to 56,000 hp via two Vulcan reduction gearboxes driving the two propeller shafts, which resulted in the *Graf Spee* achieving a very creditable 28.5 knots on her trials.

One point to note about this class of *Panzerschiffe*'s, is that although generally regarded as one group, they all possessed markedly differing arrangements in the distribution of their internally and externally placed armour. Because the *Graf Spee* was the last unit in this class to be built, it is to be expected that her design would incorporate all the lessons learnt from the construction of her sisters, and in particular the ways of increasing her fighting qualities. The main differences between these ships' protective systems can be briefly described. Whereas the first pair had an 80mm thick sloped (at 20 degrees) external belt, the *Graf Spee*'s was 80mm thick and it also extended one deck higher. Supporting this was an extended torpedo bulkhead 40mm thick which reached from the shell plating of the hull

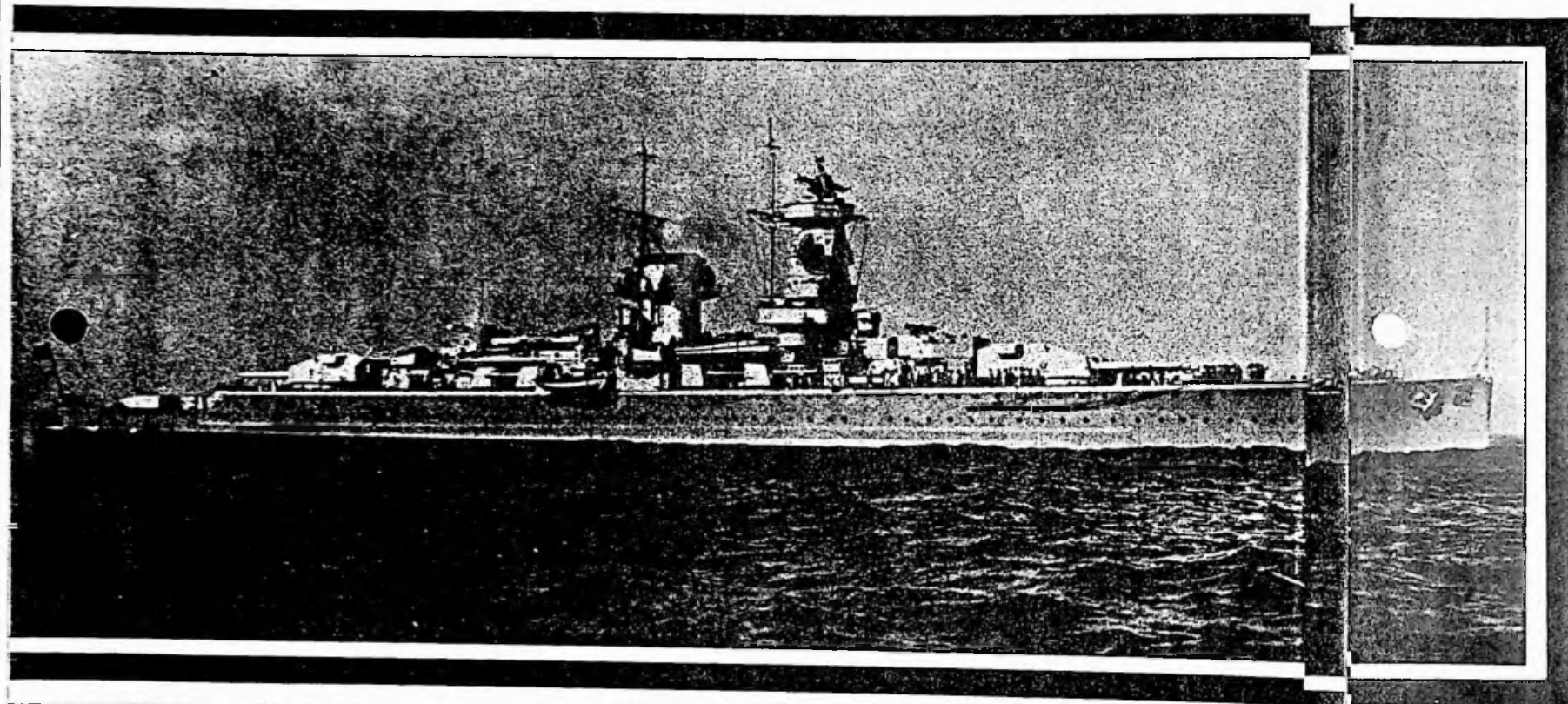
to the full width 45mm thick armoured deck, the first pair's torpedo bulkhead extended only to the inner bottom and was 45mm and 40mm thick for the *Deutschland* and *Scheer* respectively. The first unit's armoured deck was 40mm while the second unit's was 45mm

thick and both systems did not cover the full width of the ship. From this rather bland description of what was, after all, a very complex distribution and layout of heavy armour, it is apparent that of the three members of this class, the *Graf Spee* had been completed with the best all-round armour and underwater protection, a system that was designed to provide a high degree of defence against the effects of the expected 6ins. and 8ins. opposition thought likely to be encountered during a war cruise.

Although they may have all differed in their defensive qualities, all three ships had a similar main armament installation consisting of six 28cm (11ins.) guns in two triple gunhouses (one forward and one aft), and eight single 15cm (5.9ins.) mounting amidships. By 1939 the *Graf Spee* also carried an effective light dual purpose outfit of six 10.5cm (4.1ins.) guns in three twin and eight 37mm pieces in four twin mountings, supported by eight individual open 20mm pieces.

To complete her offensive outfit the *Graf Spee*, along with her sisters, were provided with a set of two deck mounted 53.3cm (21ins.) quad torpedo tubes right aft. Finally all were equipped to carry floatplanes, in the case of the *Graf Spee* in late 1939, these were two Arado Ar-196 monoplanes, which could be launched from the catapult on the aft superstructure.

From all this information, it must be apparent that the *Graf Spee* and her kind must have exceeded the limitations of the Versailles Treaty, to enable them to carry such protection and armament. Indeed such was the case, instead of the 'permitted' maximum displacement of 10,000 tons, the *Graf Spee* herself achieved a quoted 16,200 tons displacement (at full load). Nevertheless it must be equally apparent that the Germans



Left, KM *Admiral Graf Spee* on completion. Note the coat of arms on the bow forward of the anchor. Below, HMS *Exeter* at full steam in a well-known pre-war photograph. (Ray Burt).

The River Plate gun duel story by M. H. Williams

Exeter

Such actions could not continue unchallenged; to counter this lone surface raider the British and French fleets had deployed a number of hunting groups in the South, in an attempt to catch and sink, or at least deter, the *Graf Spee*.

But in the vast expanse of the Southern Oceans, the advantages were always in favour of the lone raider, who could strike suddenly at any time in an area of his choosing and then disappear as quickly into the seemingly endless oceans, before an effective naval response had been gathered together to catch her.

For such 'hit and run' operations the *Graf Spee* and her two sisters, the

numerous hunting groups tried in vain to corner and sink the members of these elusive German supply and raider groups.

One such group, under the command of Commodore Harwood, then of the Eastern coast of South America, was destined to encounter the *Graf Spee*. The resulting engagement between these two forces will now be described, and in particular, the big gun exchange between the two heavy units present, the *Graf Spee* and the Royal Navy's heavy cruiser, HMS *Exeter*, an action that formed a very important part of the Battle of the River Plate.

But before relating these events I

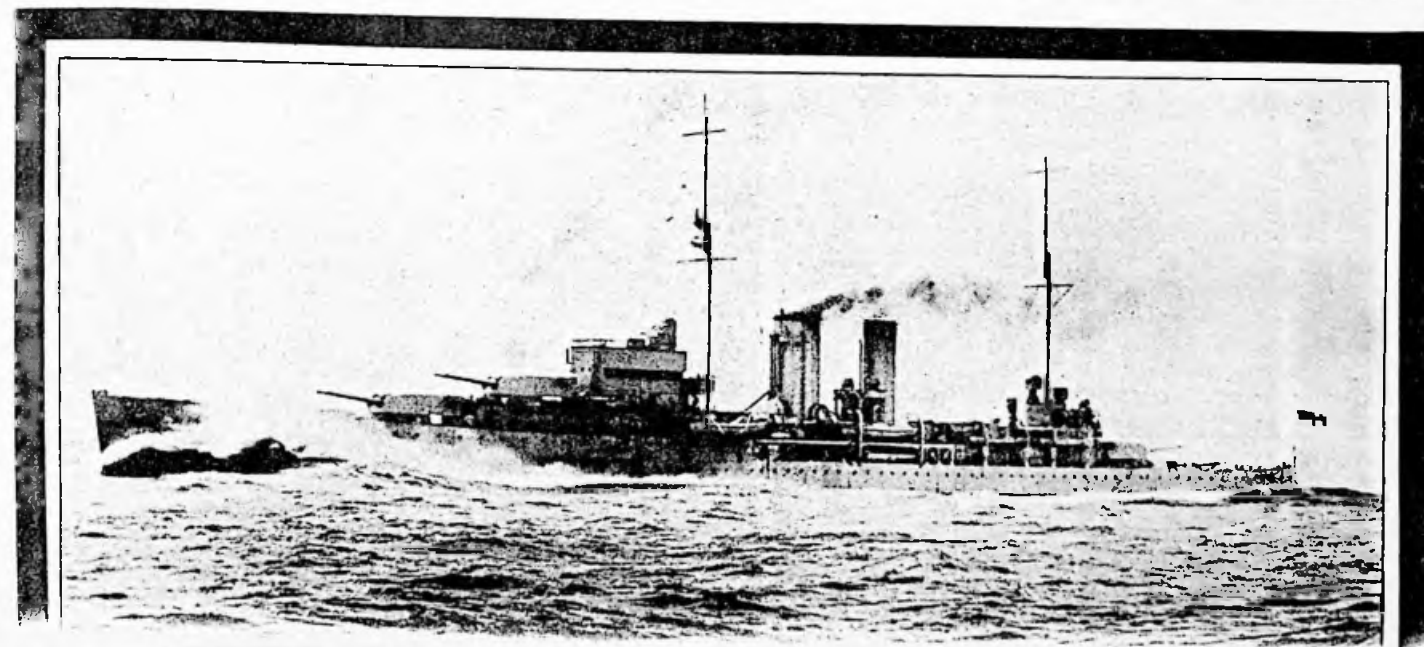
of any future German capital ship to a displacement of 10,000 tons and a main armament of 28cm (11ins.).

It must have been quite obvious to the watching naval powers that the resulting ships would be markedly inferior to their own battleships and battlecruisers. But it was never the intention of the Germans to let one of their new '*Panzerschiffe*'s' engage another capital ship; they were to be given a speed which would enable them to manoeuvre their way out of any such action against a powerful but slow battleship. The only effective heavy units possessed by the other major fleets of the world at this time were the Royal Navy's trio of World War One design

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v

Graf Spee



had succeeded in finally producing a truly formidable fighting ship capable of ocean-wide deployments in the search of vulnerable merchantmen, but at the same time a ship well able to defend itself against the anticipated 'enemy' naval forces it encountered.

It was standard practice during and after 1939 that German surface ships should try to avoid 'full engagement' with enemy warships, for fear of receiving seemingly minimal damage which could result in them losing speed, manoeuvrability, or fighting qualities, that might make them vulnerable to subsequent attacks, far from home and assistance. Such was to be the *Graf Spee's* case after her action with the Commodore Harwood's hunting group, and HMS *Exeter* in particular.

HMS Exeter

To defend her worldwide Empire, Britain had always called upon her great numbers of light naval forces to keep lines of communication and trade open, leaving the greater part of her major capital ships free to defend home waters, or so placed to 'bottle-up' or engage the enemy's heavy units. This state had however been somewhat weakened after the First World War, with the gradual reduction in numbers of every class of ship and the following further reduction after the Washington Naval Conference. Areas which were once protected by the physical presence of a British warship, were now only distantly covered by the existence of the strength of the Royal Navy, still the largest in the world.

By the mid twenties replacement cruisers for the old World War One designs were being requested by the

Royal Navy, to again allow them to possess an effective cruiser arm capable of Empire defence. From the Washington Conference, not only the numbers of future vessels were discussed, but also their size and equipment carried. Basically this allowed for the fleets of the world to build 8ins. gunned ships displacing no more than 10,000 tons, to a set number of ships for each nation.

Needless to say, this limit was the specifications aimed at by each navy, America, Japan, Italy, France and Britain, all built right up to the limitations, and in a number of classes (especially the Japanese) beyond. Britain's Treaty cruisers of the 'County' classes followed this spate of new construction, to finally equip the Royal Navy with a number of very effective and versatile but individually expensive ships.

It was primarily because of this high unit cost for the 'County' type, that the decision was taken to try and reduce the size, and therefore the cost, of the next cruiser type. This breakaway from building right up to the limit of the Treaty, was to eventually result in the size of ship that the Royal Navy had advocated at the end of the First World War for the protection of the Empire's lines of communication.

The following 'Cathedral' or 'B' class ships, *Exeter* and *York*, were the only two members of this new smaller heavy cruiser class. During the thirties these ships, in common with every other major unit in the Royal Navy, carried out a number of foreign cruises and commissions. For the *Exeter* these were mainly, besides the expected home waters, to the West Indies, and South

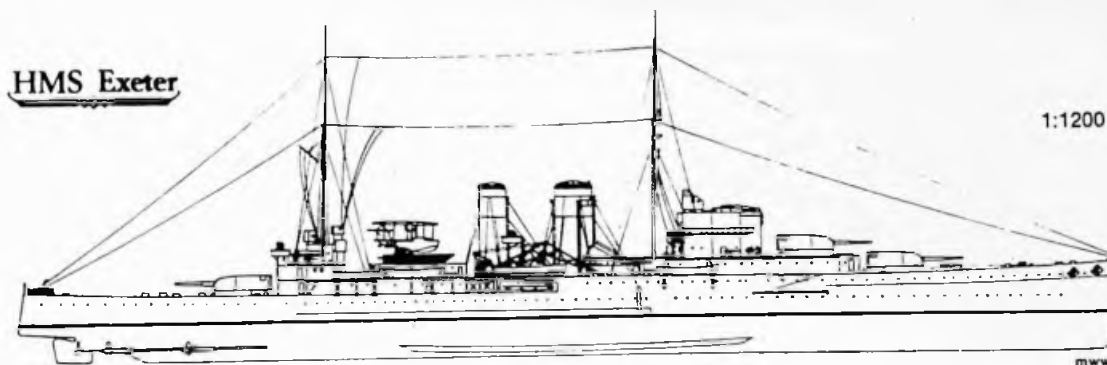
America, an area that she was soon to patrol in far different conditions and achieve distinction in, during late 1939, as the heavy member of Commodore Harwood's Force G.

The *Exeter's* displacement of 10,490 tons at deep load, by 1939, indicates that although regarded as a lighter example of the 'County' class, (14,500 tons) she was still a heavy cruiser in every sense of the word. The *Exeter* had a four shaft/turbine propulsion plant capable of producing 80,000 shp and a maximum of 32 knots, her protection of a 3ins. thick belt and 2ins. deck over her vitals, was like the aforementioned German Pocket Battleships, different within the class; the *Exeter* is reported to have possessed a better armour distribution than the earlier *York*. But it is quite obvious that a comparison between the amounts given to the *Graf Spee* and *Exeter's* armour will clearly indicate the superiority that the German unit had in this area.

The main armament of six 8ins. guns in three twin gunhouses was supported by a secondary outfit of four single open 4ins. guns, and just two two pdr AA pieces. Two Walrus flying boats could be carried and launched for spotting and reconnaissance duties to greatly increase the area and range of search operations. Finally, the *Exeter* also carried an installation of six 21ins. torpedo tubes placed in two triple mounts amidships; without doubt it was the real or potential threat that these weapons represented that could be said to be the *Exeter's* only truly effective deterrent, a threat that Langsdorff must have been aware of, and one that Harwood was to exploit to the full in the coming Battle of the River Plate.

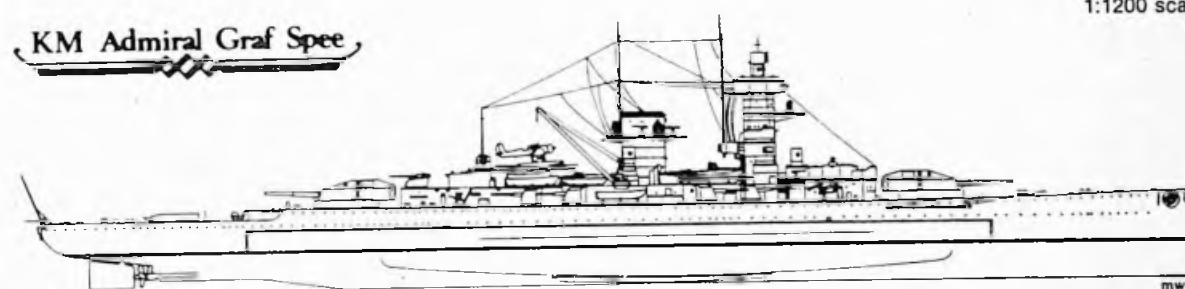
HMS Exeter

1:1200 scale



KM Admiral Graf Spee

1:1200 scale



Below, Graf Spee, the crew lining her decks, seen in 1936. The Pocket Battleship enjoyed a highly successful commerce-raiding voyage until compelled to action by Harwood's cruiser force. (Ray Burt).

The 'Duel' between the Exeter and Graf Spee

Over the years a number of excellent publications have covered the epic events of the 13th of December 1939 in great detail and depth, until every aspect of this action has become well known to naval enthusiasts and the general reader alike. I will not repeat this already well recorded material, but deal, instead, with part of this famous action, the 'big gun' duel between the two heavy units present upon that day. Needless to say mention of the presence of the RNZN *Achilles* and the Force flagship HMS *Ajax*, who played such vital parts in this Battle, and whose close-in attack against the *Graf Spee* later that day, saved the crippled *Exeter* from fatal damage at a critical moment in the action, will be made.

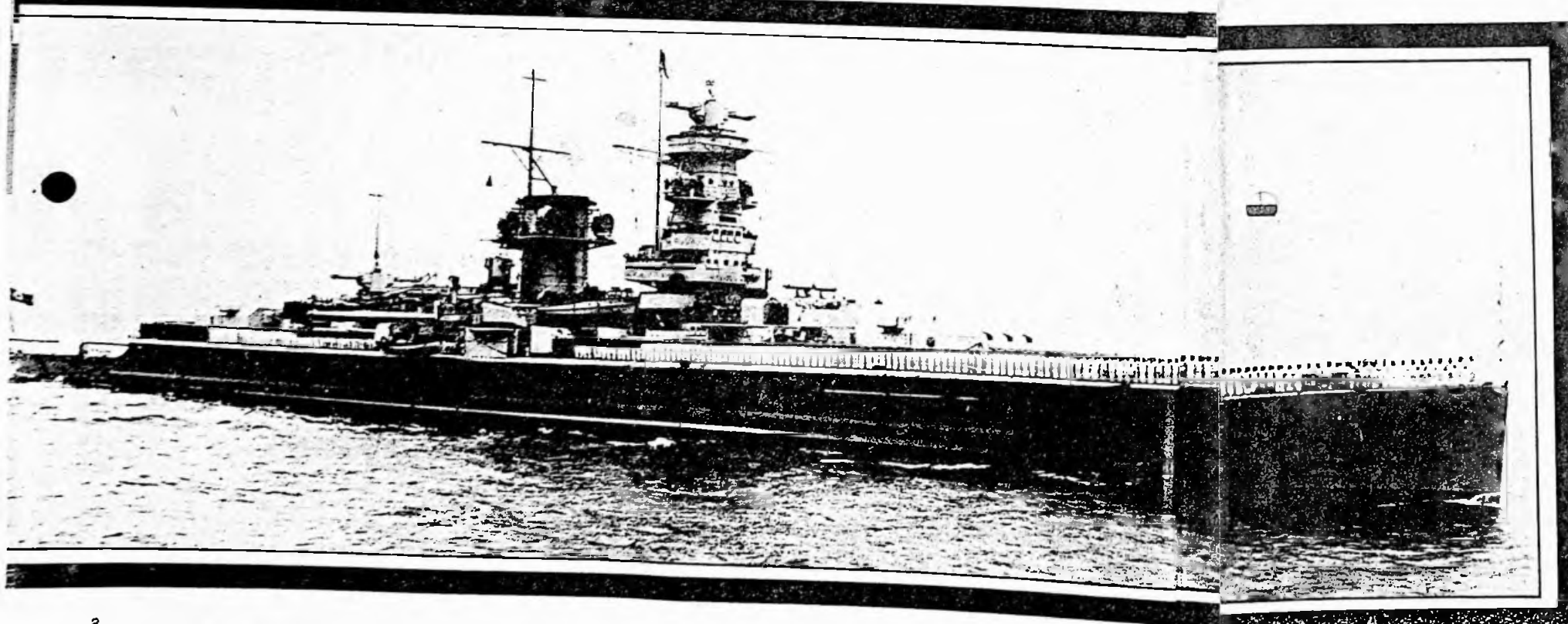
At 0530 on the 13th, approximately 300 miles off the mouth of the River Plate, two mastheads were sighted from the tops of the *Graf Spee* on her starboard bow. The sighting was temporary, but it was re-established at 0550. From this it was now confirmed that the reported masts were from the *Exeter* and what appeared at first to be a couple of destroyers, the navigation officer pointing out to Kapitän Langsdorff, the standing operational orders concerning the engagement of surface forces. But before his return home Langsdorff seems to have set aside caution to gain for his command a resounding naval

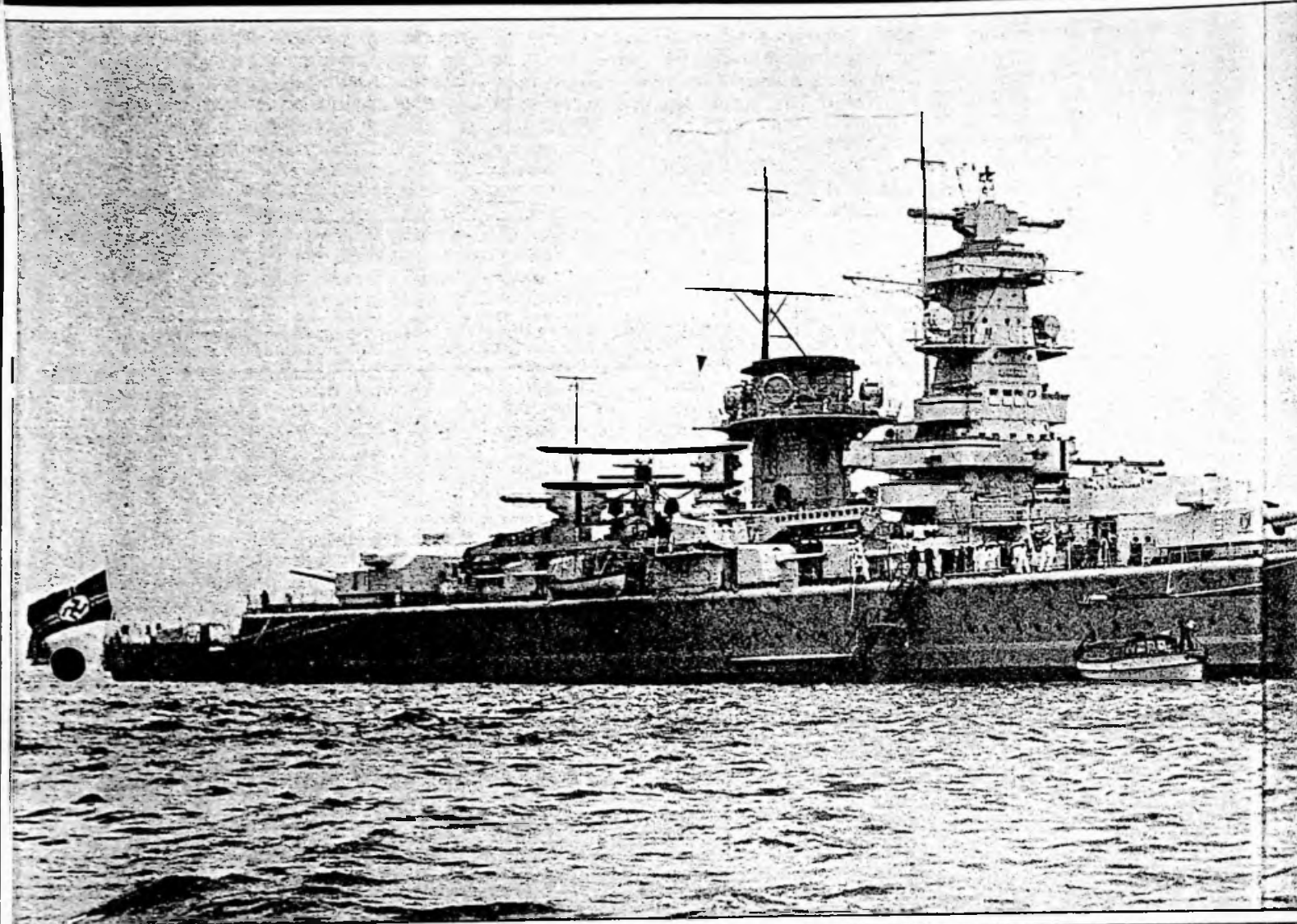
victory against this apparently weak force, to accompany his recent successes against merchantmen.

Shortly after 0600, Harwood's force (which was anticipating such an eventuality) sighted a short plumb of exhaust gas from the *Graf Spee's* diesels as she worked up to a high speed to close with Harwood. From the British line comprising the *Ajax* (flag) in the van, then the *Achilles* and *Exeter*, the latter unit was dispatched to investigate the sighting. The *Exeter* closed with the advancing *Graf Spee*.

The *Exeter* confirmed her contact with the *Graf Spee* at 0616 to Commodore Harwood who was by now also closing the range, Langsdorff commenced the action by opening fire on the *Exeter* with his main armament of 11in. guns (at a range of 21,000 yards, well outside 8ins. and 6ins. range) and on the *Ajax* with his secondary outfit of 5.9ins., at 0618. From the pre-arranged battle plan conceived by Harwood, the *Exeter* immediately steamed to the west of the *Graf Spee* to close the range still further to enable her to open fire with her main armament, while the two light cruisers made for the other flank to engage the pocket battleship with their light 6ins. guns at 0622, two minutes after the *Exeter*.

But the first blood was to go to the *Graf Spee*, the *Exeter* was hit by a projectile which failed to detonate, but which caused structural damage from its passage. The next minute brought extensive vital damage forward, when an





11ins. shell put out of action 'B' turret, the resulting explosion and shower of splinters sweeping the relatively lightly protected bridge, killing and wounding all the personnel, and wrecking the wheelhouse below the bridge. Captain Bell of the *Exeter*, despite his wounds, organised the transfer of control to the after conning position only to discover that action damage had already destroyed communications and steering control from this position as well, an exposed chain of messages was therefore set up to relay steering orders to the after compartment.

But the *Exeter's* fire was also hitting home on her opponent, from the estimated 190 rounds fired during the action, three made contact while others caused shock and splinter damage through their near miss on the *Graf Spee*. From the three direct hits inflicted, the first passed through the upper bridge without exploding, the second hit the starboard heavy AA mounting killing half the crew in its passage, before penetrating two decks and detonating inside the ship, destroying her fresh

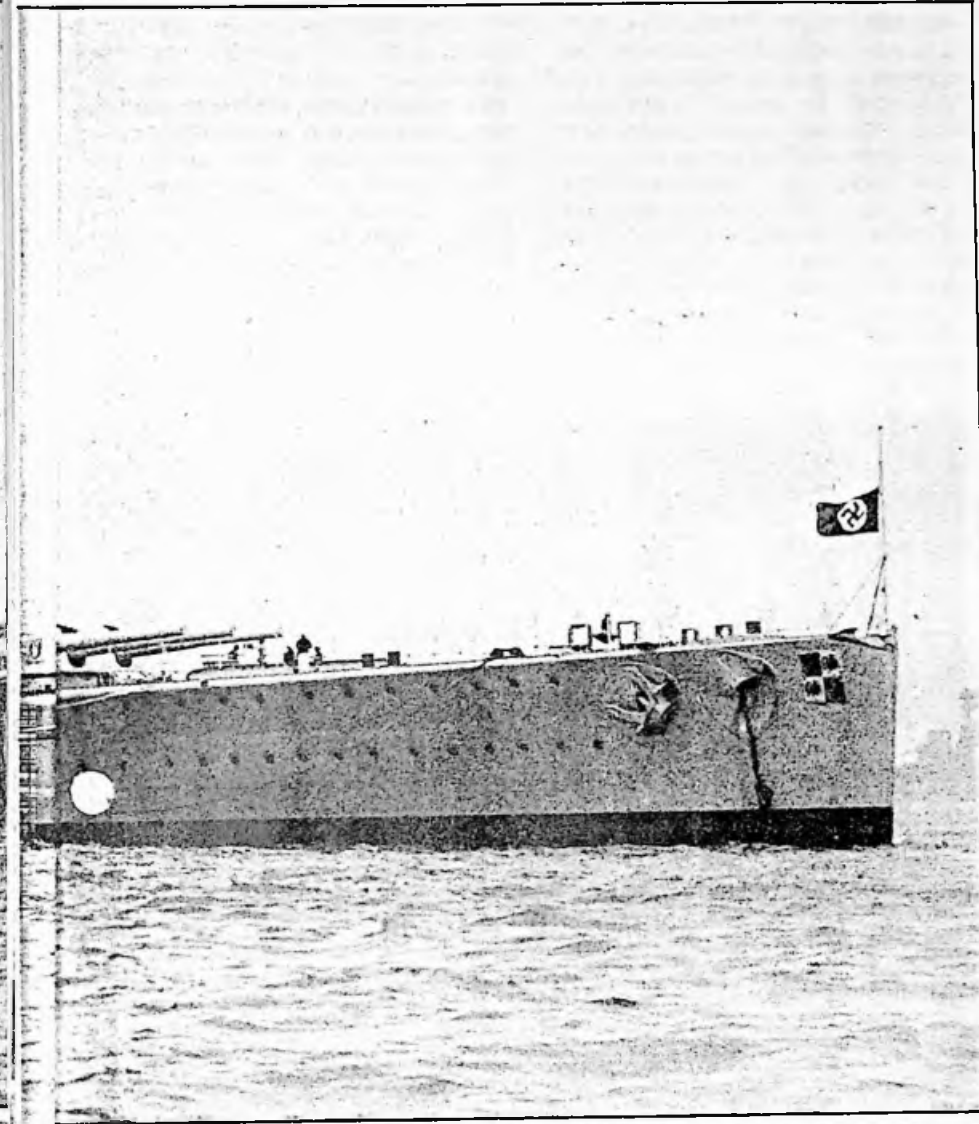
water equipment. The last hit credited to the *Exeter* proved to be very effective indeed, penetrating the *Graf Spee's* armoured belt and splinter bulkhead to finally detonate well inboard. Commander F. W. Rasenack made some telling comments after the battle on the apparent high penetration qualities of the British 8ins. projectiles, which clearly belied the view that his ship could only be successfully engaged by another capital ship.

But the exchange of heavy fire was two-sided; within half an hour of the start of the battle the *Exeter* was in a poor state, with at least seven direct 11ins. hits and numerous near misses received. Besides the previously related 'B' turret and bridge damage, 'A' turret and the aircraft catapult were now out of action, along with the port torpedo tubes, numerous fires had also been started. Despite the fact that by this stage the *Exeter* was slowly flooding forward from hull damage, she was still in action; at 0631 the torpedo officer correctly anticipated the position to fire the starboard tubes, but two minutes later

while the torpedos were on their run the *Graf Spee* altered course. Captain Bell then swung the *Exeter* around to bring the repaired and manned port tubes to bear but further hits cancelled this attack.

The serious position on the *Exeter* at 0700 can be summed up by saying that by now about 650 tons of water had entered her hull, mainly forward, resulting in a three foot settling by the bows and a 10 degree list to starboard. Only 'Y' main turret in local control and a single 4ins. gun were operational, along with the catapult damage both aircraft had been jettisoned, internal and external communications had broken down to be replaced by jury rigged systems just capable of controlling the ship. But the engine room was undamaged and she was still able to steam at full speed.

With only two 8ins. guns in action the *Exeter* still engaged the fully effective *Graf Spee* with her six 11ins. guns, which were increasingly having to be directed at the *Ajax* and *Achilles* in an attempt to drive them off from their effective attacks



Above, *Graf Spee* at Spithead with flags at half mast. Note the Heinkel He 51 floatplane on the catapult abaft the funnel. Below, HMS *Exeter*. (Ray Burt).

upon the heavily-armed and protected pocket battleship. At 0715 the *Exeter* started to open the range, 'Y' turret finally ceased firing at 0729 owing to a failure in the electricity supply and by 0730 the action had been broken off,

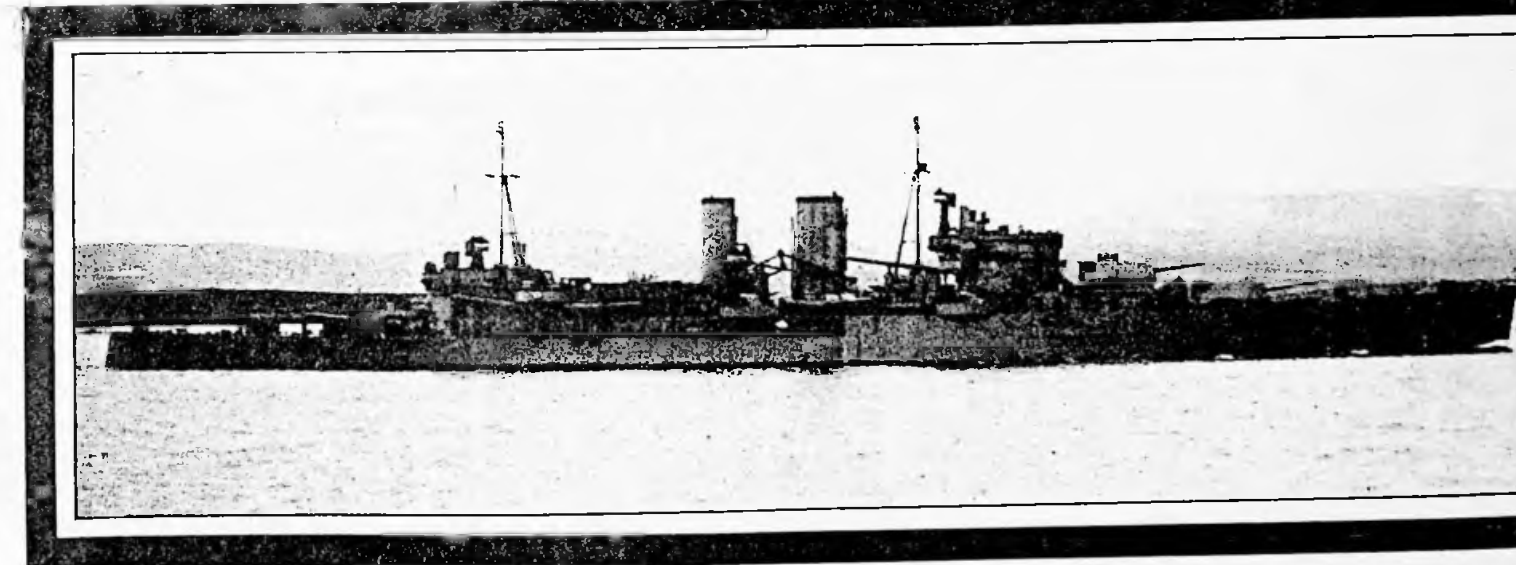
seeing as the *Exeter* was now effectively out of the action. By 0750 the last that the heavily damaged *Exeter* saw of her recent opponent was her disappearing westwards pursued by the avenging, shadowing, *Ajax* and *Achilles*, although fire had ceased at 0740 the light cruisers would trail the damaged *Graf Spee* to the mouth of the River Plate and stand guard unsupported until the scuttling of the *Graf Spee* on the 17th of December.

Without doubt, if the *Graf Spee* had encountered the *Exeter* alone the probable result would have been a German victory; likewise if Commodore Harwood had the recently dispatched 'County' class cruiser, *Cumberland*, with him, then a British naval victory might have been achieved, but these thoughts are pure conjecture. What really transpired on that day is hard fact, despite all the pre-war predictions, light units had virtually trapped and caused the destruction of a pocket battleship. In the end, perhaps it all comes down to luck and who hits who, where, and how hard, even though every British and New Zealand ship came under accurate, and for the *Exeter* and *Ajax*, telling fire, the *Graf Spee* received serious deep penetration 8ins. hits accompanied by a veritable rain of 6ins. shells (approximately 18) in return, to her superstructure and exposed positions, resulting in 37 fatalities and 57 wounded.

Perhaps the last word on the tenacious attitude of the *Exeter* during the battle should be left to Kapitän Langsdorff shortly before his death on the 20th of December by his own hand: 'I knocked out her foremost guns, I smashed her bridge; yet with only one(?) gun firing, they came at me again, one can only have respect for such a foe as that'...

The Ships

To conclude, I would like to table the main specifications of the ships directly involved in this famous action and simply indicate the general qualities possessed by each ship to enable the reader to



compare the differences between them.

The information contained below will only outline the overall specifications, concentrating as it does on only the main points of each design and quoting the 'maximums' for a number of areas, like those figures for the displacements, speeds and armour thickness for belts and decks.

Certain points should be made about the table, especially those figures quoted for 'armour'. Although it appears that each ship had a very similar protection, it should be emphasised that the *Graf Spee's* amount and distribution of armour was on a far greater scale than that of the British cruisers, as one look at the displacement figures and artwork will indicate. The significant British advantage in torpedo numbers is also worthy of mention, since it is this figure which Langsdorff must have borne in mind throughout the battle, resulting in him being forced away from the crippled *Exeter* before he could finish her off by the determined attack launched by *Ajax* and *Achilles* with their potentially lethal torpedos.

Sources

As I have already mentioned, I have not gone over material already covered in previous publications, instead I have

concentrated on one small part of the overall series of events and actions which together form the full story of this famous engagement. My concentration upon the exchange between the two 'heavy' ships involved will, however, prove to be a novel insight into the main part of the battle. But for those readers unfamiliar with the series of events which led up to, and which occurred during and after the battle, I recommend the following material.

Generally regarded as the definitive work on this period and event, is Dudley Pope's '*Battle of the River Plate*', which through a very readable and highly

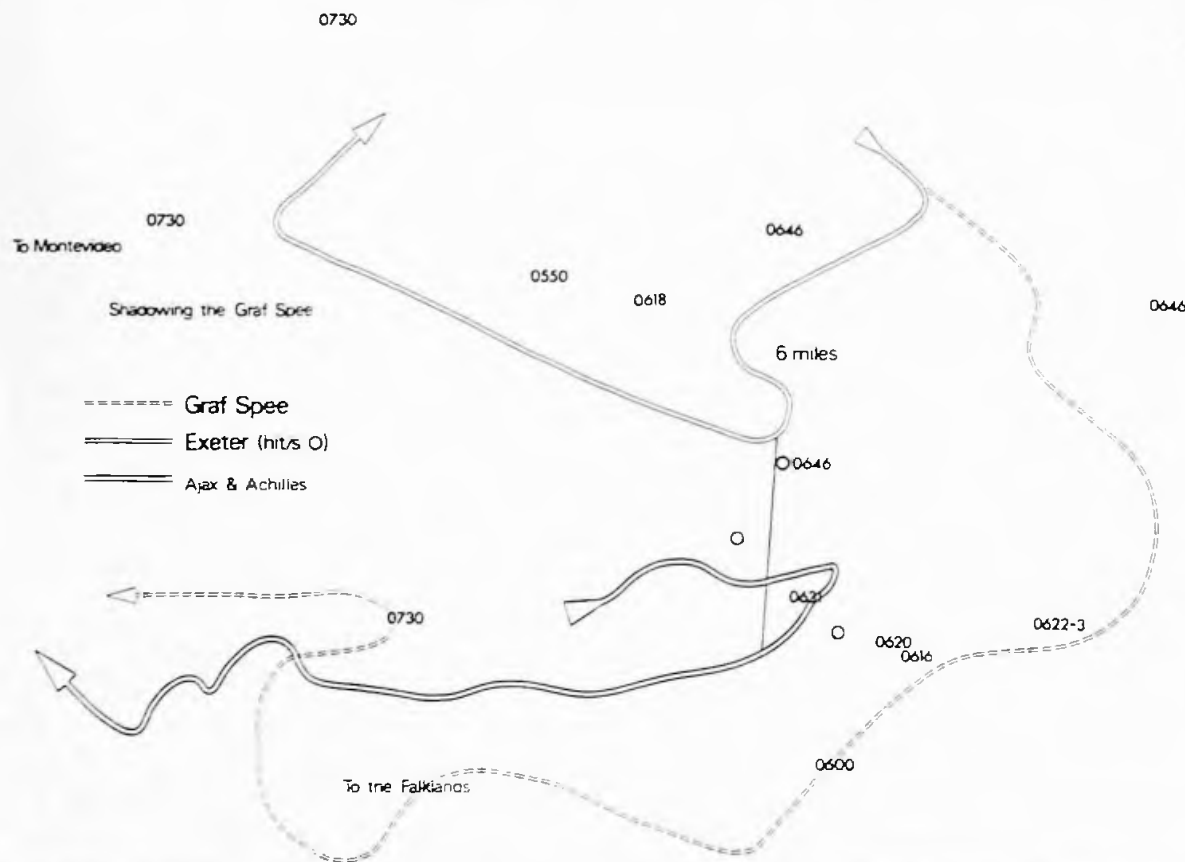
informative text, relates the epic story of the *Graf Spee*, and the British reaction. His book includes in great detail the 'human' side of this action very well indeed.

For those readers wishing to find out more about the two ships, there are two 'Profile Publications' still available from some sources. These are '*Warship Profile - 4*' on the *Graf Spee*, and '*Warship Profile - 13*' on the *Exeter*. Both inexpensive soft cover publications cover

the full service history of their particular subjects, covering in some detail their technical specifications as well.

Ship	Admiral Graf Spee	HMS Exeter	Ajax and Achilles
Displacement	16,200	10,490	9,280
Length	610'3"	575'	554'6"
Beam	70'10"	58'	55'8"
Draught	24'3"	20'3"	19'8"
shp	54,000	80,000	72,000
Speed/knots	28	32	32.5
Armour belt	3"	3"	3"
Armour deck	1.75"	2"	2"
Main guns	6/11"	8/8"	8/6"
Secondary guns	8/5.9"	4/4"	4/4"
Torpedo tubes	8/21"	6/21"	8/21"
Complement	650	630	570

BATTLE OF THE RIVER PLATE



The Great Britain being warped out of the Great Western Dock at Bristol on July 19, 1843, to the cheers of thousands. (SS Great Britain Trading Ltd).

powered by one of Maudslay, Sons & Field's massive side-lever engines. In other words, reflecting the success of PS *Great Western*, more of the same, and indeed, such a plan would probably not have strained the company with the problems that were to beset them with the construction of the mammoth as the SS *Great Britain* was initially called.

In the planning stage, two small ships were to change Brunel's mind radically. He first saw the little iron steamer *Rainbow* loading for a trip to Antwerp, in the Port of Bristol in October 1838. He sent his two most trusted colleagues, Capt. James Claxton and William Patterson to see how she would behave in rough weather. The report was very favourable. Brunel knew from his previous experience with bridges that building a ship out of iron would give him huge advantages in design for size, strength, stability and loading capacity. Half the interior space of the PS *Great Western* was taken up by the boilers and engines in the best part of the ship. Brunel realized early that if steamships were to make money, their size would need to increase dramatically. This also applied to the stability of mounting engines of over 1000 hp and attendant machinery in wooden-walled ships. They simply sagged under the strain. Ironically, none of these arguments would prove very convincing to the ordinary share-holders who believed, like the hesitant onlookers at the Great Western Dock in Bristol, that iron did not float, and was therefore an entirely unsuitable material for ship-building.

It is also a sobering thought to remember that there were no shipwrights with skills in handling iron plates or forging the frames necessary for building a ship with the unprecedented size of the SS *Great Britain*. For this reason the Great Western Steam Ship Company laid down their own iron plates, in the specially constructed graving dock, the first of its kind, costing the company a devastating £53,000.

By May 1840, the paddle boxes were fixed to the sponsons and the paddle engines partially completed. During this month Brunel sighted the second small vessel that was to alter the course of marine history. The *Archimedes* was propeller-driven. Although she was a topsail schooner, with three masts set at a very rakish angle, she was also the subject of an experiment with a propeller patented by Francis Petit Smith. Brunel was critical of the engine transmission through gears on the *Archimedes*, which he found hideously noisy, but very impressed by the propulsion, which he

AS history is retold, brilliance has often been encapsulated in the throw-away remark. The time and place was an early meeting of the Board of Directors of the Great Western Railway in October 1835, at Radley's Hotel in Blackfriars. The subject under discussion was the great length of the main railway line from London to Bristol, proposed by the Company. Brunel, well in advance of all the others present, made his famous remark in the form of a challenge. 'Why not make it longer, and have a steamboat go from Bristol to New York and call it *The Great Western*?' Only one man, Thomas Guppy, a Bristolian merchant, took him seriously: he was to be a

lifelong supporter and friend of Brunel: the challenge was met three years later.

The success of Brunel's 236ft paddle-ship, timber built, but reinforced massively with iron trusses, was amply demonstrated by her long life on the Atlantic run. She was to be the meagre and sole source of finance for the Great Western Steam Ship Company to fund the building of the sister ship, the SS *Great Britain* whose keel was laid down in 1839, just over a year after the first and epic transatlantic voyage of the pioneer, PS *Great Western*.

The SS *Great Britain* was to be much longer in the building. Four long and financially crippling years would follow,

during which time Brunel's brutally logical mind would change as fast as the technology around him was changing. Although Brunel's name is inextricably bound up with railways and bridges, his dreams were of ships.

In his dreams, Brunel saw the logic of applying modern scientific principles to all the mechanical problems which faced shipbuilders, without allowing precedent to distract him.

In his desire to 'take the next step' after the successful launch and operation of the PS *Great Western*, Brunel must have been in a somewhat uncertain state. The materials for the new ship were on order. She was to be built from wood and

Sea Classic International

GREAT BRITAIN

Past, present and future
William Mowll
traces her history

The hulk of the Great Britain at Sparrow Cove in 1970 just prior to salvage and the long voyage back to Bristol. (SS Great Britain Trading Ltd.)

saw outdated the whole concept of the cumbersome paddle wheel. Not only were paddle wheels of the non-feathering variety, energy absorbing and inefficient, but they also added top-weight and windage to vessels designed for sailing, making them roll in a fearsome manner. Although Brunel was appalled by the noisy gears, he knew that by using a chain drive to the propeller, the proposed ship could be made to run without vibration, ridding the vessel of the noises normally associated with paddle steamers.

Faced by the logic and truth of what Brunel had reported to them after extensive trials with the *Archimedes* and propeller design, the Directors of the GWSSCo. must have had their loyalty stretched to an absolute maximum. No-one else would build the adaptation for screw engines that the company now required, and if it was to happen at all, it would have to be on a self-help basis. To worsen matters, their chief competitors, the Cunard Steamship Company, had launched *Britannia* in February 1840 and were following up with the formidable fleet of *Acadia*, *Caledonia*, and *Columbia*.

Meanwhile, Brunel faced every kind of technical problem associated with turning dreams into reality. Despite the commercial pressure to have the job completed, SS *Great Britain* was meticulously put together. Built in clincher fashion, from double-riveted plates throughout, on the modern system of shifting butts, she was made beautifully watertight. Her strong back, 322 ft in length, was supported by nine longitudinal girders, giving her the stiffness and stability for the machinery to be placed in her hull and the racking stresses on the North Atlantic run. Six watertight bulkheads gave her the lateral strength Brunel required whilst also giving her a safety measure, that would be taken to its logical conclusion in the *Great Eastern*.

Power

The engines were, of course, designed for the slow action of paddle wheels, and had, therefore, not only to be reset at 90 degrees in order to line up with the propeller shaft, but also to be geared up by a factor of three, giving her six-bladed propeller revolutions of 53 rpm. The gearing was achieved by use of a primary driving wheel, some 18 ft in diameter with four sets of chains using teeth biting into the main drum which was lined with teak. This metal-to-wood drive, gave relatively silent and efficient

service, providing it was kept well lubricated. It was free from vibration. The weakest point in the whole design of the engine arrangements was with the boilers. This was nothing peculiar to SS *Great Britain*, but applied to all the early steamships which relied on salt water to supply steam for the huge cylinders of the day, over seven ft in diameter in the case of SS *Great Britain*. In a 24 hour day, the stokers would have to feed the furnaces with over 60 tons of coal in order to keep the monstrous beast at 5lbs per sq. inch. The pressure was so low, that when the boiler needed topping up, a tap could be opened, and water, using only gravity, would run freely into the pressure vessel.

Despite this criticism, the power unit in this ship at its launch was very sound and well thought out. With the ship's magnificent appearance, its proud presentation of steam power in its own right, the SS *Great Britain* was launched as a mechanical 'wonder of the world'. It is more correct to say that the ship was floated out of the Great Western Dock on July 19, 1843, rather than launched, amidst the cheers of the whole city of Bristol, and to the undoubted sighs of relief from the Company. Mrs. Miles, the wife of one of the Directors of the Great Western Steam Ship Company, and a trustee of the City of Bristol was supposed to have launched the ship with a bottle of champagne, but she panicked and missed. The quick thinking Prince Albert grabbed another bottle of bubbly and showered dock-workers beneath with spuming wine and broken glass. Both Albert and the young Queen Victoria continued with their interest in SS *Great Britain* throughout its long career. The young Queen was clearly delighted by the appearance of the ship on the Thames, and made a special visit to be shown around in 1845.

In order to make her ready for the sea, the ship had to be fitted out in the Floating Harbour. This was a departure from the original plan and upset the Bristol Harbour Authorities, who had agreed that this work could be done in the Cumberland basin. However, this suggestion had all the elements of 'the cork in the neck of the bottle' and would have, in any case, been a great hindrance to shipping using the facilities of the inner floating harbour. She was finally fitted out, opposite the Graving Dock just below the old Gas Works; it is in this place that Fox Talbot took his famous first photographic picture of a ship. It has proved to be an invaluable help to the ship restorers and remains a remarkable piece of photography.

To release the vessel, it was necessary to widen both the lower and the upper lock gates by 'altering the masonry' as Brunel so delicately put it. Not until December 12, 1844 was the ship finally free to be towed down the Avon, following a hair-raising episode during the previous day, when the ship stuck in the lock. She had to be towed back, the lock torn apart and towed out again on the last possible tide. She was grounded outside the lock gates until morning. It was, by any account, a difficult birth.

The trials which followed, fulfilled every expectation. The engine was eased into action at six rpm giving four knots. This was gradually increased as steering trials were carried out. The ship could turn a full circle in just under half a mile, and at 16 1/4 rpm from the engines, the ship made 11 knots. These were excellent figures and those concerned could be justly proud of their achievement.

The next hurdle to overcome, was to convince the public that she was safe. Certainly she was a spectacle, but even today there is a natural, and understandable, caution about entirely untried technology. People could see that she was big enough to withstand the heavy seas of the North Atlantic; she had

already weathered a furious gale on January 23, 1845, sustaining only small damage, where lesser vessels might well have gone to pieces, but her balanced rudder kept her on course 'with ease and precision'. Yet, the psychological problem remained with people; she was made of metal and metal doesn't float. In passing, I wonder how many people knew that her four lifeboats were also made out of clinchered iron plates? Hardly an encouragement to the already doubtful...

Into service

Of the many thousands who had seen her, only 45 passengers showed enough spirit to book a passage on her maiden voyage, and for all her cargo capacity, only 360 tons was in use on the first crossing. This must have been very disappointing in view of the publicity and the successful trials, but she sailed nevertheless, from Liverpool on the afternoon of July 26, 1845, and made the crossing in just under 15 days, having covered a distance of 3,304 nautical miles at an average speed of 9.4 knots. The Americans were impressed. She was given a tumultuous welcome with

plenty of extravagant language; such a contrast from the gloomy attitudes with which the GWSS Co had learned to live with in Bristol, from those who never believed it could be done.

Yet the return passage still sported only a pitifully thin passenger list: 53 cabin passengers and 1200 bales of cotton. This homeward voyage was successful in every other way, except for some criticism of the boilers, or more accurately, criticism of the stokers not being able to maintain a constant pressure, probably through seasickness, in a ship so excessively stable, that she soon earned a reputation for 'tremendous rolling' in calm seas.

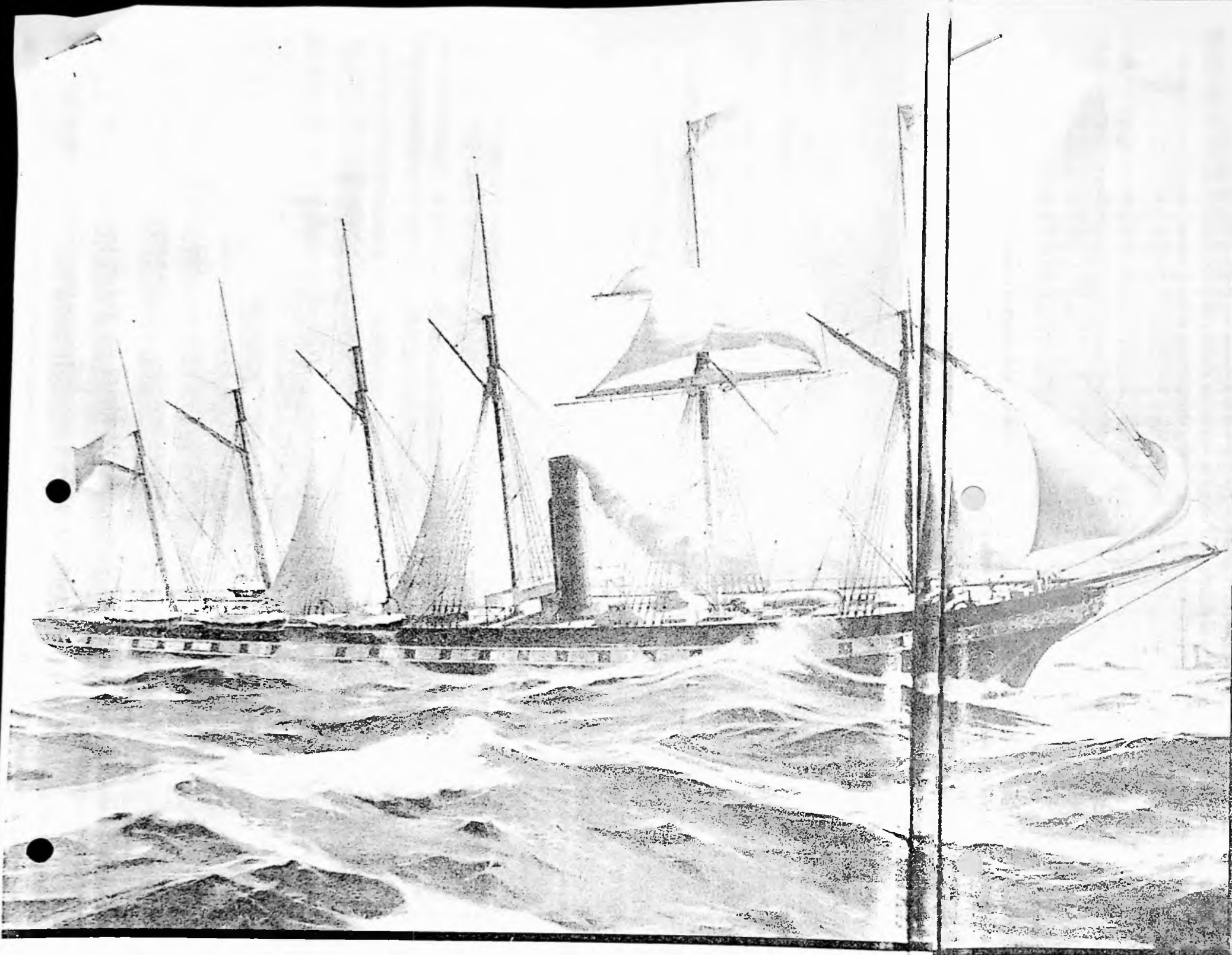
Her third crossing teased out another weakness, this time with the propeller arms, three of which broke off. They had been tampered with in Liverpool, two inches having been added to the tips in an ill-advised experiment and this may well have exacerbated the problem of metal fatigue already present. Far from limping home, the SS *Great Britain* made good use of her sails with only a gentle assistance from the dismembered propeller. As a pure sailing ship, she might well have made her mark as the fastest ship on the Atlantic run and when we appreciate that Brunel had designed

her to be sailed by a mere 30 seamen, we can appreciate the cost saving made by keeping the sail profile low.

By 1846 she was due for a refit. There was already in the offing a second and more sturdy propeller, and this was due for fitting. It was four bladed and had much the same power absorption as its predecessor. It weighed seven tons. The sail plan was also in for some changes, in that it was thought that with a heightened fourth mast, and with the removal of the mast number three immediately abaft the funnel, the ship would become more easily manoeuvrable under sail. It is well known that the masts on this ship were named after the days of the week from Monday to Saturday in order, it is said, to avoid any confusion between the fourth mast and the foremost. Personally, I don't believe a word of it, although I am prepared to believe that Brunel said there was no 'Sunday' mast because there was no 'Sunday' at sea. I am sure that the truth is that the novel sailplan on this ship, whose progress was so widely reported in every kind of journal and newspaper, was most easily remembered by this piece of folk-lore. The sailors knew the masts by their proper names of fore, main, mizzen, jigger, driver, spanker...

In the refit, attention was also focused on the fire flues and air pumps, in order to increase the efficiency of the boiler; perhaps it wasn't the stokers after all! All of this was constructive and gave the ship an extremely graceful line.

In her all-black state, apart that is from the gilding on her galleries and trailboards, SS *Great Britain* set sail on Tuesday September 22, taking the route, south of the Galf of Man and north of Ireland out into the Atlantic. She was carrying 180 passengers - a sign of the growing confidence that people were now beginning to feel about her. She was commanded by the GWSS Co's premier Captain James Hosken, who had made his name with the company over some years with PS *Great Western*, but whose record with SS *Great Britain* was not entirely clean. Despite his undoubted experience, this was a fateful day for the company for he landed the pride of Bristol on the Irish Coast in circumstances which can only be described by use of words such as 'blundering error'. He tried to blame the stranding onto the Admiralty Charts but the fault undoubtedly lay with his calculations and had nothing to do with compass error or bad visibility. To this day, however, it remains a puzzle as to exactly why he made such a crass miscalculation.



Great Britain's maiden voyage, sadly underladen and with only 45 paying passengers aboard. (SS Great Britain Trading Ltd).

foremast through the full length of the ship. Her new boiler arrangements, which were a significant improvement on the previous ones called for two telescopic funnels; the sailplan was also altered to four masts, with the removal of the 'driver'.

A new career

Thus began the new life of the resurrected ship, and commercially the most successful period that she was to enjoy. This time, people were clamouring to be taken on board. Her first voyage showed 630 passengers on the list, with total fares of £23,000. She did not look so pretty as in her Brunel days, but the new engines matched the performance of the old ones, and the new rig conceded only half a knot, with the draught increase of some 6½ ft. As the most powerful sailing ship in the world, aided by an auxiliary engine of the most modern design, she expected to cover the 12,000 mile journey in half the time of a normal passage to Australia. On average, she was to take 66 days to sail from Liverpool to Melbourne.

The ship had made only two return voyages to Australia, when she was chartered to HM Government for war service. The Crimean war was in full swing in March 1855 and within the next 15 months *Great Britain* had carried more than 45,000 troops to the war zone. On any one of these, 1650 infantry and 30 horses would have been carried, in conditions rather like those of the slave ships.

In the wake of the war, the ship was once again altered extensively: we may assume that Gibbs, Bright & Co. benefitted considerably in financial terms from the excesses of the Crimean war, for these alterations went beyond the limit of a normal 'refit'.

It had long been recognized that the excessive stability of this ship, going back to her original hull design as a paddle steamer, could be used to much greater advantage in terms of a vastly increased spread of canvas.

In the 1857 refit she carried twice the spread of canvas as in the originally launched state. She was now enabled, with a full wardrobe, to spread 33,000 sq. ft. and to use this to the very best advantage on the long Australian run.

An interesting new feature of this refit, was the introduction of a lifting propeller of the Griffiths type. It made very good sense to fit this relatively new invention, in that it left the clean run of the stern entirely free of drag, and any damage to the propeller could be simply inspected and repaired, without the use of a diver.

Known as 'The Common Screw' they were a large part of the answer to sailing ships with auxiliary engines, wanting the best of both worlds ... and getting it. Thus fitted, the ship plied between Liverpool and Melbourne with the regularity of a cross-channel ferry for the next 19 years, by which time she had seen 30 years of active service, apart that is, from the ignominious year of the stranding on Dundrum Bay.

By all accounts, she should have been broken up at Birkenhead following the return to Liverpool in February 1876; just how long is an iron ship supposed to last? In that, no-one really knew the answer to this, she was reinforced with wooden sheathing and converted to a sailing ship, to carry cargoes of coal and other minerals. With the engine and machinery stripped out of her, she was able to carry an average load of rather less than 3000 tons but voyages were painfully slow.

It was in a very bad storm, which began on May 3, 1886, trying to round Cape Horn, that she was forced to put back to Port Stanley; this finally marked the end of her active service. A cargo of wet coal had shifted badly and forced Captain Stap into a position of retreat after a three week battle against the elements.

No-one could afford to repair her. Gibbs, Bright & Co. were content to let her go. She remained in the East Falklands for the next 50 years, being used first as a floating coal bunker, and then as a store ship for wool. It was during her period of ownership by the Falkland Islands Company that someone thought it would be a good idea to cut an access through the top sheerstrake of the ship, to make the loading of the wool bales easier. Whilst the ship remained afloat, this near fatal wound remained unexposed, but when, in 1937, the ship had outlasted her usefulness even as a storeship, and was towed out to be scuttled in Sparrow Cove, this wound began to fester. A crack started to creep down the starboard side of the ship which seriously threatened the whole structure of the vessel. By the time the rescue party arrived in 1970, this crack had reached an alarming 13 inches and ran almost to the bottom plates of the ship.

Dr. Ewan Corlett, who masterminded the rescue of *SS Great Britain*, a task even more difficult than the release from Dundrum Bay, saw clearly that the vessel had to be put on a submersible pontoon, and towed home. If she was not taken soon, she could certainly go to pieces within months. She could in no

Whether or not he was involved in some all-absorbing distraction, we will never know. The fact was that the stranding on Dundrum Bay sounded the death knell for the company, even though there was only slight damage to the stern gear and propeller. As the weeks passed, the situation worsened and hopes began to fade as to the idea of successfully refloating her before the buffeting winter gales would smash her to pieces. Captain Claxton, on behalf of the company, spent the whole winter in Ireland, designing and constructing improvised breakwaters to protect the ship from the pounding seas. Brunel was nearbroken and referred to 'his baby' as

being, 'like a useless saucepan, kicking about on the most exposed shore you can imagine.'

Eventually they got her off. They had used almost every levering device known to man: weights, chains, stones, huge boxes full of wet sand known as 'camels', screwjacks, anchors and pulleys to pull her upright. The main leaks were sealed and the bottom seams made good, and on August 28, 1847, almost a year after her grounding she was towed away to Belfast Loch, and from there, back to Liverpool. The estimated total damage was £22,000 yet the hull was to all intents and purposes, undamaged; stunning testimonial

to both the material and of which she had been constructed, and at the same time, the men who had assembled this masterpiece. She was sold for a song, (£18,000), less than the estimated cost of repair. She was finally bought in 1850 by Gibbs, Bright and Co. saved by the need to service the demand for cheap travel to Australia. The gold rush was on.

For the Australian run, she was considerably altered, both in outward appearance, and internal detail. Now that she was no longer regarded as a luxury Atlantic Liner, the need for extra space for the long voyages she was to make to Australia needed to be found

and this was achieved by altering two major features, namely the weather deck and the engine room. The original engine had been badly damaged by spending 11 months stranded on Dundrum Bay, and John Penn, whose engines were so sought after by the Admiralty a few years later, was engaged to design a much more compact oscillating engine of much the same power as the original, driving an overhead crankshaft, allied to a simple gear ratio of 3:1. The new engines ran at 24 rpm driving a new, solid, three bladed propeller.

On the original weather deck, a new deckhouse was built, running from the

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One of the most recent photos of Great Britain as she is today with yards installed. By the 1990's the restoration will be complete. (SS Great Britain Trading Ltd).

way make the journey without being towed on a raft. The journey was 7,400 miles and conducted by a German towing company (Ulrich Harms) based in Hamburg.

It was made possible by the generosity of that great Anglophile, Jack Hayward, who put up the necessary £150,000 and promised to 'see the ship home'.

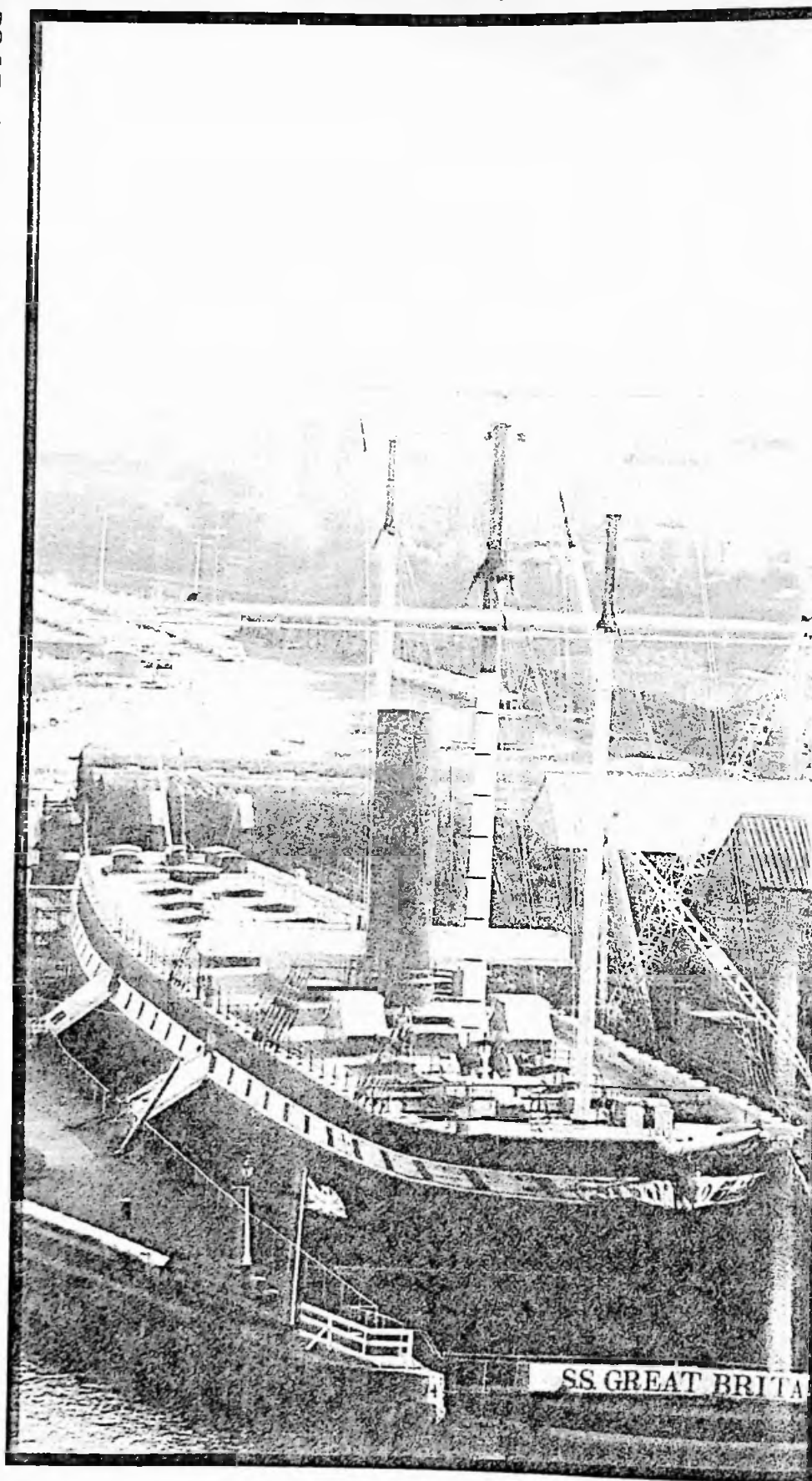
In a fairytale ending to her last epic voyage, the ship arrived home on July 19, 1970, the very day 127 years after her floating out. The rescue is a wonderful story in its own right, the result of what is possible if there is enough determination put behind the idea. It was thoroughly in line with Brunel's tough approach, and backed by the same sort of loyalty and teamwork that was associated with the original team at Bristol.

It is one thing to rescue a ship, and bring her back to her own cradle, quite another to bring her back to life. As always, ships have to make money. Initially, no ordinary member of the public wanted to do anything other than glimpse at the sorry state of the rotting hulk. It was not a pretty sight.

Certain things had to be dealt with at once, many other items would have to wait for a long time for proper attention. As with all restoration projects, the hull had to be made weather tight. Before this could happen, the structure of the hull had to be made good, the sheathing removed, and the serious wound, properly repaired. Great efforts were made to fund the very expensive and specialized work necessary, much of it relying on the new technology of glassfibre, which adheres well to wrought iron, and can be made to represent it in a very realistic way. It is also a material which we have the ability to use, whereas we have lost the skills necessary to fabricate the repairs from wrought iron.

It is necessary to underline the fact that this ship is not being made ready for the sea ever again. It is totally out of the question that she will ever leave the Great Western Dock, indeed it is said that the Bristol pilots swore a secret oath never to let her go from Bristol, and she certainly could not escape on her own, because with the newly added weight of restoration and fittings, she would never make it out of the graving dock. Having said that, the last leg of her final voyage up the River Avon in 1970 was made on her own bottom, and she will always carry that piece of dignity with her.

In the 14 years that she has been home, the SS *Great Britain* Project have made magnificent strides in her



Sea Classic International

restoration, and in enthusing firms all over the country to undertake pieces of work demanding love and attention, for purely altruistic motives. Anyone who knows anything about this kind of undertaking knows that the conquest is always made on a shoestring. It is by begging, cajoling, persuading and badgering that the work is done at all. The SS *Great Britain* Project is in this sense, very like Brunel's original Committee in Bristol, determined, against all odds, to see the work through to eventual completion (in the 1990s). Then, we will all be able to see the vessel restored to her original 1843 state, with much of the glamorous interior, with its mirrored arabesque finish, for us to admire. There will also be a replica of the original engines and transmission fabricated from glassfibre.

Already, a day out in Bristol is amply rewarded by the sight of the emergent vessel, freshly painted with funnel, masts, yards, companionways and decking all complete. The generosity of many individuals also means that a museum alongside the ship contains a

great deal of interesting memorabilia, including the captain's bath and a rather gruesome loo. The *Great Britain*, although static, is now very much a living creature. She speaks loudly of the pride of Victorian engineering; of the daring of

her creator and of the courage of her rescuers. She is an object of great beauty - a memorial to what it was possible to do with wrought iron and a reminder to us all of the nation's 'finest hour'.

Leading data

Length (excluding bowsprit):	322 feet
Breadth overall:	51 feet
Tonnage:	3443 burthen; 1016 net registered
Accommodation:	Aft saloon 110 feet Forward 61 feet Aft dining saloon 98'6" Forward 61 feet
Capacity:	252 passengers with berths (360 could be carried) 26 single cabins 113 2-berth cabins
Cargo:	1,200 tons
Coal bunkers:	Fore and Aft and alongside engines 1000; 1200 tons
Cost:	Construction £117,295 6s. 7d. Building of Graving Dock £53,081 12s. 9d. Widening Bristol Locks £1,330 4s. 9d.



ss GREAT BRITAIN

Born again in Bristol at Great Western Dock, Gas Ferry Road, Bristol. Open every day 10am-6pm summer 10am-5pm winter. Car and coach park. Souvenir shop and museum.

The ss "Great Britain" was built and launched in Bristol on July 19th 1843. She was the first ocean-going, propeller-driven, iron ship in history. Designed by J. K. Brunel, she had a varied active life for 43 years, both as a liner and a cargo vessel. Her first voyages were to America then for some 25 years she carried thousands of emigrants to Australia, the voyages to Australia were interrupted twice when she became a troopship for the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Abandoned in the Falkland Islands in 1886, the ship provided storage facilities in Port Stanley for 50 years. In 1970 she was towed back to Bristol and is now being restored to her original 1843 appearance.

Tel: (0272) 20680 for party bookings and further information.



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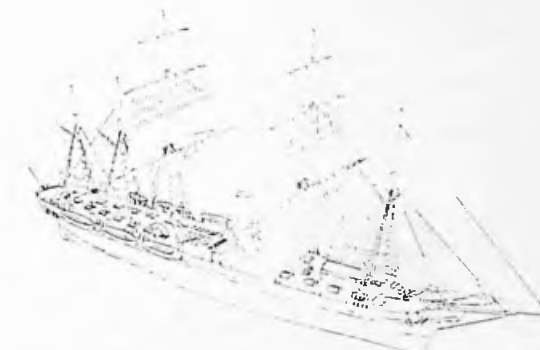


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whom the money would be passed. If you would like to help, contact Mr D Keoghane, 6 Penrose Court, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 6NP (Tel 0442 69383).

★ ★ ★

THE FALKLAND Islands Logistic Battalion commissioned a painting by David Bell showing the Falklands Intermediate Port and Storage System and various other activities by the Battalion 'down south'. (Small reproduction below).

Prints of the painting are 21 by 15½ inches in full colour and available at £2 each from PRI, Falkland Islands Logistic Battalion, BFPO 666. Orders should be accompanied by postal order or cheque payable to Command Cashier, UKLF and include 65p to cover post and packing.

Still on the subject of painting, Peter Archer painted a series of battle action pictures depicting former members of the Corps of Royal Engineers who have been awarded the Victoria Cross.

High quality limited edition prints of the pictures have been produced — £4 unsigned or £6 signed.

A small quantity are offered for sale and are available from the Treasurer, WOs & Sgts Mess, 28 Amphibious Engineer Regiment, BFPO 31.

Prints available are Maj Sir Arnold Waters and Spr A Archibald *signed* 19 (*unsigned* 13), John Ross 9 (13), John Perie 8, Frank Kirby 19.

A cheque should accompany any order and be made payable to the Central Bank 28 Amphibious Engineer Regiment.

and the cost, I cannot see us making another organised trip beyond the one projected for 1986 but we would like to go back once more as a group, to look at the graves and places of conflict and say our last farewells".

Some Regiments and Corps involved in the Falklands fighting have already agreed to help out and already more than £7,500 has been raised. The islanders themselves have started a fund to try and ensure the second pilgrimage can take place.

The Association estimates between 80-100 members will travel, each being able to pay around £600 but to meet the likely charter costs another £13,000 is needed.

"We were all grateful for the Government sponsored trip in 1983, but of necessity it had to be hurried and we would like to spend four or five days in the Islands, at our own pace".

If the target figure isn't raised in about 12 months time, contributions will be returned... though some donors have already said this won't be necessary and suggested charities to

★ ★ ★

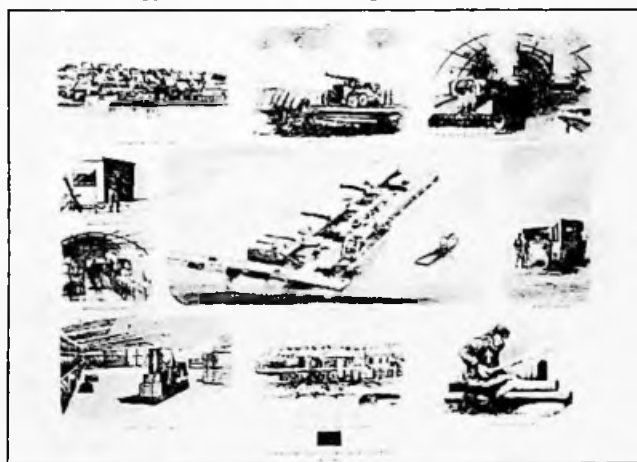
Thinking of more recent fighting, the Falklands Families Association members are planning another trip to the Falkland Islands in 1986... though for some members it could be the first such visit.

Appealing for funds to help, Chairman Des Keoghane says the Association will be grateful for any donation — however small. "A great number of our members are parents who did not receive, or expect to receive any money from the South Atlantic Fund — it quite rightly went to those who needed it most".

Mr Keoghane, a former CSM Welsh Guards whose son Kevin was killed in the bombing of Sir Galahad, stresses that donations will not help to subsidise the proposed trip for bereaved who can afford the cost.

"But a large number of parents are either on a fixed income, or pensions — or not employed at all.

"Because of the age of most of us,



The Standard
5.11.84



DECK DRAMA : Ray Winstone, front left and the cast, taste the naval atmosphere aboard the Belfast. Standard Picture: DENIS JONES

Falklands battle scars below decks

THE heroism of the Falklands War found its rightful place in the headlines.

But underlying the public glory, according to playwright Anthony Stanford-Tuck, was a life of social and sexual frustration.

It is this unheralded

side to naval service which is explored by the writer in his first play *QRs and A's Clearly State*, which opened at Islington's King's Head Theatre at lunch time.

Drawing from personal experience — Stanford-Tuck spent the best part of his youth below decks as a com-

munications seaman — he tells the story of *Johanno*, a shrewd young sailor who won a bravery award in the Falklands but becomes cynical and bitter.

The hero of his play is portrayed by Ray Winstone who starred in the low-budget British film *Scum* and on TV

as Will Scarlet in *Robin of Sherwood*.

Writer Stanford-Tuck, also responsible for the award-winning short film *Towers of Babel*, believes in realism and warns that the language used in his play is as authentic as possible.

Millionaire bids for Falkland firm

JACK HAYWARD, the colourful Bahamas-based millionaire, has offered to buy the company that owns nearly half of the Falkland Islands.

Hayward, so pro-British that he is nicknamed "Union Jack", has bid £5m for the Falkland Islands Company, whose immense tracts of sheep farmland amount to 43% of the colony's territory.

The company, a subsidiary of Coalite, the Derbyshire fuel and chemicals group, has been accused of inadequate investment in the Falklands, of charging £250,000 for the land needed for the islands' new airfield and, as reported in The Sunday Times last week, of an "act of slavery" in the terms of its leases for local share-farming.

Hayward, who says he likes to keep "all things bright,

beautiful and British", was a financial supporter of the Liberal party when it was led by Jeremy Thorpe. He bought Lundy island for the National Trust. His interest in the Falklands dates back 15 years: he helped to sponsor the return of Brunel's SS Great Britain from the islands to Bristol in 1970.

Earlier this year, he visited the Falklands and offered £1m to help rebuild the hospital after its disastrous fire last April.

According to a new fortnightly newsletter edited by Anthony Sampson, the author and newspaper columnist, Hayward invited Ted Needham, chairman of the Falkland Islands Company, to dinner at the Dorchester Hotel in London to make his bid.

Hayward pointed out that the islands contributed only about 1% of Coalite's profits (which

by Richard Faulkner

totalled more than £32m pre-tax last year), but Needham protested: "You're talking about 2m acres", and mentioned the valuable assets, including boats and stores. "But you know, Ted," Hayward retorted, "the stores aren't in Knightsbridge."

According to Sampson, Hayward said that Needham offered to sell for £12m and then £10m. Hayward commented: "If the shareholders of Coalite saw the figures and knew that I had offered £5m, they'd say it was mad to refuse."

Needham confirmed to The Sunday Times that Hayward had made an approach but denied that there had been any serious negotiations.

"Jack expressed some sort of interest," he said. "But we have not actively put the company up for sale and have no intention of doing so." Needham refused to say what figures had been discussed: "I wouldn't start negotiations through a newspaper." But he indicated that, in his view, £5m greatly undervalued the company.

Sir Rex Hunt, the Falklands civil commissioner, said: "This is news to me. But I took Jack Hayward round the battlefield tour and he was very taken with the islands. I think it was as a result of his visit that he was so generous when he heard of our fire at the hospital." Hunt added: "Obviously the islanders would welcome any British person who would invest more in these islands."

Lord Shackleton, who chaired the government com-

mittee to plan the islands' economic future after the Falklands war, commented: "I expect the government would welcome a more positive and altruistic form of ownership." He felt Hayward might encourage more land ownership by the islanders than had the Falkland Islands Company.

Needham defends the company's record: "We get bricks and bats and very little in recognition of what we are trying to do to develop the Falklands. We take our responsibilities seriously."

Hayward, speaking from the Bahamas, told The Sunday Times yesterday that his was a serious offer. "I would like to do more for the islanders and to make it possible for them to have about 50% of the equity in the company." He would not be an absentee landlord, he said, but would go to Port Stanley.



Hayward: serious offer

Vague; send for Haig

Following my disclosure that the Foreign Affairs Select Committee investigating the Belgrano sinking may exercise its right to call Mrs Thatcher, I now learn that it is to take the remarkable step of inviting Alexander Haig to appear before its deliberations. Such an invitation to an ex-minister of another country is unprecedented but Haig, who led mediation efforts right up to the ship's sinking, could provide evidence crucial to establishing whether Parliament has been misled about the incident. Whereas Francis Pym maintains the Peruvian peace plan was merely "a sketchy outline" at the time of the sinking, for example, Haig has suggested that it had been agreed in principle and "we were down to words, single words". And whereas Mrs T insists that ministers learnt of the plan only after the sinking, Haig has said that our man in Peru, Charles Wallace, "was in on every bit of the negotiations". Whether Haig will agree to appear is another matter. As an American citizen he is under no obligation to do so. He has told friends that if he had realized what an issue the Belgrano had become in this country, he would have steered well clear of Britain's "Watergate".

Commentary



**Geoffrey
Smith**

A settlement has now been reached on the controversial question of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's budget for next year. So the issue will not after all have to go before the Cabinet at Thursday's critical meeting on public expenditure.

The treasury wanted to cut the FCO budget by a sum approaching £30m and found a broadly sympathetic response in the Star Chamber of senior ministers trying to reconcile the differences between the Treasury and the spending departments.

But how the savings are to be found has yet to be determined by the FCO. Whether the agreement will in due course be seen to be in the national interest as well as to the advantage of the Treasury will depend on the precise nature of these economies.

In any exercise of this sort there are bound to be cuts which have to be assessed on a detailed calculation of costs and benefits. They may be well or ill judged, but they do not raise fundamental questions. Public opinion needs to become agitated only if deeper issues are involved.

Better uses for public money

The test of any economies in the Foreign Office budget is whether in the search to save money two basic principles are still observed: that diplomacy remains the principal function of a diplomatic service and that it would be contrary to the national interest for the British diplomatic presence to be substantially diminished in any critical part of the world.

There is talk of closing down a number of consulates in Western Europe. Their main activities are export promotion and assisting Britons who get into difficulties abroad. But one can think of better uses for public money than bailing out drunken football supporters and helping careless holiday-makers who lose their passports.

As for export promotion, the case has been canvassed for leaving this to private hands in the OECD area. In other parts of the world the helping hand of the British Government is necessary to enable potential exporters to find their way round unfamiliar obstacles. But in the OECD countries, it is argued, why should such a body as the CBI not help exporters to make money for themselves?

Whether this would be a good idea seems to me a question of practicality not of principle. It is often a useful subsidiary function if British diplomats can boost the export drive. But it is not what they are best at, and it is not the main reason for having a diplomatic service.

Danger in the blind spot

If British consulates on the Mediterranean islands were to be closed, this too would be an inconvenience to holidaymakers and might provoke a fuss in Parliament. If British representation in the South Pacific were to be withdrawn, or at least severely curtailed, there would be objections on grounds of sentiment.

But neither of these decisions would be of great consequence for British diplomacy. Nor, one must add, would they save all that much money.

The real danger seems to be that a number of embassies might be shut down in Latin America. This is a part of the world where we have both direct and indirect interests, but which has traditionally been something of a British blind spot.

We are not represented there now as adequately as we should be. We do not have separate missions in every country of Latin and Central America. Nor are they properly staffed. In the Falklands crisis there was only one full-time information officer in the whole of Latin America.

The need to win over public opinion in the area has not diminished since then. Indeed, for a British Government that is determined to maintain sovereignty over the Falklands against Argentine objections the case for strong British diplomatic activity in the rest of Latin America should be all the greater.

In one sense the need for Britain to keep in touch with what is happening in Central and Latin America is also greater. Grenada showed how easily Anglo-American relations could become soured up by misunderstandings in the southern hemisphere. That danger will be all the greater if the British Government prefers to make false economies rather than to remain well informed.

MPs attack Falklands policy

by our Political Editor

THE Government's Falklands policy comes under fire in a report now being prepared by the all-party Commons foreign affairs select committee.

The report, to be published later this month, is understood to criticise Mrs Thatcher's insistence that no aspects of the islands' sovereignty should be discussed with Argentina—an attitude which, the committee says, is undermining the fledg-

ling democratic Government of resident Raúl Alfonsín.

The committee warns the Government that a military coup in Buenos Aires is a real possibility if Alfonsín fails to make progress on the Falklands.

Ministers insist sovereignty is not negotiable, but claim that, in talks through Foreign Office officials, Alfonsín has been offered attractive proposals by Britain on re-opening trade and transport links.

Britain's refusal to discuss

sovereignty has been answered by Argentina's refusal to declare a formal end to hostilities. This effectively prevents other South American countries from providing Britain with staging facilities for ships and planes used to sustain 'Fortress Falklands.' As a result, Britain's supply lines to the South Atlantic are much more expensive.

The committee's report seems likely to get a frosty reception in Downing Street. Mrs Thatcher's view is that progress

can best be made if the two sides agree to differ over sovereignty and set that issue aside while they discuss increased practical co-operation.

Now that the committee has completed its general study of Britain's Falklands policy, it will concentrate on its study of the Belgrano affair. On Wednesday Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, will be questioned in a hearing to be broadcast live on BBC radio.

Heseltine grilling, page 4.

Heseltine to face grilling on Belgrano

by DAVID LEIGH

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Heseltine will face a barrage of hostile questions when he appears before the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee this week to answer in public allegations of a Government cover-up over the sinking of the Belgrano, with the loss of 368 lives.

Confidential Ministry of Defence documents reveal that Mrs Thatcher was twice consulted by Mr Heseltine and his deputy—Armed Forces Minister John Stanley—over statements to MPs.

They also show that the statements were made against the advice of senior civil servants and that incorrect replies to parliamentary questions were drafted within the department after discussions with No. 10.

Documents to which we have had access show that when the shadow cabinet put questions to Mrs Thatcher in March, Mr Stanley ordered civil servants to compose a 'second draft' reply.

This concealed the true date on which the Belgrano had been first sighted. It was submitted for Mr Heseltine's consideration, but two weeks later, a further letter arrived from Labour MP Tam Dalyell asking detailed questions.

Mr Heseltine ordered a full-scale investigation into the truth about the Belgrano, before any more statements were made. The sinking had happened under his predecessor, John Nott, and Mr Heseltine was not in the war cabinet at the time of the Falklands crisis.

The investigation was carried out by Clive Ponting, the Defence Ministry official who faces charges under the Official Secrets Act. His secret report was handed to Mr Heseltine on 29 March.

It revealed that previous Ministerial statements about the sinking of the Belgrano had been untrue. The Belgrano had been heading away from the British fleet for 11 hours when sunk, and had been attacked not only because it was wrongly thought to be 'closing on the task force,' but also because the Navy could not find its real target, the aircraft carrier '25 Mayo.'

An urgent high-level meeting was called in the Defence Secretary's office to discuss Mr Ponting's report, known in the department as the 'Crown Jewels.' Also present were Mr Stanley, Mr Ponting and the permanent secretary Clive Whitmore. The civil servants argued for truthful disclosure.

Mr Heseltine, accompanied by Mr Whitmore, then took the report personally to Mrs Thatcher.

In a parliamentary answer last week, she claimed that this was the first time she had realised the truth about the Belgrano's course. On their return from this meeting, Ministers instructed the civil servants to work on a new draft answer to the shadow cabinet, eventually sent on 13 April.

It revealed that the Belgrano had first been sighted on 1 May—not the following day as originally claimed. But the answer concealed the Belgrano's true course and claimed the sighting date was only being revealed because 'events have lost some of their original operational significance.' On Mr Stanley's insistence, a further detailed reply to Tam Dalyell, also drafted by civil servants, was withheld from the MP.

Mr Dalyell put down further parliamentary questions and the Ministry of Defence files show that Mr Stanley then consulted Downing Street again.

On 9 May, Mr Heseltine received a minute, signed by Mr Ponting, saying: 'You asked for advice . . . Stanley has suggested after discussion with No 10, that all the parliamentary questions should be answered: "It is not our practice to comment on military matters."'

Ponting minuted: 'I do not believe it is possible to sustain this line.' Much similar material had been released and it was unclassified. In accordance with the normal rules, he wrote: 'There is no reason for withholding this information.'

In July, inaccurate testimony was drafted, with Mr Heseltine's endorsement, and submitted to the Foreign Affairs Committee.

A memorandum from Mr J. S. Legge, head of the Ministry of Defence department concerned, noted that truthful information 'would provide more than Ministers have so far been prepared to reveal over the Belgrano affair.'

That document was leaked to Mr Dalyell, who showed it to the committee. It privately agreed to alert Mr Heseltine to the leak within his department, but also to insist that he explain his position.

Mr Heseltine ordered his own departmental security officials to mount a 'leak inquiry.' The chief constable of the Ministry of Defence police recommended against any prosecution under the Official Secrets Act, because no damage had been done to national security. A letter of resignation from Mr Ponting was accepted by his departmental superiors.

Once again, official advice was overturned. Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General, ordered a prosecution. Mr Heseltine has denied influencing him. Ministry of Defence records show he told Sir Ewen Broadbent, the second permanent secretary at the Ministry, at meeting on 13 August, that if Sir Michael would not prosecute, he (Heseltine) at least wanted the culprit dismissed.

It was the decision to prosecute Mr Ponting, who now faces trial at the Old Bailey—and who denies having committed any crime—which led to *The Observer's* disclosure of the background to conflicting Government statements on the sinking of the Argentine cruiser.

Falklands fear FO 'scuttle' over islands

By John Ezard

The Foreign Office plans to break the 76-year-old administrative link between the Falkland Islands and South Georgia, according to sources in the Falklands capital, Port Stanley.

The FO has not denied this. Deep concern has already been aroused in the Falklands that some Whitehall officials are discreetly preparing the groundwork for a "scuttle" from the islands by a future, non-Thatcherite Government — while at the same time trying to safeguard as much as possible of Britain's potentially lucrative antarctic claims.

Sources say the FO intends shortly to issue separate constitutions for the two territories. South Georgia's constitution would include the South Sandwich Islands, which run down towards the Antarctic Circle. Under a scheme known to be under discussion, these dependencies — which have no permanent population but are important to Britain's antarctic claims — would be administered directly from London instead of from Port Stanley.

Those who have made representations to Whitehall strongly opposing the scheme include the Falklands Civil Commissioner, Sir Rex Hunt.

The Foreign Office said last night: "Discussions are still going on. It would be improper to say what we are discussing."

Ownership of the two territories constitutes Britain's stake in a possible "oil rush" or other mineral exploitation at some stage after the Antarctic Treaty comes up for renewal in 1991.

Foreign Office lawyers are known to have consistently advised that Britain's legal case for sovereignty over South Georgia is considerably more impregnable than its title to the Falklands. South Georgia and South Sandwich are officially estimated to account for about half of Britain's eventual claim to Antarctic territory.

Mr Tim Blake, the Falklands elected council's constitutional specialist, said yesterday: "What the FO wants is disturbing in that it gives Britain the possibility in the future of retaining a share of the Antarctic without the Falklands. It provides a way of cutting us out of the picture."

"The local worry is about a cosy deal between two big powers to trade us off to Argentina in exchange for undisputed recognition of the British claim to South Georgia. We know this is inconceivable under the present government but it would be open in the future."

The present link with South Georgia is enshrined in a 1908 Royal Instrument signed by King Edward VII. It lays down that the dependencies be administered "for reasons of convenience" by the Falklands governor and local councillors. It has been carried out by yearly sea visits to South Georgia and South Sandwich by successive governors.

This power can be revoked by order of the Privy Council. But a new constitution would render this step unnecessary. The wording of the new document has been the subject of intensive secret "bartering" between Whitehall and the Falklands in recent weeks.

Mr Blake said during a visit to London: "We are trying to keep as much local control as we can. It would be lunatic to try to run South Georgia from London."

End of the Falklands Fantasy

IS THERE no end to the spending of taxpayers' money on the Falkland Islands?

The islanders' freedom was a British responsibility when it was lost. But Britain restored it. What more do we owe them? Their wishes being "paramount", are they not free to become Argentinians or accept a United Nations presence or join the USA or move elsewhere or fend for themselves or do what they will: provided that any other party involved is willing to go along with their wishes?

Do we owe anything to anyone else? Certainly we do. The cost of restoring the islanders' freedom fell mainly on our forces in the field — and on their loved ones, including HM The Queen, who suffered weeks of cruel anxiety or worse. What this exclusive company did for the rest of us (who were never at risk) was far more than recover the islanders' freedom and some territory of dubious value. They made amends for our collective carelessness, restored our self respect and paved the way for the most democratic Argentine government for years. We owe it to them to make the most of the opportunity they have created.

Successive British governments — including this one — have openly considered policies leading to abandonment of sovereignty over the Falklands. Romantic dreams apart, the islands have little or no value for us and have become a standing irritant to our relations with South America. Has not the time come for Britain to tell the Falklanders that we intend to abandon sovereignty over their islands: that we will, if they wish, act as honest brokers on their behalf: and that, if they decide to move elsewhere, we will offer them financial assistance? Hard on them? When, in Britain, we build an airfield or a reservoir or a bypass or the like, we displace resident taxpaying citizens as necessary, whether they like it or not.

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Falkland war film beats imports ban

By Dennis Barker

Customs authorities have relented and are allowing three Argentinian films into Britain despite an import ban it was revealed yesterday.

The films, which include *Children of the War*, dealing with the Falklands war from the Argentinian point of view, were booked for the London Film Festival, which opens later this month.

The British Film Institute, which runs the festival, was told by the customs that the films could not be imported because they counted as Argentinian goods.

Mr Derek Malcolm, director of this year's festival and film critic of the Guardian, said:

"It appears that nothing Argentinian is allowed into this country. Even newspapers are confiscated and people have told me they can't get Argentinian magazines."

The BFI argued that the films were not goods within the meaning of the regulations and were to be shown only once for cultural purposes and then returned. The other films are *Camila* and *Funny Dirty Little War*.

The Customs ruled later that

the films could be shown but they must be sent back and not offered for sale to film distributors for a wider showing, as normally happens at the London Film Festival, said the BFI.

Several small distributors have said they would like to buy the British rights but have been told that they would need a special import licence, and that the chances might not be good.

The films criticise the Argentinian military junta rather than Britain. The festival's organisers wanted them shown here to illustrate the development of the Argentinian film industry since the fall of the junta.

Mr Malcolm said: "Since democracy has come back there has been a new wave and people who had not been able to make films under the dictatorship are able to make them now."

"Whatever I think about the absurdity of the situation, the customs have their duty to do, which is what the Government have asked them to do. They have stretched a point and we are very grateful, and intend to play fair by them."

The Guardian 2/11/84

IT IS doubtful whether we should expect an excess of frankness from Michael Heseltine when he appears before the Foreign Affairs Committee to discuss the Belgrano next week. It is simply that the civil servant still in charge of preparing Mr H's responses to the committee is Mr Michael Legge, the very official who in July recommended that a highly-misleading memorandum concerning changes in the rules of engagement should be sent to the committee. This was the memo leaked to Mr Tam Dalyell and which is now part of the evidence against the man accused of the leak, Mr Clive Ponting.

EEC helps Britain on Falklands

By David Julius in New York and John Ezard in London

The European Community countries gave limited support to Britain in the UN General Assembly debate on the Falklands crisis by abstaining on an Argentine draft resolution calling for negotiations on sovereignty.

The vote of 89-9, with 54 abstentions, was similar to last year when 87 countries voted for the Argentine position.

The British Government and Falklands lobbying team at the UN was euphoric about the result, which was three votes better than their most optimistic calculations. It had expected that at least 92 countries would back sovereignty negotiations.

One of the two-man Falklands team, Councillor John Cheek, said it showed that, even in President Alfonsín's first honeymoon year in office, "there is no sign of world opinion swinging against us." His partner, Councillor Tim Blake, said, "We are very grateful to the European Community for staying with us despite their interest in normal commercial dealings with Argentina."

In London, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, reiterated Britain's refusal to negotiate sovereignty "over the heads of the islanders and against their clear wishes. The 'notable fact' about the vote was that 63 countries had supported this position. He called on Argentina to learn

from the result and to help to develop a "constructive and realistic relationship" with Britain.

The Labour Party foreign affairs spokesman, Mr George Foulkes, said the result had been achieved only by "desperately intensive lobbying" by Mrs Thatcher. The Government should not take abstentions as "a signal to sit tight and not negotiate." As a first step, he called for Argentina to declare a formal end to hostilities and for Britain to lift the 150-mile protection zone round the Falklands.

Earlier there had been speculation that the EEC countries would abandon the British view by backing Argentina.

The French UN delegate

said that while he supported the wording of the Argentine draft, he abstained because France wanted to show solidarity with Britain and its other European partners.

The British UN ambassador, Sir John Thomson, repeated that Britain remained committed to finding a peaceful solution to the Falklands question, but could not discuss sovereignty.

He said he regretted that there was no change in the Argentine resolution which contained several references to the sovereignty issue.

The addition of the wording that the two countries should also "solve their remaining differences" did nothing, he said, to cure the fundamental defect of the resolution.

Falkland friends

BRITISH lobbyists were euphoric at the United Nations yesterday after European Community nations decided against backing Argentina on the Falklands vote. Page 10.

The Times
2.11.84

Argentina fails to win EEC votes

From Zoriana Pysariwsky
New York

Despite intense lobbying, Argentina yesterday failed in the United Nations General Assembly to isolate Britain from its European partners and gain their support for a resolution calling on the two sides to resume negotiations on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands.

The assembly voted Argentina's way for the third time, with 89 votes in favour of the measure, nine against and 54 abstentions. But European abstentions took some of its victory away. The result was similar to last year's vote, when 87 countries were in favour of the resolution, nine were against and 54 abstained.

France, which held the key to the European vote, made clear that its abstention did not mean that it supported Mrs Margaret Thatcher's refusal to negotiate sovereignty, but was an affirmation of European solidarity. The US voted with Argentina.

How they voted, page 7

How UN voted on Falklands issue

Voting at the UN last night on Argentina's call for renewed negotiations on Falklands sovereignty was as follows (Zoriana Pysariwsky writes).

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussia, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, East Germany, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti,

Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Japan, Laos, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Somalia, Spain, Surinam, Syria, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, USSR, US, Uruguay, Venezuela, Vietnam, South Yemen, North Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Malawi, New Zealand, Oman, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, UK.

Abstaining: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Ban-

gladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Brunei, Burma, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Papua, New Guinea, Portugal, Qatar, St Lucia, St Vincent, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Vanuatu, West Germany.

Not participating: Gambia, Mozambique, Niger, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, St Kitts - Nevis.

The Standard
2.11.84

THE
STANDARD

November 2 1984

Forward slowly

THERE are some problems that only time can begin to resolve, and the future of the Falkland Islands is one of those. The Argentine invasion in 1982, the occupation and the war that followed, left scars that cannot be healed and forgotten in two years, nor even perhaps in 10.

Yesterday's vote in the United Nations on Argentina's call to resume talks on sovereignty appeared to recognise that fact. Despite the (welcome) change that Argentina now has a democratic government, the voting (89 in favour, nine against, 54 abstaining) was almost identical to that of a year ago. Part of the thanks for that must go to the EEC nations, led by France, who resisted calls to turn against Britain. It showed that the Community does forge some real bonds after all.

That is not to say, however, that London and Buenos Aires should stay in silent hostility for ever. Such a stalemate would not be in the interests of Britain, nor of the islanders themselves. The Fortress Falklands policy, however necessary it may be for now, is extremely expensive. And, because no-one really believes it can be permanent, it does not offer the islanders the long-term security they need.

Stalemate

The Government's stand is based on the right of the islanders to determine their future, a principle written into the UN Charter. But Britain herself, in the negotiations over Hongkong (another and even more important responsibility, affecting very many more people) has accepted that self-determination is not the be-all and end-all.

It is a safe bet that if the people of Hongkong were given a free choice, they would elect to stay under British, not Chinese, rule. But that was not practical politics. And the final say rested, as it had to do, with the British Government and Parliament.

In the case of the Falklands, it is unthinkable for the Government to leave the people in the lurch. Those rescued at such cost in 1982 must have their wishes respected now.

But the Hongkong negotiations, in which Britain had a much weaker hand, suggest that one day Britain might win a fair deal for the Falklanders, including guarantees for their future, as well as a satisfactory arrangement with Argentina on sovereignty.

That day is not yet. It may have to wait for a new British Government or a new Prime Minister, and that looks years away. But in the meantime we ought to be ready to bring relations with Argentina steadily back towards normality.

As a first step the Argentine Government could lift the sterile declaration of hostilities, which still officially stands. Britain could then ease the exclusion zone round the islands—thus putting the relationship back on a positive track.

UN Falklands vote

The UN General Assembly voted to call on Britain and Argentina to resume talks on the Falklands, but suggestions of a possible split among EEC members were not borne out. Back Page; Editorial Comment, Page 16

EEC nine abstain on Falklands

By Our UN Correspondent

ARGENTINA'S hopes of a split in European Community ranks over the Falkland Islands failed to materialise yesterday in the United Nations General Assembly.

The assembly, by a vote little different from that recorded last year, again called on Britain and Argentina to resume negotiations on their dispute over sovereignty.

Britain and eight other governments voted against the resolution, which was submitted by Argentina and other Latin American countries. It was supported by the U.S., but suggestions that there could be a split, damaging to Britain, among its Community partners were not fulfilled. As last year, the nine abstained.

A total of 89 votes for the resolution represented only a small improvement for Argentina—two more than the number last year. There were again 54 abstentions.

This was the third time since the Falklands war of 1982 that the assembly had called for negotiations. Britain rejects the idea, maintaining that Argentina should drop its insistence that the only result must be acknowledgement of Argentine sovereignty.

In a brief address to the assembly shortly before the vote, Sir John Thomson, the chief UK delegate, again raised the issue of the right of the islanders to self-determination. He said this was crucial, but Argentina argued that it did not apply in "this special and exceptional case." To ignore the right of self-determination was to overturn a principle enshrined in the UN charter, Sir John said.

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the UK Foreign Secretary, last night reaffirmed that Britain was not prepared to discuss the transfer of Falkland's sovereignty with Argentina. Sir Geoffrey stressed that 63 countries had declined to support Argentina, including all Britain's EEC partners, and said he hoped Buenos Aires would recognise that the islanders also had a right to decide their own future.

War of words, Page 6
Editorial comment, Page 16

UN vote on the Falklands

THE VOTE in the UN General Assembly on the issue of the Falkland Islands did not suggest inexorably mounting pressure on Britain to negotiate with Argentina. The majority in favour of negotiations remains, and by the tone of their speeches to the assembly many of the delegates supporting the resolution made it quite clear what such negotiations should lead to. But an important minority of nations abstained and there is no sign of this rather negative form of support for Britain's position leaking away.

The argument about this tiny British dependency may be wearing thin the patience of the UK's European partners, but it seems probable that the key-stone of Britain's argument is one they find very difficult to oppose or to ignore. At least half Wednesday's speech to the assembly by Sir John Thomson, the British Ambassador, was devoted to ramming home the point that the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands have as much right to self-determination as any other people.

The implication is that this right, enshrined in article 1 of the UN charter, can be invoked to hold the line as long as Britain wants, and that Argentina, which has insisted that it will never again use force to regain the islands, will find it an uphill struggle to mobilise sufficient international opinion to change Britain's mind from without.

Practicality

But what about the mind change from within? How long will the British parliament consider it practical or sensible to sustain and defend such a distant colony?

In the case of Hong Kong, considerations of practicality outweighed the principle of self-determination. It would plainly have been impossible for Britain to have sustained and defended any future status for Hong Kong which the local people wanted but China did not. So the British Government quite rightly negotiated the best deal with China that it could get and then asked the people of Hong Kong to express their preference between that deal or nothing. Self-determination was provided for only in a cosmetic manner.

Hong Kong's predicament may be an extreme example but it illustrates a point that is sometimes neglected. The wishes of the Falkland Islanders are not paramount: they are subservient to the wishes of the British parliament and ultimately to the readiness of the British people to sustain them in a strange and highly unsatisfactory situation. It is neither realistic nor honest for the British Government to hide behind the notion of absolute self-determination which can only be applicable to a territory that is potentially independent.

Sovereignty

For the moment that readiness in Britain undoubtedly remains. It has been greatly reinforced and prolonged by the memory of those who died regaining the islands after the Argentine invasion. As the British ambassador told the General Assembly: "President Alfonsín's government does not appear to have recognised that the events of 1982 have had a profound effect on Britain as well as in the Falkland Islands." It must be sobering for the Argentine government to reflect how much further down the road towards a negotiated transfer of sovereignty they would be if the military junta had accepted the peace plan proposed by the UN Secretary General. In order to meet its side of that bargain the British Government would have had to withdraw the islanders' right to self-determination.

The political taboo may be powerful, but a responsible British Government should weigh the costs and the benefits of continuing with its current approach to this problem. It should bring its conclusions to Parliament's attention more forcibly than in the years before the Argentine invasion.

Equally, the government of Argentina ought to devote as much attention to courting British public opinion as to attempting to whip up international pressure from a weak moral position. A constructive immediate gesture would be for Buenos Aires to lift the sterile state of hostility that exists between Britain and Argentina and to abandon its insistence that all talks with Britain must feature the sovereignty of the islands.

Britain fails to get low-key debate on Falklands, writes Nicholas Colchester at the UN

War of words over question of sovereignty

BRITAIN had been hoping for a low-key Falklands debate in the United Nations General Assembly this year, with a minimum number of speeches leading swiftly to the largely predetermined vote. It was not to be.

More than 20 countries insisted on speaking out against Britain's stance over the islands. The assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, overshadowed the whole meeting and injected a particular sense of occasion into the debate.

The start on Wednesday morning was delayed for an hour while the assembly registered its repugnance at the death of Mrs Gandhi. This made the discussion a two-day affair. Both the fact of the assassination and its impact on the schedule, allowed Sir John Thomson, the UK Ambassador, to inject oratory and genuine debate into the assembly's normally bland proceedings.

The ambassador's tribute to Mrs Gandhi was based on his years as British high commissioner in Delhi and was thus of a different order of quality and familiarity from those that had preceded it. The assembled delegates must have been struck by the evidence of easy friendship between the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement and the ambassador of the country now charged with colonial intrusiveness in the South Atlantic.

Sr Dante Caputo, the Argentine Foreign Minister, launched the attack with a tough re-assertion of Argentina's deter-



Sir John Thomson... notion that UK has strategic designs in the South Atlantic is pure fantasy

mination to recover the islands. "It must remain clear to the international community that the hundreds of millions of pounds invested in the consolidation of the military and colonial situation in the South Atlantic will not succeed in changing the reality of the territories under dispute.

"The islands are in Latin America; our claims and determination to recover them

not disappear or weaken." His speech was notable for its attempt to reverse the image of recent history and portray the UK as militaristic and Argentina as bent upon peaceful negotiation.

"As we all know," he continued, "the conflict in the Malvinas began with a British act of force, whereby the Argentine population living there was evicted."

Later on he asked: "Who gains from the present situation? Where does it lead? Who benefits from the militarisation of the South Atlantic? What is the aim of the construction of a powerful air and naval base with over 4,000 in military personnel, submarines, warships and aircraft whose capacity clearly exceeds the imaginary defence needs against my country? Is it really true that the Malvinas are going to be incorporated into a global strategic project?"

In contrast to Britain's "rigid refusal" to negotiate, Dr Caputo stressed Argentina's determination to settle the argument by peaceful means. He pointed to the recent settlement of the dispute with Chile over the Beagle Channel as proof of Argentina's non-belligerence.

Emphasising the new hints of flexibility that the Latin American sponsors had introduced into the resolution, he explained: "We insist that these negotiations must not be limited only to the question of sovereignty but must also take into account all the issues which will ensure the re-establishment



Dante Caputo... claim and determination to recover the islands will not disappear or weaken

of relations between both states on a permanent basis. Among these issues, the status of the present inhabitants of the Malvinas must receive special attention."

Sr John Thomson was given an unexpected lunch-hour to modify his prepared text and to work up ripostes to Dr Caputo's thrusts. By the time he came to the rostrum at the centre of the General Assembly

Assembly he had dramatic advantage working for him.

The case against him had been repeated many times by different delegates. Here, finally, stood the lone defendant, ringed by hostile delegations, with that added element of titillation that exists when a "great power" is in the dock. In magisterial style Sir John went out of his way to counter the tactic of the Argentine Foreign Minister by which "he linked passages about peace with innuendoes that we mean war."

He stressed that it was only to prevent invasion happening again that the UK had had to spend large sums of money and station more forces than it would have wished in that part of the world. He said, "the notion that we have strategic designs in the South Atlantic is pure fantasy."

Sr John explained that Britain was unwilling to negotiate about sovereignty because "Argentina does not envisage any dispassionate discussion of the merits of the British case but only discussion of the mechanism for the absorption of the islanders by Argentina."

But above all he stressed the right of self-determination which, he said, had featured in 101 of the 145 speeches in the General Assembly so far this year: "We say with conviction that the people of the Falkland Islands have the same right to self-determination" — a right which was "no less inalienable than that of other peoples. No one can take it away from them," he said.

Daily Mail
2.11.84

Howe stands by Falklands

BRITAIN is to ignore the latest UN call for negotiations on the sovereignty of the Falklands.

Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe told Argentine President Alfonsín: 'We are not prepared to discuss the future of the Islands over the heads of the Islanders.'

And he assured the Falklanders 'We stand by our commitment.'

By JOHN DICKIE
Diplomatic Correspondent

Last night's UN vote on Argentina's resolution on sovereignty talks was 89 for and nine against with 54 abstentions.

This was a serious setback for the Argentines.

They had sent their Foreign Minister, Dante Caputo, to drum up extra votes after President Alfonsín vigorously canvassed for

support in Europe, particularly from France.

What swung the balance with the French as with so many others was the failure of the Argentines to recognise the importance of mentioning Falklands rights to self-determination.

Sir Geoffrey did not disguise his glee. He said: 'I welcome this satisfactory result. Sixty three nations have once again declined to support the Argentine call.'

After the UN vote he said Britain was ready to play its full part in any moves towards restoring relations with Argentina.

Daily Telegraph 2/11/84

EEC STAYS FIRM OVER FALKLANDS

By Our United Nations
Correspondent in New York

Argentina again failed to win EEC backing for a United Nations motion yesterday calling for negotiations on sovereignty of the Falklands.

The result of the resolution, carried by 89 votes to nine, with 54 abstentions, was similar to that obtained by Argentina last year when EEC countries also abstained.

Mirror, mirror on the Buenos Aires wall

Sir, — Your Leader of October 31 argues that as there has been no referendum in the Falkland Islands, self-determination does not exist. Islanders would welcome a referendum, if the United Nations and Argentina were prepared to abide by the outcome — in accordance with Article 1 of the UN Charter.

You refer to the "benign" government of Mr Alfonsín. We have seen little benignity in his attitude to the Falk-

land Islands. Last week in Rome he stated bluntly: "Sovereignty is not for discussion." He has made it clear that in calling for negotiations on sovereignty, he is prepared to discuss only the transfer of the islands to Argentina within the next four to five years.

Whilst the Argentine government maintains this attitude, it is difficult to see how a meaningful question for a referendum can be framed; or how the Foreign

Office can be expected to enter negotiations with Argentina; still less proceed with such talks with "some resumption of civil relations."

The Argentines have made much of British "intransigence." Perhaps they should examine their own position more closely. — Yours

Alastair Cameron.

Falklands Islands
Government,
London SW1.

Daily Telegraph 1/11/84

£4,000 envelope

At Harpers an 1878 envelope sent from the Falkland Islands to a Berkshire address went for £4,000 and a set of 1953 Falkland centenary issue stamps belonging to Arthur Negus were sold for £1,300.

Prices do not include buyer's premium

Firmer Argentine line in Falklands debate

By MICHAEL KALLENBACH
United Nations Correspondent, in New York

THE Argentine Foreign Minister, Senor Dante Caputo, yesterday repeated that the Falkland Islands belonged to Argentina and it was determined to recover them.

Speaking during the opening of the annual General Assembly debate on the Falklands dispute with Britain Senor Caputo took a firmer stand than during previous years.

Accusing Britain of adopting an attitude of "rigid refusal," he said, "The islands are in Latin America. Our claim and determination to recover them shall not disappear nor weaken."

Calling on U.N. delegations to support the Argentine draft, which stipulates that London and Buenos Aires must solve the sovereignty dispute through negotiations, he said, "We all know the conflict of the Malvinas Islands began with a British act of force."

'Civilised manner'

He repeated that the islands, while belonging to Argentina, would not be reclaimed by force. "Hence, Argentina is simply asking all of us to tell our peoples that the negotiated solution, the diplomatic solution, is the only appropriate means to definitively solve conflicts."

The present dispute should be solved "in a civilised manner."

Argentina was ready to

"discuss everything. Logically, this means not to ignore the central question that opposed both our countries, namely, the issue of sovereignty."

He cited his country's willingness to find peaceful solutions to disputes and mentioned the recent agreement with Chile over the Beagle Channel.

Britain's position was due to be outlined in the assembly late last night by the United Nations representative, Sir John Thomson. Twenty-five countries have asked to speak in the debate, including Australia and Belize, who are expected to speak in Britain's favour.

According to official United Nations sources, the other EEC countries confirmed privately last night that they all intended to adopt a common abstention on the Argentine resolution, the same position they took last year when the result of the vote was 87-9 in favour with 54 abstentions.

The General Assembly delayed the opening of the Falklands debate yesterday to pay tribute to Mrs Gandhi.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Senor Perez de Cuellar, led the tributes from the Assembly rostrum, paying tribute to Mrs Gandhi's staunch support of the United Nations.

He said Mrs Gandhi had been untiring in her efforts to guide and promote the "peaceful evolution of her great and ancient country. In that infinitely complex and difficult endeavour she has now given her life."

The Times 1/11/84

UN vote blow for Argentina

Argentine officials at the United Nations have been told that Britain's European Community allies will abstain rather than support Argentina on a General Assembly resolution urging negotiations on Falkland Islands sovereignty.

Falklands hard line

From David Julius
in New York

THE Argentine Foreign Minister, Mr Eante Caputo, opened the annual UN General Assembly debate on the Falklands dispute with Britain yesterday with a hardline approach, accusing Britain of beginning the conflict by taking the islands forcibly.

The debate was delayed so that UN diplomats could pay tribute to the memory of Mrs Gandhi.

Calling for support for the Argentine resolution, which calls on London and Buenos Aires to resume negotiations on the sovereignty dispute, Mr Caputo reaffirmed that "the islands are in Latin America. Our claim and determination to recover them shall not disappear nor weaken."

Events would demonstrate that this will be the unavoidable outcome. Only the maintenance of a political shortsightedness by the British side could postpone it.

He tried to convince the international community that, if the Falklands crisis were not solved, it would create "a lack of tranquility" in the world.

He talked about Britain's attitude of "rigid refusal," and asked who gained from the present situation. Where did it lead. Who benefited

Reminding governments of its new-found democracy, Mr Caputo said that during the first 11 months of the new Administration it had taken concrete international steps towards peace and a negotiated settlement with Britain.

He also boasted of his country's recent settlement with Chile over the Beagle Channel dispute. "All this means that Argentina not only accepts peace but also struggles for it" said Mr Caputo. "Who can doubt that my Government seeks peace and is truly committed to it."

Illumination of what MoD declined to reveal

Change in rules of war notified after Belgrano

By Richard Norton-Taylor

New evidence emerged yesterday that the decision by the Falklands war cabinet to change the rules of engagement on May 2, 1982, to allow the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, to be attacked outside the exclusion zone was not communicated to the Argentine government until May 7, and was passed on to the UN Security Council only on May 8.

The evidence comes in documents deposited in the House of Commons library, copies of which have been made available to the Guardian. Although they were deposited shortly after the events, they contain detailed information which the Minister of Defence has persistently refused to give publicly to the Commons foreign affairs committee.

They show that although the Government, and Mrs Thatcher in particular, has said that the general warning given to Argentina on April 23 was a sufficient basis for the attack on the Belgrano under the UN Charter's article 51 relating to self-defence, there was room for misunderstanding about the precise nature of the instructions given by London to the task force.

In a message to the UN Security Council dated May 8, 1982, Sir Anthony Parsons,

then Britain's UN ambassador, gave the full text of the warning presented to Argentina the previous day. This was five days after the Belgrano was torpedoed and six days after Mr Francis Pym, then Foreign Secretary, had raised in writing the question of whether Britain should give a new warning to Argentina.

Sir Anthony said that the main purpose of his message was "to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding about the United Kingdom's intentions." He annexed a copy of the message to the Argentine government on May 7, which he said gave "further precision" to the circumstances in which Argentine forces would be regarded as constituting a threat.

He spelled out that Britain regarded any Argentine warship or military aircraft found more than 12 miles from the Argentine coast as hostile and "liable to be dealt with accordingly." This new detail and clarification — passed to Buenos Aires only on May 7 — reflected the decision by the war cabinet on May 2.

Yet although the documents have been in the Commons library since May 1982 — available, in theory, for any MP to read — the detail in them has not been given to MPs by the Ministry of Defence even though the Commons foreign

affairs committee has asked for it. Mr John Stanley, armed forces minister, made no mention of the documents when he sent a memorandum to the committee last month about changes in the rules of engagement.

The first indications that the announcement of the rule of engagement change agreed by the war cabinet on May 2 was delayed came in an internal MoD document allegedly leaked by Mr Clive Ponting, the senior Ministry of Defence to the Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell. A leaked document says that the "appropriate warning" about the May 2 change was not given until five days later.

The fact that the detailed documents were deposited in the Commons library shortly after the events of May 1982 took place makes it hard to understand the ministry's secrecy and concern about revealing the same information in another way.

Mrs Thatcher has meanwhile confirmed in a parliamentary answer to Mr Dalyell that it was in March this year that she first knew the Belgrano had changed direction 11 hours before it was attacked. This was before she wrote a letter about the Belgrano to Mr Denzil Davies, Labour's defence spokesman, in which she makes no reference to this.

The Times 1/11/84

Argentine junta member jailed by civilian court

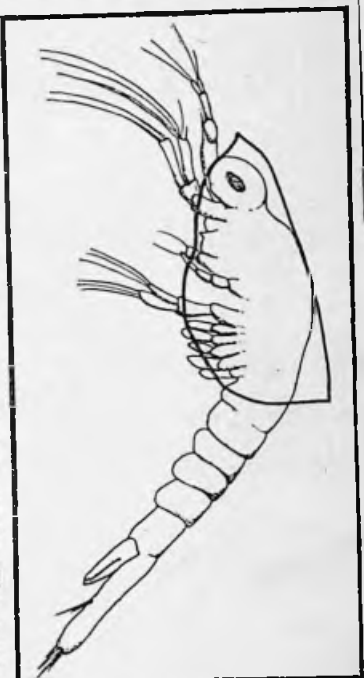
Buenos Aires (AFP) - Admiral Armando Lambruschini, a member of a former Argentine military junta, was jailed here by order of a civilian court.

Civil courts have been assigned to try the nine members of the 1976-83 juntas on charges of violating human rights during repression of subversive activity. Eight of the nine junta members are now in jail, and the ninth, General Omar Graffigna, is due to appear before the court.

THE REPORTED collapse of a fishery is always cause for concern. The reported collapse of two Antarctic fisheries presages an ecological disaster. Earlier this year at the third annual meeting in Tasmania of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) there was a move to impose a moratorium on fin fishing in the Southern Ocean.

These must be the most expensive waters in the world in which to maintain a fishing fleet. But short of withdrawing ships and turning back to traditional fisheries — many of which are already over-stretched — what else is available in the Southern Ocean?

It is an irony that covetous eyes were cast at the region initially because of the large potential resource of krill. However, the technology for processing krill is still in its infancy, so the main effort has been at fish. The majority of the 120 species of fish in Antarctic waters are indigenous and are restricted to the continental shelf and the shelf of the surrounding islands. There are few densely schooling pelagic species and those that do form large shoals feed largely on krill. Most of the sedentary demersal notothenoid fishes have more catholic tastes, their diets including algae,



crustaceans, polychaete worms and molluscs. Antarctic fish are generally small, under 25cm in length, with only about 12 species growing to more than 50cm.

Estimates of Antarctic fin fish biomass are notoriously difficult to obtain. One indirect indication comes from analysing reported catches. The enormous fishing effort of the large fleet of Russian vessels operating around South Georgia appears to have removed most of the standing stock. They began operating in the late 1960s. By 1970/1 a catch of more than 500,000 tons of *Notothenia rossii* was landed from Atlantic and Indian Ocean sectors combined. This was reduced to a paltry 16,000 tons by 1977/8. It is difficult to assess what effect these levels of exploitation will have on the

remaining stocks. The general feeling is that the catches are much larger than can be sustained. Hence the unease at the CCAMLR meeting.

Krill is the long-term target for the major fishing fleets of the USSR, Japan and Poland operating in the area. The estimated catch of krill has risen from an exploratory four tons in 1961-2 to over 400,000 tons in 1979-80. It is these figures and those relating to fin fish that exercised the Commission's collective mind in Hobart.

What background information is available to the Commission? Antarctic research has been in progress for over 100 years. HMS Challenger collected specimens from the Southern Ocean during her voyage from 1872-6. A newly published two-volume treatise on Antarctic Ecology,

Going in for the krill

It is all very well saving the whale, but what happens if we exterminate the whale's food supply? Tony Fincham on the threat hanging over Antarctic fishing resources

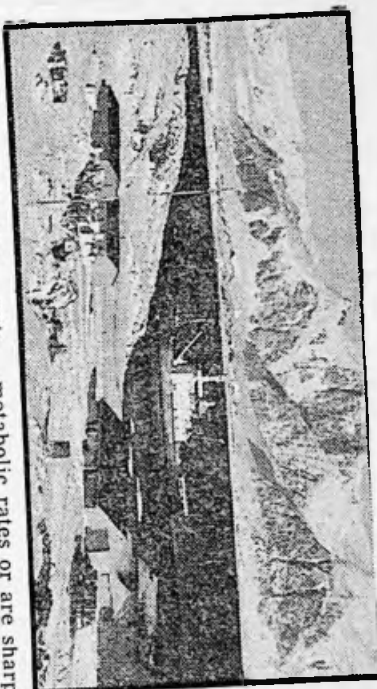
Left: Larval *Calypthopsis* stage of krill. Right: Antarctic research station — data essential to avoid disaster

edited by Dr Richard Laws, Director of the British Antarctic Survey, provides the most up-to-date account of current thinking and research. He notes in the preface that the volumes were planned in 1978. Events in the South Atlantic in 1982 delayed the writing and editing of the books. That the Falklands / South Georgia conflict took place at all between two Antarctic Treaty signatories emphasises the need for co-operation in the management of the region's resources.

General characteristics of the Antarctic marine ecosystem have gradually emerged. These include high biomass; species that are unusually large in size (gigantism); high levels of indigenous species not found elsewhere; glaring gaps in certain groups, e.g. crusta-

ceans such as barnacles and crabs and few pelagic larval stages acting as a means of dispersal (especially in the benthic communities). To this list may be added more novel features, recently reported.

Initially the high biomass of the marine fauna generally was thought to reflect high annual primary productivity of the phytoplankton. Recent research shows that the high biomass is in fact the result of slow growth, delayed maturation and longevity. There was no fast turnover with high productivity: life proceeds in these cold waters of 1 to -2°C at a slow and measured pace. But accurate assessment of annual primary production is vital in planning sensible commercial exploitation of the living resources of the Southern Ocean. No generally accepted values are yet avail-



able. One estimate puts annual primary production south of the Antarctic convergence at around 610 million tons. All the evidence suggests that primary productivity is no greater than that of other world oceans. What then is the biological basis of the high biomass of secondary production?

Perhaps the enhanced rates of productivity are more apparent than real. One suggestion is that the increased longevity of phytoplankton in cold waters may produce this effect. Secondary zooplankton (especially krill) would have more live food to eat and therefore obtain higher quality nutrient.

However, this still begs the question why do organisms grow more slowly in cold water? Is it simply a direct effect of temperature on

metabolic rates or are sharp seasonal fluctuations and the disruptive effect of ice cover equally important?

Whatever the explanation, krill swarms may reach several kilometres in length, with densities of up to 33 kilograms per cubic metre. Not unexpectedly, much recent work has concentrated on the life history of krill (*Euphausia superba*). Females produce eggs continuously and release them periodically throughout the spawning season. Eggs released at the surface then sink and it is predicted that most embryos hatch at around 850 metres. The early larval stages require no external food, utilising yolk, and begin a slow developmental ascent, back to the surface waters. At the calypso stage feeding begins and these larvae are able to survive for only six

days without food. This is generally abundant in the surface waters where the later larval stages aggregate. Under favourable conditions krill completes its larval development within four months. Juvenile and adult krill are able to survive up to seven months starvation.

But with all these successful adaptations to life in cold waters, not even the high fecundity of krill will be able to sustain the increased level of catches. While the International Whaling Commission regulates whale catches, no such international agreement specifically covers krill. Over-fishing of these euphausiid crustaceans would have knock-on effects especially for seabirds, seals and whales. How ironic if we saved baleen whales from extinction, but wipe out their food source.

The articles of the original Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources adopted in Canberra in 1980 specifically state that data should be compiled on "factors affecting the distribution, abundance and productivity of harvested species" and that attempts be made to "identify conservation needs and analyse the effectiveness of conservation measures." Two fin fisheries have collapsed. Dare we hope that the krill story will be different?

FALKLANDS DISCOVERY

Raymond Selkirk traces a long lost naval railway at Port Stanley

A FEW weeks ago I was on duty as a ship's officer in Port Stanley when I was interested to hear Patrick Watts, local radio station announcer, asking for details of the old narrow-gauge railway which ran from Navy Point to Moody Brook, a distance of about three miles. The request was on behalf of the Falkland Islands Philatelic Bureau.

Postage stamps of the Falkland Islands are very beautiful and have featured birds, animals, butterflies and moths, flowers, ships, aircraft, and military uniforms. The designer thought that a picture of one of the old narrow-gauge locomotives would be a good subject for a new stamp. Patrick was asking on the radio if anyone had any photographs of the railway as the only sign of it was a rough farm track along its route. The fate of the locomotives and other stock was unknown to him.

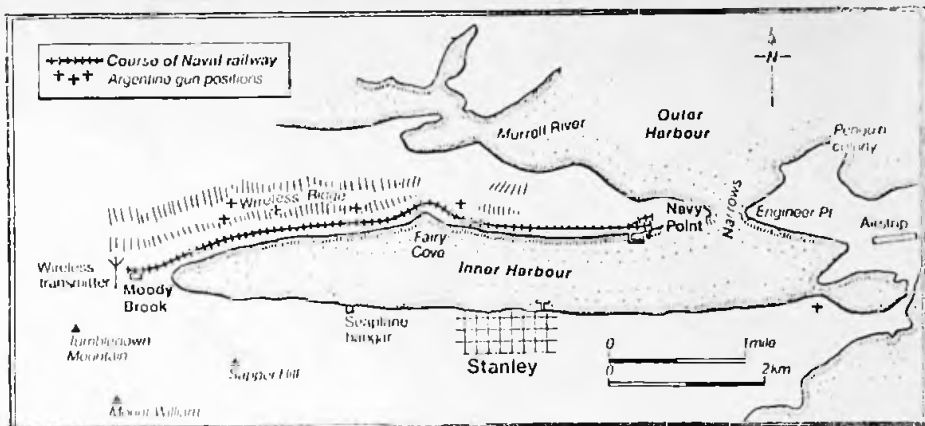
This line, along the northern bank of the inner harbour, had been operated by the Royal Navy during the first world war and into the 1920s. Its purpose was to transport mail from Navy Point to the RN wireless station at Moody Brook. Presumably the generators for this large station were coal-fired.

On board my ship we had an army liaison officer, Major Allen of the Royal Engineers. I knew that the major was a railway enthusiast and mentioned the request to him. He took immediate action and informed me that when I came on board the next day (the ship was at anchor in Port Stanley inner harbour) we would proceed in search of the railway: a military combat support boat of the Royal Corps of Transport would arrive at the ship at 15.30 and transport us to Navy Point.

We disembarked at Navy Point and along the jetty where a strange black-painted ship was lying the white tug *Albatross*, renamed HMS *Falkland* and known to all and sundry as "The Black Pig". Her mundane duties now were to tow around all the ships in the harbour after their refuse, which was suitably bagged in black plastic bags.

Major Allen and I began our search for signs of the old railway in and around the collection of huts and billets at Navy Point. After only a few minutes the major called me from behind an old hangar and I was pleased to see that he had located a right-angled rail crossing sticking out of the turf. A closer inspection after a bit of turf-kicking showed that the crossing was a wagon turntable and more turf-kicking exposed the direction of the main track, which appeared to have been of 2ft or 3ft gauge. This passed right through the naval yard and underneath several buildings.

We located two sidings but the main track seemed to head for the eastern breakwater of the small harbour at Navy Point. The inshore end of this breakwater



Route of the narrow-gauge (probably 2ft.) railway from Navy Point to Moody Brook at Port Stanley, Falkland Islands



Mortal remains of a Kerr Stuart "Wren" class 0-4-0 saddle-tank locomotive, under a pile of scrap beside the eastern breakwater at Navy Point, Port Stanley. Photo: Raymond Selkirk

was covered by a large scrap dump. There were old hawsers, rusty ships' plates, hundreds of oil drums and all manner of junk. As we peered down into this mass of junk we couldn't believe our eyes—underneath the first layer was an almost complete 0-4-0 narrow-gauge locomotive! It was lying at an angle of 45 degrees with the cab invisible under many tons of junk. The front of the smokebox was missing but the engine looked as if it was well worth recovering. We were very satisfied with our "find" but, after also seeing a wagon in the water nearby, continued to walk the full length of the railway trackbed to Moody Brook.

Outside the naval yard at Navy Point no further lines were found. The old route had become just a very rough farm track but here and there the remains of wooden sleepers could be seen. The route runs along the shore under "Wireless Ridge", which now is full of Argentine bunkers and trenches. We passed several 30mm Hispano-Suiza anti-aircraft guns left behind by the Argentine troops. One had taken a direct hit and there was a soldier's grave beside it. The body had been removed to the central Argentine military cemetery but the wooden cross was still in position.

A few of the Argentine bunkers had roofs of corrugated iron covered with turf, but I noticed that some of the "raiders" were railway track, so presumably the Argentine troops found the last of the rails below Wireless Ridge. Great care has to be taken in this area as much live ammunition is scattered around. Most of the Argentine minefields have been located and marked by the Royal Engineers but when walking cross-country in these areas it is best to follow tank tracks or landrover tyre marks.

The Argentine soldiers must have left Wireless Ridge in a great hurry as there were uniforms, boots, toothbrushes, sleeping bags and tents scattered all over the place. Quite close to Moody Brook we found a pair of wagon wheels and were well satisfied that we had located just about all that remains of this long-lost railway.

Moody Brook base is now operated by REME and all that is left of the Navy wireless station are the concrete bases which anchored the guy wires for the antennas. From Moody Brook, a captured Argentine Mercedes Jeep took us back into Port Stanley along the south side of the harbour.

Recovery of the locomotive is in hand by the Royal Engineers and I hope that, some day soon, I may see details of a beautiful new Falkland Islands stamp which will take my thoughts back to a very happy afternoon spent in the remote South Atlantic.

As well as receiving this article from Raymond Selkirk, another reader, Ross Gregory, has sent us a cutting from "Royal Air Force News" of September 8, 1983, which states that two locomotives have been discovered and that it was hoped—under a rescue bid entitled "Cumber Railway Project"—to restore for public display the better of them, together with sample rail vehicles and other relevant items. Chris Jackson, of the editorial staff of "Railway Gazette International", is sure that the locomotive shown in Mr. Selkirk's photographs is a Kerr Stuart 0-4-0 saddle-tank of the "Wren" class.

Argentina tops league of human rights

By TONY ALLEN-MILLS in New York

ARGENTINA, accused four years ago of being the most repressive country in the western hemisphere, has become "the most vigilant defender of human rights in Latin America," according to an annual freedom survey.

The Council of Hemispheric Affairs placed President Alfonsín's democratic regime at the head of its list of Central and South American countries respecting human rights.

"Given Argentina's horrendous recent history as the hemisphere's worst human rights violator, the country has made the most extraordinary return to the ranks of democratic societies of any hemispheric nation in recent history," said the council, a private Washington-based research group.

Following Senor Alfonsín's inauguration in December, 1983, human rights violations were said to have "virtually ceased." Trade unions, political parties, the Press and the arts all emerged with "renewed vitality."

Slow justice

But the council noted that despite the democratic government's obvious intention to bring to justice those responsible for the bloody years of repression, progress has been slow.

"Several leading human rights groups remain dissatisfied . . . they charge that Alfonsín has wavered in the face of threats and intimidating gestures by the military," the survey said.

However, continuing pressure from the military and other Right-wingers makes discretion a "reasonable strategy to follow," the survey added.

"Just how Alfonsín maintains this delicate balance between a population hungry for a settlement on one hand, and a resistant and brooding military on the other, is a matter to be closely scrutinised in the coming years."

Apart from Argentina, other countries with positive human rights records in 1983 were said to be Belize, Venezuela, Ecuador and the English-speaking Caribbean.

But severe abuses continued in Guatemala, where the "veneer" of recent elections had failed to cover up continuing brutality by the armed forces against the country's civilian population.

ASTIZ WINS MILITARY HEARING

By CRISTINA BONASEGNA in Buenos Aires

A CIVILIAN judge in Argentina handling a case against Lt Cdr Alfredo Astiz on charges of abducting and wounding a missing Swedish girl in 1977, has ruled that the case should be transferred to military courts.

The ruling follows a month-long battle over competence between the prosecution and the defence in the case against the Argentina Navy officer.

Federal Judge Miguel del Castillo, who is investigating the disappearance of a Swedish national, Dagmar Hagelin, under the former military regime, unexpectedly ruled that he was not competent to handle the case.

He made the decision under controversial reforms to the military code of justice, introduced by President Raul Alfonsín almost a year ago.

Tribunal backing

The Armed Forces and the highest military tribunal in the country have openly backed Astiz, claiming that the middle-ranking officer was merely following orders by his superiors in the regime's drive against terrorism in the mid and late seventies.

Astiz has been accused by eye witnesses of the abduction, of shooting Miss Hagelin, then 17, in a case of mistaken identity and of taking her to an illegal detention centre where she was last seen alive a few days later.

Dalyell questions detectives' suspension

By Paul Brown

The Home Secretary, Mr Leon Brittan, is to be asked why three detectives who were investigating the murder of the anti-nuclear campaigner, Miss Hilda Murrell, have remained suspended on full pay for four months.

They were suspended for allegedly playing golf when they were supposed to have been investigating the killing. Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, has tabled a Commons question because he believes the matter should now have been resolved.

His allegations in the Commons that the security services were involved in the murder of Miss Murrell, aged 78, have been denied.

He said that it had been suggested that the police were told not to press their inquiries into the murder too closely. Mr Dalyell asked whether the officers were tipped a "nod and a wink" that they could play golf rather than proceed in their normal conscientious manner.

He hoped the Home Secretary would be able to give him the facts surrounding the suspensions.

The Sunday Post
30th December 1984

NOEL SERVED UP A BREAKFAST TREAT

IT seems viewers all over the country on Christmas Day had no sooner unwrapped their presents before they were being bowled over by Noel Edmonds and his "Live Live Christmas Breakfast Show."

- A great idea, with Noel Edmonds an excellent host. I was amazed at the pictures being beamed from the Falklands—especially seeing the trouble the camera crew were having filming only a hundred feet above Clapham Common!—S. Dickson, Shields Rd., Glasgow.
- A terrific idea to link up with our forces in the Falklands. I'm sure it brought great happiness to many a home around the country.—Mrs M. Bryce, The Inch, Edinburgh.
- His easy manner made this a most enjoyable programme.—D. O'Brien, Mull Way, Aberdeen.
- Full marks for the first-ever link-up with the Falklands. And weren't all those flowers beautiful? — Mrs R. Simpson, Clarkston, Glasgow.

The BBC say their switchboard was jammed on the morning of the show, and have voted the live experiment a smashing success. They've already set in motion plans to repeat the format next Christmas.

And good news for fans of Noel's series is there's another one planned for later next year.



● Noel Edmonds.

Dalyell demands answers

by NICK DAVIES

TAM DALYELL, the Labour MP who has blamed British intelligence for the murder of peace campaigner Hilda Murrell, yesterday challenged the Home Office to explain a series of inconsistencies in the police account of the 78-year-old spinster's death.

He is asking why West Mercia police have consistently denied that Special Branch were called into the murder inquiry—a fact which was reported in *The Observer* last week, and confirmed on Friday by Home Office Minister Giles Shaw.

Mr Dalyell said yesterday: 'I am told that it was specifically denied, even at the inquest, that Special Branch were involved in the investigation, and now we learn that they were. I want Giles Shaw to tell me how he explains that, and a series of other points.'

Miss Murrell's nephew, Commander Rob Green, who had a key role in naval intelligence in the Falklands conflict, is pressing the police for more information.

Commander Green, is also taking legal advice to try to obtain reports by two pathologists into Miss Murrell's death.

'Belgrano murder' charge rejected

A Home Office minister denied last night allegations that blundering British intelligence officers killed Miss Hilda Murrell, who was found dead near her home in Shrewsbury in March.

The denial was made by Mr Giles Shaw, Minister of State, in a letter to Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow. Mr Dalyell asked Mr Shaw during a Commons debate last week to investigate the death when he suggested Miss Murrell interrupted a search of her home.

Mr Dalyell said a search was made for papers linked to the sinking of the General Belgrano because Miss Murrell, a noted rose grower and opponent of nuclear power, was related to a naval officer involved in the operation against the Argentine cruiser.

In his letter Mr Shaw, who received a report from West Mercia police over Christmas, told Mr Dalyell: "I am able to state unreservedly that your

allegations about the intelligence services being involved are totally without foundation."

Mr Shaw said the involvement of Special Branch officers in the police investigation had been raised and he understood from the West Mercia police that they had been consulted during an early stage.

Mr Shaw said Special Branch was involved because there were suggestions "of some sort of political motive relating to the Sizewell B inquiry. As you so clearly state such suggestions were absurd, but it was right for the police to eliminate this possibility in the investigation of a most serious crime. Once this possibility had been eliminated the Special Branch were not further involved."

Mr Dalyell said last night he was not satisfied with the answer.

Mr Dalyell is to meet police officers from West Mercia on January 15.

Falklands separation plan 'only an idea'

By DAVID ADAMSON Diplomatic Correspondent

A CONSTITUTIONAL proposal for the separation of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands from the Falklands was still only an "idea" which had yet to be decided on, a Foreign Office spokesman said yesterday.

THATCHER 'ARROGANT' ON ISLANDS

By Our Buenos Aires Correspondent

ARGENTINA's Foreign Minister, Senor Dante Caputo, described as "arrogant" Mrs Thatcher's assurance that the Falkland islanders' wish to remain British would always come before Argentine claims over the South Atlantic archipelago.

Senor Caputo reacted angrily to Mrs Thatcher's Christmas broadcast to the islands, saying that her statements "are almost typical of an ever-shrinking empire that never ceases decaying."

Speaking on Thursday night the Foreign Minister said he was confident that "sooner or later" Argentina would recover the islands over which both countries battled for seven weeks in 1982.

"I believe that Mrs Thatcher can talk about what she will do during her government, but to intend to set the course of history by saying "always," seems to me an act of arrogance," he declared.

Hard task

Senor Caputo re-affirmed that his country would continue waging a diplomatic battle to have its claim over the Falklands recognised. This he described as a "difficult and hard" task.

Negotiations between Argentina and Britain over the future of the islands are deadlocked over the issue of sovereignty.

"Argentina had a just title (to the islands), a legitimate government pressing for this title, and history itself backing it up," the Foreign Minister added.

He was commenting on a report that the Falkland islanders feared the separation of the dependencies would make it easier for Britain at some future date to reach an agreement on the Falklands with Argentina.

The islanders' anxieties were increased by the visit earlier this month of Mr David Thomas, Foreign Office Assistant Under-Secretary, following the circulation of copies of a new constitution.

He is reported to have said that the decision to sever the dependencies was made by the Cabinet in 1982.

1982 statement

A Foreign Office spokesman referred yesterday to a Commons statement by Mrs Thatcher in April, 1982, after the Argentine invasion, that the administration of the dependencies from Port Stanley was purely a "matter of convenience."

In its report earlier this month the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee said it had no difficulty in concluding that Argentine claims to South Georgia and the South Sandwich islands were without foundation.

On the other hand, it was unable to reach a "categorical conclusion" on the rival claims to the Falkland Islands.

However, the Labour Government in 1977 tacitly conceded that the Argentine claim had some validity. It agreed to hold negotiations which would cover future political relations, including sovereignty, with regard to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich islands.

In a statement it looked forward to the creation of "a framework for Anglo-Argentine economic co-operation which will contribute substantially to the development of the islands and the region as a whole."

Attempts to restart talks have been concerned with the Falkland Islands only and it is extremely unlikely that the Government would agree to extend them to the dependencies.

While the Government would like to negotiate an agreement on the Falklands it is committed to any agreement being acceptable to the islanders.

CIVILIAN TRIAL FOR ARGENTINA JUNTA CHIEFS

By CRISTINA BONASEGNA in Buenos Aires

MEMBERS of Argentina's former military juntas will be tried by a civilian court for their responsibility for widespread human rights violations.

This development follows a Supreme Court ruling on Thursday night which put an end to a jurisdiction struggle between military and civilian courts over the issue.

President Raul Alfonsin brought the charges against members of three of the juntas that ruled Argentina between 1976 and 1983 shortly after he took office a year ago.

Two former military presidents and three other junta members are being held under preventative arrest in the investigation into the 10,000 people who have disappeared.

"The trial of the juntas will be fast and spectacular," said Emilio Mignone, a human rights campaigner yesterday. "It will be open to the public and sentences could be passed as early as March."

Justice reform

Under a reform of the military Code of Justice, introduced by Alfonsin, the charges against nine former junta members were transferred to the Federal Chamber of Appeal on Oct. 2, after the highest military tribunal in the country apparently refused to pass sentence.

However, the Supreme Court ruling, which backs up the Military Code reform, is not expected to set a precedent in investigations into human rights abuses against other

officers, including Navy Lt-Cdre Alfredo Astiz.

Astiz is being tried by a civilian court on charges of wounding and abducting a Swedish-Argentine girl, Damar Hagelin, in 1977 and of taking her to an illegal detention centre at the Navy Mechanics School in Buenos Aires where she was last seen alive some days afterwards.

Law chief's view

But the federal solicitor recently said that he felt Astiz's case should be transferred to a military court.

Under the reformed military Code of Justice, the Armed Forces' Supreme Council is the proper court for crimes committed by military personnel on duty.

Although the judge handling the Astiz case is expected to express his intention to continue the investigations next week, the Federal Chamber of Appeal and the Supreme Court are likely to order the case to be transferred to the military court, human rights campaigners said.

"If this happens the Astiz case won't return to the civilian court until 1986 and a definite sentence will have to wait until then," one campaigner added.

Argentine junta members face civilian trial

By Our Buenos Aires Correspondent

ARGENTINA'S Supreme Court has ruled that nine former members of three military juntas, which ruled the country after a 1976 coup, including General Leopoldo Galtieri, must now stand trial in a civilian court for human rights abuses.

The former military leaders had earlier challenged the constitutionality of being submitted to civilian trials after their cases were transferred two months ago from Argentina's highest military tribunal, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to the civilian federal appeals court.

Although the ex-junta members maintained they had the right to a military trial, the Supreme Court ruled on Thursday that the constitution required equal treatment of all citizens before the law.

Military trials for the nine former commanders were ordered by President Raul Alfonsín when he took office a year ago. The men were charged with illegal abduction, torture and murder in connection with the disappearance of more than 9,000 Argentines.

But court martial proceedings against them by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces moved so slowly that the federal appeals court took over the cases, citing unjustified delays by the military court.

Five of the accused officers were then confined to a military prison under "preventive arrest," while three more—those who commanded forces during the Falklands invasion—had already been imprisoned.

FEARS ON S. GEORGIA RULE

By Our Port Stanley
Correspondent

FALKLAND ISLANDERS are becoming increasingly concerned and angry about Foreign Office intentions to remove the administration of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands from the government in Port Stanley.

Fears that the islands would soon lose their Falklands Dependency status were first aroused when copies of a proposed new constitution for the Falklands were received in Port Stanley recently and the matter has been brought to the boil by the visit of Mr David Thomas, Foreign Office Deputy Under-Secretary.

The offending section of the draft constitution invalidates a statute of 1908 which established the Falklands' governor and executive council as the administering authority for the dependencies. If introduced, the new constitution would permit direct administration of South Georgia and South Sandwich group from London.

The issue has aroused and revived the traditional suspicion of the Foreign Office in the Falklands. At what is said to have been a lively meeting of councillors with the visiting FO man, islands' representatives are believed to have made their dissatisfaction clear. The issue has even resulted in graffiti being scrawled in prominent places around Stanley.

One slogan read "Divorce South Georgia betrays Kelpers," while another poster on the doors of the town hall denounced the constitution as a whole, and proclaimed "Think Again."

At the entrance to Government House appeared a placard bearing the accusation, "Double Dealing on Falklands

Deal with Argentina

Councillors seem united in their opposition to the plan. "The new constitution removes South Georgia from our control," said Mr John Cheek. "I've had a number of people phone me up who are obviously worried about it. The more 'phone calls I get, the more I am convinced that people are very worried here."

Mr Cheek went on to say that he believes the fears of Falklanders derive from a suspicion that a split with the dependencies could make it easier for a future British government to arrive at an agreement with Argentina.

"If a future British government wanted to come to some agreement with Argentina over the Falklands, it would then exclude South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands," he said.

"Possibly they could get rid of the Falklands while retaining those dependencies."

He says that because of the ramifications for the dependencies, councillors are facing a dilemma. Their approval of the document as a whole is being sought by the FCO, although it could be introduced without the councillors' consent.

"I'm worried that if we accept this constitution we are at the same time saying, yes, we agree to South Georgia being cut off. So there is going to be some hard thinking and hard talking."

Mr David Thomas, who heads the Americas and Dependent Territories Section at the Foreign Office, has said that the decision to sever the political connection between South Georgia, the South Sandwiches and Port Stanley, derives from a decision made by the British Cabinet in 1982.

"The idea was that separate constitutions should be drawn up reflecting the actual conditions and needs of, on the one hand the Falkland Islands, and on the other hand the dependencies," he said.

Mr Thomas said he had noted the strength of feeling and said that he would be reporting to his superiors about his findings in the islands. The constitution which has caused such a furor can, in theory, be imposed without the assent of local councillors.

Dalyell to keep secret his source on Murrell

By Our Political Correspondent

Mr Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP who has blamed British Intelligence burglars for the killing of a woman aged 78 in Shrewsbury last March, is refusing to disclose the identity of his source to the police.

An appointment has been made for Mr Dalyell to be interviewed by Chief Superintendent David Cole, head of West Mercia CID, at the House of Commons on January 15.

But Mr Dalyell said last night that although he was convinced that his source would be able to help the police with their murder investigation, he could not supply the name. "Once I start to reveal sources, who else will talk to me again?" he asked.

The MP said in the Commons last Thursday that Miss Hilda Murrell, an international rose expert, had been killed after she had disturbed burglars who, he said, may have suspected that Miss Murrell was keeping documents relating to the sinking of the General Belgrano during the 1982 Falklands conflict.

Miss Murrell was known to be close to her nephew, Commander Rob Green, a former naval intelligence officer who had passed the signal ordering the sinking.

No such documents were being held at Miss Murrell's home and Mr Dalyell accepted that there was no premeditated attack by the burglars, but he told the House: "Being a lady of courage and spunk, often found in that generation of women, Miss Murrell fought them. They, too, had to fight, injured her, and panicked. The cover-up had to begin because the searchers were members of British Intelligence. I am informed."

Thatcher stays firm over Falklands

By Anthony Bevins, Political Correspondent

The Prime Minister has repudiated an all-party Commons select committee's doubts about Britain's legal claim to the Falkland Islands.

In a special Christmas broadcast to the islands, Mrs Margaret Thatcher said: "I want to have a word about many of the visitors that I know you get coming to Falklands. Some of them come with all sorts of ideas, some of them start pontificating about the future."

But she then stated: "The Falkland Islands are British territory. The people have been there for many generations, often before families that went to the Argentine."

"People who come and see you come from a democracy. Democracy is about the right of self-determination."

And when people now tell me: 'Ah, well, there is democracy in the Argentine', I say: 'Yes, and the people in government of the Argentine should know now they have democracy; they have self-determination, and they should know that they must extend that same right to the people of the Falklands.'

"That is why I constantly say to everyone who comes to see me: it is the wishes of the Falkland Islanders that are paramount, and so it will continue to be."

A report from the Commons select committee on foreign affairs, published earlier this month, failed to reach a "categorical conclusion on the legal validity of the historical claims of either country".

It also said: "Some kind of accommodation with Argentina is not only inevitable, in view of the cost of the present policy to the UK, but also desirable if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long-term economic prosperity and political stability."

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow and the most steadfast critic of government policy towards the Falklands, said last night that he had written to Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, about the implications of the broadcast.

He said that the Prime Minister was playing into the hands of those elements of the Argentine military who wanted to take revenge against Britain.

Argentine democracy 'has not strengthened Falkland claim'

Thatcher digs in over 'paramount' islanders' wishes

By David McKie

The fact that democracy has been re-established in Argentina has not strengthened its claim to the Falkland Islands, the Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, says in a Christmas message to the islanders.

In a broadcast on the Calling the Falklands programme on Christmas Day, Mrs Thatcher said democracy was about the right of self-determination. People who were democrats could not expect and demand the right of self-determination for themselves and then deny it to the people of the Falklands.

"When people now tell me, 'Ah well, there is democracy in the Argentine,' I say 'Yes, and the people in the Government of the Argentine should know that now they have democracy, they have self-determination, and they should know that they must extend that same right to the people of the Falklands,'" the Prime Minister said.

"That is how I see your future—still as British territory, still as having the right to self-determination to decide your own future. That is why I constantly say to everyone who comes to see me: 'It is the wishes of the Falkland islanders that are paramount and so it will continue to be.'"

Mrs Thatcher's message did not please some British politicians. Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, wrote to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, declaring that the message was "provocative in timing, tone and contents." Mrs Thatcher was playing into the hands of those elements of the Argentine military who wanted revenge against Britain and who wanted to destabilise the civilian regime.

"The contrast is stark in her dealings with Felipe Gonzalez, the Spanish Prime Minister, over Gibraltar and with Deng Xiaoping of China over Hong Kong, and her treatment of President Alfonsín of Argentina," he said.

But the message will have gone down more sweetly in Port Stanley, not only for its content but for its chummy affectionate tone—almost that of a private Christmas greeting to kindly remembered relatives overseas.

Some of it revealed hitherto neglected aspects of Mrs Thatcher's own family life. The

Queen's message, she told the islanders, was always the centrepiece of her family's Christmas Day. "After lunch we gather round the television and we always stand when the national anthem is played and we listen to the message which she has to give."

Mrs Thatcher also recalled in emotional terms her own visit to the islands in January. "I was not expected, but news travels so quickly, and people came out to their doors to see me.

"Someone brought out the most beautiful pink rose in all its solitary beauty, and tears were rolling down our cheeks, because I at last was seeing the people and the soil and the sea



Tam Dalyell: ...described message as provocative

that had meant so much to me, and we had a meeting not only of minds but of hearts."

The Prime Minister had a special word for those who maintained the air bridge with Ascension Island, the troops on South Georgia to whom she had sent a special air letter, and the men of the British Antarctic Survey.

③ The Home Office minister, Mr Giles Shaw, has been asked by Mr Dalyell, to clarify the extent of Special Branch involvement in the investigation into the murder of Miss Hilda Murrell.

In Parliament last week, Mr Dalyell said he had information that Miss Murrell, of Shrewsbury, had been killed by intelligence officers who were searching her home for sensitive papers concerning the sinking of the Argentine warship General Belgrano.

FALKLANDS AIRPORT 'WILL MISS DEADLINE'

By NICHOLAS COMFORT Political Staff

THE Prime Minister has given the firmest official indication to date that the new £359 million airport being built for the Falklands will not be ready by the target date of this coming April.

In a BBC Radio interview broadcast to the islands on Christmas Day, Mrs Thatcher said that she hoped the first runway at the Mount Pleasant airport would be open "by about the middle of the year."

Ministers have been insisting that the target would be kept to ever since Sir Gordon Downey, Comptroller and Auditor-General, reported to the Commons last month that he did not see how the project could be completed on time.

Sir Gordon said that the scale and complexity of the task suggested that it was hard to imagine either the main runway or the airport as a whole being ready by the deadlines that had been set.

Every week's delay in getting the airport operational will cost the taxpayer £500,000 in troop transit and accommodation costs.

Costly refuelling

The moment it is finished, wide-bodied jets will be able to replace many of the present Hercules flights which require costly aerial refuelling.

And the scope for reinforcing the Falklands garrison at short notice will enable an immediate cut in service manpower on the islands—a step which could thaw relations with Argentina.

Even if Mrs Thatcher's hopes are strictly borne out and the airport's first runway is ready at the end of June, the delay will have cost over £4 million.

And some MPs, taking their cue from the Comptroller-General's report and the fact that by then it will be midwinter in the Falklands, harbour strong reservations over whether it can be completed until September or October.

Marvellous job

The Prime Minister in her Christmas broadcast cited the Mount Pleasant project as a sign of Britain's commitment to the islanders, noting that when she visited the Falklands early last year she was told they would believe it when they saw it.

Speaking of one particularly sceptical councillor, she said: "I hope now that he is seeing something happen, and that aircraft will be able to come so much more easily than we have been able to coming through Ascension."

Mrs Thatcher went on to pay tribute to the "marvellous job" the RAF men operating the air bridge from Ascension had performed since the Argentine surrender in June, 1982.

She also told the islanders that she had sent a special personal air letter to the tiny British garrison on the remote sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia, adding: "I hope someone has taken it to them."

In her broadcast the Prime Minister commiserated with the islanders, on the fire which destroyed the hospital at Port Stanley in April with the loss of eight lives.

Mrs Thatcher said she had heard of the fire from the Chief of Army Staff, who had caught her up with the news while she was travelling to Windsor Castle to greet the Emir of Bahrain on a State visit.

"We hope to be able to start early next year rebuilding the hospital," she said. "I hope a better hospital and a safer hospital, but your staff have always been marvellous and served you so loyally, so efficiently, so well."

Mrs Thatcher had nothing to say about the abortive negotiations with Argentina in July which broke down over the question of sovereignty.

But she did round off the broadcast by saying that the fact that Argentina was now a democracy did not lessen the Falklanders' right to self-determination.

Assurance to Falklanders

By Our Political Correspondent

A firm restatement of the rights of the Falkland islanders to block any deal which involves handing over the islands to Argentina is being planned by Mrs Thatcher.

In a Christmas day broadcast to the Islanders the Prime Minister will underline that their wishes are "paramount," and that they have a right to decide their own future.

The tone of Mrs Thatcher is certain to annoy Argentina, and will also dismay the Foreign Office.

Still paramount

"The people in government in Argentina should know that they must extend that same right to the people of the Falklands," she declared.

"That is how I see your future: still as British territory, still having the right to decide your own future."

"It is the wishes of the Falkland islanders that are paramount — and so it will continue to be."

Mrs Thatcher made this promise with a sideswipe at MPs who have visited the Falklands and called for the islands to be handed over to Argentina. She added the hope that her clear disagreement with such a view would set the islanders' minds at rest.

Thatcher attacked

Mrs Thatcher's Christmas message to the Falklands was attacked as "a stark contrast" to her attitude to Hongkong and Gibraltar by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, in a letter yesterday to Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary.

Argentina in last-minute struggle for IMF credit

BY PETER MONTAGNON, EUROMARKETS CORRESPONDENT

ARGENTINA WAS yesterday embroiled in a last-minute struggle to secure the critical mass of subscriptions to its \$4.2bn (£3.6bn) loan from creditor banks needed to win release before the end of the year of a \$1.4bn credit from the International Monetary Fund.

Less than 48 hours before the IMF executive board was due to vote on Argentina's economic stabilisation programme, subscriptions to the loan were still running slightly short of the 90 per cent target set by Mr Jacques de Larosiere, the IMF managing director.

But with money continuing to flow in over the Christmas holiday period, bankers said they believed the shortfall could be made up in time for the IMF board meeting in Washington tomorrow.

In Buenos Aires, Sr Leopoldo Portnoy, deputy president of Argentina's central bank, said yesterday that the credit was already at least 85 per cent subscribed.

Argentina's creditor banks had been asked to reply to the country's loan request by Christmas, in plenty of time for the IMF board meeting which is to vote on an economic recovery programme designed to halve inflation to some 300 per cent by next autumn.

Mr de Larosiere has made it clear to the banks that the programme will not be viable with-

out their financial support. Initial replies to the loan request were, however, slower than expected. Apart from the reluctance of some banks to put up fresh money for Argentina, others have faced technical problems in making their commitments.

The problems centre around the need to win IMF board approval for the package in the space of less than a month and the difficult self assessment process. Banks have to calculate their own subscriptions to the loan at a rate of 16½ per cent of their existing exposure and this figure then has to be reconciled with Argentina's own assessment.

Senior bankers say that there has been no widespread aversion to Argentina's package in the market place. The country's to reduce substantially its interest arrears before the end of the year is a major incentive to banks worried about their 1984 profit figures, the bankers say.

On Monday Argentina announced that it would pay an extra \$100m in interest before the year's end with funds which Sr Portnoy said had been raised in the form of a short-term bridging loan from Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela.

But, like a \$500m bridging loan promised by the U.S., this money will be paid over only once the IMF board has voted on Argentina's programme. If

that programme is approved, Argentina would use the Latin American and U.S. money, together with \$250m from its own reserves, to pay \$850m in overdue interest.

This would leave only \$400m in interest arrears on public-sector foreign debt, but for many banks the payment of the arrears can count only towards 1984 profits if it is actually received by December 31.

If the year-end passes without IMF board approval for Argentina's loan, the momentum of subscriptions to the commercial bank credit could thus slow appreciably, bankers believe. Argentina would also stand to lose \$100m in IMF credit because of changes in borrowing ceilings being introduced by the Fund on January 1.

The committee of leading creditor banks chaired by Citibank yesterday would not confirm Sr Portnoy's 85 per cent figure of subscriptions for the new loan. This is because it does not want to publish a total that might influence smaller creditors who are on the cerge of making a decision, bankers said.

The new loan is part of a package that also includes some \$13.5bn in public and private-sector debt rescheduling, as well as arrangements to maintain Argentina's access to short-term trade and money market lines.

Falklands rules changes

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, yesterday handed the Commons foreign affairs committee a detailed list of changes in the rules of engagement during the Falklands conflict — one of the issues at the heart of the Belgrano controversy and the Official Secrets Act charges against Mr Clive Ponting, a senior Ministry of Defence civil servant.

He did so after persistent pressure from committee members who discovered from internal ministry documents in August that the Government was attempting to mislead them about the number of changes in the rules of engage-

ment and when they were made.

The documents showed how the ministry intended to give just the briefest of summaries with no mention of the change which gave the task force authority to sink the Belgrano. This approach was reflected in a cursory memo sent to the committee in July by the armed forces minister, Mr John Stanley.

Internal ministry documents also disclosed that the war cabinet delayed warning Argentina about the changes of May 2 1982, the day the cruiser was sunk. The documents were allegedly sent to the Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell, by Mr Ponting. Mr Dalyell then passed

them on to the foreign affairs committee.

Mr Stanley has told Mr George Foulkes, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman, that the submarine Conqueror, which attacked the Belgrano, reported to fleet headquarters at Northwood, outside London, on the afternoon of May 1 that it had sighted the cruiser.

This conflicts with evidence to the committee given by Lord Lewin, chief of defence staff at the time. Lord Lewin said that the message did not arrive until about midnight and that this was why ministers or their official advisers were not immediately informed. Mr Foulkes yesterday wrote to Mrs Thatcher about the inconsistency.

No surrender on Falklands

NEW YEAR hopes of easing tension with Argentina over the Falkland Islands are fading.

Mrs Thatcher is expected to take a tough "no surrender" line this week by repeating that the wishes of the 1,800 islanders are paramount in any settlement.

Some Tory MPs, however, believe the House of Commons should have the last say and not the Falklanders.

Daily Star 31st December 1984

FALKLANDERS FEAR SELL-OUT

FALKLAND ISLANDERS are angry about plans for Whitehall to take over direct control of South Georgia from its Port Stanley administrators.

They fear the Foreign Office is paving the way for a sell-out deal with Argentina.

Islanders say that under the proposed new constitution London could keep control of the South Georgia outpost, while handing over the Falklands in a separate agreement.

Protesting islanders have daubed "No double-cross" slogans in their capital.

"People here are very worried," said one councillor.

The Falkland sound of defiance

IT WAS 4 am when Rex Hunt told Patrick Watts that the Argentinians could be expected by dawn. Watts was sitting in a converted school-room in Port Stanley where he had once learned how to read and write. Now it was the two-studio Falkland Islands Broadcasting Station, which he had run for the past five years. Seven hours a day with BBC input, messages about lost dogs, and the Roman Catholic minister's Friday night newsletter.

Hunt had urged Watts to stay on the air for as long as possible. He decided to remain until the Argentinians walked in. "After listening to the sound of shells and small arms fire I became quite scared," he told me in London this week. "I did what I suppose any broadcaster would do. I opened up my mike and started to describe what I could hear."

The islanders responded by telephoning their own sightings — light aircraft landings, the Royal Marines' battle, and the shelling of houses on the outskirts of Stanley. Argentinian transmissions broke in with greetings to the oppressed Malvinas population. Watts acted as an intermediary, remaining in touch with Rex Hunt over an open line. "When I said 'Have you surrendered to the troops?' he replied 'I will never surrender to the bloody Argies'."

The invaders arrived at the station at about 8.30. "I had left the door unlocked. They duly marched in and extended their hands in greeting. They told me they wanted me to broadcast messages. I refused. They started arguing among themselves so I told them to go out in the passage because they were creating a disturbance while I was on the air."

"They started pointing guns around. I said 'That won't do you any good.' They put their guns down in the studio and went into the passage, still arguing. Eventually they came out in a more orderly manner. They said it was to the benefit of the population that they announced what was going to happen. I felt that was something people would want to know, but I told them they were unwanted and we were quite happy under British rule."

"They had tapes prepared, playing military music and messages to the population. I got a bit stropky. I was pretty tired. I had been on the go from 4.30 the previous afternoon. I told them it was my radio station and they couldn't do what they wanted. Eventually they told me I had better go home and get some sleep."

Watts (40) later returned to remain with the station throughout the occupation. He wanted to retain a familiar British voice — "to show that all was not lost" — although his action led to one or two mutterings about collaboration. More important, perhaps, he repeatedly challenged the right of his Argentinian opposite number to broadcast Buenos Aires news without a BBC equivalent.

"We compromised by not reading war news from either side. This went on for about a month. We tried to

maintain a normal service with English and Spanish output. They were very concerned about Dad's Army. They thought it might contain war messages. They would listen to it for 30 minutes and not smile once."

The Argentinian controller grew increasingly nervous as the Task Force approached, said Watts. A week before South Georgia was recaptured, he announced that he had some urgent bills to pay and was not seen again.

The service was sealed down shortly before the British invasion, then virtually put out of action when shells damaged the station's antennae. The transmitter also needed repairs: the Argentinians had kept it running as a makeshift heater.

Another occupation began. Watts hammered out a deal that would allow personnel from the British Forces Broadcasting Service to scale up the station's output to 22 hours a day. He insisted that he should retain control and that the stations identity as the property of the Falklands government should not be impaired. The arrangement has worked well, he believes.

He also secured a pledge that the station would keep the BFBS's new equipment should they ever withdraw. This deal will pay off handsomely: the BFBS is to move shortly to a new station near the airport at Mount Pleasant.

But Watts was not a happy man when I met him shortly before his return to the Falklands. He had taken extended leave in an effort to find assisted places for his two teenage daughters at a Scottish boarding school. The Scottish authorities denied that Falklands citizens qualify, despite EEC documents to the contrary.

"I am very unhappy about education in the Falklands. I was dismayed to find that of the £31 million development grant, none has been allo-

cated to education. Very few councillors seem to care. Even if my daughters were educated in the Falklands there are no opportunities for them. They could go into nursing, but with no proper training they would be people who go round cleaning up the mess."

Watts, who is divorced, began looking for a job in Britain. Last week he learned that the BBC had turned down his application for a sports producer's job. After upholding the independence and best traditions of broadcasting, I suggested, this seemed a bit mean.

"I was a bit surprised," he admitted. "I do all the football and horse-racing commentaries. I am known as the Peter O'Sullivan of the Falklands because I seem to know more about horses and handicapping than anyone else. But I was grateful that they gave me an interview. I have to accept that I have to take my turn in the queue."

On Christmas Day, as usual, he will be covering the Falklands' festive meet. His daughters won't be there, however. They are now attending a high school in Britain in the care of his sister. "I don't know what will happen," he said.

Picture by Martin Argles

Horn of plenty

REDPATH: grub's up

BOILING in Belize, freezing in the Falklands, heaving upon the boundless main, Our Boys on Tuesday will whack into 25 tons of Christmas pudding, 270,000 mince pies and 300 tons of sausages. The silent toast curling on their lips will be the Naafi, that cornucopia of civilian rectitude which last year regurgitated £14 million profits to the services from a turnover of £334 million.

Such plenitude would excite Milo Minderbinder, the fixer in Catch 22 who juggled Sardinian eggs with the Egyptian cotton crop. Not so, says Ken Redpath, the Naafi's genial controller of supplies. To confound corruption, buying and selling are segregated, sometimes at the expense of commercial efficiency.

But the Naafi must have the power to transform local economies, I suggested. He replied that his first priority is to make the Naafi as profitable as possible while providing service families with the grub to which they are accustomed. This means mostly British fare. Germany's 400 Naafi outlets import 60 per cent of supplies, whereas Cyprus insists on local purchasing quotas.

I asked him about the bitter experience of Everards, the British brewer which set up a plant in the Falklands to market Penguin ale, only to be flooded out by the Naafi's lake of Courage.

"It was not a good idea in the first place," he said. "Everards said they were going to set up a brewery and could they rely on our support? They meant it was going to be good for Everards. We said it depends on its commercial viability and whether the troops would

drink it. We found it didn't sell and went bad quite quickly. It didn't compete with the duty-free beer being shipped from this country."

"We came to an agreement that if there was a demand we would stock it. Our job is not to favour any particular merchant. All the major brewers have to compete with each other in our clubs. We have about 20,000 items in our inventory."

He was given four days in which to victual the Task Force — normally a six-week job. "These things always seem to happen at weekends. The quantities were a bit mind-boggling. I remember saying at the end of a briefing 'You nip out and buy 80 tons of sausages'. And two million Mars Bars, enough to sink a battleship."

His first thought had been to replenish Ascension island with South African goods. He rang the Ministry of Defence for advice. "They said don't do it, it's politically sensitive." He also sent a buyer to the Chilean Embassy to enquire about buying their fruit and veg. "We got the brush-off. They had to maintain the status quo."

The MoD provides a political steer on requests, from former colonies still seething by the Naafi. Until last year they operated a £20 million annual trade in Malaysia, more than 20 years after independence. They still buy and warehouse goods for Kenya and Uganda. Redpath says the MoD curbed trade during Idi Amin's rule, although recent orders include 7,000 bicycles and a bakery.

The Naafi's empire also embraces most British embassies. "The term diplomatic bag gets stretched a bit occasionally," he said.

The Falklands fall victim to the cockney trouper



Trouper as trooper?
Jim Davidson makes his one and only parachute jump, over Aldershot — courtesy of the Army.

A rehearsal room in Richmond, Surrey.

Comedian Jim Davidson wants to throw a big brown dog through a window. Nothing personal, you understand, just a case of disposing of stolen goods. He discusses the scene from his new series of *Up the Elephant and Round the Castle* — showing on ITV in January — with the director, and they compromise. The dog — a life-size prop — will instead be pitched out of camera range and caught by hands unseen.

The cast break for lunch. Davidson, dressed in loose-fitting casual green jacket, Army-style camouflage trousers, training shoes and thick white socks, moves quickly toward the restaurant, a stream of jokes and laughter bobbing in his wake.

It will surprise many of his fans, however, that irreverent, 31-year-old Davidson does have a serious side, which has taken him to the Falklands three times since June last year to entertain servicemen and islanders — journeys

totalling nearly 50,000 miles. Davidson made his most recent trip in September, accompanied by his band, dancers, Irish singer Tina Duskay and a Thames TV crew with five tons of equipment. The result is a semi-documentary about the Falklands and his concerts there, *The Jim Davidson Falklands Special*, showing on ITV on Christmas Eve.

He performed 13 concerts in 10 days, in spartan surroundings ranging from portable cabins — 65 attending — to chilly aircraft hangars where 1000 crammed in.

Davidson was captivated by the haunting beauty of the windswept Falklands. He draws deeply on a cigarette, recalling his first trip. It was a moving experience, especially visiting the spots where British servicemen sacrificed their lives.

'I'd been interested in military history for some years, and when the war in the South Atlantic finished, I felt I wanted to entertain our troops down there,' explains Davidson. 'They're doing a difficult job in not very hospitable surroundings, but

morale is incredibly high. Anger flares briefly as he dismisses critics of the Fortress Falklands policy. 'I'm very patriotic and have made many friends down there. The islanders are a great bunch, more British in some ways than we are. We had incredible co-operation from the Navy, Army and Air Force, from top brass to squaddies. Nothing was too much trouble, which was just as well as there are only nine miles of roads around Port Stanley and we had to travel by helicopter, lorry and jeep.'

Cassettes of his TV show will be flown to the Falklands in time for Christmas, and the programme will include messages from servicemen to their sweethearts, wives and other relatives in Britain.

Over Christmas, Davidson is working the clubs circuit in the south of England. But now and again his thoughts will return to the Falklands, 8000 miles away, and the massive British military presence protecting the 1800 islanders.

'One of the locals tramped for five hours just to see the show,' muses Jim Davidson.

Monday 24th December

TV TIMES
22.12.84 - 4.1.85

cont./ TV Times 22.12.84 - 4.1.85

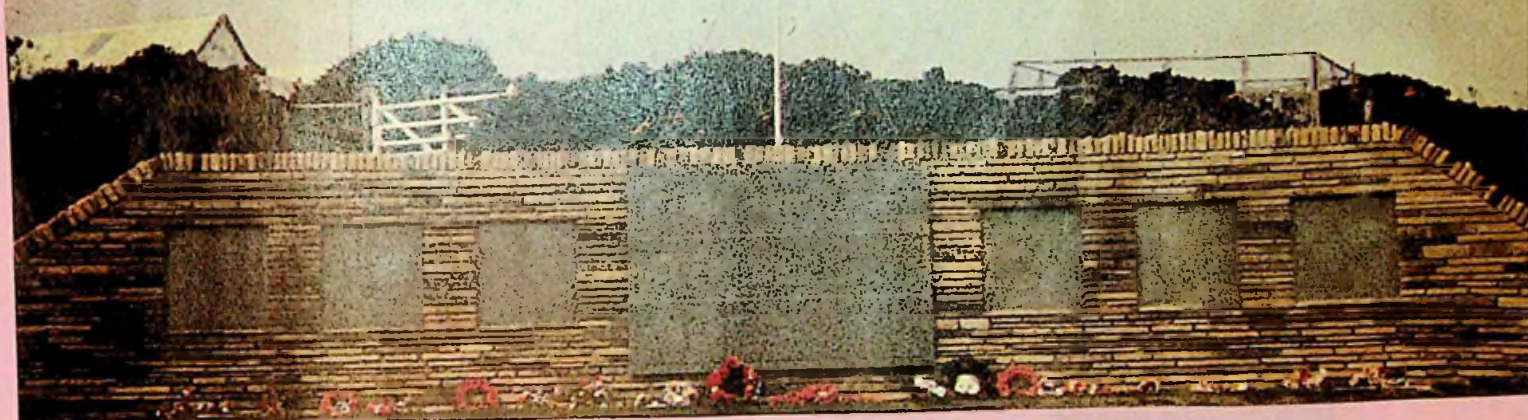
Monday 24th December



Comedian Jim Davidson on stage in the bleak but welcoming Falklands (left). He also visited many of the newly historic sites, including the 2 Para Memorial at Goose Green (right).



Davidson (left) on the long flight from Ascension Island to the Falklands. He has made three such trips in 18 months.



8.0 Jim Davidson's Falklands Special

JIM DAVIDSON
Jim's Band

A unique film narrated by John Mills, which follows the entertainer 8000 miles to the South Atlantic, which, two-and-a-half years ago, was a scene of conflict. From Ascension Island to Port Stanley, Mount Kent and Goose Green, Jim entertains the men and women of the armed forces, many of whom will not be home for Christmas. Guest singer is Tricia Dusky and the dancers are Vanessa Biddulph, Alison Richards, Sam Spencer-Lane and Sara Throssell.

See page 10

EDITOR TREVOR WAITE
SOUND TREFOR HUNTER
CAMERA TED ADCOCK
PRODUCER ROBERT LOUIS
DIRECTOR STUART HALL
Thames Television Production

Friday 28th December



The tiny volcanic island of Ascension is where Cindy Buxton (left) and Annie Price filmed 'Survival Special'. 7.0.

7.0 Survival Special WIDEAWAKE ISLAND

Until the Falklands crisis of 1982, few people had heard of Ascension, a tiny volcanic island halfway between South America and Africa and, more importantly, halfway between Britain and the Falkland Islands. Cindy Buxton and Annie Price spent over a year filming the large colonies of sea birds, turtles that swim 1400 miles from Brazil to nest and the shrimps that are found nowhere else in the world but in a handful of table-top-sized rock pools. Narrator is Anthony Valentine.

Oracle sub-titles page 170

EDITOR LESLIE PARRY
WRITER/PRODUCER
MIKE LINLEY
Anglia Television Production

'Secret agents in Belgrano murder plot'

BRITISH secret agents killed an elderly spinster while searching for documents on the sinking of the General Belgrano, Labour MP Tan Dalyell claimed yesterday.

Home office Minister Giles Shaw last night promised a full investigation and a comprehensive reply to the startling allegations.

But the immediate reaction of detectives and the coroner who investigated the murder last March of internationally-known rose grower Miss Hilda Murrell was that the MP's theory was 'total fantasy' and 'utter rubbish'.

Mr Dalyell, who has waged a one-man crusade over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser during the Falklands war, made his revelations in an early hours speech in the Commons.

He said that 78-year-old Miss Murrell was the aunt of retired Naval Commander Robert Green. He once held a key position in Naval Intelligence and passed on the signal ordering the destruction of the Belgrano.

After leaving the service because he thought the Falklands war was 'unnecessary', Commander Green was, according to Mr Dalyell, suspected by the security services of depositing sensitive documents at the home of Miss Murrell, in Sutton Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

The MP suggested that Intelligence officers broke into the house to search it but were disturbed by Miss Murrell, who put up a fight. She was then driven six miles in her own white Renault to woodland, where she was beaten, stabbed numerous times and left to die from hypothermia and loss of blood.

Mr Dalyell told the Commons: 'I am informed that the intruders were not after money, not after nuclear information but were checking to see if there were any Belgrano related documents of Commander Green in the home of his aunt.'

The 'nuclear information' was a

By GORDON GREIG and TIM MILES

reference to another theory propounded that Miss Murrell was killed because she was preparing a paper to be presented at the inquiry into the Sizewell B electricity generating plant.

Last night, Mr Dalyell said: 'I was not provided with this information by Mr Green. I've kept clear of him. After my statement was put to him, he said: 'Mr Dalyell is absolutely on the centre of the target.'

Theory

The police, meanwhile, remain convinced that Miss Murrell was the victim of a psychopathic burglar hunting for cash.

At an inquest earlier this month, Shropshire coroner Colonel David Crawford-Clarke recorded a verdict of unlawful killing. He said yesterday that he has no intention of reopening the case and dismissed Mr Dalyell's theory.

He said: 'No sane person would



Hilda Murrell:
Left to die

believe anything like that. I'm quite sure it's utter rubbish anyhow.'

An official West Mercia police spokesman said of the Belgrano theory: 'We were made aware of allegations of this kind some time ago. They have been fully investigated and we have found no evidence to support this theory.'

Mr Dalyell's statement was given in advance to Mr Paddy Ashdown, Liberal MP for Yeovil, who read it over the telephone to Mr Green.

'Mr Green confirms and corroborates the facts,' said Mr Ashdown, stressing that he was not in the position to come to the same conclusion.

Last night Mr Green, 40, said: 'I sincerely hope the people who murdered my aunt were not looking for papers relating to the Falklands war. She certainly had nothing and it means that I would have been responsible for her death. I think it is more likely they were looking for papers relating to her anti-nuclear work.'

Home Office to investigate Dalyell's murder claim over Belgrano documents

By Michael Horsnell

Allegations that an elderly woman was murdered by British intelligence officers whom she caught searching her home for sensitive documents on the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano, are to be examined by the Home Office.

The startling claim was made early yesterday in the Commons by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, who has unremittingly questioned the Government about the sinking.

The body of the woman, Miss Hilda Murrell, aged 78, an international rose expert, was found three days after she died in March, about six miles from her home in Shrewsbury.

There were signs of a break-in and struggle at the house where, Mr Dalyell said, intelligence officers may have believed Miss Murrell kept documents about the Belgrano affair deposited with her by her nephew Commander Rob Green, who had held a key position in naval intelligence during the Falklands War.

Commander Green, who left the Navy after 20 years' service in 1982 for career reasons, said last night that although he found Mr Dalyell's ideas "incredible and appalling", they could be true. But he had not spoken to Mr Dalyell and was keeping an open mind.

West Mercia police said

yesterday that there was no evidence to support the allegations and the Shrewsbury coroner, Colonel David Crawford-Clarke, who recorded a verdict of unlawful killing, described them as "utter rubbish".

Mr Giles Shaw, Minister of State at the Home Office, said yesterday that Mr Dalyell's claims, made as MPs sat all night debating the Consolidated Fund Bill, a technical measure which allows them to raise almost any topic, would be given full consideration.

Mr Dalyell told *The Times* that although he was satisfied with this undertaking, he ultimately wanted a select committee of privy councillors to consider the operation of the security services.

Mr Dalyell, who refused to disclose his source, said last night: "Before the police or the coroner issued their denials they should have read my speech in Hansard."

He added: "I do not wish to advance any theory why Miss Murrell's body was found six miles from her home. Nor does it make any difference that Commander Green did not lodge any documents with her; it was believed that she had when her home was broken into. The circumstances of Miss Murrell's death have not been explained."

Mr Dalyell said he was given to understand that there was no premeditated intention to kill

Miss Murrell but she had returned home to find intruders.

In the Commons he said: "Being a lady of courage and spunk often found in that generation, Miss Murrell fought them. They too had to fight, injured her and panicked. Things went disastrously wrong. She was then killed or left to die from hypothermia, and the cover-up had to begin because the others were members of British intelligence. I am in-
for

Dalyell went on to dismiss earlier newspaper suggestions that Miss Murrell, an anti-nuclear campaigner who was preparing a paper for the inquiry into the Sizewell B project, had been murdered for her views.

At the inquest earlier this month Chief Supt David Cole, head of West Mercia CID, which has been conducting a murder inquiry for nine months, said he believed Miss Murrell was attacked by a burglar looking for cash.

A police statement on Mr Dalyell's claims said yesterday: "Allegations of this nature have been fully investigated by the force, and these particular lines of inquiry are not being pursued further at the moment. No evidence has come to light which has substantiated these allegations."

Parliament, page 4

Intelligence men killed woman, 78, says Dalyell

By CHARLES LAURENCE

THE Government is to look into a claim that a 78-year-old woman who died after a burglary at her home near Shrewsbury was killed by British intelligence officers searching for documents linked to the sinking of the Argentine cruiser Belgrano.

The claim was made in the House of Commons at 4 a.m. yesterday by Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, who has made persistent attacks on the Government over the sinking of the Belgrano.

Mr Giles Shaw, junior Home Office minister, said the allegation would be "given full consideration and a proper, and I hope comprehensive, reply."

Miss Hilda Murrell, a rose grower, was found dead last March in a wood six miles from her home at Haughmond Hill, north of Shrewsbury. The house, where she lived alone, had been broken into and there were signs of a struggle.

At an inquest last month, which found that she had been "unlawfully killed," the coroner was told that she had been driven the six miles to the wood in her own car, then stabbed and left to die of cold.

'No evidence'

West Mercia police are continuing inquiries. A spokesman said yesterday that allegations similar to those made by Mr Dalyell had already been investigated but no evidence had been found to support them.

Mr Dalyell told MPs during an all-night sitting that Miss Murrell was the aunt of Cdr Robert Green, who had been a naval intelligence officer at fleet headquarters in Northolt and



Miss Hilda Murrell:

had passed the signal ordering the sinking of the Belgrano during the Falklands conflict. Cdr Green thought the war "unnecessary" and had since left the Navy.

"It was thought that some of Rob Green's supposed records might be in the home of his aunt to whom he was close. I am also given to understand that—and I quite accept it—there was no premeditated intention of doing away with Miss Murrell, only a search of her house while she was out," said Mr Dalyell.

'Lady of courage'

He went on: "Alas, she returned unexpectedly to change and the intruders either arrived while she was dressing or were disturbed by her."

"Being a lady of courage and spunk, often found in that generation of women, Miss Murrell fought them. They too had to fight, injured her and panicked."

"The cover-up had to begin because the searchers were members of British Intelligence, I am informed."

Miss Murrell was a campaigner against nuclear weapons and had been preparing a paper for the public inquiry into the Sizewell B power station proposals when she died. Early allegations were linked to this campaign.

Mr Dalyell, however, dismissed these claims and

Shaw confirmed that "no evidence whatsoever has been found to link those activities with her death."

Mr Dalyell said the police theory that Miss Murrell was the victim of a common burglar failed to tally with the "obviously sophisticated break-in" in which the telephone lines had been cut to halt outgoing calls while allowing in-coming calls.

Police denied that the wires had been cut in a sophisticated way.

Mr Dalyell called for a Select Committee of Privy Counsellors to monitor the activities of the intelligence services.

He said: "I am certain there are persons in Westminster and Whitehall who know a great deal more about the violent death of Miss Hilda Murrell than they are prepared to divulge."

'It is odd'

Mr Shaw commented: "It is at least odd that if there was a British security element in the investigation, or indeed occasioning the crime for which the investigation had been set up, that somehow that should be continuing in this way without those involved being able to make sure that the police and the security forces were apparently sharing common knowledge."

West Mercia police are no longer pursuing "political" lines of inquiry. Their spokesman said the repeated allegations were unhelpful as they were deflecting public interest from the "real thrust" of the inquiry, which was the search for a burglar who turned killer.

At his home in Leigh, near Sherborne, Dorset, last night, Cdr Green, said: "I was in the Navy until the end of 1982, and I was the fleet intelligence officer at Northwood, the command headquarters there."

"During the Falklands war, I was part of the command team, but I sincerely hope the people who murdered my aunt were not looking for papers relating to the Falklands."

"She certainly had nothing, but it means that I might have been responsible for her death. I think it was more likely for intruders were looking for papers relating to the anti-nuclear work."

'MANIC' CLAIM

Tory riposte

Mr Edward Leigh, Conservative MP for Gainsborough and Horncastle, said during Commons Business Questions that parliamentary time should not be "wasted" with further discussion of Mr Dalyell's claims.

He attacked the "manic and ludicrous suggestion by Tam Dalyell that members of the security services are roaming around the country bumping off ladies to fish documents relating to the Belgrano."

Mr John Biffen, Leader of the House, told him: "I can promise no Government time will be available for such a debate."

FALKLAND'S DEAD HONOURED

By Our Political Staff

A South Atlantic Campaign Memorial, bearing the names of the 258 men who lost their lives in the Falklands conflict, is to be erected in the Crypt of St Paul's Cathedral, Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, announced last night.

The Queen will unveil the memorial at a commemorative service next summer to which the next of kin of those who died will be invited. The memorial is to be sited "in a suitable place close to other military memorials."

Killing linked to Bergano, Dalyell claims

The Home Office is investigating allegations by the La-

hour MP Mr Tam Dalyell, that a 78-year-old Shrewsbury woman died after a violent encounter with British intelligence officers she discovered searching her home for sensitive documents concerning the Belgrano affair.

The claims, made in the House of Commons yesterday by the MP for Llanthony, were denied by the police whose own investigation into the mysterious death of Miss Hilda Murrell earlier this year is now in its ninth month.

But they also produced a call from Mr. Paddy Asidown, Liberal MP for Yeovil, for an independent inquiry into the matter. Miss Murrell's nephew, Mr. Rob Green, who held a key position in naval intelligence during the Falklands conflict,

Mr Green said last night that he did not accept that the Belgrano controversy had caused

his aunt's death. She opposed nuclear power and was no doubt listed as a potential subversive because of her criticism of the Government's attitude towards nuclear waste, he said.

The body of Miss Muirhead, one of the country's most celebrated rose growers, was found on March 24 in a house about

On March 29, a Shropshire Constable, who lives six miles from her home, where there had been signs of a break-in. At an inquest earlier this month, a verdict of unlawful killing was recorded. Detective Superintendent David Cole, of West Mercia Police, said he had been led to the inescapable conclusion that Miss Burrell was attacked by a burglar looking for cash.

He told the coroner, Colonel David Crawford-Clarke, that

At the time of her death

Miss Murrell, who was an active anti-nuclear power campaigner, was working on a document to be presented to the Sizewell B inquiry. It was later read at the inquiry by her nephew. It was this activity which fuelled earlier speculation about the reasons for the break-in at her home.

But yesterday in the Commons Mr Dalyell claimed that the real reason was that it was thought that some of Mr Greyn's supposed records might be the Belgrano affair might be at the home of his aunt.

He told the House: "I am informed that the intruder was not after money, nor after nuclear information, but was checking to see if there were any Belgrano-related documents of Commander Greer in the home of his aunt."

gence, I am informed,

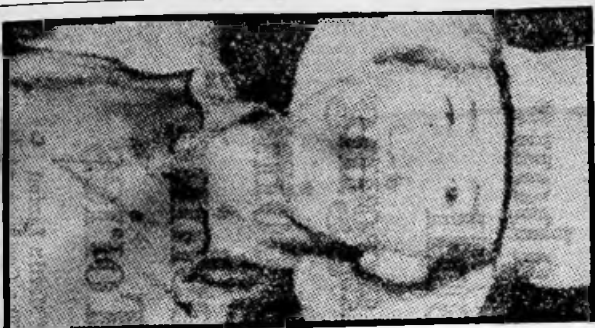
Mr Dwyer went on to say that there were inconsistencies in police accounts given to Miss Murrell's family after the discovery of her body, three days after the apparent attempted burglary.

He claimed that the police version of a burglar breaking in and being surprised by the return of Miss Murrell "didn't tally with what was obviously a sophisticated break-in in which the telephone had been cut, leaving it so calibrated that it could ring in but not out."

said that the information which led him to make the allegations in the Commons had come from a "confidential source." He wanted a select committee of MPs created to monitor the activity of the security services.

A West Mercia police spokesman said yesterday that a report of their investigation had been sent to the Home Office, whose junior minister, Mr Giles Shaw, has promised that Mr Dayrell's allegations will be given "full consideration and a proper and comprehensive reply."

Mr Green, who has now retired from the navy, has publicly stated his opposition to the sending of the task force to the South Atlantic. He has described the sinking of the Belgrano as a necessary act in an unnecessary war. During the conflict he was involved in sending signals to HMS Conqueror, the submarine which sank the Argentine warship.



Miss Hilda Murrell —
anti-nuclear campaigner

Financial Times

Falklands road 'still barely serviceable'

By Bridget Bloom, Defence
Correspondent

THE FIVE-MILE road between Port Stanley and the only airport in the Falklands has had nearly £7m spent on it, but is still barely serviceable, MPs were told yesterday.

The Commons Defence Committee, which is holding a continuing enquiry into the future defence of the Falklands, visited the island nearly two years ago and described the rebuilding of the airport road as a top priority.

Several MPs yesterday expressed disbelief when they were told by Ministry of Defence officials that, despite expenditure of £6.8m, the road was still potholed and in poor general condition. Mr Michael Mates described the situation as "unbelievable."

Officials told MPs the road had broken up within months of its reconstruction. Continuing work by Royal Engineers had made it possible to travel the five miles in about 15 minutes.

The Government is now spending a further £1m on more permanent repairs.

The Guardian

Television link with Falklands

THE BBC said yesterday that it will set up the first two-way television link by satellite to the Falklands on Christmas Day to allow islanders and troops to talk live to relatives in Britain, writes Dennis Barker.

The Ministry of Defence and the British Forces Broadcasting Service are collaborating in the scheme. Noel Edmonds will devote part of his Live, Live Christmas Breakfast Show to interviews which will be seen in Britain and the Falklands.

NO, we have not yet finished with cathedral services commemorating the Falklands War. There is now another one planned for St Paul's next June to coincide with the third anniversary of victory. Yes, Mrs Thatcher will be there.

Arrangements are quite well advanced to erect a plaque recording the names of the Falklands dead in the crypt of St Pauls. The approach initially came from the MoD, together with the idea that it should be unveiled on the third anniversary of the Argentine surrender.

The event, which was to have been announced next February, is being organised by Canon Graham Routledge, cathedral treasurer: "We act corporately as a chapter in such matters and people ask us to put up memorial tablets all the time," he says. "It shouldn't be considered any differently than if it were a deceased dean or other distinguished cleric."

The decision to go ahead with the plaque and service is said to have been firmly resisted by certain members of the chapter, though not necessarily the Dean, the Very Rev. Alan Webster.

Falkland Islands fishery

From Mr J. Provan, MEP

Sir,—Your report (December 12) on the plundering of the Falklands fishery underlines the urgent need to safeguard these valuable fish stocks especially the hake and squid stocks.

The European Community implications of the Falklands fisheries potential should be emphasised. It is a disgrace that these fish resources which should be the basis of much needed employment for the Falkland islanders and could be a life line to EEC fleets are being ruthlessly plundered by East European and Far Eastern fleets.

In the EEC context the Falklands fishery is of interest to the powerful Spanish freezer trawler fleet which landed some 16,000 tonnes of squid from Falklands waters in 1983 and is expected to have landed 2,500 tonnes in 1984. There are some 500 Spanish freezer trawlers, some over 2,000 grt, seeking continued fishing opportunities. At the same time when the British Government should be doing its utmost to protect the British fishing industry from the threat of an invasion of Spanish

vessels into EEC waters it is time for the EEC to take action. We need a Community initiative to secure Falklands waters for EEC fishermen.

The present free for all can only be stopped by declaring a fishing limit round the Falklands so that proper management of the joint stocks shared with Argentina can be undertaken. We would thus be achieving benefits for Britain, the Falkland Islands, the EEC and the Spanish.

Proper management of the fishery and the provision of the necessary bunkering, repair and other services could provide the basis for sound long term development of the local economy.

If this resource continues to be plundered not only will the Falklands lose much needed employment and revenue but the threat to our own fishermen in EEC waters will be increased.

James Provan

(Conservative spokesman on Agriculture and Fisheries in the European Parliament).

Walacetown,

Bridge of Earn, Perth.

Record flight

An RAF Nimrod reconnaissance aircraft has flown 16,000 miles to the Falklands and back in a record time of 38½ hours. The flight from Kinloss was broken by a stop at Ascension Island.

Argentina expects rescheduling soon

From Catherine Dodds, Paris

The date on which Argentina expects the signature of an IMF standby arrangement worth one million SDR and \$260m is December 28.

On January 15 and 16, Argentina is due to negotiate with the representatives of a number of western governments the rescheduling of debt principal and interest for credits extended, or guaranteed by those governments.

And, after the agreement of the 320 commercial banks, Argentina expects the formal agreement covering the rescheduling of debts and interest owed to these banks to be signed after mid-January.

Senor Grinspun's visit to Paris was to explain Argentina's economic and debt repayment prospects to French, Belgian, Spanish and Portuguese banks.

And while Senor Grinspun

was persuading commercial banks in Europe of Argentina's good intentions regarding debt repayment the president of Argentina's central bank was completing a similar mission with creditor commercial banks in the US, Canada and Japan.

During the negotiations which resulted in the Washington accord on December 2 Citybank chaired the 11-strong banking group representing the 320 commercial banks.

The Argentine economy minister Senor Bernardo Grinspun, returned to Buenos Aires from Paris last night apparently convinced that all the 320 commercial banks to whom Argentina is indebted will, within two days, agree to the rescheduling of that debt as negotiated, in Washington last week.

Split Peronists face destruction

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

A leadership struggle in its national congress has split Argentina's Peronist Party down the middle and raised the spectre of dissolution for the once-dominant movement created by General Juan Perón.

The "official" faction of the Peronist National Congress, the party's governing body, went ahead with the election of new party authorities on Sunday night, despite a walkout by more than half the delegates on Saturday.

The dissident delegates, who comprise most of the Peronist

congressmen and provincial leaders, denounced the congress as illegitimate and called for a new congress to be held on February 2 in the northwestern province of Tucuman.

Peronist leaders described the split as the most serious in the party's history, but said it was principally a power struggle and not an ideological division.

On one side is the "official" faction led by Senor Lorenzo Miguel, a controversial union leader, and Senor Herminio Iglesias, the populist Buenos Aires province *Caudillo* (leader), which controls the still powerful party apparatus. On

the other are most of the Peronist senators and deputies, as well as most of the provincial leaders, who want a renovation of the party leadership.

On Sunday, Senor Iglesias and Senor Miguel's faction had its way, re-electing ex-president Isabel Perón as the symbolic president of the party founded by her late husband. Señora Peron has virtually retired from politics.

Senor Miguel, was elected to the key post of first vice-president, while Senor Miguel was named second vice-president, and Senor Iglesias became the Peronist secretary-general.

FALKLANDS/MALVINAS**Argentina and Britain:
The stalemate continues**

Loud chants from angry workers calling for higher wages could be heard when visitors from the United States and other countries attended at a military factory in Cordoba, Argentina, on 10 October, to observe the ceremonial first flight of a new prototype jet training aircraft. The manufacturer, Fabrica Militar de Aviones (FMA), a branch of the Argentine airforce, has received an initial order for 64 of the aircraft from Escuela de Aviacion Militar, the airforce's military aviation school. The first batch of these aircraft is to be delivered in late 1987, and the first new aircraft squadron will, according to present plans, reach operational status by March 1988.

Development of the plane, which will fly at speeds of mach 0.83, has been dogged by industrial problems associated mainly with the chronic dissatisfaction of the workforce with terms and conditions, and by technical difficulties which have partly reflected the continuing stalemate following the Falkland war. Thus, due to the fact that Argentina has no diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom, FMA has had to seek a substitute for the prototype's British-manufactured Martin-Baker ejection seats. Not surprisingly, officials are now looking to the United States for replacements – and are considering, in particular, seats made by the US firms Stencel Aero Engineering Corporation and McDonnell Douglas.

On the day of the ceremony, most of the factories' 5,358 civilian employees had walked off the site, after half a day's work, to protest against the fact that their remuneration had not kept pace with other government workers' wages, and with the country's annual inflation rate of over 600%. Argentina's desire to recoup losses of military power suffered in the Falklands conflict continues to run up against practical difficulties associated with the country's chaotic economic environment. However, these problems have never been seen by the military as providing good reason for any modification of its ambition to restore the country's lost military virility.

On the same day, Fabrica Militar de Aviones showed off its new IA 58 Pucara multi-purpose attack aircraft, modified to accommodate a single pilot rather than two, in order to secure space for additional weapons loads. According to airforce officials attending the ceremony, it is the military's intention to modify all Pucarás in the Argentine airforce – numbering about 70 planes – with the single-seat configuration, to allow the aircraft to be equipped with a 30-mm cannon. With this modification, the Pucara will be capable of use for air-to-air combat, rather than solely in its previous rôle of undertaking air-to-ground missions.

The Pucara's avionics and navigation systems will also be upgraded to permit the aircraft to operate in all weather conditions – something it was unable to do during the Falkland Islands war.

Meanwhile the Malvinas issue came up at the United Nations assembly in New York, for its annual shake-down. Despite intensive lobbying, Argentina failed to gain a significant increase in support for its motion in the Assembly calling for renewed negotiations between Britain and Argentina over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands. Specifically, 89 delegates voted in favour of the resolution, which was two more than in 1983. As in that year, 9 countries voted against the resolution and 54 abstained – including all of Britain's European Community partners, whose solidarity Argentina had been lobbying hard to break.

The result of the vote was a significant setback for Argentina, since it is clear that the new democratic régime has failed to achieve any shift in world opinion in support of its claim.

Representatives from the Falkland Islands addressed the Fourth Committee of the Assembly on behalf of the islanders. Mr Tim Blake, one of the representatives, spoke about economic development of the islands, and Councillor John Cheek concentrated on the political issues – in particular, the matter of self-determination. He stressed, of course, that the islanders wished to maintain their links with Britain. For his part, the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, stressed that the United Kingdom would stand by its commitment to the islanders and would not negotiate sovereignty over their heads and against their wishes.

To complicate matters further, President Alfonsín of Argentina asked the European Parliament for financial assistance, in an address given on 24 October. In response, the British indicated that this would be quite impossible until an end to hostilities over the Falkland Islands was declared. The Argentine President did not mention the Malvinas in his speech, although he made it clear that peaceful international relations could be settled diplomatically – as had been the case in negotiations with Chile over sovereignty of the Beagle channel. He said that as Latin America needs technology and investment, and the European Community seeks raw materials, there are obviously the makings of a deal. He also said that, since the European Parliament had been created from a lasting compromise, why could this spirit of compromise not be extended beyond Europe? He added that if Argentina's new democracy was to 'work', international help would obviously be needed to rebuild the economy. President Alfonsín's brother is Argentina's Ambassador to Brussels.

Throughout his visit to Europe, including specifically his stopover in Rome, President Alfonsín stressed however that 'the issue of sovereignty... cannot be a matter for discussion'. He also frequently rejected the suggestion that the issue could be brought before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. For his part, the Argentine Under-Secretary for the Interior, Sr Raul Galvan, recently claimed that Argentina would regain control of the Falkland Islands from Britain 'before 1989', when the present government's term of office is due to end. He said that regaining the Falklands was becoming a top priority for the Alfonsín régime.

However nothing could be further from the minds of the Falkland Islanders themselves, who have welcomed Britain's construction of a memorial in honour of the 250

year, we may have to pay out \$11 billion by way of interest to our creditors.

Q: *Are you looking for the same margins from the banks, and expecting them to charge the same spreads on new debt as on previously rescheduled debt?*

A: The relevant discussions on this matter will naturally not be governed by the views expressed on only one side of the table. However, I consider that the 1½% spread reportedly applied to the Venezuelan and Mexican money would be reasonable. It would depend on the structure of the cash flow. I don't know whether, or by how much, old loans may sustain interest rate reductions.

Q: *On the question of currency switching, to transfer loan obligations into alternative currencies, are you in favour of such a device, or do you fear the latent currency risk?*

A: This is difficult. However, it may be a risk that borrowing countries may not be able to sidestep in the future.

Q: *What do you think the enlarged meeting of the IMF Development Committee next Spring can achieve (a reference to Mr Donald Regan's announcement at the International Monetary Fund meeting in Washington that a gathering was to be held next year between members of the Development Committee and the industrialised world, to thrash out trade and related matters of mutual interest)?*

A: Mr Regan says that the meeting will be to exchange views — for dialogue, not for negotiations. We certainly don't expect such a meeting to resolve thorny issues — such as the matter, for example, of whether switching loans into different currencies might be helpful in alleviating pressures on the debtor nations. However, by debating these and many other intractable issues at a high level, some progress might be made. There might be some meeting of minds.

Q: *Isn't the Development Committee meeting or forum scheduled far too far ahead to address the pressing issues facing the Third World?*

A: Unfortunately, political initiatives in Latin America, and indeed elsewhere in the Third World, tend to move faster than responses. But it's undoubtedly a step in the right direction, even though the meeting will only be discussing trade and related matters, not financial and monetary issues which are of course of paramount importance.

Q: *How much significance do you attach to lower dollar interest rates?*

A: Obviously the problem has a political dimension... But everyone — certainly the Europeans and the Latin Americans — is convinced that the main cause has been the (American) deficit. It is difficult to anticipate any substantial reduction in the level of interest. But the impact of a decline in interest rate levels would work through much earlier — producing much faster results — than liberalisation of trade. Yet both trade and interest rate responses are urgently needed in order to reduce pressure on the hard-pressed developing countries.

Q: *How far do sovereign debtors, in your opinion, compete with each other when negotiating with the banks?*

A: There is no formal system for consultation (between the debtor countries of Latin America). However we have all been good and close friends for many years, and we all know each other. In any case, most of the information concerning these matters can easily be read in the newspapers...

Q: *Why did you reject a World Bank Cofinancing Operation?*

A: We didn't. We have been discussing such a possibility for a long time. But we decided not to go into a cofinancing with the World Bank, because it could deviate the Bank from its normal lending... What has been happening is that the commercial banks have simply stagnated (in their lending). But they have not entirely closed the window. So we have to find additional ways of identifying further borrowing possibilities. In general, if the commercial banks do not come up with additional funds, all that would happen would be that the World Bank would provide the money, at lower cost — but the recipient countries would not obtain extra money, since the World Bank's normal lending would have been correspondingly reduced. But everyone is waiting for the commercial banks to return to the market...

Q: *To what extent have the institutions of the financial sector directly contributed to Brazil's hyperinflation?*

A: This, of course, is a most important question. For your information, there is a clear separation of functions between the Central Bank and Banco do Brazil. In the monetary budget, the operation of Banco do Brazil and the Central Bank appear together. Banco do Brazil does not carry the responsibility of controlling the money supply. The Central Bank has been a bank of 'second line', and has mainly been financing agriculture and trade.

It is not entirely the case that Brazil has 'two central banks', as I think you are implicitly suggesting. On the contrary, Banco do Brazil operates within certain lending limits. This is rather a difficult area to discuss within a short space of time, but Banco do Brazil has certainly had monetary functions.

Q: *Yes, and one has the impression that there have been two sources of monetary expansion... with both institutions actually 'creating' liquidity — or validating demand for liquidity, rather.*

A: This is only partially true. The main reason for inflation has been the country's generalised indexation system. Now that inflation is of the order of 200% per annum (currently running at 220%, and expected to reach 250% next year; *Ed.*), indexation simply complicates matters. The technique we are adopting is to try to establish a diminishing spiral effect — that is to say, curbing the expansion of the money supply so that it lags behind inflation. In our present economic circumstances, however, attempting to reduce the spending of public enterprises, to abolish subsidies for production and to curb wages, is definitely not the way ahead. ●

British troops who died in the war. A garrison of 4,000 British servicemen remains on the islands, and diplomatic discussions between Argentina and the United Kingdom have been at a standstill since the first official post-war discussions on the issue of sovereignty collapsed in London last July.

Contrary to the impression created by the pro-Argentine lobby, and by the Argentine Government itself as it strives constantly to undermine Britain's resolve, the likelihood of an accommodation between Britain and Argentina over the Falklands is remote in the extreme. One factor here is the bitterness felt by the islanders against the Argentines. Recently, one Kelper, who had ventured to suggest that the islands' future lay with Argentina, was ostracised as a traitor, and compelled to seek exile in Argentina itself. Meanwhile the Argentine Government has put it about that the 1,800 islanders are actually suffering economically, due to the fact that significant economic development cannot be undertaken before a resolution of the sovereignty issue is achieved. This argument is buttressed by the assertion that, so far, only £30 million has been allotted for industrial and agricultural projects, compared with the £3 billion absorbed by the British Ministry of Defence for local military expenses.

The Falkland Islanders have never had any illusions about the policies likely to be adopted by the civilian government in Buenos Aires. Sensibly, the Kelpers' leaders are suspicious of the Argentine's intentions, and only too well aware that

successive Argentine governments have been motivated by expediency over the Malvinas issue. In particular, the leaders in Port Stanley doubt the durability of the present régime. In any case, no Kelper would willingly swap Argentina's hyperinflation, adverse human rights environment and social restlessness for the peaceful way of life to which they are accustomed. In this connection, the atmosphere of frayed nerves which characterised relations between the Argentines and the British military during the months immediately following the end of the war, has given way to cordial relations. The garrison has been reduced from 8,000 at the time of the surrender of Port Stanley to 4,000, and the troops are no longer billeted at private houses but are quartered in the newly-constructed barracks complex.

At the same time, Major Peter de la Billière, the military commander, has been operating a 'hearts and minds' campaign to ensure, in his words, that 'military contact with residents is primarily beneficial to islanders'. This former Director of the crack Special Air Services (SAS) told correspondents in a recent interview that 'in all his other assignments, which include duty in Northern Ireland, I have never felt so assured of the local community as here in the Falklands'.

The new airport, scheduled for completion by next April, at an estimated cost of some \$300 million, will be capable of accepting jumbo jets, C-5A Galaxy military transport planes and other all-weather aircraft. The opening of the airport is universally regarded as symbolic of Britain's inten-



The Falkland Island Port and Storage System, constructed and installed by the British Ministry of Defence.

tion to retain the islands, and to proceed with economic development. However Mr Simon Armstrong, the general manager of the Falkland Islands Development Corporation, has said that 'we are not expecting mass investment in the future. The best we can hope for is to get some islanders back'.

During 1983, some 30 Kelpers who had fled during the war, returned to the islands. Additionally, 40 new British immigrants arrived, some of whom have established businesses there. However a local doctor has been more critical. He recently told American newsmen that 'the British are letting these islands slowly die again'. Certainly, there are critical shortages — for example, of skilled labour, including teachers. The hospital which was burned down over 6 months ago, has not yet been rebuilt.

Of the \$4.5 billion likely to have been spent on the military garrison in the Falkland Islands by 1987, only some \$65 million has been earmarked for improving conditions on the islands — of which \$21 million has been allocated for the repair of war damage, and \$44 billion for expenditure on development projects. According to Foreign Office officials, notorious in Britain for having always been lukewarm about the Falkland Islands' future and status, no economic programme of major proportions is likely to be announced until some kind of understanding has been reached with the Argentines.

Meanwhile the Kelpers remain divided about the Thatcher Government's unwillingness so far to implement recommendations contained in Lord Shackleton's post-war report, particularly the recommendation of 'compulsory radical land reform'. This proposal called for the breaking up of large holdings, and of the property of absentee landlords resident in the United Kingdom. The largest landowner in this category is the Falkland Islands Company, a privately-owned monopoly chartered in 1951. Besides owning roughly half of the land area, it also owns 50% of the sheep, warehouses and agricultural installations. It employs, moreover, 80% of the non-government employees on the islands, and controls the sale of the 2 million kg wool crop exported annually.

The second Shackleton Report, written by a former leading British socialist, also recommended the establishment of a 200-mile fishing limit around the islands. This would permit the Falkland Islanders to earn an estimated \$4.6 million per annum in revenues from fishing permits issued to Polish, Spanish, Soviet, Japanese and East German trawlers, which are estimated to catch some \$69 million worth of fish annually in Falklands waters.

Another curious anomaly is that the Falkland Islands do not provide food supplies for the military garrison. Although some 10,000 sheep are slaughtered every year on the islands, the farmers burn the carcasses, in order to prevent overgrazing of the islands' poor pasture. Despite this waste, the garrison consumes frozen New Zealand lamb shipped via London to Port Stanley — apparently because the local sheep are not slaughtered to European Community standards. And yet, as one critic has pointed out, an EEC-standard slaughterhouse could be purchased in Britain and established on the islands for an estimated \$138,000. The British Government has so far failed to implement this

recommendation.

The dispute between Britain and Argentina continues to engage the attention of foreigners, anxious to provide their own solutions. Somewhat provocatively, Yale University Press recently republished *The Struggle for the Falkland Islands*, by Julius Goebbels — long considered in Argentina to be the authoritative treatise on the subject. Dr Goebbels is claimed by apologists for the former Argentine junta to have approached the question of the islands' sovereignty with scholarly integrity, giving, according to one specialist, 'considerable attention to the relationship between international legal principles and the political interests of major European states during the discovery and colonisation of the New World'.

Although Dr Goebbels' treatise admitted that Britain's title was largely based on peaceful occupation, validating Britain's position, he nevertheless tried to illustrate that the territory had been seized illegally. He also alleged that seizure was supported by the United States under President Andrew Jackson.

Latter-day 'experts' have followed in the footsteps of Dr Goebbels, with their own spurious attempts to undermine Britain's position, the latest academic to attempt this having been Professor Michael Reisman, in *The Yale Law Journal*. In a recent issue, Professor Reisman advanced the following dubious argument:

'In 1982, self-determination was presented as a single, self-evident option in which the local inhabitants were entitled to a veto right. Self-determination is, and must be, a more complex international process, for it involves choosing that option which most nearly approximates all the valid interests involved. Many other states, groups and individuals must be taken into account if different options for self-determination are likely to have significant deprivatory effects on them. The wishes of the inhabitants should be granted as much deference as possible, but they are not accorded a veto over competing considerations. The interests of other peoples and groups must also be considered'.

This ludicrous proposition flies in the face of international law and the provisions of the United Nations Charter, as construed by the former colonial powers.

Under the United Nations Charter, the current political status of the Falkland Islands as a non-self governing territory, must be brought to an end. The accepted UN formula for doing so offers the governing power three choices: granting the territory independence; associating it with the mother country or another state; or incorporating the territories into the metropolitan political entity.

Bearing in mind the British Foreign Office's record, none of these options have yet been taken seriously by officials. However the Thatcher Government has received representations in London proposing that Britain's remaining dependencies should be grouped under a small Ministry other than the Foreign Office, with a view to territorial integration along French lines. Having gone to the lengths involved in the Falklands war, the British should have made up their minds to incorporate these remaining territories with the mainland, as overseas counties or departments. That is an option which has not yet received the appropriate attention it deserves in London, but this may change. Its at-

traction for Britain would be that, once an overseas territory is incorporated into the nation of the governing power, all 'accusations' of colonialism would cease to apply.

For its part, the *Yale Law Journal* proposed a much less attractive solution from Britain's point of view, namely 'an arrangement resembling the Aaland Island settlement. This settlement resolved the dispute between Finland and Sweden over potentially strategic islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia with a Swedish-speaking population. The Aalands remained Finnish, but they became an autonomous region with language and administrative guarantees for the Swedish population. Under these circumstances, Aalanders have the best of all possible worlds. Falklanders could, too. Argentina appears amenable'.

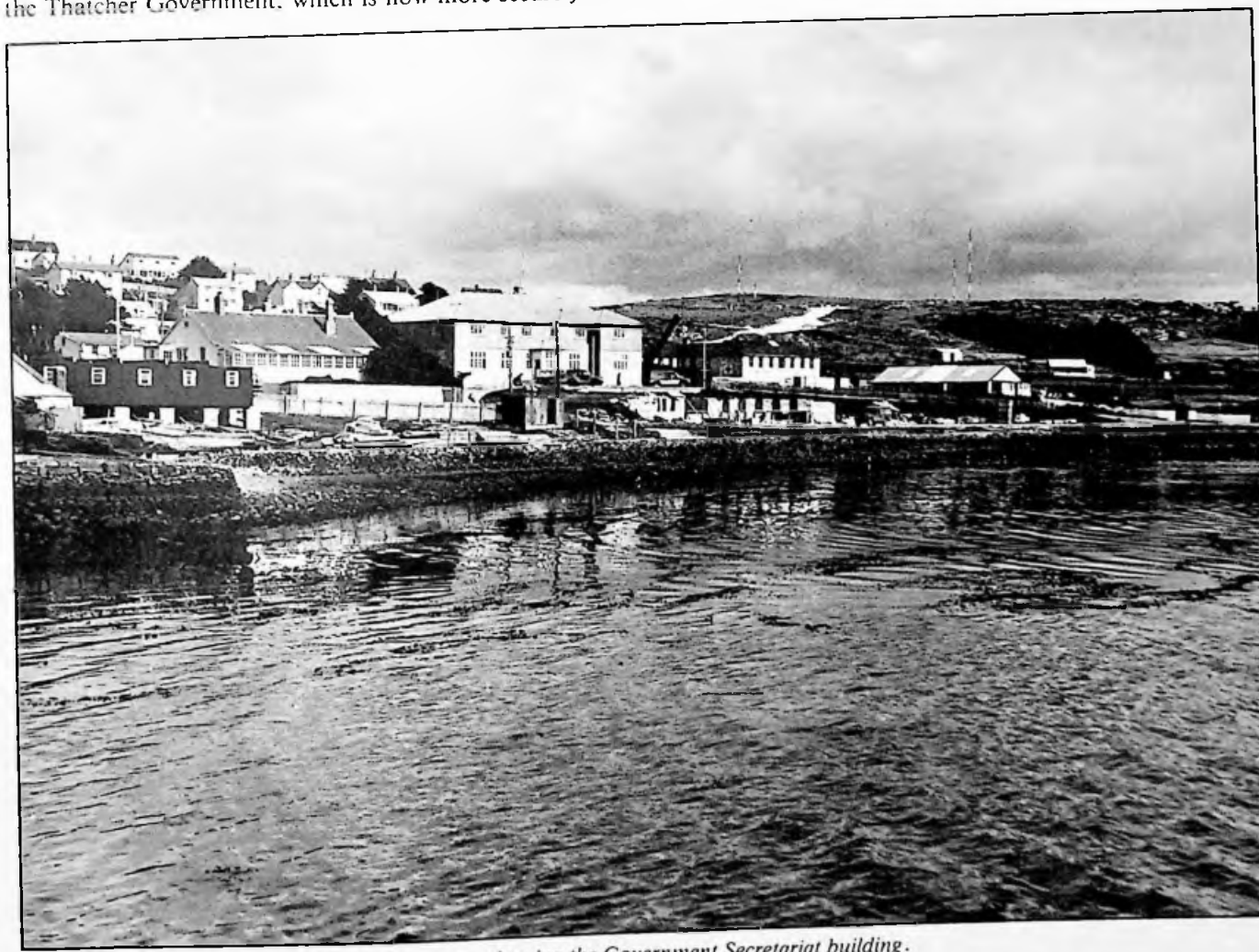
'... Another possible solution would be to involve a transfer of sovereignty to Argentina, coupled with a long-term leaseback to the United Kingdom. This possibility, too, apparently, was acceptable to Argentina and had some support in the Foreign Office at different points in the last century'.

All this manoeuvring behind the scenes, mainly in response to Argentina's continuing agitation, has failed to influence public opinion in London, let alone the attitude of the Thatcher Government, which is now more securely in

power than ever. Quite apart from the self-determination issue, the archipelago is of considerable prospective economic importance — not only as a possible source of petroleum, but also as a convenient base for the exploitation of the Antarctic Continent, which is likely to become the scene of an international scramble when the current treaty governing its status expires at the end of the century. At all events, the British Government's current position rests on the following statement made by the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, before the United Nations General Assembly in October:

'The Falkland Islanders like any other people have the right to self-determination. We had hoped that the new Argentine Government, with its attachment to democracy and human rights, would have been ready to recognise this fundamental human right of the Falkland Islanders...'

'Those who call on us to negotiate on the sovereignty of the islands should think what exactly it is that they are asking us to do. For Argentina, such negotiations could only have one outcome: the transfer of sovereignty over the islands, irrespective of the wishes of the Falkland Islanders. To ask us to do that is to ask us to overturn the principle of self-determination enshrined in the Charter'. ●



A view of part of Port Stanley from the harbour, showing the Government Secretariat building.

Daily Mail
18.12.84

Festive phone-calls

CHEAP rate phone calls can be made from 6 p.m. December 24 until 8 a.m. December 27, and again from 6 p.m. December 28 to 8 a.m. January 2 (in Scotland, 8 a.m. January 3). Reductions cover local, national and most direct-dialled information calls. Calls to the Falkland Islands will be half-price from midnight, December 21 to midnight, January 11.

Daily Mail
19.12.84

Happy families

THE first live TV satellite link with the Falklands will reunite troops and their families 8,000 miles apart on the BBC's Noel Edmonds Christmas Breakfast Show.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS: THE FALKLANDS

A solution made in Hong Kong

By Ian Davidson

THE REPORT of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee on the Falklands is a wonderful monument to English amateurishness. It is loyal and patriotic; pragmatic and realistic; constructive and well-meaning; and hopelessly muddled.

On the one hand, it supports the British Government in its refusal to negotiate with Argentina over the sovereignty of the islands, and praises its wisdom in seeking to make progress through 'practical and sensible' arrangements for relations between the two countries.

On the other hand, it argues that an "accommodation with Argentina is not only inevitable, in view of the cost of the present policy to the United Kingdom, but also desirable if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long-term economic prosperity and political stability."

In September, during the UN General Assembly in New York, President Alfonsín held out the promise of a delayed return of sovereignty: "We could accept that the islands are returned to us in five years, three years, but not in 29 years." Some people, including Mr David Steel, leader of the Liberal Party, would regard this as an interesting opening bid which might, just conceivably, contain the seeds of all sorts of possible compromises, once the question was explored.

Yet the committee's conclusion is quite different, and unexplained. "This does not appear to us to offer the prospect of negotiations without preconditions, and the scope for compromise appears remarkably limited. "If a negotiation without preconditions is one which must contain the possibility that Argentina would renounce its claim to the islands, then we are on a hiding to nothing."

Indeed, it is arguable that the British Government is on a hiding to nothing in any case. The military defence of the Falklands is costing a fortune: this year it will have amounted to about £25,000 for every man, woman and child on the islands, and even though the completion of the new military airfield will allow a significant wind-down, the 10-year defence bill will still be £3.2bn. Yet it is not entirely clear what this vast expenditure is for.

The committee is absolutely



Mrs Thatcher and President Alfonsín.

clear that "in the long run a solution acceptable to the Falklands' immediate neighbours is essential to the islands themselves; their prosperity must depend on having decent relations with Argentina. The militarisation of the islands may be a (very expensive) insurance against another invasion, but it does not provide for a decent future for the islanders."

Naturally, President Alfonsín's government would like the restoration of good relations with Britain, but it can afford to wait because all the economic and political costs of deadlock are on the UK and on the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands. After the war, Lord Shackleton recommended a series of development programmes, without which he predicted the internal collapse of the Falklands economy "in the next five years or so." But the government's response to his recommendations has so far been sluggish and incomplete, and the committee warns that time is running out for the establishment of a viable economy.

Moreover, pressure is also likely to build up from other governments. In 1982 and 1983, the United Nations passed resolutions calling on Britain and Argentina to negotiate on the sovereignty issue, and with the passage of time impatience is likely to grow, not merely from traditional third-world opponents of "colonial" powers, but also from pro-western and pro-British governments.

It is quite possible for Britain to ignore such resolutions, but it will not be comfortable if its friends, especially those in the European Community, start voting against it. And sympathy for the Argentine demand is likely to be intensified by the restoration of democratic government in Buenos Aires, as well as by the knowledge that Britain had been negotiating with the junta until shortly before the invasion.

Even if the British Government cannot draw the conclusion that it cannot indefinitely exclude the question of sovereignty from negotiations, and that it cannot secure the interests of the islanders without negotiations, it must still make sensitive calculations about timing. Whatever resolutions may have been passed in the UN in 1982, no one could seriously have expected the British Government to resume negotiations in the immediate aftermath of a bloody war. Two years later, however, that particular argument should be starting to evaporate.

On this, as on so many other aspects of the case, the Foreign Affairs Committee appears to hold two contradictory views. On the one hand, it claims that the time is not yet ripe; on the other, it asserts that time is running out, and implies that President Alfonsín's honeymoon may be the most propitious moment of all.

Unless one assumes that there mere passage of time will weaken Argentine insistence on the sovereignty issue—which is much the least likely hypothesis—it is hard to imagine what could happen which would make the time ripe.

Three possible explanations for the British Government's rigidity suggest themselves. Perhaps Mrs Thatcher, having so flamboyantly wrapped the flag of victory round herself in 1982, now feels that her personal position is indissolubly linked to the maintenance of British sovereignty. Perhaps she and her ministers fear that "people" would not like it if the Government started negotiating with the defeated enemy. Or perhaps, despite their recent qualifying remarks about the sovereignty of the British parliament, ministers are really shackled, as their predecessors were between 1966 and 1982, to

the 'proposition' that the islanders' views are paramount. If the first or third of these possible explanations is at all near the mark, then the problem is insoluble. Another prime minister might be less personally mortgaged to the Falklands campaign, but if the islanders know they have a veto, they will certainly use it—unless the British Government's dilatoriness in following the Shackleton recommendation looks like precipitating a collapse of their economy.

On the other hand, I find it hard to imagine that there would be a large popular outcry against negotiations on sovereignty. The soldiers and sailors of the Task Force did not fight and die for the preservation of sovereignty, but in order to defeat the Argentine invaders and throw them off the islands. What happens thereafter is a question of an entirely different political order, as we

The question of long-term guarantees for the islands

know from our post-war reconciliation with the Germans. Last week's TV programme Brass Tacks showed that even the parents of those who died recognising and accept the need for negotiations.

If there is to be a negotiation, it will have to distinguish the question of sovereignty from the question of long-term guarantees for the interests, the autonomy and the life-style of the islands. How such guarantees could be underwritten is obviously the central issue, but the British Government has already set an inspirational precedent in its agreement with China over Hong Kong, which contains detailed guarantees lasting 50 years after the surrender of sovereignty. Mrs Thatcher signs that agreement in Peking this week.

So when President Alfonsín invokes the notion of a Hong Kong type solution, as he did three months ago, why not find out what he means? Simply to fall back on the doctrine of unripe time is no solution to anything.



ARRC 2nd Class — obverse.

ARRC 2nd Class — reverse.



STAFF SERGEANT Robert Stout, RAMC, spent most of his Army career as a male nurse in the comparative calm of various medical centres. That was until the Falklands campaign when he found himself, at one stage, in the mayhem that followed the Argentinian attack on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Sir Galahad.

It was quite a change of scene for someone who describes himself as 'basically a base wallah'. While the experience was a bit of a shock, it wasn't wasted.

Staff Sergeant Stout came back with several ideas for improving the operation of field hospitals. In particular he designed a new bed which is now being evaluated by the Stores and Clothing Research and Development Establishment (SCRDE) at Colchester.

The bed is made of aluminium and very much lighter than the current cast iron models. It's slightly narrower and higher, allowing easier access for nursing.

And, by employing quilts covered with waterproof sheeting

which can be easily sponged clean, it is designed to reduce laundry to an absolute minimum.

The bed, if it is accepted for service, won't be the staff-sergeant's only memorial of the Falklands war. Recently he was at a Buckingham Palace investiture, along with Warrant Officer 2 Adrian Pierce, who was also in the Sir Galahad at the time of the attack, to receive one of the country's highest nursing awards.

Both now join a small but select group of men who are able to put the initials ARRC (for Associate of the Royal Red Cross) after their names. This is the Second Class of an order introduced in 1883 as the first British Military award exclusively for women.

The modern movement towards greater equality of the sexes in work opportunities has meant that nursing is no longer the reserve of women. Since 1977 men have also been eligible to become members of the Royal Red Cross.

On 8 June, 1982 Mr Pierce and Staff Sergeant Stout were both in the dormitories of the Sir Galahad when the bombs hit. Mr Pierce had been on the tank deck, where most of the damage occurred, until a few moments before, but there

had been some delay in getting the first medical party ashore and he had gone down to the dormitories to inform his men.

"I was very lucky to have been out of that area," he said. "The dormitories are next to the tank deck and we could hear the noise of the people who had been hurt.

"We tried to find a way out to them but there was no way we could use most entrances as there were flames and everything coming through.

"When we eventually got through we saw horrific injuries. We got on to the top deck where we were formed up as the medical team with the RSM of 16 Field Ambulance and we started treating as best we could the casualties as they were coming out."

Staff Sergeant Stout recalled: "Probably the burns and the smell of burning flesh were the worst things. But you just had to carry on. I mean, a patient is a patient regardless of your own traumas."

"I think my initial feeling was — 'Is this it? Is it the end?'" said Mr Pierce. "Then a sort of numb feeling. But when we saw the casualties I suppose the instinct of training took over.

"I don't think we were aware

of the explosions coming from the hull. We saw so many people needing treatment we didn't worry about what was happening elsewhere."

The difficulty was actually treating patients, many of whom were suffering from appalling injuries. All the medics had were morphine syringes and battle dressings which they had collected from unwounded Welsh Guardsmen.

After the Falklands Staff Sergeant Stout went back to 2 Field Hospital, Aldershot. This was his first field unit in an Army career which now spans 21 years and he managed to join it originally just prior to the trouble with Argentina.

Mr Pierce, who was also with 16 Field Ambulance on attachment from 2 Field Hospital, at the time of the crisis, is now managing the group practice at the medical centre, Tidworth Garrison.

**Story: Robert Higson
Pictures: Les Wiggs**



Staff Sergeant Robert Stout.



Warrant Officer 2 Adrian Pierce.

Mail on Sunday
16th December 1984

Howe in RAF row

CABINET Ministers are to step in to settle an explosive row between Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe and the RAF over the purchase of a new trainer aircraft. Sir Geoffrey is backing the Brazilian-designed Embraer Tucano, partly as a gesture of gratitude to the Brazilians for allowing planes diverted from the Falklands to land there.

And he is being supported by the Industry Department and Ulster Secretary Douglas Hurd, because the initial 130 £1 million planes would be assembled in Northern Ireland, creating 2,000 new jobs.

But the RAF chiefs want the more sophisticated Swiss Pilatus trainer. They are backed by British Aerospace who would handle much of the work. The British challenger, the Firecracker, built by ex-Squadron Leader John Davey, now seems to be out of the race.

Tam's sinking popularity

BELGRANO bore Tam Dalyell's stately home in Scotland, The House of Binns, given to the National Trust of Scotland by his mother Eleanor, has reported a substantial drop in the number of visitors.

The house, owned by the family since 1612 and in Dalyell's constituency of Linlithgow, attracted only 4,414 visitors last year — a drop of nearly 1,500. But the Trust is not blaming the Labour MP, who lives in a flat in the Binns with his wife Kathleen and children Gordon and Moira.

'We get variations on all our properties every year,' explained a Trust official. 'I don't think we could put it all down to the Belgrano.'

Oh, no?

China to agree on more say for Hong Kong

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

CHINA is expected to agree to let the people of Hong Kong have more of a say in their future when discussions with Britain resume after the signing this week of the pact for the hand-over of the colony in 1997.

Whitehall advisers believe that China's leadership will allow Hong Kong representatives to help draft basic laws of the colony in 1997.

The Government of Teng Hsiao Ping will probably accept also that Hong Kong should have direct representation on a joint advisory group to be formed by Britain and China.

The need for these concessions was emphasised by an unofficial delegation from the Hong Kong Legislative and Executive Councils which met Mrs Thatcher 10 days ago.

British officials expect too that China will reassure Hong Kong on another key issue, that of travel rights after 1997, but Peking is likely to dig in its heels on questions of defence.

Chinese troops are expected to be stationed in the colony and probably local men will be liable for conscription to the Chinese forces.

Teams of British and Chinese officials are expected to begin

talks on clarification of the Hong Kong pact early next year.

The signing ceremony will be at the centre of a round-the-world trip by Mrs Thatcher, who will leave from Heathrow tomorrow and spend 54 hours in the air during the next six days.

She will follow her visits to Peking and Hong Kong with a call in Washington for breakfast on Saturday with Mr Bush, the Vice President, before travelling to Camp David to see President Reagan.

Falklands troop cuts when airport opens

By NORMAN KIRKHAM
Diplomatic Correspondent

SEVERAL hundred troops and RAF personnel are likely to be pulled out of the Falklands quickly after the opening of the £250 million airport at Mount Pleasant next Spring.

Whitehall is anxious to cut the huge cost of defending the islands, which is running at around £12 million a week, with substantial reductions in troop strengths and probably withdrawal of a squadron of Harrier jump jets.

The Falklands garrison has about 3,500 men, including a battalion of Green Jackets, support units and the RAF. It is

thought that continuing reductions over the next two years will reduce the force by up to 40 per cent.

But RAF staff and troops will have to be stationed at Mount Pleasant as well as the present Port Stanley airfield, where Phantom fighter-bombers and Nimrod reconnaissance planes have been operating with the Harriers. Several naval ships also remain on patrol protecting the 150-mile exclusion zone.

The opening of the Mount Pleasant airfield, which has a two-mile runway and a huge hangar, will mean that wide-body TriStar and VC-10 jets can rapidly transport troop reinforcements to the islands in an emergency.

The airfield will begin operating at the end of April or early May, and the buildings will be completed by late 1986. Although it will be fully equipped with up-to-date radar and landing devices, arrangements have been made with Uruguay and Brazil to divert the big jets there if necessary.

Between 200 and 500 troops of the Royal Engineers are believed to have been brought home from the Falklands in recent months after completion of mine-clearing and road-building tasks.

The defence budget spending on the Falklands was set at £624 million in 1983-84, with £684 million for 1984-85 and

£552 million for the following 12 months.

The Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee called in its special report on the Falklands last week for the Government to undertake no further fortification of the islands and to reduce progressively the armed forces there.

The islanders expected the recommendation to cut down the garrison, but there is widespread disappointment in Port Stanley because the Committee refused to support their requests for a 200-mile fishing zone to be established and provide vital revenue.

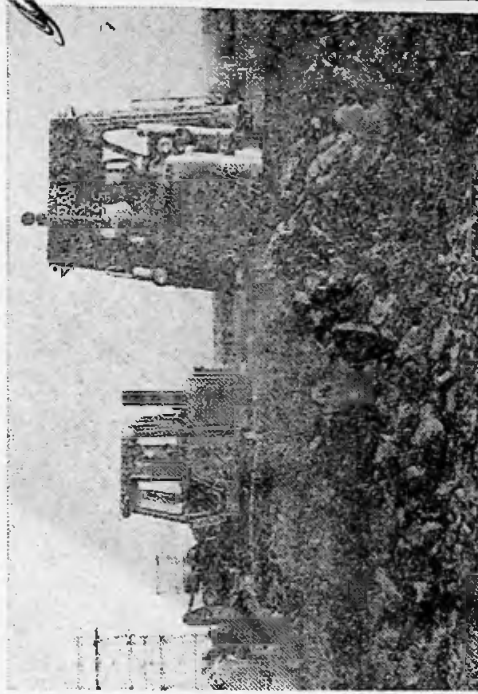
Up to 60 foreign trawlers a day are fishing the grounds to within three miles of the Falk-

lands coast, many of them from Poland, Russia and Eastern Europe. New fleets of Japanese and Taiwanese vessels will move in next year.

The islanders estimate that the foreign fishing would bring in an annual income of £10 million if a zone were established and licence fees charged.

The ships are taking out scores of thousands of tons of hake, squid, krill and other fish. There are fears that the stocks could be exhausted within a few years without conservation measures.

The main objection to establishing the fishing zone, however, is that the quarrel with Argentina over the Falklands' sovereignty would be exacerbated.



FALKLANDS INVADERS: Work in progress on the £250 million Falklands Mount Pleasant Airport. The Laing, Mowlem and Amey Roadstone construction consortium is confident of meeting the April deadline for the arrival of the first wide-bodied jet.

Unfertilisable farms of the Falklands

Sir.—You note, in your articles on the report of the all-party Commons foreign affairs committee on the Falkland Islands, the recommendation that the "prime emphasis" of development should be towards diversifying the islands' agricultural economy, in preference to more politically sensitive issues, such as oil and fisheries.

The select committee is clearly unaware of problems relating to the enhancement of what is an extremely poor agricultural base. On average, Falklands pasture supports one sheep to about five acres. Current research is directed towards introducing new species of grasses and legumes, which can be supported only by the regular application of artificial fertiliser, inevitably shipped from the UK.

Even with an intensive flock management system, which requires only small areas of reseeded pasture, the long-term pay-off in terms of wool production is very marginal to the financial input.

Nevertheless, senior officials of the Overseas Development Association can still

talk in terms of providing a "reseed with fertiliser" package to Falklands farmers, which could presumably work only if bolstered by subsidies. Not only would this alter the present stable system of husbandry which has evolved over many decades, but it would also make farmers dependent on financial aid.

This inevitably raises the suspicion that some form of agricultural development must be seen to be taking place for political reasons, whatever the costs in economic or social terms.

Large-scale diversification into, say, beef or arable farming, or market gardening, is clearly even more problematical. In any case, there is at present no real market for Falklands produce except in Europe, and freight costs mean that profit margins will always be low.

A lot of goodwill and no small amount of money are being expended on agricultural research in the Falklands. Progress is being made, but all the signs suggest that a large increase in profitability is unattainable.

It is time that British poli-

ticians were made aware of, or owned up to, the fact that agricultural diversification will never be the key to large-scale economic development in the islands. It is the islanders who stand to lose by this misconception.—

Yours faithfully,

David Roberts.
Ford Street,
Nr Wellington,
Somerset.

Sir, — I was pleased to see your article on the "unrestricted plunder" of the Falklands fish stocks (December 10), as it draws attention to a situation which is fast becoming critical.

The Falkland Islands Foundation, with the Falklanders themselves and international fisheries experts, have been seriously alarmed at the gross over-fishing that has taken place for the past few years round South Georgia, and this is now being repeated round the Falkland Islands. It is obvious that the present policy of allowing totally unrestricted fishing will be harmful for the Falkland Islanders, for all nations wishing to fish there for longer than another year or

so, and for the breeding colonies of seals, penguins, and other sea-birds which depend on the squid and fish.

The seas around South Georgia fall within the area covered by the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources; and at the meeting in September the experts there agreed that several species were fast approaching commercial extinction, but the parties to the convention nevertheless failed to impose effective conservation measures for the area.

The only solution now is for the British Government to impose a 200-mile fishing limit around South Georgia and close it to all fishing until the stocks recover. Very strict controls, with a licensing system, must also be imposed around the Falkland Islands to prevent any further depletion of the fish and squid stocks from an area that, until the present free-for-all, was one of the richest fishing grounds in the world. — Yours faithfully,

Peter Scott.

(Chairman, Falkland Islands Foundation).
Slimbridge, Gloucester.

been limited. So has dissatisfaction among civilians who lost children in the dirty war, and think Mr Alfonsín is too soft on the generals.

In his dealings with the opposition, Mr Alfonsín has suffered only one serious setback: in March, the senate, where the Peronists have a majority, turned down his plan to democratise the Peronist-dominated trade unions. Otherwise, the

He has since reversed himself into deflation, and agreed with the International Monetary Fund and the advisory group of his commercial-bank creditors how he should deal with Argentina's \$45 billion foreign debt. Inflation is still running at 550%. Getting it down to an acceptable level is going to hurt.

In his second year, Mr Alfonsín is unlikely to agree with Britain about the Falklands. He pulled out of talks in Switzerland in July because Britain refused to discuss ways of dealing with the question of sovereignty. This scuppered hopes that the two sides could resume trade, airline flights and, eventually, diplomatic relations. So long as Mr Alfonsín faces his economic pain at home, he is likely to go on banging the patriotic drum to distract his people's attention from where it hurts.

Argentina

Perhaps a sip of champagne

Mr Raul Alfonsín has ended his first year as president of Argentina on a generally upbeat note. Since his inauguration last December, after six years of military rule, Argentina has become an open society. Congress is busy; newspapers say what they want; and the long-suppressed but vigorous artistic world is beginning to flourish. The country's unsolved economic problems, however, are eating away at the foundations of democratic stability which Mr Alfonsín is trying to build.

Mr Alfonsín has reduced the power of the generals by retiring some and transferring others, cutting conscription and slashing defence spending. The 1985 military budget is said to be half that of 1983 (but still a whacking 12.9% of gdp). Continued deliveries of Exocet missiles and Skyhawk jets apparently stem from orders made by the previous military-led regime.

The president seems to have steered a middle way in dealing with the "dirty war" of the 1970s, in which a wave of left-wing terrorism was brutally crushed by the armed forces. Several generals have gone on trial; and, on December 7th, Captain Alfredo Astiz (known as the "blond angel"), who was captured by Britain during the Falklands war, was arrested on suspicion of the murder of a Swedish woman in 1977. Yet restiveness among the military men, who believe they saved Argentina from communism, has



Muted cheers for Alfonsín's democracy

Peronists have been in a muddle, caught between their visceral allegiance to the late General Peron's wayward widow, Isabelita, and their inability to find a strong man to replace the general.

Confusion among the Peronists helped Mr Alfonsín to a triumph in the referendum which he called on November 25th over his settlement of the Beagle Channel dispute with Chile. Mr Alfonsín gave up Argentina's claim to three islands in the channel but gained his main point: sovereignty over the Atlantic south-east of Cape Horn. The Peronists' call for abstentions was ignored.

The economy remains a huge problem. Mr Alfonsín gaily promised increases in real incomes while inflation was raging—at one point, at an annual rate of 700%.

Brabant Island — sun, sea and snow!

THEY describe it as an 'old fashioned' expedition to explore in all senses a remote and wild island — In reality it is much more.

The Joint Services Expedition to Brabant Island is a long-term scientific project being carried out by a highly trained, dedicated band of men in search of adventure and keen to find out more about a tiny lump of rock and ice off the Antarctic Peninsula.

Around 1000 miles south of Cape Horn, the island is so inhospitable that only four landings have even been recorded. The very first was in 1898 when a Belgian expedition, led by Adrien de Gerlache, and with Roald Amundsen as a team member, spent five nights there.

Some 85 years later the island now has more inhabitants than it has ever previously seen. For the past 12 months members of the JSE have been resident, carrying out the first detailed scientific exploration of the area — describing the rock and land forms, the native vegetation and what lives on and around the island.

They are also making the first ascents of all the mountains, including Mount Parry — the highest at 8,300 feet. News filtered through only recently that following the first unsuccessful attempt, hindered by bad weather and a shortage of food, the peak has now been conquered.

There is also a plan to circumnavigate the island in kayaks — the most southerly canoeing yet undertaken.

By Sarah Last

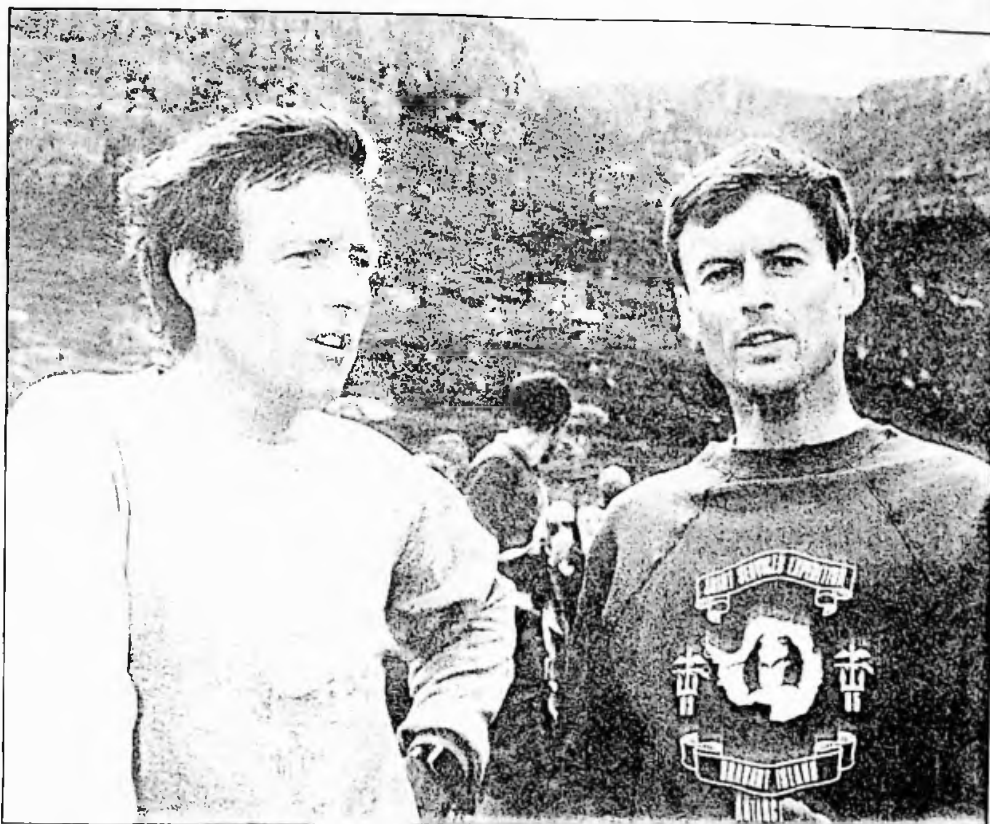
Francois de Gerlache, a Belgian serving with NATO and the grandson of Adrien, joined the overwintering party of Brabant Island and a memorial has now been built at Bulls Bay on the southern side to mark his grandfather's historic landing.

So far only a handful of RAF men have been involved with the project, led by Royal Navy Commander Chris Furse. It began in December 1983, two stages have now been successfully completed and the expedition has so far fulfilled all expectations.

Fit Lt Steve Taylor and Fit Lt Dave Ball recently left England as part of the 16 strong second summer party which will complete the third and final phase of the JSE. They are due to relieve the overwintering team — the first to spend a winter in tents purely by choice, anywhere in the Antarctic — only days after Christmas.

During their stay, they return at the end of March, they will continue the scientific studies, climb mountains at the southern end of the island and possibly explore the coastline by canoe.

Fit Lt Bill Hankinson and Cpl Ted Atkins were members of the original summer party and were the first to climb a 4,000 foot mountain which they aptly named 'Per Ardua'. When the overwintering party arrived in late March this year Cpl Atkins re-



Fit Lt Dave Ball (left) and Fit Lt Steve Taylor the latest RAF men to join the JSE to Brabant Island.

mained on the island and was joined by Cpl Jon Beattie.

Fit Lt Taylor has been climbing on and off for about 10 years and is one of the most experienced mountaineers to join the JSE. Normally a Phantom pilot based at Leuchars, he is also in charge of the Mountain Rescue Team there. Fit Lt Ball is an engineering officer based at Cottesmore, home of the Tri-national Tornado Training Establishment.

They were among 23 men originally selected for the second summer team — the number now stands at just 16. Their rigorous training for the expedition included two weeks in Scotland during January and a further two weeks in the summer.

Fit Lt Taylor will be deputy leader of the glaciology expedition and will also lead the mountaineering part of the exploration while Fit Lt Ball will act as admin officer for the JSE.

Even though the two men are visiting Brabant Island in the

summer months, they can expect fairly harsh weather conditions. Fit Lt Taylor said the weather was likely to be comparable with a very harsh winter in the Scottish Highlands. Normally the environment is far worse. The island is almost entirely covered by snow and ice and the climate very hostile: temperatures range from +10 deg C to -40 deg C and winds often exceed hurricane force 12.

Speaking about the JSE, Fit Lt Taylor said, "Quite honestly joining an expedition to the Antarctic has been something I had wanted to do for many many years. I am very much looking forward to it all, but the worst part is knowing how much I will miss my family."

Fit Lt Ball added, "I am looking forward to the solitude in some ways, although I will also obviously miss my family. I know I will really enjoy my work and am looking forward to seeing the place and to helping the real

scientists pursue such worthwhile work.

"But I think the main thing will just be the fact that we are in an area where nobody has really ever been before."

The JSE to Brabant Island is certainly a challenge for all its members — adventure and almost certainly an element of danger are guaranteed and so is hard work and often uncomfortable living conditions.

At times the novelty of being an Antarctic explorer wears off, a radio bulletin from the overwintering party show: "Prolonged poor weather hampered all movement. White-out, and strong winds, frequent depression... temperatures to minus 13 deg C... September worst weather yet, tents repeatedly buried... October improvement... high spirits after three weeks much superb weather... Thank's second summer message... Hectic last month. Many home thoughts now. Christmas shopping difficult. Love."



GOOD RELATIONS!

On a recent MRR mission around the Falkland Islands, Flt Lt 'Twig' Taylor and crew of 1312 Flt Hercules Detachment RAF Stanley played hosts to some of the more attractive additions to the islands.

At the same time the crew helped to foster good inter-Service relations as all the young ladies were from the Army.

Picture line up (left to right): L.Cpl Helen

Rushten, Flt Lt Dick Oddy, Lt Helen Booth, Cpl Julie White, Flt Lt Mike Merrill, Pte Carol Halls, MLM Chas Sweeting, Maj Eileen Marsh, Sgt Trev Prough, Lt Karen Saunders; in front: Flt Lt 'Twig' Taylor and Pte Lynn Johanneson.

201 Sqn aircraft does round trip in 38½ hours

NIMROD RECORD FOR FALKLANDS FLIGHT

KINLOSS-based 201 Squadron has just flown to the Falklands and back — in record time.

The squadron, which operates Nimrod and is currently celebrating its 70th anniversary, has established an as yet unconfirmed record flight time of 38½ hours for the round trip.

If the flight is ratified by the Royal Aero Club, who were officially monitoring the trip, then it will be a British National Record. Other similar mammoth flights have taken place but none has so far been officially recognised.

The record-breaking attempt took place while crew seven was

deployed to the Falklands to participate in Exercise "Southern Rein." The first leg of the journey from Kinloss to Ascension Island took some 11 hours, and two days later they flew on to Port Stanley in nine hours and five minutes. They returned to the UK last week, taking eight hours 20 minutes to make the flight from the Falklands to

Ascension and a further ten hours and five minutes to complete the round trip.

"Quite frankly, this sort of flight is not unique," said Wg Cdr Earl, "but because the Royal Aero Club were monitoring it, we think we will be able to claim it as the first record and that is terrific for the squadron."

During their detachment to the South Atlantic, the crew from 201 Squadron flew one very special

sortie — they took Sir Rex Hunt, the Civil Commissioner in the Falklands, and Major-General Peter De La Billiere, CBFFI, over the Southern Sandwich Islands, which are Falkland Island Dependencies.

The aircraft which flew to the Falklands was captained by OC 201 Squadron, Wg Cdr Terry Earl, and it was a particularly

By Sarah Last

memorable journey for him — during the long flight he clocked up his 5,000th hour on Nimrod. On board, the crew marked the occasion at the exact hour by presenting him with a special trophy — the nose wheel door of a Pucara, which they had all signed.

And there was a special cargo on board the reconnaissance aircraft when it made its record-breaking flight. As part of the

70th anniversary celebrations, 201 have had a first day cover specially commissioned; and its designer is a squadron member.

Sgt Ady Davies is flight engineer with crew eight and his illustration depicts the history of 201 — there is a Nimrod overflying a Sunderland flying boat and it incorporates the crest of RAF Kinloss, Guernsey and the squadron.

Around 2,500 of the covers were flown down to the Falklands and were stamped both at Ascension Island and Port Stanley. They were returned to the UK and will now go on to Guernsey — the island enjoys a long-standing affiliation with the squadron — where they will be specially franked.

But 201's were not the only first day covers to go a round trip of some 16,000 miles. A crew member estimated that about 10,000 in all were carried for various groups and organisations.

Victory is a bright and beautifully coloured flower; transport is the stem without which it could never have blossomed.

These were the words of Winston Churchill spoken many years ago. More recently, the truth of these words was again well demonstrated in the Falklands campaign. Without the massive logistic support behind them, our Forces would never have been able to retake the islands.

Although most of the men and supplies were transported by sea throughout the campaign, there was a continuous need for the rapid deployment of personnel, equipment and supplies to the halfway stage post on Ascension Island, during which delivery times could be measured in hours rather than days. It was in this role that 10 Squadron and their fleet of VC10s played a vital, but largely unrecognised, part in the operation.

In any future conflict, 10 Squadron are prepared to provide that same rapid transport, where necessary, right up to the front line; and their training exercises and TACEVALS (tactical evaluations) reflect this. The sign of VC10 aircraft and their supporting groundcrew operating in full NBC clothing can come as a bit of a surprise to those familiar only with the rather glamorous image attached to their additional task of transporting Royalty, members of the Government and other VIPs around the world.

On 1 January 1985, 10 Squadron will be seventy years old and in addition to serving in the transport role, their distinguished history has encompassed reconnaissance and bombing. To mark this anniversary, Sgt Ed Alastair Stuart, Flt Cdr Ops 10 Squadron, traces the squadron's history from the Battle of the Somme to Operation Corporate and talks about their war role today and tomorrow.

10 Squadron

No 10 SQUADRON formed at Farnborough on 1 January 1915, but after six months of training, was transferred to France where it was attached to the First Army for general reconnaissance and artillery observation duties flying the BE2c.

In 1916, during the Battle of the Somme, the squadron made strategic bombing raids on the enemy's railways and other communications with considerable success. By late 1917, the BE2cs had been exchanged for Armstrong Whitworth FK8 aircraft and, in addition to its bombing and reconnaissance roles, the squadron took part in low-level strafing of the Hindenburg Line.

The War over, the squadron returned to England in February 1919 and was reduced to cadre status, being disbanded in December 1919.

The Royal Air Force had undergone much re-organisation when the squadron re-formed as part of the bomber force at Upper Heyford in January 1928. It was equipped initially with Handley Page Hyderabad which were succeeded in 1931 by Hindalls and these, in turn, were replaced two years later by Vickers Virginias.

No 10 was among the first to be equipped with the Handley Page Heyford bombers in 1934. Early in 1937, the squadron was transferred to Dishforth where it began re-equipping with Whitley aircraft.

On the outbreak of war in 1939, No 10 Squadron was fully operational and made its first sorties on 8 September. It was not until March 1940 that the first bombing raid of the War was made on enemy territory, although several attacks had been made on German shipping in enemy waters, including an attack on the seaplane bases at Sylt and Borkum.

Following the German invasion of Norway in April, the squadron's aircraft were sent to attack the airfield at Stavanger and bomb shipping in Oslo Fjord. Some weeks later, when France and the Low Countries were invaded, the pace of bombing was stepped up and, on Italy's entry into the War, No 10 Squadron was the first to cross the Alps and attack the North Italian cities.

While Fighter Command was engaged in the Battle of Britain, Bomber Command was concentrating its efforts on the Channel ports from which the enemy was expected to launch his invasion of this Island. No 10 Squadron, now based at Leeming, played an important part in this assault, extending the scope of its operations to include the enemy-occupied airfields in France.

In the early part of 1941, No 10 Squadron bombed oil refineries

and factories producing U-Boat parts and long-range aircraft. The main object of these raids was to relieve pressure on our Atlantic convoys which were under heavy attack by sea and air. In the autumn of the same year the squadron's Whitley bombers were replaced by the Halifax with its longer range and greater striking power.

Early in 1942, No 10 Squadron sent aircraft to attack the "Tirpitz" which was sheltering in Norwegian waters. Twenty-two of its aircraft claimed excellent results in the first thousand-bomber raid on Cologne on 30-31 May 1942. A similar number joined in the second mass raid on Essen two nights later. In July 1943 the squadron took part in the four raids that devastated the city and port of Hamburg and the following month was detailed with others to attack Peenemunde on the Baltic coast where the enemy was developing the flying bomb and rockets. So successful was the bombing that the V-weapon programme was delayed for more than six months.

With the approach of the Allied assault on Europe, the Spring of 1944 saw No 10 Squadron taking part in the attacks on the French railway system. Immediately before the landings in Normandy, the squadron bombed enemy gun positions and radar stations on the French coast. Mines were laid to protect the seaborne army from surface and U-boat attack. On D-Day itself, the squadron bombed German troop concentrations at St Lo and then resumed its attacks on communications, disrupting the enemy's efforts to move up reinforcements to the battle area.

In March 1945 the Allied Forces entered Germany and the squadron bombed targets selected by the advancing ground forces on a tactical support basis. On 25 April No 10 Squadron flew its last offensive operation; the target was enemy defensive gun positions on the island of Wangerooge.

The post-war history of the Squadron shows a succession of disbandments and re-formations. In May 1945 No 10 Squadron was transferred to Transport Command, equipped with Dakota aircraft, and in the following August posted to India to provide an internal passenger and freight service. During the famine of 1946, help was provided in dropping food to stricken areas.

On Indian independence and partition in 1947, the squadron was attached to the Pakistan forces. At the end of 1947, it was disbanded, but less than one year later was re-formed to take part in the Berlin airlift, again equipped with Dakotas. This most successful operation conducted in a cold war situation highlighted the need for the swift deployment of aid and logistic support. A reduction in Transport Command in February 1950 resulted in disbandment again. The squadron was reformed in January 1953 at Scampton equipped with English Electric Canberras BMK2 in the bombing role.

1957 No 10 Squadron reached a high standard of accuracy in bombing practice, winning several competitions and trophies including the coveted Armament Officers' Trophy in 1955.

The squadron re-formed yet again in April 1958 at Cottes-

more, equipped this time with Handley Page Victor BMK1 aircraft as part of the 'V' force of Bomber Command. On 21 October 1958 the Squadron was honoured by the presentation of the Squadron Standard by Princess Margaret. The squadron was disbanded again on 1 March 1964.

THE VC10 ERA

ON 1 JULY 1966 the squadron was re-formed, for the fifth time, at Brize Norton equipped with Vickers VC10 jet transport aircraft, in the long-range strategic transport role. The VC10 was initially designed as an airliner to serve the hot, high and relatively short airfields in Colonial Africa and now that the runways at these and most other destinations have been extended to accommodate the larger wide-bodied jets, the VC10 enjoys excellent operational freedom.

No 10 Squadron's aircraft were designed and built to RAF specification having the shorter body of the standard VC10 with the fuel tank, wings and engines of the super variant as supplied to BOAC. Additionally, the RAF aircraft have a large freight door and a stressed freight floor which enables them to carry heavy items of military equipment. Of the 13 aircraft, 11 are kept in regular use, while the other two are refurbished to a planned servicing schedule. Modification programmes are undertaken on an opportunity basis thus ensuring minimum disruption to the overall task.

The aircraft servicing is carried out at Brize Norton in the Base Hangar which is the largest single span cantilever hangar in Western Europe; it is 1,050 ft in length and involves 5½ acres of unobstructed floor space.

Much of the squadron's tasking involves a mixture of passengers and freight and it is in this configuration that the aircraft are most often used. This gives a good operational flexibility and enables the transportation of small operational units comprising men and equipment which can be kept together as a single entity. The fully passenger-carrying capacity of the aircraft is used for exercises and unit moves, and in this role the aircraft can carry some 137 persons in reasonable comfort. The third role capability, which was fully exploited in the support of our forces in the South Atlantic, is the airborne hospital or casualty evacuation in which the aircraft can carry 60 stretcher patients or slightly less if a field operating theatre is included. During the many flights from Montevideo with war-wounded, additional airborne staff included surgeons, anaesthetists, theatre staff and nurses.

The squadron's aircraft, each named after a member of the RAF or RFC who had been awarded the Victoria Cross (VC), have, from the outset been painted in a non-camouflage scheme, principally because of the peacetime tasks. VVIPs are often flown to civil airports and the politically sensitive areas, and the aircraft's current livery is less likely to be contentious.

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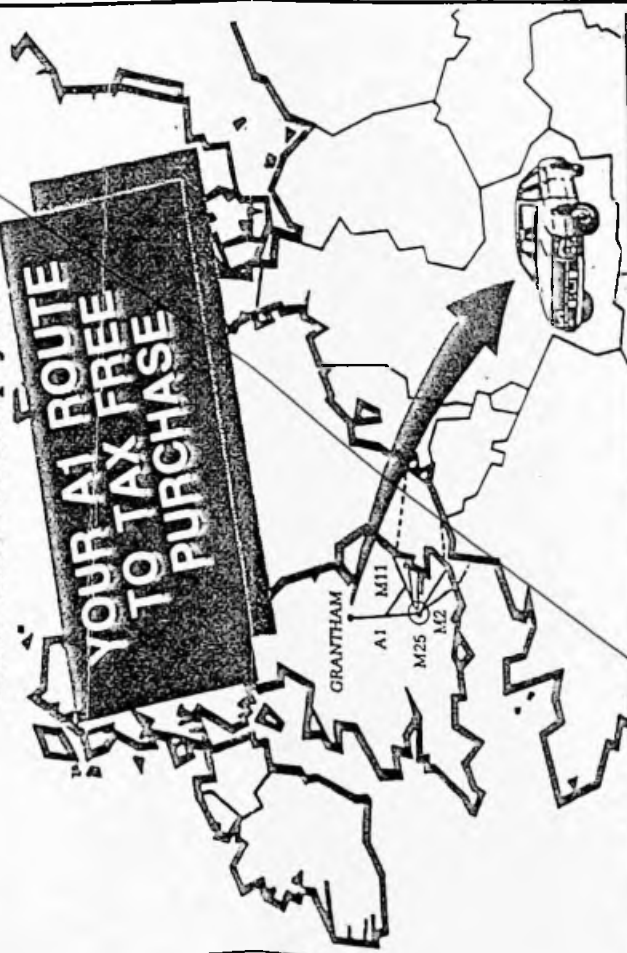
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seventy years on — 'allowing victory to blossom'

have played a large part in the following events:

Evacuation of troops and families from Aden in 1967

Evacuation of troops and families from Malta in 1972

Reinforcement of the Sovereign Base Area in Cyprus and the evacuation of families after the Turkish invasion in 1974

Evacuation of European families from Angola in 1975

Evacuation of British families from Lebanon in 1979

Deployment and recovery of the Commonwealth Liaison and Monitoring organisations for Operation Agila (Zimbabwe) December 1979 to March 1980

Deployment of the Royal Marines to the Condominium of the New Hebrides in 1980

Evacuation of the Governor, Mr Rex Hunt, and Royal Marines from Montevideo after the Argentinian invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982

Strategic airlift in support of the Task Force to the Falkland Islands in 1982

Evacuation from Montevideo of Forces wounded in the Battle for the Falklands in 1982

OPERATION CORPORATE

THE SQUADRON'S contribution to Operation Corporate, although not widely publicised, was vital. During the early months of the conflict, the crews were each flying anything up to 130 hours a month. After Port Stanley was taken the flights became more productive in both directions carrying vital supplies to Ascension and recovering casualties from Montevideo.

These were hectic days and on occasions the entire VC10 fleet was operational somewhere around the world. It is a fine tribute to the machine and the men who serviced and supported it, that during the months of the conflict only two sorties were lost because of unserviceabilities. Crews worked long hours for many months and on one

memorable occasion the Squadron Commander left base with the very last crew available, leaving the various extraneous duties associated with a flying unit in the capable hands of the Station Commander.

Once the Falklands were retaken and the facts began to emerge, the utility of the transport force was seen in a new light, and by the end of June 1982 it became evident that as a force some 17,000 flying hours had been achieved. The Hercules had undertaken the greater proportion of the task and that is understandable, but it was interesting to note that the 13 VC10s carried one third of the total uplift for one quarter of the total hours flown. Indeed, the whole air supply and repatriation operation was a huge success and when one compares the airlift part of the conflict with other airlift operations it will be seen that Corporate is second only in scale and intensity to the Berlin Airlift of 1948.

NO 10 TODAY

AS WE MOVE from an era when we had a strategic capability with such aircraft as the Vulcan and the Canberra to the more limited range of the Tornado, we are even more dependent on airlift and airborne refuelling. In maintaining a high degree of mobility and flexibility, the present task for 10 Squadron is to provide the latest and most efficient means of moving men and their munitions to NATO's flanks and the Central Region.

If required to operate in its War role, the squadron would experience the same hostile environment as the front-line element of our forces. To that end all the aircrew have been issued with and undertake regular training sorties in NBC flying equipment. This part of the continuous training is taken seriously on No 10 Squadron where all the aircrew, both male and female, must be capable of operating in a nuclear, biological or chemical environment.

The squadron was one of the

first in the RAF to achieve this capability and through regular practice in the simulator and during station exercises, new techniques have been developed to overcome the many practical difficulties.

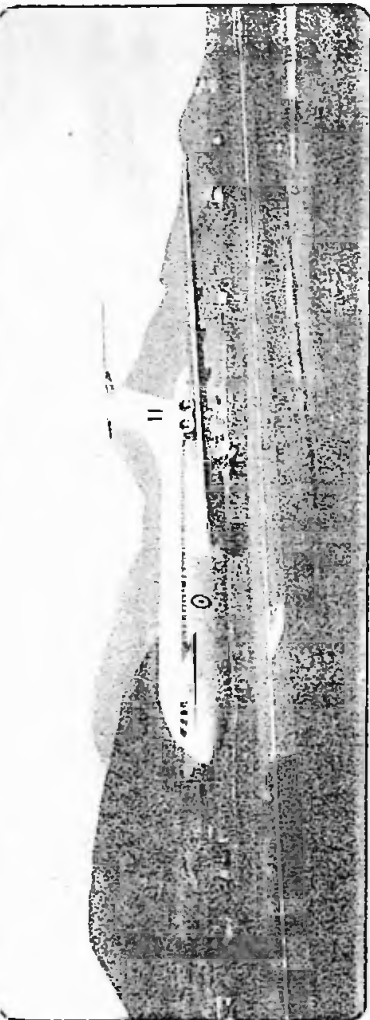
Although much of the current tasking is in support of the Falklands, regular schedules are flown to Cyprus, Sarajino, Germany and Washington, with special flights to numerous destinations world wide. Most of the special flights are known in advance, but there are occasions when only a few hours notice is given to the crews. This year alone the squadron has flown The Queen, Prince Philip, Prince Charles, Princess Anne, the Prime Minister and other VVIPs on various occasions. Peking has become something of a regular destination as the various stages in the Hong Kong agreement have been negotiated.

This might appear to be the more glamorous aspect of the squadron's tasking, however, these VVIP flights create a great deal of hard work for the crews and support staff who take much pride in having such responsibilities.

No two days in the life of 10 Squadron aircrew are the same. Though Operation Corporate now features as part of our national history, a great effort is still required to support our commitment in the Falkland Islands. The crews are enjoying a rate of flying today which is not far short of the hours flown in 1982, but the quality of the flying is improving, as destinations become more varied.

As to the future of the strategic transport role, our experiences in various operations during the past decade suggest that an efficient and effective transport force is essential to any military effort and most particularly to the battle for the mastery of the skies.

Regardless of the advances in design and technology, the requirement for mobility and flexibility is as important today as it was when Churchill recognised their importance many years ago.



Above: A 10 Squadron VC10 arrives at Wildawake airfield, Ascension Island. Below: A VC10 in the aeromedical evacuation role.



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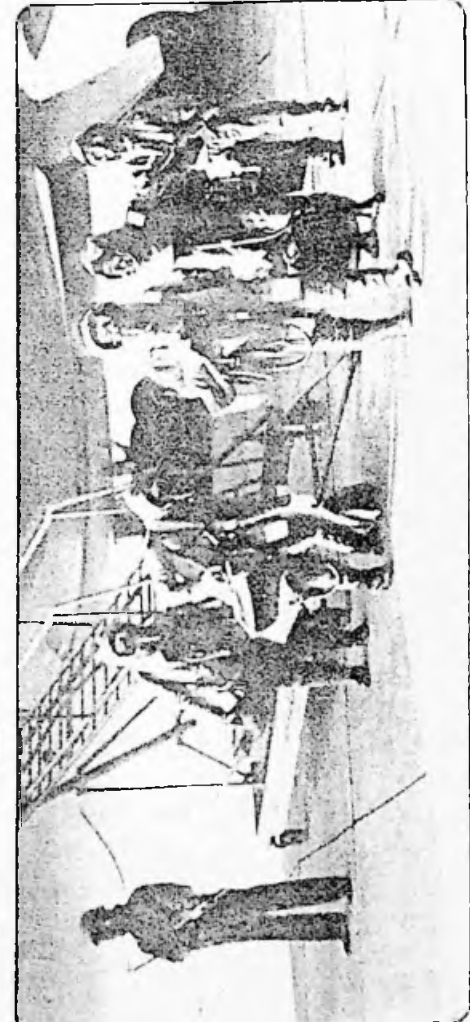
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celebrating in relays

AMONG the 70th Anniversary celebrations of 10 Squadron will be a 70-mile road relay from the Squadron's birthplace at Farnborough, Hampshire, to its present location at Brize Norton. The run will be sponsored and timed by the RAF Benevolent Fund.

The plan is that, between 15 and 20 members of the Squadron will form a relay team to fly the 70 miles from Farnborough to the RAF stations at Bracknell, Benson and Abingdon en route to Brize Norton. Stage lengths will vary from three miles to a maximum of 12 miles. It is hoped that a celebrity will start the run during the morning of January 1, 1985.

The Officer Commanding No 10 Squadron, Wg Cdr Len Marshall, will run the first stage of the route and he will be accompanied by a navigator. It is planned that the navigator will be dressed in 1915 style flying clothing and he will ride a vintage bicycle in good working order.

Owing to the shortage of daylight hours, the run will be carried out in two stages. The first from Farnborough to Benson will be run between 9 am and 4 pm and the one from Benson to Brize Norton between 10.30 am and 4 pm. All the runners will complete the last mile into Brize Norton.

Later in January, a dinner and dance will be held in the Gateway House, Brize Norton, for the serving members of the squadron and some distinguished guests. A 70th Anniversary commemorative plate has been designed and a limited number will be sold by the squadron.

MIRROR PROFILE

Today: **TAM DALYELL**

IN Margaret Thatcher's eyes there is no more obstinate figure than Tam Dalyell. Her lips tighten as he rises to his feet. When he opens his mouth her supporters groan.

For two years now he has harried her over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano.

From the Tory benches he seems an incongruous figure. As a product of Eton and Cambridge and heir to a baronetcy which he has left unclaimed shouldn't he be one of them?

Instead, as a Labour MP, he is a thorn in Conservative flesh and sometimes that of his own party as well. Journalistic judges in a recent competition have awarded him the title "Parliamentary Troublemaker of the Year".

He annoyed Premier Harold Wilson with his troops-out-of-Borneo campaign. They eventually withdrew.

He infuriated Denis Healey by his opposition to the Anglo-French swing wing aircraft. The project was ultimately ditched.

Scupper

In the name of rare species such as the Pink Footed Booby (and the cost) he stopped an Indian Ocean atoll from becoming an R.A.F. base.

He helped scupper Jim Callaghan's plan for devolved government in Scotland, fearing that his country might become a kind of Ulster.

One of his ancestors, a 17th century Royalist General, was dubbed "Bloody Tam". Two hundred years on his own critics dub him a bloody nuisance.

In an era when silence can pass for solidarity he bears such barbs as a badge of honour. Dalyell

TAM DALYELL: The watchdog who won't let go—even when his prey is a Prime Minister.



Troublemaker Tam Thatcher's men wince when his teeth sink in

by **MATTHEW COADY**

(say it Deeyel) was born in Edinburgh. Behind him stretch generations of public servants including two governors of Nepal.

The family home in the lowlands—The Binns—now owned by the Scottish National Trust flies its own flag.

He saw service in The Royal Scots Greys but failed to obtain a commission.

"If you've been a trooper in a regiment known to have been founded by one of your

ancestors you can never be embarrassed again," he says with a burst of loud, infectious laughter.

Nor has he been—even when a Labour colleague once jibed: "People who live in Binns shouldn't talk rubbish."

At Cambridge he was a member of the university Conservative association but his radical streak surfaced.

He became a teacher and a pioneer of ship-schools which offered teaching voyages to

State-educated pupils in term time. Dismayed by unemployment, he also became a Socialist.

His entry into Parliament smacked of a film comedy.

Victory

The grandfather of a boy in a junior football team which Tam had successfully coached thought one good turn deserved another.

The old man won him a union nomination for the West Lothian by-election in 1962 and he romped

home costing the Tories their deposit.

The constituency has since become Linlithgow but he has remained its M.P. fighting off a string of Scottish Nationalist challengers.

Shortly after his initial victory he met the girl he was to marry, Kathleen Wheatley, in the lobby of the House of Commons.

Her father, now a leading Scottish judge, had been a member of the post-war Labour Government.

At 52, Dalyell, though ceaselessly active in his party, has never held office. The nearest he

came to it was as Opposition front bench spokesman on science but he was fired by the then Labour leader, Michael Foot, because of his stand against sending the Falklands task force.

Yet he longs for a ministerial role and is honest enough to admit it.

"I'm no great trouble maker," he says. "I'm no maverick but I'm serious about certain things."

Foremost among them is a detestation of being misled and here he cites the Belgrano affair—"I object to cover-ups."

Truth

Let him suspect one, and his hobnailed tenacity in pursuit of what he believes to be the truth can be near-obsessive and unnerving.

There are more cunning politicians than Tam Dalyell but his kind is often remembered in the long roll-call of history.

He may have failed to become an Army officer but in the Awkward Squad—essential to the health of any democracy—he is already a lieutenant-colonel.

Daily Mail
14.12.84

Falklands spy alert

BRITAIN is urgently considering imposing a ban on fishing round the Falklands after evidence that Russian spy trawlers have been operating off the islands.

They have been observing British defence operations under cover of a huge fleet of trawlers fishing inside the 200-mile exclusion zone.

The Falklands have become one of the richest grounds for the fishing

By GORDON GREIG
Political Editor

nations of the world, and up to 60 ships a day are now plundering one of the islands' great assets. The extent of their operations has brought repeated protests from Argentina, which is still banned from going anywhere near the Falklands.

Government answers in the Commons last night revealed that 16

nations have been fishing deep inside the limit—including the Soviet Union, Poland and East Germany. And Foreign Office Under Secretary Tim Renton told one MP: 'We are actively considering the possibility of establishing an exclusive fishery limit.'

During the Falklands campaign Russian military activity reached unprecedented intensity in monitoring the British task force and all military activity as a way of penetrating British defence secrets.

Back from the Falklands

LOUISE Callow is enjoying the luxuries of home life — after four unforgettable months in the Falkland Islands.

Now she is looking forward to the fun and festivities of a family Christmas. But recently Louise was battling against blizzard conditions and coping in cramped accommodation — in the land still bearing the scars of war.

The 20-year-old Stamford chef was posted to Port Stanley after joining the Women's Royal Army Corps last year.

She arrived in July just in time for the bitter South Atlantic winter.

Louise said: "It was around freezing most of the

time. The worst thing is the wind—it never stops blowing. Even if the sun is out the warmth gets blown away."

The weather didn't help the living conditions. Along with the other girls from the catering corps Louise was based in 'Look Out Camp' just outside Port Stanley.

She lived in temporary cabin accommodation — sharing a room with four other girls.

Everyone had their own wardrobe but the worst thing was the lack of running water.

"Every time you wanted to go to the loo or have a wash you had to get fully dressed first. That was a bit

strange," said Louise.

Louise worked as a chef in the camp kitchen — cooking for about 350 hungry soldiers. "The kitchen was like a garage," she said.

But living on a military camp had its advantages for the 40 girls.

With thousands of lonely soldiers around they got a lot of attention. "We got invited to parties because there were so few of us," she said.

There were three pubs in Port Stanley and they closed at 10 pm.

"After the pubs shut there was nothing. We just had to go back to the video room," said Louise.

Life can get very depressing in the wilds of the Falklands but Louise said the only answer was to take a positive attitude.

She went on an adventure training exercise in West Falkland on her four day holiday period, and had a fantastic time exploring the island and studying the abundant wildlife.

The outdoors excursion also gave Louise the opportunity to meet the local people.

"They were really friendly and always offered us tea and biscuits. Some resent the soldiers being there but most are appreciative as they never thought the task force would come," she said.

Louise recently returned home to her mother in Water Street, Stamford. Soon she will be off to Larkhill, near Salisbury but for the moment she is happy doing her Christmas shopping — something that was impossible in the Falklands.



LOUISE Callow — helping to feed the Falkland troops.

Argentina's long haul to credibility

ARGENTINA HAS begun an all out effort to dispel doubts among its commercial bank creditors over the seriousness of its commitment to its International Monetary Fund economic programme.

"We don't like to undertake any commitment we are not in a position to fulfill. We are sure we are now in a position to fulfil all the agreements we have undertaken," Sr Bernardo Grinspun, Economy Minister said in Zurich yesterday.

The sober tone of his remarks in an interview at the start of a four nation tour of Europe and the Middle East contrasted markedly with the strident rejection last summer of IMF calls for curbs on real wage increases.

Next year public sector wages in Argentina will increase barely, if at all, in real terms, he said. But economic growth should match this year's 3 to 4 per cent level even after a progressive cut in the consolidated public sector cash deficit to 4.4 per cent of GDP in the final quarter from 10 per cent in the current quarter of 1984. In its medium term outlook for Argentina's economy, the IMF now projects that there will be no further need for after next year.

Inflation, now running at a monthly rate of 16 per cent, should be reduced to an annual rate of between 10 to 15 per cent within the next two or three years, he added.

Argentina's economic programme with the IMF foresees inflation dropping to 300 per cent a year by next autumn, but bankers say further sharp falls thereafter should not

Peter Montagnon in Zurich interviews Argentina's Economy Minister at the start of his four nation tour to secure support for a new debt agreement

automatically be discounted because of Argentina's long tradition of very rapid response to economic adjustment. During his tour the minister will seek to drum up support for the new Argentina debt agreement with commercial bank creditors which calls for new money loans totalling \$4.2bn (£3.5bn) and rescheduling of some \$13.5bn in private and public sector debt.

The initial response to the package has been generally positive, the minister said. The advisory committee of leading creditor banks will make its commitment to the new money loan by next Wednesday. This adds up to some 30 per cent of the amount sought.

Sr Grinspun added that he is to meet representatives of several European governments in Paris on Sunday to discuss a proposed additional package of up to \$500m in "bridging finance" to help Argentina reduce interest arrears before the end of the year. Argentina is also seeking contributions for this package from Governments in Latin America and the Far East.

Assuming that a critical mass of subscriptions to the new money loan can be received in time for the IMF board formally to approve Argentina's \$1.4bn loan request before the end of the year the country will move on to talks about rescheduling some \$1.8bn in official debts at a Paris Club meeting of industrial country creditors on January 15 and 16, Sr Grinspun said.

If the IMF approval is not forthcoming in time Argentina will not, however, receive its bridging finance by December 31 which would allow it to pay \$1.25bn in public sector interest arrears before the year-end profit reporting deadline for bank creditors. In these circumstances it would be "difficult" for Argentina to make a contribution, calculated at \$250m from its own reserves, Sr Grinspun said.

Argentina's new loan package from commercial bank creditors is generally regarded as the most difficult rescheduling exercise yet undertaken and it has been launched amid worries that several smaller banks may refuse to participate because of their aggravation over interest arrears.

Senior bankers say however that Argentina's promise to reduce its interest arrears before the end of the year is designed to stimulate commitments to the new loan from banks that might otherwise have refused to put up new money. The concentration of Argentina's debt among a relatively limited number of banks—about 100 banks or one third of the total number of individual creditor institutions hold

90 per cent of the loans outstanding—should help in this respect.

Despite Sr Grinspun's optimism bankers still believe there might be resistance to the package from some smaller U.S. regional institutions as well as banks in southern Europe and the Middle East which have traditionally been reluctant to go along with reschedulings. There are also fears that other Latin American banks which have difficulty funding themselves in the money markets may be slow to commit new money.

Sr Grinspun said that Argentina's decision to seek an orthodox solution to its debt problems did not diminish the importance of the role that could be played by the so-called Cartagena group of major Latin American debtors.

He said that this group should still seek a much broader dialogue on the debt problem with governments of the industrialised countries as well as official institutions such as the IMF and World Bank. This was because the debt problem was not just a financial one but also concerned issues such as trade and investment.

"If we cannot export enough and don't have investment capital it would be impossible to deal with the problem," he said. Countries cannot squeeze their economies indefinitely, reducing imports simply to pay their debts. Argentina's economic programme, which concentrates on reducing inflation is designed partly to offer an environment of greater security for foreign investors, he said.

Falklands constitution to go to parliament

By Hugh O'Shaughnessy

A NEW constitution for the Falkland Islands is expected to be approved by parliament in Westminster by March. It would come into effect in the territory in time for the Falklands general elections, due at the end of next year.

Under the constitution as drafted, the Falklands Legislative Council would increase the number of its elected members from six to eight. Four of these would represent Port Stanley and the other four the rest of the islands.

In addition there would be a majority of elected members on the Executive Council. The council, which is effectively the Falklands government, is controlled at present by a majority of non-elected civil servants and appointed members.

The Civil Commissioner in Port Stanley and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary in London would, under the new constitution, preserve their existing powers of veto over the council's decisions.

Mr Alistair Cameron, the Falkland Islands Government representative in London, commented: "This could be the beginning of a development towards a form of self-government such as is in effect in Gibraltar."

Enduring memory

THE DANGEROUS days of Spring 1982 will be recalled tonight at the first reunion of the ship's company of HMS Endurance which played so prominent a part in the Falklands campaign.

Chief guest at the reunion will be Captain Nick Barber, who was in command when the unarmed Endurance dodged Argentine warships through the ice-flows in the early stages of the conflict.

A fitting venue for the meeting has been found in HMS Vernon, Portsmouth. Captain Robert Falcon Scott, whose name is synonymous with the Antarctic, qualified as torpedo officer aboard Vernon in 1891.

The Guardian

FALKLANDS Crime File (part 17): Two islanders have been fined £10 each by magistrates for contravention of the Falklands "blacklist." This is a record on which the names of people with drinking problems are kept — either voluntarily or on the recommendation of a doctor or magistrate. Those on the list are prohibited from possessing drink; other islanders are forbidden to supply it to blacklisted individuals on penalty of joining the list themselves.

Falklands pledge traps ministers, say MPs

THE GOVERNMENT'S commitment to the Falkland Islanders during the conflict has forced it into "something of a political cul-de-sac", and given it even less room for manoeuvre than before the invasion, the all-party commons foreign affairs committee said yesterday.

The Government has gone far beyond its obligations under Article 73 of the United Nations Charter by insisting on the "paramountcy" of the islanders' "wishes", rather than their "interests", says its report.

Question PM says Labour

THE committee's Tory majority yesterday blocked a demand by Labour MPs that Mrs Thatcher should be summoned to give evidence about the events surrounding the sinking of the Argentinian cruiser, the Belgrano.

The four Labour members — Mr Nigel Spearing, Mr Ian Mikardo, Mr Dennis Canavan, and Mr Michael Welsh — argued that the Prime Minister and Lord Whitelaw were the only members of the war cabinet still in office.

However, in the long run, "a solution acceptable to the Falklands' immediate neighbours is essential to the islanders themselves: neither independence nor incorporation in the United Kingdom could conceivably achieve that objective."

"Some kind of accommodation with Argentina is not only inevitable, in view of the cost of the present policy to the UK, but also desirable if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long term economic prosperity and political stability."

The committee's Tory chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw, agreed at a press conference yesterday to make clear that the report in no way recommended "ceding, selling or bartering" the Falklands to Argentina.

The committee was unable to decide whether Britain or

Funereal pace leaves little time to save islands' economy

THE COMMITTEE reversed its strongest language for an attack on the "funereal" pace at which the Overseas Development Administration had set up the Falklands Development Corporation.

The corporation was recommended in Lord Shackleton's 1982 post-conflict report as an urgent means of rescuing the neglected Falklands economy and as an agency for lending islanders money to widen land ownership.

"If a viable economy for the Falklands is to be put into place before the inevitable withdrawal of most of the garrison, time is now be-

ginning to run out," says the report.

Sir Anthony Kershaw, the committee's Conservative chairman clarified this reference to inevitable withdrawal by saying at a press conference that it referred to an already planned reduction in garrison numbers after the strategic airport, which will allow rapid reinforcement, opens next spring.

The report says that "as an urgent response to an allegedly critical situation, it is difficult to imagine any enterprise being proceeded with at a more funereal pace" than the starting of

Argentina had the strongest legal claim to the Falklands.

The report says: "The historical and legal evidence demonstrates such areas of uncertainty that we are unable to reach a categorical conclusion on the legal validity of the historical claims of either country."

Much of the historical ar-

gument had been made less relevant by "Argentina's illegal resort to arms."

A previous committee had faced significant disagreement by historians on the period between the abandonment of the Spanish settlement in East Falklands in 1811 and the British occupation in 1833.

the corporation. "This sluggishness has undoubtedly given rise to understandable and justified resentment in the Falkland Islands."

More than two years after Lord Shackleton's report, although many studies and surveys are in progress, few have yet borne fruit in terms of tangible new economic developments producing turns to the islands.

The pattern of land tenure remained basically unchanged and the dominance of the Falkland Islands Company, the main landowner, was almost undiminished.



The Falklands shoreline, fringe of a problem which Sir Anthony Kershaw says it is not yet prudent to discuss

Richard Norton-Taylor and John Ezard report on the prospects for political and commercial changes in the South Atlantic

The report says that sovereignty should be side-stepped for the moment and that, whatever the legal claims, the invasion and conflict greatly reinforced the moral and political force of the Government's commitment to protect the interests and rights of the Falklanders.

However, it says that Brit-

ain was prepared to admit the possibility of talks on sovereignty even after the invasion on April 2, 1982.

Britain's insistence later, "once the immediate passions aroused by the conflict had cooled," on her claim to perpetual and non-negotiable sovereignty over the islands was not generally

the islands, would have seen little spending aimed at islanders' "more immediate social and economic needs."

The committee recommends that the development programme's prime emphasis should be on means of diversifying the islands' agricultural economy.

It is not convinced that the Falklands Government's persistent call for a 200-mile exclusive, revenue-yielding fishing zone can be justified in the light of the considerable political and practical problems to be overcome.

However, at a meeting to draft the report in October,

expected or accepted at the UN as the long-term outcome of the dispute.

Evidence by Lady Young, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, that "successive British governments have made it clear that they have no doubts about our sovereignty" was clearly belied by negotiations between 1967 and 1982 and by repeated doubts expressed by government officials.

Indeed, the report reflects Foreign Office thinking by suggesting that Britain's claim to the Falklands are not as strong as those to the dependencies, notably South Georgia.

However, it says that the Government's opposition now to any talks with Argentina "is no doubt prudent," a phrase opposed by some Labour members of the committee. If a deal were to depend on purely Argentinian guarantees for the islanders, there was a question on how far the word of Mr Alfonsín's Government could be regarded as an Argentinian bond.

A solution on the lines of leaseback could not easily be contemplated by Britain because of the "understandable mistrust of Argentina among the Falklands population" and uncertainty about political stability in Argentina. However, the report says that the Government should adopt a more positive tone in its attempts to normalise relations with Buenos Aires.

The Government should give a public undertaking that no further fortification of the Falklands was being contemplated and that the size of the army, RAF and naval presence in and around the islands was being reduced.

It should also consider issues of the non-sovereignty with Argentina, and possibly with other neighbouring Latin American states. These might include exploitation and regulation of hydro-carbon and fisheries resources in the region.

If agreement was reached on proposals for changes in the Falklands' international constitution, Britain should consider inviting the UN Decolonisation Committee to visit the islands.

the committee came close to supporting the Falklands Government's call for a fishing limit. The reservation was whether a unilateral imposed limit would be internationally acceptable to Third World and Communist countries.

It was made clear at yesterday's press conference that concern was felt about foreign fleets over-fishing in the South Atlantic and that a limit was still "one of the most likely ways forward."

Falklands Islands, Volume 1, Fifth Report, Foreign Affairs Committee. HMSO, £5.55.

Commons inquiry sheds doubt on Britain's legal claim to Falklands

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

Britain's legal claim to the Falklands, which is at the heart of the centuries-old dispute with Argentina and led to war two years ago, is cast into doubt by the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee in a report published yesterday.

After inquiries into the two rival sovereignty claims, the all-party group of MPs says: "The historical and legal evidence demonstrates such areas of uncertainty that we are unable to reach a categorical conclusion on the legal validity of the historical claims of either country."

But the committee, whose Falklands investigation has taken two years, emphasizes that much of the historical argument has been rendered less relevant by Argentina's "illegal resort to arms".

Without referring directly to Fortress Falklands, the MPs say the cost of defending the islands, £684 million this year and £552 million next year, will remain a substantial drain on the defence budget while the present policy continues, allowing for the savings brought about by the airport at Mount Pleasant.

"In broad terms it is costing us about one thousand times as much to defend each inhabitant of the Falklands as it costs us to defend each inhabitant of the UK."

Britain's unqualified refusal

since the conflict to discuss the sovereignty of the Falklands with Argentina "undoubtedly" makes progress on issues such as bilateral relations more difficult. But, after a disagreement in the committee, the report says in the present situation "this policy is no doubt prudent".

Labour MPs wanted to describe such an attitude as "understandable" but were voted down by the Conservative majority.

The attitude of the Argentine democratic government under President Alfonsín towards negotiations on sovereignty is essentially no different to that of its predecessors, the MPs say.

"Such negotiations once begun, must lead eventually and inevitably to the relinquishment of the United Kingdom's claim to end administration of the Falklands."

Because questions of principle and national honour are at stake and feelings in Argentina, Britain and the Falklands are so intense, "the prospects for an early settlement of the sovereignty dispute itself are remote."

"All our evidence, has, in fact, reinforced the wisdom of the general approach now being adopted by HM Government, that progress should be made towards re-establishing practical and sensible arrangements for

relations between the two countries."

The absence of normal diplomatic and commercial relations are not in the best interests of either country and will have to be rectified before long, the MPs say.

"Some kind of accommodation with Argentina is not only inevitable, in view of the cost of the present policy to the UK, but also desirable if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long-term economic prosperity and the political stability."

Although the committee says that Britain should not agree to the inclusion of the sovereignty issue in talks with Argentina "in the immediate future" it should be willing to discuss how progress can be made to try to find a negotiated settlement as requested by the United Nations.

The MPs recommend that Britain should announce it will lift the Falklands protection zone once Argentina formally declares an end to hostilities; undertakes progressively to reduce the size of the army, air force and navy presence in and around the islands; and announces publicly the non-sovereignty issues, it is prepared to discuss with Britain.

Special Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Falkland Islands, volume 1, Command 268-1 (Stationery Office: £5.55).

Next steps in the Falklands

IT IS not clear whether Argentina or Britain has a better historical claim to the Falkland Islands, but it is clear that there can be no swift settlement of the dispute about that claim. It is also clear that Britain must some day come to an agreement with Argentina about the territory. Such are the findings of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons, whose report on the Falklands was published yesterday.

The Committee advocates a new and more outgoing attitude by Britain to Argentina until the time becomes ripe for bilateral talks about the future of the territory and the wounds of war heal over.

Britain should, for example, say publicly that it will not fortify the islands any further and that it intends to take the first opportunity of running down its garrison in the South Atlantic. The Protection Zone—formerly known as the Total Exclusion Zone—round the Falklands should be scrapped as soon as the authorities in Argentina formally declare an end to hostilities.

The Committee's report is sober and realistic. It contributes to a much needed clarification of the issues in what will be a continuing debate about the future of the 1,800 Falklanders.

Obvious

It is obvious that while Mrs Margaret Thatcher remains Prime Minister, the British Government will continue to baulk at any discussion with Argentina over the sovereignty of the islands. She has made it clear that she did not order the recapture of the Falklands in 1982 in order to start turning them over to the Argentines a few years later.

The suggestions from the Foreign Affairs Committee start from the premise that an accommodation between Britain and Argentina is not only inevitable but desirable. The British treasury cannot go on indefinitely pouring billions of

pounds into the defence of a community the size of a small English village. Nor will the economic and political prospects for the islanders themselves brighten if they refuse to acknowledge the existence of their large continental neighbour. As the Committee states, it is high time British politicians and the British public came to terms with those facts.

Recognised

The Committee recognises that such is the present understandable distrust of the Argentines by the Falklanders that the idea of a leaseback is not possible. No Falklander would be happy with a situation in which sovereignty over the islands was passed to Argentina in return for a period of continuing British administration.

The MP's stop short of throwing the leaseback solution away entirely. "The passage of time," they comment, "may well make possible a reopening of discussions along these lines."

The Committee reinforces its views about the long-term future of the Falklands with some useful and at times pungent comments on the need for political and economic reforms in the short term. The Overseas Development Administration was, for instance, sluggish in getting the Falkland Islands Development Corporation going; there must be more land reform and the constitution must be brought up to date.

The question of sovereignty over the Falklands cannot for ever be ruled out of discussions between Britain and Argentina—just as the questions of the future of Hong Kong and Gibraltar have been discussed on a realistic basis with China and Spain, respectively.

The committee's report strengthens the argument for a more flexible position on the part of the British Government. In spite of the failure of the Berne talks earlier this year, a sensible dialogue must be resumed; a change of gear on the British side is needed soon.

MPs urge positive Falklands line

By Richard Norton-Taylor and John Ezard.

AN ALL-PARTY Commons committee yesterday ducked the issue of whether Britain or Argentina has the stronger legal claim to the islands but said that it was not in the interests of Britain or the islanders for the present stalemate to continue.

Though the report, by the foreign affairs committee, has all the hallmarks of a compromise between the Tory and Labour members and also side-steps the other central issue in the Falklands dispute — the question of sovereignty — it offers little comfort to Mrs Thatcher.

Neither did the Argentine

Foreign Minister, Dr Dante Caputo, when in an interview last night he firmly repeated his government's refusal to talk to Britain without sovereignty on the agenda.

"We want a firmly grounded relationship with Britain and to ignore sovereignty is to overlook the fundamental issue," he said on BBC-2's Brass Tacks. The British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, said on the same programme that, in view of the Argentine attitude, "unfortunately for the Falklands, things could not be less auspicious."

Both men were interviewed before the report was published but were commenting on its likely contents.

Mr Des Keoghane,

chairman of the Falklands Families Association, which represents next-of-kin of the 255 servicemen killed in the conflict, said he recognised negotiations with Argentina would have to come for economic reasons.

"Most servicemen are realists and they are going to

Pledge traps ministers, funeral pace for development, page 4: Leader comment, page 12

realise this must be done," Mr Keoghane said. "I can see, in future time, a sort of joint government of the islands."

The report urges the Government to adopt a "more positive tone" in its at-

tempts to normalise relations with Argentina and points out that it is costing Britain about 1,000 times as much to defend each inhabitant of the Falklands as it costs to defend each inhabitant of Britain.

The costs are estimated at £684 million next year. "Although both capital and recurrent costs are likely to fall following the commissioning of the new airport at Mount Pleasant," the committee says, they will remain a substantial drain on the United Kingdom defence budget so long as the present policy continues."

Although the committee acknowledges that the Alfonsín government in Argentina is adopting an atti-

tude towards sovereignty different from its predecessors, and although it points out that Britain agreed to the possibility of talks on sovereignty during the Falklands conflict in 1982, it says simply that the prospect now for an early settlement of the sovereignty dispute is remote.

It acknowledges that British officials have consistently expressed doubts about Britain's legal claims to the Falklands, though not to its dependencies of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. But Sir Anthony Kershaw, Tory MP for Stroud and the committee's chairman, expressed the view yesterday that the whole

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'Positive' Argentina line urged

Continued from page one

problem was a political rather than a legal matter.

Both Tory and Labour committee members agree that long-term security cannot be bought by arms. But they disagree over when the issue of sovereignty should be tackled.

Two Labour members — Mr Ian Mikardo and Mr Denis Canavan — made it clear that they did not accept Sir Anthony's judgment that "it will be a matter of a generation before the issue of sovereignty is settled." Indeed, Sir Anthony said that it was possible that the whole question could eventually be solved without a transfer of sovereignty.

He also made it clear that he was worried about political stability in Argentina. The report goes so far as to say: "If (a deal) were to be one dependent on purely Argentine guarantees for the

Falkland Islanders, the question inevitably arises as to how far the word of Sir Alfonsín's Government can be regarded as an Argentine bond."

Yet the report says that politicians and the public in Britain must recognise "some kind of accommodation with Argentina is not only inevitable, in view of the cost of the present policy to the United Kingdom, but also desirable if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long-term economic prosperity and political stability."

It chides the Government for getting itself into what the committee describes as a cul-de-sac by referring to the "wishes" of the Islanders, as opposed to the "interests" — the word used in the United Nations Charter.

The Government, the report says should now give a public undertaking that no further fortification of the

Falklands is being contemplated and that it intends to lift the Protection Zone around the islands as soon as Argentina formally declares an end to hostilities. It should say it is prepared to discuss economic cooperation in the region with Buenos Aires.

The committee was attacked yesterday for condoning the Government's policy of inaction by Mr George Foulkes, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman, and Mr Cyril Townsend, Tory MP for Bexley.

In his Brass Tacks interview, Dr Caputo signalled one apparent modification in Argentina's previously headline position which had earlier yesterday led the Falkland Government representative in London, Mr Alastair Cameron, to accuse President Alfonsín's administration of being "more intransigent than Gen. Galtieri."

FALKLANDS REALITIES

THE CASE FOR THE GOVERNMENT giving a public undertaking that there are no plans for the further fortification of the Falkland Islands is, as the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee argues in its report published yesterday, a very strong one. There is paradoxically, as we have often said before, no surer way of jeopardising the long-term security of the islands than to pour too much money into them in the form of defence expenditure: such profligacy is bound sooner or later to evoke a bad reaction at home. This is not to say that the political reasons for defence overkill cannot be appreciated. Clearly the Government is at great pains not to take the smallest risk of a repeat of the events of 1982.

The first aim of the Government in its dealings over the Falklands must be to convince the Argentines that we mean, and will continue to mean, business. Perhaps the best way to introduce doubts, as the Foreign Affairs Committee suggests, would be to embark on talks which included the issue of sovereignty. So the committee falls short, but only just, of recommending that we should. Refusal to discuss sovereignty may be a difficult and unpopular line with international public opinion, but the Government has no choice at this stage but to pursue it. Possibly the world will regard us with more sympathy if we make every effort to re-establish normal relations with Argentina. But it should be made clear, especially to the Argentines, that sovereignty is not for discussion.

The second way to introduce doubts, or at any rate confusion, in the minds of Argentines is to continue with the kind of lavish, almost *ad hoc* expenditure on the Falklands which everyone knows cannot be sustained. Of course there are some people (perhaps some of them are members of the Foreign Affairs Committee) who are urging a decrease in defence expenditure in the hope that it will gradually dwindle to nothing. But the fact is that the Government must reduce expenditure in line with our ability and ultimate willingness to pay. The Falklands can only be defended if the Government is prepared to develop a realistic long-term policy now which convinces the Argentines that there will be no talks on sovereignty and that defence expenditure at a sensible level can be maintained.

Slip through the net

Should he read this week's reports of Eastern European ships plundering Falklands fish stocks, Nikoli Kot will relive a nightmare. Last Christmas, as a Russian scaman aboard one of these ships, Kot broke both legs and was flown to Port Stanley hospital. Lest he observe military movements in the town, the authorities kept him in a darkened room and blindfolded him when he went to the toilet. Kot understandably tried to escape but broke four ribs climbing out of a window. During Mrs Thatcher's surprise visit he was locked in a lavatory to avoid an embarrassing encounter, and was finally flown 8,000 miles to Britain by RAF Hercules where, legs still in plaster, he was unceremoniously dumped at the Soviet embassy.

Leaking on

There is no end to the Belgrano leaks. The latest springs from the ICA in the Mail, which is trying to keep the wraps on a freedom of information conference on January 19, entitled *Shh... It's a Secret*. The surprise star, whom it plans to reveal shortly, is Clive Ponting, whose trial for allegedly leaking Belgrano documents opens nine days later. Ponting's subject: "Secrecy and liberty".

Drastic defence review not needed, MPs told

By David Fairhall,
Defence Correspondent

Defence programmes and commitments do not need a drastic review despite the steeply rising cost of military hardware and the continuing burden of the Falklands, Sir Clive Whitmore, Permanent Under Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, told MPs yesterday.

Unpublished government forecasts show the cost of the Falklands garrison plus associated operations and equipment replacements running at about £500 million a year at least until 1986-7.

But Sir Clive told the all-party Commons defence committee that the defence budget will rise again next year to more than £18 billion, an increase of 2.8 per cent in real terms after allowing for inflation.

Thereafter it would show no real growth, which he saw as a

reasonable balance between defence needs and what the country was prepared to spend.

Sir Clive adopted much the same line of argument that Mr Heseltine has used to deny the prospect of any embarrassing defence review — a term Conservative ministers have never liked to acknowledge.

Mr Heseltine's favourite proof that it cannot happen consists of a simple diagram showing that as one goes further and further ahead in the defence department's 10-year forward costings, an increasing proportion of the budget remains uncommitted.

If certain programmes cannot be fitted in beneath the £18 billion ceiling, they are moved sideways until they fit.

His critics point out that half the defence budget goes on manpower, and that certain programmes are virtually committed, a long way ahead. The Trident nuclear submarine programme is a good example.

The Falklands is another, as the defence committee was reminded yesterday when some of the costlier items involved were listed in a government memorandum: two more TriStar tankers — £123 million including conversion; nine extra Sea Harrier aircraft at £59 million and a new airfield for the garrison — £215 million.

Even so, Sir Clive told the committee, if only the equipment half of the budget is considered about 50 per cent of the main expenditure is still uncommitted three years ahead, and six years ahead the proportion rises to 90 per cent.



Sir Clive Whitmore —
'reasonable balance'

Oh fudge, our help in ages past

On the one hand, everything is hunky-dory and absolutely right; on the other hand, for heaven's sake, it's a terrible, unsustainable, futile mess. Which, in a single, cracked nutshell, is what the Commons' Foreign Affairs Committee thinks about the Falklands. Not since Anthony Perkins pursued Janet Leigh into the shower with a long knife has there been such a ludicrous exercise in schizophrenia. Consider. On the one hand, we (the committee) have looked at the facts most carefully, and are bound legally to say that we don't think we have much of a claim to the islands in the first place. On the other hand, since the Argies tried to take them away, the law doesn't matter because it's all politics now. (An argument of total legal dottiness.) On the one hand, civilian and fighting and other multi-million sundries quite apart, defending the islands devoured £624 million last year and is devouring £684 million this year, so that "it is costing us about one thousand times as much to defend each inhabitant on the Falklands as it costs us to defend each inhabitant of the UK". On the other hand: what on earth are we supposed to do about it? On the one hand, the "paramountcy" of the islanders' wishes remains absolute. On the other, "some kind of accommodation" with Argentina is "inevitable" in the long term "if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long term economic prosperity and political stability". On the one hand, we must be willing to discuss "a negotiated settlement." On the other hand, Senor Alfonsin and his benign Social Democrats may not be around for very much longer so it's difficult to see how something you can only discuss in the "long term" (because the short term is now, and She won't discuss anything now) can in fact be discussed in the long-term, because then there may be no one to discuss it with.

There is page after page of such supreme illogic. We must make the islands economically viable. But that can't happen without permanent transport subsidies. We must offer the Argentinians something they

don't want in order to draw them into talks. We condemn the "funereal" pace of development of something we think we should give away later. We should invite the UN Decolonisation Committee to look around; and then denounce them when (citing endless legal arguments, which we accept, and endless UN resolutions, which we prefer to ignore) they tell us to get out.

Still, the committee MPs have nonetheless performed a signal service. They have laid out all the Government's arguments in a single report: and though they lack the spunk (or suicidal impulse) to reach plain conclusions, those conclusions nevertheless wheedle forth clearly enough.

In short: we probably don't have much title to these islands anyway. They're costing us a bomb. We're still flinging defence money at a non-Threat as though there was no tomorrow. At the same time — because Whitehall is pretty turned off the whole daft enterprise — the civil strides to alleged "economic viability" are really shuffles sideways. In the end someone will have to tell the islanders and the Falklands lobby back here what's what. But not us: not today, thank you.

Such views are understandable to be sure; but deeply craven. They trail — by unhappy timing — across a domestic canvas where tiny portions of that £684 million are driving Sir Keith Joseph to the depths of despair. Even the words the committee uses — the "community" of the islands — have a separate resonance in Grimethorpe or Corton Wood. Is there truly nothing to be done? Of course there is. We can negotiate with this elected government of Argentina, just as Sir Geoffrey (all unknowing what may be in 15 years) has just negotiated with this unelected Chinese government about Hong Kong. We could stop piling in military hardware (a tremulous committee point) since there is now no Threat to reinforce against. We could stop pretending that the islands are the Selby of the South Atlantic. Above all, we could do what Mrs Thatcher and Mr Pym long ago explicitly pledged: that is, consult the islanders properly.

First ask the major parties in Parliament today what stable future they are prepared to underwrite: then see what Senor Alfonsin will offer: then put that choice openly to the indigenous Falklanders. It will require a little political courage... But it must be better for everyone than the present grey mist in which the Falklands drift, bulwarked by short term promises from London — and long term signals of certain sell out because "the cost of the present policy" cannot be borne. Short term resolution — now, as before — is profound medium term irresolution. Why not, for the sake of all concerned, say so, and try to sort out the mess yesterday's committee so poignantly lays bare?

Reduce island forces, say MPs

GOVERNMENT URGED TO CURB FALKLAND EXPANSION

By DAVID ADAMSON *Diplomatic Correspondent*

THE Government should give a public undertaking that no further fortification of the Falkland Islands is being contemplated, says a report published yesterday.

It should also state that the size of the armed forces in and around the islands will be progressively reduced, according to the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee.

Such an undertaking would carry the proviso that evidence of renewed hostile Argentine intentions towards the islands would render it void.

The committee endorses "the wisdom of the general approach" adopted by the Government in its attempts to re-establish "practical and sensible arrangements for relations" with Argentina.

But it believes that the Government could usefully adopt a "more positive" tone in its proposals and publicly offer specific incentives for Argentina to encourage greater flexibility and break the present deadlock over negotiations.

Easing of tension is possible

Other recommendations put forward by the committee are: An announcement by Britain that it intends lifting the Protection Zone around the islands as soon as a formal declaration of the end of hostilities is communicated by the Argentine government through the Protecting Powers (Brazil and Switzerland);

A public announcement of the non-sovereignty issues, which Britain is prepared to discuss with Argentina (and possibly other neighbouring Latin American states), including oil and fisheries resources;

And the Government should consider inviting the UN Decolonisation Committee to visit the Falklands.

If the Government feels unable to pursue the idea of unilateral declarations, the possibility of parallel moves by the two governments towards a military relaxation should be considered, the report suggests.

Both countries either are or soon will be in a position to give assurances leading to an

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easing of tension without loss of face or significant military disadvantage.

In view of the progress in fortifying the Falklands since 1982 and the imminent commissioning of the new airport at Mount Pleasant, a British undertaking on no further fortification and a reduction in the size of the armed forces would be politically and militarily acceptable at home.

On the Argentine side, the re-equipment of the armed forces since the end of the war has probably progressed sufficiently for a curtailment of further arms purchases to be both defensible in Argentina and financially advantageous.

The report says that to date the British position has been that it could not consider lifting the Protection Zone until Argentina has formally declared an end to hostilities and "fully satisfied" Britain that it denounces the future use of force.

Argentina has repeatedly demanded as a condition for the resumption of negotiations a guarantee that Britain will stop fortifying the islands and concentrating armed forces in the area.

The committee makes it clear that its ideas are aimed at finding a way out of the "new and more dangerous impasse" that has been reached following the failure of the Berne talks in July.

The collapse of the talks is seen as likely to result in increased international pressure on Britain to come to the negotiating table on Argentina's terms.

Unilateral moves by Britain on the lines suggested would reassure the international community of Britain's desire for a permanent settlement and prevent the diplomatic initiative passing to Argentina.

They would not mean that Britain should agree to the sovereignty issue, as at present

defined by Argentina, being placed on the agenda for talks in the immediate future.

The committee takes the view that the prospects for an early settlement of the dispute over sovereignty are remote. It attributes its conclusion to the intensity of feelings on all sides over sovereignty, the emotions generated by the war and Britain's commitments to the present generation of islanders.

At the same time, it is clear that the absence of normal diplomatic and commercial relations between the two countries will have to be rectified before long.

There is a need for politicians and the public, particularly in Britain and the Falklands, says the report, to recognise that the present situation, although understandable in the short-term, can only offer an uncertain future to the islands in the long-term.

As a result, some kind of accommodation with Argentina is not only inevitable, in view of the cost of the present policy to Britain, but desirable if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long-term economic prosperity and political stability.

A solution on the lines of a leaseback of the islands to Britain cannot be easily contemplated at the moment because of the islanders' distrust of Argentina and uncertainty about the Alfonsín regime.

Uncertain future for islands

The committee believes that the new Argentine government is pursuing a policy essentially no different from that of its predecessors. That means that they view negotiations as leading inevitably to the relinquishment by Britain of its claims to the Falklands.

Britain's policy—of keeping sovereignty off the agenda indefinitely—may reflect understandable caution about the long-term stability of the Alfonsín government.

However, the committee sees it as possibly ignoring the extent to which President Alfonsín's freedom of manoeuvre is circumscribed by Argentina's endemic economic and political problems close in on him.

If a deal were to be dependent on purely Argentine guarantees, the question would arise as to how far the Alfonsín government's word could be regarded as an Argentine bond.

"Similarly, to strike a deal in the hope that it would reinforce the stability of the democratic regime in Buenos Aires would be an extremely

risky gamble, since many issues other than the Falklands could contribute to that regime's collapse."

The committee was unable to reach any categorical conclusions about the validity of either sides historical claim to the islands.

It did conclude though, that Argentina's claims to South Georgia and the South Sandwich islands were without legal foundation.

The Foreign Affairs Select Committee comprises: Sir Anthony Kershaw (C., Stroud), chairman; Mr Dennis Canavan (Lab., Falkirk W.); Mr Ivan Lawrence (Lab., Burton-on-Trent); Mr James Lester (C., Brixton); Mr Ian Mikardo (Lab., New and Poplar); Mr Mark Robinson (C., Newport W.); Mr Norman St John-Stevas (C., Chelmsford); Mr Peter Spearling (Lab., Newham S.); Mr Peter Thomas (C., Hendon S.); Mr Peter Wells (C., Hertford and Stortford); and Mr Michael Welsh (Lab., Doncaster N.).

Fifth Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Commons, Falkland Islands. Vol. 1. H.M.S.O. 25-55.

RAF taking command

By Maj.-Gen. Edward Fursdon Defence Correspondent

AIR Commodore Richard "Kip" Kendal, 45, is to be the next commander of the Falklands Islands forces. He is at present Commandant of the RAF's Central Flying School.

He will succeed Maj-Gen Peter de la Billiere next Summer, with the rank of Air Vice-Marshal.

For months it has been known that once the Mount Pleasant airfield opened next April there would be a shift of emphasis to an airfield-based reinforcement defence strategy.

But no decision has yet been

taken on whether the garrison trooping and contingency reinforcement tasks will be undertaken by RAF TriStar aircraft or by civilian charter wide-bodied aircraft.

In mid-January, Prince Andrew will be returning for a second tour of duty in the South Atlantic as the Lynx helicopter pilot on board the Type 22 frigate Brazen, 3,860 tons.

He served as a Sea King helicopter pilot in the carrier Invincible, 19,500 tons, during the Falklands campaign of 1982 and later converted to flying Lynxes. He joined Brazen in June this year.

Daily Mail 13.12.84

● Prince Andrew is off to the Falklands — where he fought during the Falklands War — for five months in the New Year. His ship HMS Brazen is to patrol the 200-mile protection zone.

Daily Mail
12.12.84

BRASS TACKS

BBC 2, 8.10: The Falklands — Time to Talk ? Is a series of interviews by Sir Nicholas Henderson, our Ambassador in Washington during the Falklands conflict. He asks whether the time has not now come to negotiate with Argentina over the future of the islands.

Those interviewed include Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe, Sir Anthony Kershaw MP, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, David Steel and the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr Dante Kaputo.

MPs urge ease-up with Argentina

By Diplomat Correspondent

A POWERFUL committee of MPs urged the Government yesterday to be 'more positive' in its attempts to normalise relations with Argentina.

The call came from the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs.

It said in a report: 'Some kind of accommodation with Argentina is not only inevitable in view of the cost of the present policy to the UK but also desirable if the Falklands are to have any prospect of long-term economic prosperity and political stability.'

Illegal

But committee chairman Sir Anthony Kershaw, Tory MP for Stroud, told a news conference that he believed it would be a generation before Britain and Argentina settled the issue of sovereignty.

The committee was unable to decide which country had the strongest legal claim to the Falklands, but felt that much of Argentina's historical argument has been rendered less relevant by its 'illegal resort to arms.'

The cost of defending the Falklands will remain 'a substantial drain in the defence budget'

**Alfonsin moves cautiously to
avoid provoking the military**

Trial could be turning point in dirty war inquiry

From Jeremy Morgan
in Buenos Aires

A decisive moment may finally have been reached in President Alfonsín's slow-moving attempt to investigate the former Argentine military regime's "dirty war" against civilian opponents without provoking outright opposition from the armed forces.

After a year of indecision by the elected authorities and stalling by the military leadership, both sides have been plunged into barely disguised confrontation by last week's order from a federal judge that the Argentine navy officer accused of kidnapping a Swedish teenager in 1977 should stand trial.

The case, centred on the disappearance of Miss Dagmar Hagelin, then 17 years old, at the height of the regime's crackdown on opponents, could decide rather more than just whether the officer, Alfredo Astiz, should be judged by civilian or military courts or

whether he should be tried at all.

Amid some confusion over the accused officer's rank, the navy's serving admirals were called to a meeting by the chief of staff, Admiral Ramon Arosa, on Monday.

Navy spokesman said that the officer was a lieutenant and not a captain, as he has always been described since he surrendered to British forces on South Georgia in the early days of the Falklands war in 1982.

Lieutenant Astiz has gone to court only once, in uniform, where he refused to give evidence before Judge Miguel Del Castillo or attend an identity parade. The case has also prompted an intervention from the Armed Forces Supreme Council, Argentina's highest military court.

The military tribunal called on the judge to disqualify himself from the case because he sent it to military justice months ago. But the clarification



Lieutenant Astiz being driven away for interrogation in Buenos Aires

tion of Lieutenant Astiz's rank have been cleared by a military court which investigated the Hangelin case in 1981 and concluded he did nothing more than carry out orders. But that officers are to be divided into three categories — those who ordered the repression, those who exceeded orders, and those who merely followed them.

Lieutenant Astiz is said to have been cleared by a military court which investigated the Hangelin case in 1981 and concluded he did nothing more than carry out orders. But that officers are to be divided into three categories — those who ordered the repression, those who exceeded orders, and those who merely followed them.

Government spokesmen conceded that the trial has sent "strong repercussions" down the ranks.

Foreign fleets depleting Falklands fish stocks

By John Ezard

An average of 63 foreign factory ships — mostly from Eastern Europe — were fishing for free in the British-held waters around the Falkland Islands every month earlier this year, according to confidential Royal Navy statistics.

The figures which have just become known, disclose a picture of unrestricted, legalised plunder on a scale not so far appreciated in Britain. The ease with which an international fishing free-for-all is being allowed in otherwise strictly guarded seas has astonished fishermen from some of the nations taking part.

According to official figures and British traders who buy some of the fish, catches already made around the Falklands and other British dependencies have a value approaching £200 million a year — only £24 million less than next year's total Ministry of Defence forecast for main-

taining Britain's Fortress Falklands garrison.

In February 1985 fleets scheduled to fish in the South Atlantic will be swelled by 30 to 40 extra Japanese factory vessels, plus 10 ships from each of two new countries, Taiwan and South Korea.

The trend has intensified warnings that what the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation classifies as one of the world's richest fisheries could be in danger of exhaustion within two or three years, leaving Britain or Argentina to preside over barren waters around the Falklands when the sovereignty issue is resolved.

The navy figures cover the last South Atlantic fishing season between November 1983 and August this year. In the peak month, April, 103 ships were vacuuming up fish, unhindered — and even helped in emergencies — by the naval patrols which monitored them. The Falklands are one of the few maritime territories in the

world without a coastal fishing limit. The Government fears that to impose one could jeopardise future talks with Argentina, which has a strict coastal fishing limit of its own.

Details of the size of foreign operation were not known to the House of Commons foreign affairs committee when it compiled a report on the Falklands to be issued on Wednesday. The Government has so far refused to publish evidence on the grounds that it would disclose the garrison's surveillance capacity to Argentina. But senior officers have maintained that this capacity is already obvious to Argentina through its own radar and through the British radar signatures it picks up.

The figures give precise tonnage which make it clear that nearly all the foreign vessels are large ships in fleets with facilities for onboard processing and freezing.

Of the ships counted in April, 51 were Polish, 32 Rus-

sian, nine East German, four Spanish and seven Japanese. Even in July, deep into the South Atlantic winter, 68 ships were at work. Over the nine months, all the ships logged a total of 3,557 days fishing between them.

The only cost to the fleets are the dues paid by most Polish vessels for using a deepwater harbour near Port Stanley. The harbourmaster's dues income over the past 10 years reflects the scale of the fishing "gold rush" which has developed since the 1982 conflict.

In 1974-75, according to Falklands government figures, income was £1,561. In 1976-77 — when Lord Shackleton presented his first, apathetically received, report on economic prospects for the Falklands to the Government — it was £1,940. In 1980-81 it was £89,896. In 1982-83, the year of the conflict which produced regular patrols, harbour dues suddenly rose to £163,910. In

the year ending last April, dues were £261,324.

Mr Symon Lyster, secretary of the Falkland Islands Foundation, a conservation society, said one Polish captain told him that "he thought we had completely lost our senses. But he was determined to profit from the bonanza while it lasts."

Britain's biggest fishing, research and commodity trading firm, J. Marr Seafoods of Hull, has handled some 40,000 tonnes of foreign-fleet-caught Falklands fish this year, "and we have only been taking a tiny part of their catch," said the firm's director and general manager, Mr Roger Johnson.

This included 25,000 tonnes of Russian-caught squid handled in July. It was worth £15-£17 million at current market prices of £600 to £700 a tonne.

According to other trade sources, Spain landed £30,000 worth of Falklands squid this year. This was enough to meet her entire domestic and tourist

needs. She was able to stop squid imports. From trade contacts with foreign fleets, Mr Johnson estimated their total squid catches this year at 250,000 tonnes, worth some £100 million.

The Falklands' other fish stocks of cod, hake and blue whiting were estimated by a British White Fish Authority report in 1979 as worth £108 million. The fishing industry estimates that 1984 foreign fleet catches were already approaching this level.

Mr Johnson said he had been frustrated this year to find Russians asking him to accept Falklands fish in exchange for Scots mackerel. "That really does rub salt into the wound," he said.

The only official figures for catches by foreign fleets are those eventually given by the countries involved to UN Food and Agricultural Organisation headquarters in Rome. The last full figures available cover 1982. They indicate a

total 1.54 million tonne catch from the whole Patagonian Shelf — the fishing field which stretches from Uruguay to Cape Horn and includes the Falklands waters.

Highly incomplete figures for part of 1983 indicate a total catch of 441,000 tonnes by Poland, Japan and Russia. These returns do not give separate figures for the Falklands. But an FAO official cited the view of one of its leading recent fisheries experts, Mr John Gulland, that the Falklands area is one of the world's most productive fisheries.

A fisheries adviser to the Foreign Office, Dr Inigo Everson, the British Antarctic Survey's section head of marine biology, said it was reasonable to believe that since the 1982 conflict much of the fishing within the Patagonian Shelf had switched to the Falklands, where it was undisputed by South American patrol ships.

Northwood did not tell ministers that the Belgrano had changed course away from the Task Force, and Lord Lewin, who had visited Northwood on his way to Chequers on May 2, quickly got an agreement from the war cabinet to allow the cruiser to be attacked.

Lord Lewin has since belittled the significance of this change in the rules of engagement, describing it as a change in degree rather than one of principle. Anyway, he told the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, imagine what ministers felt like when they woke up in the morning to hear on BBC radio Argentina's claim that they had hit a British aircraft carrier and reeked significant damage on the British Task Force.

So ministers were convinced by naval commanders that the Belgrano was "a threat," though they were not told of the precise nature of that threat. This will not be known until and unless the Government agrees to supply evidence — in particular the time that GCHQ intercepted, decoded and forwarded to ministers, the Argentine orders to their fleet, on the night of May 1 and 2, to return to their coastal waters.

Ministers have already had to acknowledge that some evidence — in the form of signals — has been destroyed. But they insist that all important information relating to the Belgrano's sinking is safe in the hands of the Ministry of Defence. As if in anticipation of further revelations — for ministers did not know everything that was going on — and perhaps they still do not — they suggest that these would be irrelevant: the decision was taken and the rest is history.

But a more honest reaction, some Whitehall officials say, would be an open recognition of the difficulty that there is in reconciling the government's insistence that it was adopting a policy of "minimum force," with the concern of naval commanders about the genuine vulnerability of the Task Force. Given this difficulty, was the war cabinet really interested in striking the right balance?

Ministers 'dragging feet on islands'

By Ian Aitken,
Political Editor

A highly embarrassing report from a senior all-party Commons committee is expected to tell Mrs Thatcher and her Foreign Secretary this week that its members have been unable to sort out the legal rights and wrongs of British and Argentine claims to the Falkland Islands.

Moreover, the 11-man select committee on foreign affairs is likely to say that it does not believe the Government is moving fast enough on talks aimed at normalising relations with Argentina. It wants Britain to hold out a number of political and diplomatic carrots in order to get things moving.

The committee's recommendations form part of its report on a lengthy investigation in which ministers, civil servants and service chiefs gave evidence. The committee members, who include four Labour MPs, are believed to have agreed that the Government is broadly correct in refusing to talk about the sovereignty of the islands until Anglo-Argentine relations have been re-established on a sensible footing.

But although the report is expected to be unanimous a substantial number of changes are said to have been made in the final draft of the report. The Labour minority, which consisted of Mr Ian Mikardo, Mr Nigel Spearing, Mr Dennis Canavan and Mr Michael Welsh, is reported to have rejected any formula which gave the islanders a total veto over an eventual settlement.

Surprisingly, the MPs appear to have reached no conclusion about the legal validity of the claims and counter-claims by Britain and Argentina to the ultimate sovereignty over the islands. But they insist that Argentina's claim has been seriously weakened by her unsuccessful attempt to use force. Equally, the report is understood to argue that Britain's successful recapture of the islands has greatly strengthened the moral force of her claim to protect the islanders' rights.

Ministers seem likely to be satisfied, however, with the committee's views on the order in which the Government is seeking to conduct its dealings with Argentina. The report is expected to endorse the idea that talks about sovereignty cannot take place until normal diplomatic and economic relations have been resumed.

But it is the committee's proposals for speeding up the process which will most annoy the Prime Minister and her colleagues. For it is understood that the report suggests that Britain should offer some radical "inducements" to Argentina.

These include a promise to end the exclusion zone around the islands immediately Argentina announces a formal end to hostilities. But perhaps more embarrassing for Mrs Thatcher is a proposal that Britain should publicly announce that no further fortification of the islands is planned, and that British forces will be steadily reduced, so long as relations remain peaceful.

However, the general tone of the report is said to be more conciliatory than seemed likely in the early stages of the committee's inquiry. That early mood was inflamed when the committee's chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw, returned documents to the Defence Ministry which had allegedly been sent to the Labour MP, Mr Tam Dalyell, by a civil servant.

In particular, the report appears to rule out the idea of making a bargain with Argentina's new elected government in order to keep it in office.

The Guardian 10/12/84

RICHARD
NORTON-TAYLOR
charts the course of
the continuing
Belgrano controversy

Murky waters

"A LOT of things may have been going on," Britain's Defence Secretary during the Falklands crisis told the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee the other day, "that I didn't know about."

Sir John Nott added that he did not have the remotest idea what his War Cabinet colleague Mr Francis Pym, then Foreign Secretary, was discussing in Washington with the US Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, at lunch on Sunday May 2, 1982 — the day the Argentine cruiser, the Belgrano, was sunk with the loss of 368 lives.

"As far as I am aware," Sir John said in his first appearance before MPs since he left office and Parliament last year, "all changes in the rules of engagement were decided by the War Cabinet." He said he was "not a very good source of information" on what authority the general warning given to Argentina on April 23 — a warning which the government has since seized on to justify later action, including the Belgrano's sinking — gave to the Task Force commanders.

Lord Lewin, chief of defence staff at the time (who enjoyed a close rapport with Mrs Thatcher), has said that

in his view — though this was not that of Pym or Nott (the other members of the war cabinet, William Whitelaw and Cecil Parkinson, took even more of a back seat) — any hope of a diplomatic settlement had evaporated during the last week of April.

It is now clear, mainly from the expansive evidence of Lord Lewin, that Friday, April 30, 1982, was the key date; by the end of that day the naval commanders, as Lord Lewin told the Foreign Affairs Committee, had convinced ministers that the rules of engagement should be changed to allow the submarine Splendid to attack "the unique threat" of the Argentine aircraft carrier, the Veinti-cinco de Mayo.

During that day, both Pym and the Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers, questioned whether an attack on the carrier outside the total exclusion zone was compatible with Britain's reliance on article 51 of the UN charter covering self-defence. They said they were concerned about international opinion and even public reaction at home. They did so after being briefed — as ministers usually were — by the "mandarins' committee," chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robert Armstrong.

The doubts were overcome; for the navy that was the turning point. It had secured political agreement for this crucial change in the rules of engagement.

In the event, the Splendid lost track of the Argentine carrier and then, but only then, the Task Force commanders turned their attention to the other large Argentine ship, the Belgrano.

On May 1 and May 2 the mandarins' committee, whose job was to explain to ministers the full significance of rules of engagement, was bypassed. Fleet headquarters at

RAF officer to head Falklands garrison

By Rodney Cowton
Defence Correspondent

For the first time a Royal Air Force officer is to be given overall command of the military garrison in the Falkland Islands.

It is understood that he is Air Commodore Richard Kembell, who will be promoted to Air Vice-Marshal. Aged 45, he is at present Commandant of the Central Flying Training School and is regarded as an expert in air defence.

He is expected to go to the Falklands in the middle of next year. The present commander is Major-General Peter de la Billiere, who took up his appointment in June and had commanded the Special Air Service Regiment.

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of State for Defence, has praised the way in which the three services work together in the Falklands, and is understood to have agreed that there was no reason why the garrison commander should invariably be a soldier.

The appointment of an RAF officer as successor to General de la Billiere will broadly coincide with the opening of a £250 million airfield at Mount Pleasant, which will enable the Falklands to handle wide-bodied jets.

The main runway is scheduled to come into operation in April. A subsidiary runway and its services are to be completed a year later. There will be a shift from the present large permanent garrison to a smaller one capable of rapid reinforcement through the new airfield.

Still afloat

The Foreign Affairs select committee will decide today whether to take the ultimate step in its investigation of the Belgrano sinking: inviting the Prime Minister herself to appear. The meeting looks set to be bloody. Labour members will argue that her evidence is indispensable, but they expect the majority Tory group - already accused of bias for returning the leaked Pönting papers - to slap down a move that would embarrass and anger their leader. Embarrassing their former ministers is another matter. Sir John Nott, a reluctant witness last week, is to be sent further written questions on apparent contradictions between his evidence and that of Lord Lewin. Former US Secretary of State Alexander Haig, meanwhile, has conspicuously failed to reply to his invitation to give evidence. He clearly means it when he says he does not want to get involved in Britain's "Watergate".

Falkland Islands press for 200-mile fishing limit

BY HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY,

AN international scramble for the deep-sea fish stocks around the Falkland Islands, which could yield catches worth £200m a year, has prompted the Falkland Islands government to try and exploit their potential.

The government in Port Stanley is continuing to press Britain to declare a 200-mile fishing zone round the islands and this month it begins a study of the inshore fishing

potential of the territory.

The 18-metre Grimsby-registered vessel the Coastal Pioneer arrived in Port Stanley late last month to explore potential catches of crab, king crab, clams and scallops. The Falkland Islands government is hoping to establish a small industry, with the high value catches flown to markets from the airport now being completed.

Port Stanley is continuing to press Whitehall to extend the present three-mile limit and charge licence fees to the increasing numbers of foreign trawlers working the Falkland waters for cod, hake and blue whiting.

A commercial survey of the yield of the deep-sea fisheries carried out by British trawler owners J. Marr and Sons suggests that an annual catch

worth £200m could be taken from Falkland waters. Fleets from the USSR, Poland, East Germany, Spain, Japan and Taiwan are now fishing intensively in waters around the islands. Dues received from foreign trawlers received by the Stanley harbour master have risen from less than £2,000 in 1976-77 to £261,324 in 1983-84. According to the Falkland

Islands Association in London, the licensing of trawlers, were a 200 mile fishing limit declared around the Falklands, could yield a net profit to the islands of £7m a year. The British Government has so far refused to declare such a limit lest it damage still further the possibility of some eventual agreement with Argentina about the future of the islands.



Under arrest: Captain Alfredo Astiz being driven away after his arrest in connection with the 1977 kidnapping and disappearance of a young Swedish woman.

Navy unrest over Astiz case

From Douglas Tweedale, Buenos Aires

The arrest of Captain Alfredo Astiz, one of Argentina's most notorious suspected human rights violators has caused unrest in the Navy that could lead to a confrontation with President Alfonsín's year-old civilian government.

A meeting of top admirals was called yesterday to discuss possible responses to the arrest, and sources said the Navy was likely to adopt a "firm line" if the captain were not released. The sources did not specify what action might be taken.

Federal judge Miguel Del Castillo ordered captain Astiz's arrest on Thursday in connection with the kidnapping and disappearance of a young Swedish woman.

Captain Astiz, known as the "Blond Angel", and widely believed to have played a leading role in the military campaign of repression in the

late 1970s, was taken into custody on Friday night and was said to have refused to testify.

Yesterday morning he failed to appear in court to be identified by witnesses, reportedly on order from the admirals. Judge Del Castillo was also to have questioned him.

Captain Astiz's arrest has caused unrest among young Navy Officers, many of whom identify with him and feel he is being singled out unfairly. One Navy source said that "Astiz only followed orders" and that dozens of other officers played an equally active role in the "dirty war", during which, according to a state investigating commission, military squads kidnapped, tortured and secretly killed thousands of people in their indiscriminate drive against terrorism.

When President Alfonsín took over last year, he vowed to bring those responsible to justice, but made a distinction between those who gave the orders and those who simply followed them.

Captain Astiz is suspected of having taken part in the kidnapping of Dagmar Hagelin, a 17-year-old Swede who was spotted in a secret Navy detention centre before she disappeared in 1977.

He is also accused of having engineered the 1976 kidnapping of two French nuns who disappeared. Captain Astiz commanded Argentinian forces in South Georgia during the 1982 Falklands conflict and was briefly held as a prisoner by Britain.

Argentina's foreign debt is \$45 billion, not \$45 million, as stated yesterday.



Capt. Alfredo Astiz, the naval commander who led the Argentine troops during their occupation of South Georgia at the start of the Falklands war, on his way to be interrogated in Buenos Aires on charges of kidnapping and seriously wounding a 17-year-old Swedish girl. The alleged offences took place during the "dirty war" waged against Argentine Leftists in the late 1970s.

When even some of the Conqueror's crew feel ill at ease

Sir, — All salient facts about the Belgrano sinking are now agreed—even by our Government.

On April 30, 1982, the Rules of Engagement were altered to allow our submarine to attack the Argentinian aircraft-carrier, *Veinticinco de Mayo*, wherever it might be found. At dawn on May 1 a Vulcan attack on Port Stanley led to a further steady escalation of the conflict, the Argentinians simply retaliating.

In the night of May 1 we intercepted Argentinian orders to their fleet to withdraw to safer waters. At 8 pm (London time) on May 2 the Belgrano was sunk on a course away from the Falklands and towards its home port that had been set five hours earlier.

Yet Sir John Nott has challenged before the House of Commons Select Committee Lord Lewin's claim that all hope of a negotiated settlement had been aban-

doned a few days before May 1. "It was not my opinion at the time." What would his opinion have been if the carrier had been sunk on April 30?

From Margaret Thatcher and Lord Lewin down, Government and Services spokesmen seem to inhabit a Lewis Carroll Wonderland. They treat our language and our intelligence in the lordly manner of a Humpty Dumpty. Words mean what they want them to mean.

The only real defence of the Belgrano sinking is military necessity. The war was a gamble that had to succeed at all costs. It was a gamble because — despite clear warnings — the Government had failed to take proper precautions against the threat to the Falklands. It had then to fight underprepared and dangerously late in the year.

Well, did sinking the Belgrano save the task force by removing the threat from

the Argentinian fleet? The real threat was from the air-launched Exocets that sank the Sheffield on May 4, the Atlantic Conveyor on May 25, and which narrowly missed the Glamorgan on May 30. HMS *Invincible* was also missed twice: on May 4 and 5.

How would the task force have coped with one of its two carriers out of action? Sinking the Belgrano did absolutely nothing to avert this danger. Those who ordered it knew where the real threat lay. But to keep credibility and control over the operation, the Government had to do something.

The long tale of evasions and half-truths since then has been a sad one — and amazingly it continues, though tastefully packaged as "admissions."

Margaret Thatcher and her political aides seem unable to conceive that thinking people have been concerned about the Belgrano ever

since it was sunk. Such people are neither unpatriotic nor cranky — and they are quite numerous. There are still more people who are sick of the way they and the truth have been manipulated.

On the Conqueror itself there were men who felt uneasy at what they had to do. In the end the Government's cover up campaign was bound to force someone there to break silence.

When will they ever learn? — Yours sincerely,
(Prof) Harold Mattingly,
School of History,
University of Leeds.

Sir, — Lord Lewin's assertion (Guardian, December 6) that the sinking of the Belgrano "saved life," puts one in mind of the dispatch from the Vietnam war: "The village was destroyed in order to save it."

D. L. Headey,
44 Coxwell Road,
Faringdon, Oxfordshire.

Skyhawk jets for Argentina

By Jimmy Burns in Buenos Aires

THE ARGENTINE Ministry of Defence yesterday confirmed that an order had been made for 16 Skyhawks from Israel in 1982 but denied that the aircraft were about to be, or had already been, delivered.

It said that the order for the U.S.-built fighter jets had been made by the former military government of President Reynaldo Bignone as part of a re-equipment programme to replace about 50 front line combat aircraft shot down by the British during the Falklands War.

Delivery of the jets had been held up because the U.S. had withheld its authorisation for the resale of military equipment leased or sold to Israel, the Ministry said.

In Buenos Aires yesterday, a U.S. Embassy spokesman refused to comment on a report that Washington had since given its approval of the contract and that the jets would be delivered over the next few weeks.

The Ministry of Defence said that no major arms purchases had been made since President Raul Alfonsin came to power a year ago and that the few weapons that had been delivered in recent months consisted of contracts which had already been signed by the former military regime.

Alfonsín's first year sees

From Jeremy Morgan in Buenos Aires

Argentina shows no sign of losing its penchant for secrecy and self-contradiction a year after President Alfonsín took office, symbolising a deep-seated desire for a more open and sane society.

The Government has survived with rather less difficulty than might have been expected after decades when the country's conduct was conditioned by the opinions of a pampered and self-satisfied cadre of military officers.

This is, perhaps, all the more surprising since the President, who was sworn in exactly one year ago today, has overseen a gathering economic disaster in which an already high inflation rate almost doubled to 700 per cent and relations with overseas creditors went from bad to worse.

To some extent, the instinct for intrigue and an often surreal tendency towards secrecy has made the Government's task easier than the pessimists expected as the military regime slipped quietly out of power to everyone's relief.

A Byzantine struggle for power in a Peronist mass movement that still has to learn how to live without its founder, means that the Government has to contend with only occasionally effective opposition in Congress.

In perhaps the greatest paradox of all, President Alfonsín's biggest ally in keeping the Peronists divided is their nominal leader, former president "Isabel" Peron, widow of the populist and three times elected president Juan Domingo Peron, who died 10 years ago.

Mrs Peron says little from her self-imposed but apparently comfortable exile in Madrid. When she does, it normally helps stir the divisions seething within a party dominated by rightwingers who also hold sway in a turbulent labour movement.

There is more than a suspicion that Mrs Peron is primarily making mischief for those who held sway in her unhappy Peronist government before it was overthrown by the armed forces in 1976. Most of the country knew months ago she

for was no longer really interested in the movement.

But only now are the Peronist labour barons and power brokers publicly beginning to question her right to the leadership, perhaps heralding a long-awaited struggle that has been threatening ever since the defeat in last year's election.

The first year of democratic rule has centred not so much on Congress but on two spectres outside — concern about the looming cost of repaying the debt mountain and the fear that if President Alfonsín gets it wrong, the armed forces will again seize power.

On both issues, the Government is suspected of trying for the traditional fix while distracting the public eye by saying one thing and doing the other.

President Alfonsín wants Argentina to regain its standing in the international community, but that does not prevent outbursts of the nationalism seen in other leaders over the years.

President Alfonsín's occa-

no real change



● President Alfonsín: penchant for secrecy

hension at its inability to advance Argentina's cause.

Ironically, the one foreign policy triumph for President Alfonsín, who never misses a chance to emphasise the virtues of democracy, was the treaty signed with General Pinochet's unashamedly authoritarian dictatorship in Chile.

On the domestic front, President Alfonsín is asking the public—which has rarely been sure of what is going to happen next let alone the reason why—to trust the courts while he restores to Argentina the rule of law.

But he has not removed a big impediment to the need for justice to be seen to be done: the secrecy surrounding court proceedings has not been lifted as judges sift through hundreds of human rights cases stemming from the military's Dirty War in the 1970s.

A population still exercising its newfound right to free speech is not slow to understand that nothing has really changed. But for their part, the people do not yet seem to have to learned how to answer back.

sional bitter blasts at British "intransigence" over the Falklands are seen less as a defence against nationalist suspicions than a sign of government frustration and incompre-

'Threat' to crew of sub

MR TAM Dalyell claimed yesterday that crew members of the British submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano, had been threatened with prosecution under the Official Secrets Act.

The Labour MP told a meeting of his Linlithgow constituency that he intended to table a series of questions to the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, based on new information.

Mr Dalyell said: "I understand from sources that have always been reliable in the past that the original 'raw' signals of the Conqueror were destroyed on orders in May 1983. "I also want to know if it is true that an officer in the Conqueror at the time has been going round crew members asking if they kept any documents in the Falklands campaign?" He wanted to know if it was true that they were told they would be liable to prosecution if they failed to hand them in.

Alfonsín ends first year on upbeat note

From Douglas Tweedale
Buenos Aires

It is exactly a year since a disgraced military junta went off the stage in Argentina and handed over power to a democratically elected government.

President Raúl Alfonsín ends his first year in office today on an upbeat note, despite serious economic and political problems which continue to threaten the country's still-fragile democracy.

Señor Alfonsín has just settled peacefully the long-standing border dispute with Chile in the Beagle channel. He also reached agreement a week ago with Argentina's foreign creditors to refinance part of the crippling \$45 million (£37 million) foreign debt, and to receive fresh credit.

Opinion polls show that the avuncular Señor Alfonsín, who is 58, still retains the tremendous personal popularity which enabled him to defeat the powerful Peronist party last year.

Last week's agreement with the banks, which rolls over debts of some \$16 billion due before next year, should give Señor Alfonsín's beleaguered economic team some breathing room to deal with the domestic economic crisis. But bankers gave a warning that Argentina still has a long way to go to regain the confidence of its creditors.

Señor Alfonsín's aides admit the economy has been the biggest disappointment. The President promised to cut inflation to two digits within a year, but at the end of last month it stood more nearly 700 per cent a year.

One of the most difficult problems facing Señor Alfonsín has been human rights. He is committed to bringing to justice those responsible for atrocities committed during the military's "dirty war" against dissidents in the 1970s, but the military has strongly resisted efforts to prosecute.

Nearly a dozen former military under are under arrest, but there has not been a single conviction.

Foreign policy unquestionably have been the most successful area for President Alfonsín. The peace treaty signed with Chile in November brought him credit on both the international and domestic fronts, and Señor Dante Caputo, the Foreign Minister, has established an image as one of the most capable members of the Government.

NONSENSE

I TOO am fed up with this nonsense about the Belgrano.

The Labour Party must know that land armies will still attack the retreating enemy, as they're liable to turn and attack again.

The Belgrano had not surrendered, so the anti-British would rather it was left alone to turn and sink one of our ships.

For years our Communists complained about the Fascist Argentine generals. Yet when we went to help our people in the Falklands we were wrong, and these traitors still argue on behalf of the Argentines.

—Cecil Roots, Hutton, Preston.

THAT LITTLE CROSS ON A LONELY FALKLANDS HILLSIDE...

EDWARD HYNES, of Airdrie, is working in the Falkland Islands.

He's been there for 4½ months and won't be home to his wife, Sandra, and children Nicola (7), Sharon (5), and Christopher (18 months) until February.

Ed's a foreman in charge of concreting work on the new Mount Pleasant airfield being built near Port Stanley.

Every Saturday, he phones home—and recently he told Sandra he'd taken advantage of good weather to climb Mount Pleasant.

On top of the hill, he came on a cross placed there to commemorate British Servicemen killed in the Falklands conflict.

For a moment, he stood in silent tribute. Then he carried on over the hill.

Farther down, in a bleak and desolate spot, he was surprised to come on another, smaller cross.

ED discovered it marked the spot where two Servicemen died when their helicopter was shot down.

At the foot of the cross was a sprig of heather, bound with a piece of tartan ribbon.

Edward couldn't find any names. But he guessed at least one of the men must have been a Scot—and that maybe a comrade had left the heather and tartan ribbon as a tribute.

He took photographs of the cross and has sent them home to Airdrie.

Sandra says Ed hopes relatives of the two Servicemen might recognise the description so she can pass on the photographs.

A touching memorial of two brave men who died on a lonely hillside 8000 miles from home.

JACQUES de Larosiere, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, has given Argentina's 320 or so creditor banks until Christmas to signal their agreement to the \$20 billion rescue package announced last Sunday.

The signs are that many American regional banks may prove reluctant to follow the IMF's lead, though they may be forced to comply by the US Federal Reserve.

Next week senior Argentine officials will conduct a massive public relations exercise addressing bankers in the world's financial capitals. The 40 or so British banks involved will hear Bernardo Grinspun, the Argentine finance minister in Zurich on Thursday. London was ruled out as too controversial because

Christmas deadline for Argentine debt

by Colin Clifford and Nick Gilbert

of Falklands aftermath. Garcia Vasquez, the governor of the Argentine central bank, will face the Americans.

The aim is to seek support for the complex re-scheduling proposals flogged out with Larosiere and the working committee of eleven leading creditor banks.

Many American regional banks have already written off Argentine debt, and if the

present package falls apart, will be under pressure from US regulators to write off more. According to John Cooper of Marine Midland it will be "difficult to obtain the money Argentina is seeking".

One senior regional banker said that some banks "will chip in but only on a reduced basis." The United States is contributing a \$500m dollar bridging

facility to tide the Argentines over until the new IMF loan becomes available.

The Bank of England is understood to be refraining from putting any pressure on British banks mainly because of the political furore that this might provoke. However, it is likely that the British banks will fall in line with the rescue package.

The critical factor is likely to be that the package is interdependent with a \$1.4 billion facility to be provided by the IMF. The new credits from the banks cannot be drawn down until the IMF confirms that Argentina is sticking to the strict fiscal and monetary policies agreed last September. They will report quarterly, with the first in February.

The IMF monitoring should be strict enough to re-assure the British banks that the funds are not being spent on armaments. Guy Huntrods of Lloyds Bank International, the British representatives on the 11-bank creditors committee, points out that "the programme with the IMF involves very substantial fiscal retrenchment including military spending".

As their part of the deal, the banks are asked to increase their loans to Argentina by 16.75% as part of a total \$4.2 billion additional term and trade credit facilities. However, Argentina has promised to repay early next year \$750 million due under a previous facility agreed under the abortive 1982 rescheduling agreement with the former military regime. This will reduce the net new money to about 11%.

Argentina will also contribute a further \$750 million to its \$1.2 billion interest arrears by the end of the year.

Public sector loan repayments due in 1982 and 1983 will be rescheduled over 10 years and those due during this year and next over 12. In all some \$9.9 billion is covered. An additional \$3.5 billion due from the private sector is also rescheduled for 10 years. All repayments are subject to a three-year grace period.

Argentinian navy's secret plane deal with Israel

by Maria Laura Avignolo
Buenos Aires

IN defiance of a government-ordered freeze on arms purchases, the Argentinian navy has bought 16 Skyhawk aircraft from Israel in a secret transaction using clandestine funds. The Skyhawks will be based at Puerto Belgrano, a naval base 500 miles south of Buenos Aires.

Naval sources confirmed the purchase to The Sunday Times and said that the deal had been initiated shortly after the Falklands war, while General Reynaldo Bignone was still president of Argentina. It could not be completed at the time because the Skyhawks had been supplied to Israel by the United States, on condition that they were not to be resold to any third party whom the US would not supply directly.

The deal surprised Argentina's minister of defence, Raul Borras, who became Argentina's first civilian defence minister following last year's presidential elections. Normally major weapons purchases can be

concluded only with government approval, but the Skyhawk deal has revealed what many suspected - that the navy has a secret slush fund which allowed them to spend up to £58m as down payment without any political supervision. Once the contract had been negotiated, the defence minister was finally persuaded to approve it when Israel threatened to invoke a heavy penalty clause for breach of contract.

The purchase not only alarmed civilians, but also annoyed the Argentinian airforce which argued that it should have the Skyhawks, as it had borne the brunt of aircraft losses during the Falklands conflict. A former airforce commander pointed out that the aircraft carrier from which the Skyhawks will operate, the Veinticinco de Mayo, spent most of the conflict in port.

Today the navy is again largely confined to port, but this time because the Alfonsín government has so reduced military spending that the navy can afford neither to sail its ships nor, ironically in view of this deal, fly its aircraft.

FALKLANDS COSTS FALLING

By Air Cdre G. S. COOPER
Air Correspondent

THE cost of defending the Falklands is projected to fall from £684 million this year to £490 million in 1986-87 when the new airport becomes fully operational.

Further savings will depend on garrison cuts Britain may be able to implement when more reliance can be put on air reinforcement.

Defence Ministry figures show £2.088 billion expenditure on the Falklands from the Argentine invasion to the end of next March. Operation Corporate cost £780 million, followed by spending of £624 million in 1983-84 and £684 million in 1984-85.

The latter figures include the capital costs of replacing lost equipment and building the airfield at Mount Pleasant and the running costs of the garrison.

Next year the projected annual cost falls to £552 million, before falling to £490 million in the 12 months ending in March, 1987.

The latest cost estimate for the strategic airfield is £250 million. Additionally £119 million will be spent on Army facilities and a harbour nearby.

Direct from Ascension

The first wide-body aircraft to use the new 8,500ft runway is expected to be an RAF TriStar, possibly next April. By flying direct from Ascension Island without in-flight refuelling TriStars will cheapen each round-trip from £110,000 to £70,000.

The monthly cost of the Hercules air bridge has been about £2,000,000, and the RAF expects to save some £25,000,000 a year on movements to the Falklands. Negotiations continue on contracting out part of the work to British Airways.

The Phantom air defence squadron will move to Mount Pleasant when all operational facilities are complete.

The RAF will probably withdraw the Harriers, which at the moment provide a valuable back-up should weather stop the Phantoms operating at Stanley airport.

The new runways will also make it easier for Nimrods and Buccaneers to operate from the Falklands, and open the way for reinforcement by Tornado strike or fighter aircraft in due course.

In addition to the TriStars, VC10 transport aircraft will also be able to fly direct to Mount Pleasant.

Stanley airport will have to be kept open as a diversion, and the need to guard both Mount Pleasant and Port Stanley sets problems in deciding what garrison cuts can be made.

The Guardian 8/12/84

SIR JOHN Nott would insist on calling it HMS Belgrano when addressing MPs this week — as well as talking of the sinking of the Conqueror. And why did the Conqueror re-visit the destroyer-infested scene of the sinking? "I suspect to see if the Conqueror could help find survivors." Ah.

Financial Times 10/12/84

Diplomatic goal

There may not be any formal diplomatic, trade, or cultural relations between Britain and Argentina — but there is still football diplomacy.

No sporting contest between two countries since the Falklands was had aroused more publicity and interest in Argentina than the final of the world club championship played in Tokyo yesterday between European champions Liverpool and South American champions, Independiente of Argentina.

The 1-0 defeat of Liverpool will be fully savoured in Buenos Aires — but the fairly fought game itself was a triumph for the pep-talk which Argentine President Raul Alfonsín gave his players.

He invited the Argentine team to the presidential palace before they left for Tokyo. "Play with the determination the game demands," Alfonsín exhorted them. "But also try and demonstrate that we are not the aggressors. We are not seeking a violent revenge."

Most of the now-celebrating Argentines will, of course, have forgotten Independiente's origins — the club was founded in 1905 by the employees of a British-owned clothing store.

Judge asks the President to act in teenage girl's case

Argentina to try naval officer for kidnapping

From Jeremy Morgan
in Buenos Aires

An Argentine navy captain, Alfredo Astiz, who was named by human rights organisations some years ago as a junior officer active in the former military regime's "dirty war" against civilian opponents, is to stand trial in connection with the disappearance of a teenage girl in 1977.

A federal judge ordered the arrest and trial of Captain Astiz, who is alleged to have operated under the alias of Blonde Angel, on charges of the kidnapping and attempted murder of Miss Dagmar Hagelin, who is reputed to have been last seen in the notorious clandestine gaol at the Navy Mechanics School.

The trial was ordered after Judge Miguel del Castillo heard evidence from an unidentified witness who had travelled from Europe, court sources said. The judge took the unusual step of asking President Alfonsín, as head of the armed forces, to ensure that Captain Astiz was brought to court as soon as possible, in what legal sources said was an attempt to speed up judicial proceedings.

This is the first action taken against Captain Astiz, who returned to public notice in 1982 when he surrendered to British forces in the South Georgia war, since the elected government took office in Argentina a year ago.

The decision to start pro-

ceedings against Captain Astiz, who earlier this year was photographed basking on an Argentine beach but is now said to be at the navy's main base of Puerto Belgrano, has been linked to a visit last month to Buenos Aires of Sweden's assistant foreign minister, Mr Pierre Schori, in connection with the Hagelin case.

Miss Hagelin held dual Argentine-Swedish citizenship and is said to have been caught up in a raid by a "dirty war" security squad on a friend's house outside the capital.

The Swedish government and her Swedish father pressed for several years for an explanation of how Miss Hagelin disappeared, but a military court cleared Captain Astiz of any connection with the case at a hearing in 1981.

Within a year, Captain Astiz had been chosen to lead Argentina's forces on the South Georgia, but he quickly surrendered.

Human rights activists claimed some years ago that Captain Astiz was one of several young officers who infiltrated groups protesting against the regime's "dirty war" campaign, in which at least 9,000 people are estimated to have disappeared.

President Alfonsín said later that he had passed to the Defence Ministry a court order for the arrest of Captain Astiz. A Defence Ministry spokesman said that the ministry's legal advisers were studying the order by the federal judge.

The Belgrano and the law

Sir.—The claim that the Belgrano sinking was "cold-blooded murder" and flouted international law is still in December 1984 a valid one. Because we did not declare war, the high seas remained international waters and a highway for ships of all nations; and the sinking of ships was restricted by UN Article 57 which only allows such action to be taken in self-defence.

The British Government therefore swiftly established a maritime exclusion zone: another name surely for declaring territorial waters around the Falklands.

When questioned by the Foreign Affairs Select Committee about the change of rules of engagement, Sir John Nott implied (Guardian, December 6) that law officers had said the warning given on April 23, 1982, had covered the decision taken on April 30 to sink the aircraft carrier Veinticinco de Mayo.

It would appear that in law the sinking of the carrier would be justified as self-defence reacting to an immediate threat, as long as the carrier was within 500 miles of the task force, as this was about the maximum range of her aircraft.

The decision to sink the Belgrano was taken in "about 20 minutes" at lunch-time on May 2. This would not appear to allow any time to consult law officers.

If, as implied by Sir John Nott, the criteria for justification of sinking Argentinian ships were at least in part based on the range of their weapons, we come down to the range of the Exocets — less than 30 miles — with which the escorting destroyers were equipped. Hence it would appear that the warning of April 23 did not cover the action taken on May 2.

Admiral Lord Lewin has stated twice on television that this was so. He said on Panorama of April 16, 1984, and Brass Tacks of November 14, 1984, that this warning did not cover action by submarines.

The admiral's statement explains the actions of the Conqueror's captain: if he already had Rules of Engagement covering the situation, then by shadowing the Belgrano for hours and not attacking he could have been accused of doing less than his duty.

It also explains the actions of the captain of the Belgrano. The Argentinians must have known that in sending a task force, we would also dispatch submarines. If they had understood that our warning of April 23 had meant that our submarines could attack them anywhere on the high seas, the last thing one of their naval captains would do would be to steer a steady course and provide a sitting-duck target. They demonstrably therefore did not understand Mrs Thatcher's interpretation of the April 23 warning.

Hence the repeated allegation of cold-blooded murder, the justification for which was one of future, not immediate, threat; and hence the great importance of the course of the Belgrano, which Mrs Thatcher and Sir John Nott declare was irrelevant.

To save further speculation, may we have a ruling by law officers or the United Nations on this matter?

Diane S. Gould,
11 Queen Elisabeth Road,
Cirencester,
Gloucestershire.

Committee Corridors

A regular feature in which Watchman highlights the proceedings in one or more of the week's Committees.

A gentleman with a familiar face appeared in the Committee Corridors on Wednesday, to give evidence to the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee. When he arrived he was wearing a smart dark overcoat and looked every inch what he was – a distinguished City merchant banker.

Let it be added that merchant banking seems to agree with him. He certainly appeared much happier and more relaxed (even healthily chubby in the face) then he was when he held high office in the Government. But perhaps this is not surprising, because he had one of the most onerous and nerve-wracking jobs of all – that of Defence Secretary during the Falklands Conflict in the spring of 1982.

Watchman is of course talking about Sir John Nott, who left the 'Id of politics for banking two years ago. Inevitably his name has become embroiled in the Belgrano affair, which the Committee is investigating, and everyone at the Committee was eagerly awaiting his account of things.

Though he answered questions frankly and sometimes forcefully, he did at one stage warn the Committee, 'I have put the whole of the Falklands behind me. For me, it is part of British history.' At another stage, he said, 'I have been out of the House for two years now, and I really have not followed these matters as closely as some of my interrogators. I do not really claim to be an expert... if any facts are asked of me, I think such questions should really be put to the Government. I really have only some rather distant memories and a few opinions.'

Mr Ian Mikardo (Lab, Bow and Poplar) asked whether it was correct that at the time during the Conflict, when Mr Francis Pym, the then Foreign Secretary, went to the United States to see Mr Haig, the British War Cabinet had already abandoned the policy of minimum force. To this Sir John replied that he had not at that stage given up hope of a peaceful solution, and he did not believe that the other members of the War Cabinet had either.

'I always wanted a peaceful settlement. This was a highly labourious operation. I was confident, though I could never be sure, that the landing and future operations on the islands would necessarily be successful. I was never in favour of going beyond what we needed to do, for the protection of the Task Force. My overriding duty was to protect our ships and men, and clearly there was an inherent conflict between this and the opportunities which might develop for further peaceful negotiations. In the last resort, however, I saw my overriding duty – and this was also the unanimous view of the War Cabinet – as being the protection of our Task Force.'

He denied being aware of the Peruvian peace proposals, prior to the sinking of the Belgrano. He said, 'Indeed, the Prime Minister, as I understand it, has denied that we had any knowledge of the Peruvian negotiations at the time we took the decision on the Belgrano. I really do think the Prime Minister's recollection, and the records of this Government, are better than suggestions emanating from critics and enemies of HMG.'

He added, 'The threat to the Task Force was so great, it overrode all our natural caution over possible future negotiations.' On the morning of the sinking of the Belgrano, the Argentines were claiming to have sunk various British ships in the Task Force, and to having shot down British aircraft. 'How anyone can suggest changing the rules of engagement was wrong is beyond my comprehension,' Sir John observed.

Mr Mikardo asked why Britain had acted on an Argentine appreciation of the situation. Had there not been information from British sources, telling the British Government that the Argentine claims were untrue?

Sir John replied that he and others had been accused of causing an escalation in the conflict, by changing the rules of engagement. 'It is unclear why we should have been accused of this when the Argentines were claiming that they had sunk our ships the previous day.' He then admitted, 'I do not think I was ever aware of the course of the Belgrano. I should have been, but I was not. I think I first learnt of it when I read about it in the diary of a crew member from the Conqueror, in one of the Sunday papers.'

Mr Mikardo asked, 'If you did not know what the course was, why did you tell the Commons that the Belgrano had been closing in on elements of our Task Force?' Sir John replied, 'Because the latest information, when I made that statement, was that a pincer movement was likely to be made. The course of the Belgrano was quite irrelevant in relation to the decision to sink her, however.'

The sinking of the Belgrano was only one of thousand of incidents during that week. 'I find it amazing that so few mis-statements were made, when I remember the great difficulty of getting communications from the South Atlantic,' Sir John said.

The Committee's Chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw (C, Stroud) asked him, 'Do you take the view that the sinking of the Belgrano was an event which was a crucial watershed in the relations between the United Kingdom and the Argentine at that time, and that peace negotiations were made impossible as a result?'

To this, Sir John replied, 'No.'

At an earlier sitting of the Committee on Wednesday, Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Lewin, gave evidence. He was Chief of the Defence Staff during the Conflict, and he told the Committee that, though the sinking of the Belgrano had been tragic, it had been the right decision.

Replying to Mr Mikardo, who had asked him whether, in retrospect, the killing of 368 Argentine servicemen 'at a stroke' had been justified, he said, 'I think that is rather an unfair question. I had no idea how many men were going to be killed. The main concern of myself, and I am sure of Ministers, was the safety of our own men. According to my judgement, the Belgrano was a threat to the safety of those men, and we could reduce that threat by attacking her.'

'I think it is tragic that 368 men lost their lives, and I was extremely surprised that the number was so high, but with all the hindsight now available, and all the information that has come to me about the Argentines' actions and intentions, I have no hesitation in saying that it was the right decision.'

'After the Belgrano was sunk, the Argentine navy did not once again emerge from its territorial waters. It is quite likely that by sinking the Belgrano, we saved life. The need for changes in the rules of engagement varied, as we assessed the threat to our forces. It is up to us to make representations to Ministers, when we feel exposed.'

'The rules of engagement are written in the book. I found quite early on that to put rules of engagement to Ministers, in the form in which they are written in the book, was counterproductive. They are too difficult to understand, for people who are not familiar with them, so it was necessary to put them in a political way.'

He said the Belgrano had posed a threat to the mission entrusted to Rear Admiral Sir John Woodward, Commander of the Task Force. 'He could not do his job while the Belgrano was where she was, or while she was even at sea.'

'We would have been extremely imprudent to have assumed that she was not fitted with Exocet missiles, though we now know she was not.' Another factor which had to be considered was the fact that the Belgrano had been south of the Exclusion Zone, with South Georgia 800 miles to the east of her. 'She could have skirted around, south of the Task Force, out of range, and cut across to recapture South Georgia,' Lord Lewin added.

Remote islands

Those who hoped next week's select committee report on the future of the Falklands might lead to a softening of Britain's hardline attitude will be bitterly disappointed. Indeed, although spending on Fortress Falklands is currently some £2 million a day, the report is, I'm told, more hardline than ever. The Argentines' legal claim to the islands has been undermined by their resort to arms, it will say. Our government is "prudent" to oppose talks on sovereignty, should resist the temptation to do a deal, however high the present costs, and to strike a deal simply to reinforce the stability of President Alfonsín's democratic government would be an "extremely risky" gamble according to the report. Alfonsín, it continues, has adopted the same stance as his predecessors. This makes the prospects of an early settlement of the sovereignty question "remote", and if the Argentines insist on discussing it, it will hinder progress on other fronts the committee concludes. The passage of time has done nothing to lessen hostility: quite the opposite. The general election scuppered a draft report prepared by the first, less Tory-dominated select committee, which apparently suggested sovereignty *should* be discussed and that leaseback was the least unpalatable option.

Advance warning

That Sir John Nott sailed with such comparative ease through his interrogation by the Foreign Affairs select committee is hardly surprising: he had seen the questions in advance. These were prepared by Tam Dalyell, who is not on the committee, and passed to his Labour colleague Denis Canavan, who is. In the process, Dalyell unfortunately left a duplicate on a House of Commons photocopier. "I thought you'd ask me that," announced Sir John smugly halfway through a "surprise" Canavan question on whether the Belgrano carried exocets. "You see leaks happen both ways."

PHS

FALKLANDS AIRPORT ON TARGET

SUB'S SIGNALS DESTROYED

A number of signals sent between the nuclear submarine Conqueror and Fleet Headquarters, Northwood, around the time of the sinking of the General Belgrano have been destroyed, Mr John Stanley, Armed Forces Minister stated last night.

Mr Stanley's disclosure in a Commons written answer, is certain to fuel still further the controversy

By Our Port Stanley
Correspondent

IF there are any doubts in Britain about the cost and work schedule of the Falklands' Mount Pleasant Airport, they do not seem to exist at the sharp end.

The Laing, Mowlem and Amy Roadstone construction consortium are confident of meeting the April deadline for the arrival of the first wide-bodied jet next year.

"We've had one of the most severe winters here and there have been periods when people thought it would not be ready on time," said the project director, Mr Bill Bloomfield.

"But at the moment we are heading for that date and unless we have exceptionally bad weather I see no reason why we should not meet that date."

Most people at Mount Pleasant seem to share this optimism and are apparently affected by the same drive to see an international airport rise out of the virgin peat bog.

"It's an exciting project to build something as big as this in a place like this," said Mr Wyn Kendrick project manager.

Americans' project

"I don't think that anywhere in the world has there been an airport of this size which has been built so quickly."

With understandable satisfaction, he went on to point out that a similar airport being built by the Americans on the island of Diego Garcia is expected to take five years to complete. The main two-mile strip at Mount Pleasant will have been built in 16 months.

The feat will have been achieved with no thanks to the Falklands environment.

According to Mr Maurice Chamings, regional director for the Property Services Agency in Port Stanley, the only materials which the contractors have been able to glean from the area have been water and quarried rock. "Everything else had to come from the UK."

The "everything else" includes 500 vehicles and pieces of machinery worth £20 million, prefabricated buildings, fuel, food and workers.

So far more than a quarter of a million tons of these supplies have been brought down to the South Atlantic by the four cargo vessels on permanent charter to the consortium.

Peat in plenty

The one thing that they do have in plenty on the site is peat. But that is a serious hindrance rather than a help.

To get to bedrock and commence work on foundations for the runways and buildings, the mechanical diggers have excavated 1.5 million cubic yards of the fuel, enough to keep a traditional Falklands kitchen range blazing for 8,060 years.

A year ago only 105 "pioneers" were working on the project but as more accommodation blocks were built, so more men moved in.

At present between 1,700 and 1,800 men are working the site on a 24-hour shift system regardless of the weather. As the April deadline looms the number involved will increase to 2,500.

For a 12-month contract with one month of paid leave in Britain, an ordinary labourer can expect to take home £9,000 tax free, with food, accommodation and a 15 per cent. bonus for completion of the contract thrown in.

With hundreds of tradesmen, labourers and managerial staff, it adds up to a hefty wage bill but the Property Services Agency, whose job it is to make sure that taxpayers' money is being well spent, are keen to emphasise the cost effectiveness of the airport.

The next steps in Hong Kong

THE SMOOTH passage of the draft agreement on the future of Hong Kong through the House of Commons and the calm manner in which the people of the colony have accepted it should not lead to a feeling of complacency. The agreement may be the best that could possibly be negotiated in the circumstances and there is some justification for regarding it as a major British diplomatic achievement. Yet as the euphoria over the maintenance of Hong Kong's capitalist system for 50 years after the transfer of sovereignty to China in 1997 has died down, the doubts and fears about what has not been spelled out in the agreement have grown.

The findings of the Assessment Office, set up to test the acceptability of the agreement to the people of Hong Kong can hardly be considered a triumphant endorsement of the agreement. The public response to an extensive advertising campaign appealing to the people of the colony to send in their opinions on the agreement elicited only 2,500 direct submissions. That, from a population of 5.5m, is a disappointing result to say the least, even though some of the submissions came from organisations with a large membership.

The two senior officials appointed to monitor the work of the Assessment Office summed up the conclusions of the study in carefully measured, if chilling terms. The majority of the people of Hong Kong accepted the agreement because they regarded re-unification with China as inevitable and because they were relieved that the terms of the agreement were as good as they were. "But the verdict of acceptance implies neither positive enthusiasm nor passive acquiescence."

Reservations

No one in Hong Kong, let alone Britain, seriously believes the agreement on the colony's future can somehow be reopened to take account of the many reservations which have been expressed. Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, underlined the reasons for this in the Commons on Wednesday. Any attempt to change specific sections of the agreement would upset the delicate balance that had been established during the negotiations, leading inevitably to the crumbling of the entire edifice. Implied in his remarks

was the conviction that Peking would never accept such a procedure anyway.

Yet there are several grey areas in the agreement where room for manoeuvre still exists to allay some of the fears and satisfy some of the demands of the Hong Kong people, though it will require great patience and skilled diplomacy to achieve the desired results.

The most important proposal made by the unofficial members of Hong Kong's executive and legislative councils (UMELCO) is that the people of Hong Kong should be allowed to participate in the drafting of the Basic Law, which will be the Special Administrative Region's new constitution.

The Chinese government has made it clear that this is entirely Peking's responsibility, but the latest indications are that it has not ruled out some kind of association of Hong Kong's representatives with the drafting of the Law, be it only in a consultative capacity. For the people of Hong Kong that would provide at least some reassurance that the principles set out in the draft agreement will be respected.

Consultations

On the British side, Sir Geoffrey gave an undertaking in the Commons that Hong Kong government officials will be included in the British delegation to the Sino-British joint liaison group, due to be set up after the ratification of the agreement.

Since such a decision could probably not have been taken without prior consultation with Peking it holds out hope that the Chinese intend to allow the Hong Kong people a somewhat greater role in the implementation of the agreement than was at first feared.

Given that prospect, it is even more important that the plans for more democratically elected institutions should be put into effect as quickly as possible, modest though they are.

Though it is often stressed that Western confrontational politics are alien to the Chinese tradition, a gradual move to direct elections of the Legislative Assembly is desirable in the present situation in Hong Kong. If the people of Hong Kong are to have any say in the implementation of the Sino-British agreement, their representatives must have credibility.

Financial Times

Top IMF man for Argentine debt tour

By Peter Montagnon,
Euromarkets Correspondent

MR RICHARD ERB, Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, is to accompany top Argentine officials on at least part of their forthcoming world tour to promote the country's new debt rescheduling package.

His presence should serve to dispel some of the lingering doubts in the banking community about Argentina's willingness to comply with the economic adjustment programme negotiated with the IMF last September.

Bankers note that the participation in a rescheduling "roadshow" of such a high-ranking IMF official is exceptionally rare.

Speaking in London yesterday, Mr William Rhodes, chairman of the bank committee that negotiated the package with Argentina, said he was confident it would be completed on schedule. Banks have to subscribe by Christmas to \$4.2bn (£3.5bn) in new loans.

The Guardian

WESTMINSTER did have control over the soldiers during the Falklands War. Or so Mr Heseltine was at pains to impress during his recent visit to the Foreign Affairs Committee, when he grandly told members that it was "an indication of the political control" exercised over the military that the War Cabinet issued instructions not to attack any Argentine ships picking up survivors from the Belgrano.

Mr Heseltine and his aides have since had a chance to read the transcript of the Committee proceedings. He has now sent back a correction. It was, after all, the naval chiefs — not the politicians — who sent that instruction.

Nott dismisses accusations on Belgrano sinking

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

Sir John Nott, Secretary of State for Defence during the Falklands conflict, returned to the Commons last night and told MPs it was "ridiculous" to suggest that the General Belgrano had been deliberately sunk to scupper plans aimed at averting war.

And in his first detailed public examination about the torpedoing of the Argentine cruiser since he retired from active politics two years ago, he launched an impassioned defence of the Government's decision to sink the ship.

With Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, the leading critic of the Belgrano sinking, only a few feet away, Sir John told the Commons foreign affairs committee that he had not known about Peruvian peace proposals when the War Cabinet gave the go-ahead for the sinking in May 1982, and Mrs Thatcher had also denied knowledge of their existence.

"I really do think the Prime Minister's recollection and the records of this Government are better than suggestions that emanate from critics of the Government and its enemies."

Sir John, asked why he had told the Commons after the sinking that the Belgrano had been "closing" on the task force when the opposite was true, said his statement was based on the latest, up to date information. While he regretted not saying the ship was in "proximity" to the task force, the course of the Belgrano was not relevant to the decision to sink it.

He had only recently learnt of the change of course, but even if he had been informed shortly after the war, he would have seen no reason to correct his original statement because it was "not of the remotest importance or interest to anybody".

It was amazing that so few mis-statements had been made given the great difficulty with communicating with a task force 8,000 miles away, he said.

Sir John, now a merchant

banker, said that when the War Cabinet discussed on May 2 whether to allow an attack on the Belgrano, the threat to the task force "was so evident that it overrode our natural caution about possible future diplomatic negotiations."

That morning the BBC had reported Argentine claims that British ships and aircraft had been destroyed.

Lord Lewin, chief of the defence staff during the crisis yesterday told the committee that the sinking of the Belgrano, which killed 368 Argentine sailors, probably resulted in the saving of life during the Falklands War.

Although it was tragic that so many had died and he had been extremely surprised that the number was so high, Lord Lewin insisted the sinking was entirely justified. "After the Belgrano was sunk the Argentine navy did not once again emerge from territorial water. It is quiet likely by sinking the Belgrano we saved life," he said.

Lord Lewin appeared irritated when Mr Ian Mikardo, Labour MP for Bow and Poplar, asked him if the killing of 368 men "at a stroke" was justified by subsequent events.

"I think that is a rather unfair question. I had no idea how many men were going to be killed. My main concern and, I am sure ministers' main concern, was the safety of our men."

Lord Lewin told MPs why he, Admiral Sandy Woodward, commander of the task force, and Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse believed the Belgrano posed a serious threat.

In the 24 hours before the Belgrano was positively identified by HMS Conqueror, British ships had been attacked and damaged by Argentine aircraft, and the task force was expecting a co-ordinated attack from ships, shore-based aircraft and possibly submarines.

Admiral Woodward's mission was to enforce the total exclusion zone and place

Nott dismisses accusations on Belgrano

Continued from page 1

undercover forces on the Falklands to gain information about Argentine positions, in preparation for landing and repossessing the islands. "He could not do his job whilst the Belgrano was where she was or even at sea."

It was also possible that the Belgrano might try and skirt round south of the task force and recapture South Georgia.

● A former Royal Navy lieutenant, Mr Narendra Sethia, who was serving aboard the HMS Conqueror when it sank the Belgrano has issued writs for libel and breach of copyright against *The Observer* for publishing extracts from his diary.

Continued on back page, col 8

Nott and Lewin differ over Belgrano sinking

BY ANDREW ARENDS

SIR JOHN NOTT, former Defence Secretary, yesterday dismissed allegations that the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano had been sunk during the Falklands war to scuttle Peruvian peace plan as "ridiculous" in evidence to the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee which partly conflicted with statements by Lord Lewin, former Chief of the Defence Staff.

Sir John said that Foreign Affairs Committee that, immediately before the Belgrano was sunk on May 2 1982 with the loss of 368 lives, he had not given up hope of a diplomatic solution to the Falklands War.

This contrasted starkly with the statement by Lord Lewin, who earlier yesterday told the committee that, by April 30, the War Cabinet had come to the conclusion that there was no hope of a diplomatic settlement.

Commenting on Lord Lewin's remarks, Sir John said: "I heard him this morning and recall him asserting that. It was not my personal opinion" — nor, he said, was it the opinion of the political members of the War Cabinet.

Confusion also emerged as to the exact nature of the changes in naval rules of engagement which led to the sinking of the General Belgrano. Lord Lewin said the change in the rules of engagement on May 2 "was not a change in principle" but one of degree.

Sir John, however, said the decision to engage the Argentine cruiser was a "major change."

Yesterday's evidence also left unclear the exact nature of the War Cabinet's instruction to the commander of HMS Conqueror, the submarine which sank the Belgrano.

Lord Lewin said: "The Belgrano was a threat. Ministers had taken a decision to sink it — after that, was operational."

Sir John said the change in the rules of engagement was "missive" — it permitted the commander of HMS Conqueror to sink her. When asked how broad this "operational discretion" was, Sir John conceded that he had no answer.

He said that he did not know whether the signal from Fleet



Sir John Nott: Had not given up hope

HQ in Northwood to Conqueror contained an explicit order to sink the Belgrano.

Questioned by Mr Nigel Spearing, Sir John admitted that, from what he knew, there was only the likelihood that the Belgrano would be sunk. The Ministry of Defence has consistently refused to make public details of the exact changes in the rules of engagement.

Sir John also said he did not know why HMS Conqueror had returned to the scene of the sinking of the Belgrano on May 3.

Some members of the committee, which is investigating the sinking of the Belgrano, were clearly concerned about the extent to which political control was maintained over events during the weekend of May 1-2, and immediately after.

Mr Robert Harvey pointed out that Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, told the committee on November 7 that the decision not to allow Conqueror to attack the Argentine destroyers rescuing Belgrano survivors on May 3 had been made by the War Cabinet.

Mr Harvey noted that Mr Heseltine had since written to the committee admitting that the decision had been taken by the Commander-in-Chief, Fleet, Sir John Fieldhouse.

Hong Kong deal 'bold and imaginative plan for future'

BY KEVIN BROWN

THE AGREEMENT between Britain and China on Hong Kong is "a bold and imaginative plan for the future," Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, told the Commons yesterday.

"As a means of reconciling the apparently irreconcilable it could have important implications for problems in other parts

The agreement provides for the return of sovereignty over Hong Kong to China in 1997, when the lease on most of the colony expires, and for the continuation of the capitalist system for a further 50 years.

Sir Geoffrey and Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, are expected to travel to Peking later this month for the signing ceremony.

Opening the first full debate on Hong Kong since the agreement was unveiled in September, Sir Geoffrey said 1997 would mark the beginning of a new era for the colony.

The success of the agreement would depend to a large extent on the people of the colony and their willingness to make it work, he said.

"They are resourceful and resilient people, and I believe there is every chance that, in the 21st century, Hong Kong will continue to be the striking financial, economic and social success that it is today," he said.

Sir Geoffrey said the Government would legislate early next

year to provide for termination of British sovereignty in 1997, and to amend nationality law relating to Hong Kong.

Mr Denis Healey, the shadow Foreign Secretary, urged the Government to take account of the "clear misgivings" about the agreement which existed in Hong Kong.

Mr Healey urged the Government to launch an international effort to assist the resettlement of those who might want to leave the colony before the Chinese take-over. He indicated that he was referring to servants of the British colonial administration who might be subject to victimisation, and would have no automatic right to settle in Britain.

Mr Edward Heath, the former Conservative Prime Minister, said it would be foolish not to acknowledge that Hong Kong had grave difficulties which it was the Government's responsibility to help solve in the 12 years of British sovereignty which remained.

Several backbench MPs on both sides of the House backed a call by Mr Healey for annual progress reports to be made to parliament. Other backbenchers expressed concern about the plight of Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong, the possibility of conscription by the Chinese Government and the extent of local participation in the joint liaison group set up by Britain and China to ease the implementation of the agreement.

Belgrano sinking 'tragic but the right decision'

By ANTHONY LOOCH *Parliamentary Staff*

THE sinking of the Belgrano during the Falklands conflict, although tragic, had been the right decision, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin told the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee yesterday.

Lord Lewin, who was Chief of the Defence Staff during the conflict, had been asked by Mr Ian Mikardo, Labour MP for Bow and Poplar, whether, in retrospect, the killing of 568 Argentine servicemen "at a stroke" had been justified.

Lord Lewin said: "I had no idea how many were going to be killed. The main concern of myself, and I am sure of Ministers, was the safety of our own men."

"From my judgment, the Belgrano was a threat to the safety of those men, and we could reduce that threat by attacking her."

"I think it is tragic that 360 men lost their lives, and I was extremely surprised that the number was so high. But with all the hindsight now available, and all the information that has come to me about the Argentines' actions and intentions, I have no hesitation in saying that it was the right decision."

Exocet missiles

"After the Belgrano was sunk, the Argentine navy did not once again emerge from its territorial waters. It is quite likely that by sinking the Belgrano, we saved life."

He said the Belgrano had posed a threat to the mission entrusted to Rear Admiral Sir John Woodward, Commander of the Task Force. "He could not do his job while Belgrano was where she was, or even just at sea."

"We would have been extremely imprudent to have assumed that she was not fitted with Exocet missiles, though we now know she was not."

Another factor which had to be considered was that the Belgrano had been south of the exclusion zone, with South Georgia 800 miles to the east of the ship.

"They could have skirted around south of the Task Force, out of range, and cut across to recapture South Georgia," Lord Lewin added.

at the time to be the most up-to-date information available.

The sinking of the Belgrano had been only one of thousands of incidents in the South Atlantic that week. He found it "amazing" that so few mis-statements had been made, considering the difficulties of communicating with the South Atlantic.

Mr Peter Thomas, Conservative MP for Hendon South, asked whether, on the day before the sinking, Sir John had been aware of the peace efforts undertaken by President Belaunde Terry of Peru.

Sir John replied that he had not. "The Prime Minister has denied that we had any knowledge of the Peruvian negotiations at the time we took the decision on the Belgrano, and I really do think that her recollection, and the records of this Government, are better than the suggestions which emanate from the British Government's critics and enemies."

He did not think the sinking had been a crucial watershed in relations between Britain and Argentina at the time.

He said the dispatch of the Task Force had been a highly hazardous operation, and he had always wanted a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

"I was never in favour of going beyond what we needed to do for the protection of our Task Force. My over-riding duty was to protect our ships and men, and clearly there was an inherent conflict between this duty, and the opportunities which might develop for further peaceful negotiations."

ARGENTINE NAVY HAS 212 EXOCETS

By DESMOND WETTERN
Naval Correspondent

LATEST figures for sales of French sea-skimming Exocet anti-ship missiles show Argentina as the biggest overseas customer after West Germany and Britain.

The Argentine Navy has bought 212 of the missiles, including 32 of the latest longer-range version installed in four new West German-built destroyers, and 28 of the air-launched type.

But this figure probably does not take account of the five used against British warships in the South Atlantic when the destroyer Sheffield and container ship Atlantic Conveyor sank.

The Royal Navy has bought 500, some of which were lost in ships sunk in the South Atlantic in 1982, and has only recently taken delivery of the final batch of an order placed originally in 1972, according to JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY.

The Gulf states, Iraq, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, are reported to have bought 204 between them.

West Germans top

But it is pointed out that the Iraqis have probably bought many more than the 26 the French are prepared to admit selling to them since at least 60 confirmed attacks have been made on ships in the Gulf.

The West German Navy is the largest foreign customer for the missile with 352 purchased so far, mainly for fast missile-attack craft.

Total air-launched sales are conservatively estimated at 546 out of an overall total manufactured to date of at least 2,600. All the air-launched Exocets exported have gone to Third World countries.

Apparently for security reasons the French have so far not exported any of the submarine-launched type. It was due to become operational this year in some French submarines.

Nott denies peace hopes dead days before Belgrano sinking

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Sir John Nott, Defence Secretary during the Falklands conflict, told MPs last night that he disagreed with the then Chief of the Defence Staff, Lord Lewin, that all hope of a negotiated settlement had been abandoned a few days before the Argentinian cruiser, the Belgrano, was sunk.

He had heard Lord Lewin say that there was no hope for a settlement by the end of April 1982. "It was not my opinion at the time," said Sir John.

In evidence to the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Sir John and Lord Lewin both insisted that the decision to sink the Belgrano was justified. But their testimony raised new questions about the degree of political control over the military, and particularly over fleet headquarters at Northwood, outside London.

Sir John was being questioned by MPs for the first time since he left office last year. He said that he did not recollect that he was ever told that the Belgrano had changed course away from the task force 11 hours before it was attacked, but added that he would not expect to be.

"Whatever course the Belgrano was on, it could have turned round in a minute," he said.

Sir John said that he regretted telling the Commons on May 4, 1982, that the Belgrano was closing on the task force when it was hit. With hindsight it would have been better to have used the phrase "in proximity" to the task force.

Lord Lewin was asked whether ministers were told



Sir John Nott, (left), who questioned Lord Lewin's peace pessimism

about the signal from the submarine Conqueror that it had sighted the Belgrano on May 1 (the day before it was attacked). "The exact details were not necessarily reported to Whitehall," he replied.

The change of course of the Belgrano, communicated by Conqueror to Northwood about four hours before the cruiser was attacked, was "an insignificant detail." He did not know whether ministers were told of the change of course because it would not be recorded in minutes. "So I'm afraid nobody will ever know," said Lord Lewin.

"Ministers took a decision that the Belgrano was a threat; what happened next was only operational." He was referring to the War Cabinet's decision, at about 1 pm on May 2, to change the rules of engagement to allow the Belgrano to be attacked.

Sir John described the change as "permissive." He

said he had no answer when asked how broad was the discretion given to operational commanders.

Lord Lewin described the change in the rules of engagement to sink the Argentinian cruiser as a change in degree, not principle. However Sir John said later that it was "a major change."

Lord Lewin also acknowledged for the first time in public that Britain intercepted Argentinian orders on the night of May 1 to its fleet to seek safer waters closer to Argentina's coast, but that intelligence was only received in London on May 3. In any case, the Argentinian plan was simply to wait for more suitable weather, he said.

Lord Lewin said the proposal to change the rules of engagement on May 2 to sink the Belgrano was not submitted by naval commanders to what he described as "the mandarins' committee" chaired by Sir Robert Armstrong, the Cabinet Secretary. It normally prepared a brief for members of the War Cabinet before ministers took decisions.

He also conceded that Mr Francis Pym, the then Foreign Secretary, and Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General, wrote a note the day before — May 1 — to the War Cabinet questioning whether the change to allow the task force to sink the Argentinian carrier the 25 de Mayo, was compatible with the United Nations charter covering self-defence.

"But we convinced ministers," he said, adding that Mr Pym was worried about the reaction

Turn to back page, col. 1

Nott denies hopes dead

Continued from page one
"among his colleagues in France and Germany."

Sir John and Lord Lewin referred to Argentinian attacks, which largely failed, on the British task force on May 1.

Sir John told the committee: "It is beyond my comprehension how anyone can consider the sinking of the Belgrano an escalation of the conflict by the British."

Lord Lewin said that he had no hesitation in saying that the sinking was the right decision. It was quite likely that by sinking the cruiser "we saved life," because the Argentinian fleet returned to its own waters afterwards.



It's the wonder of woollies . . . Top model Samantha Fox has a couple of good tips (right) for the men of HMS Endurance on how to wrap up against the Antarctic cold. She also had a few last-minute Christmas gifts for the lads when she visited the ship at Portsmouth as flight pin-up. Helping her with the parcels (above) are LEM "K.P." Peters and Cpl. Paddy Lee RM.

Big picture: George Richardson Inset: LA(Phot) John Hickin

Endurance warms to Samantha

SHORTLY before she sailed south towards the Antarctic ice last month, HMS Endurance received a heart-warming "flying" visit from top model Samantha Fox. And as it was the ship's families' day, she took her Mum along to Portsmouth, too.

Eighteen-year-old Samantha and mother Carol were the guests of LA John Scriver, who had written to the Sun newspaper asking the Page Three Girl of the Year to be the pin-up of 829 Squadron 001 HMS Endurance Wasp Flight.

Calendars

During the day Samantha signed calendars for the ship's company, watched flying and boat displays, and received a colour photograph of the ship signed by all the Flight members.

In all, about 250 family guests enjoyed the day at sea in the ice patrol ship, which is now heading for her 17th Christmas in the South Atlantic.

During her extra-busy seven-and-a-half months down South, the "Red Plum" is due to transport Brabant Island Expedition teams to and from the ice and link up with British Antarctic Survey ships and representatives of Birmingham and Aberdeen Universities.

Navy photography has been given an international boost by the Brabant Island expedition. Three members of the Photographic Branch are involved with the project, and their photographs will be seen all over the world.

LA(Phot) Jed Corbett from

the Fleet Photographic Unit has been on Brabant since the expedition started in the last Antarctic summer. His photographs have been sent back and have appeared at

exhibitions in Edinburgh, the Royal Geographical Society, London, and at Cologne in the biennial international photographic trade fair.

Flying out on November 26

with the second summer party are LA(Phot) Tim Hall from HMS Daedalus and LA(Phot) Martin Barker from HMS Osprey.

● See also page 17.

LETTERS *to the Editor*

Write to Navy News, Barham Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.

How Navy helped a Falklands widow

AS A Falklands widow I felt compelled to write regarding your article "Widows of War — and Peace."

Since reading your article in last month's Navy News, of which I am an avid reader, I have purchased a copy of the book "Another Story — Women and the Falklands War." I am abso-

lutely horrified that only one side of the story has been published

Personally I have no complaints about the way the Navy "handled" my affairs following the death of my husband Mark on board HMS Glamorgan. The Fleet Chief allocated to me helped

me through all the necessary arrangements and financial problems that I would have encountered.

I have had contact with the ship (albeit occasionally) from the Falklands conflict until this day, and I know, despite a change of captain, that if I needed help now,

that help would be forthcoming.

I am personally proud of the Royal Navy and am sincerely grateful for all the support, kindness and generosity shown both by them and the general public.

— Dawn Samples,
Portsmouth.

Exeter mast □ story

I WAS interested to read of the return of a 6ft. length of the fourth HMS Exeter's mast to Port Stanley.

When the Exeter returned to the Falklands after the River Plate action, both masts were in a dangerous state. I and a number of others were detailed as extra bosun's party.

We struck both top masts which were floated ashore, and I was under the impression that they were set up as a memorial, though they would probably have rotted away by now.

During the stay in the Falklands I stayed ashore each night with the very good family of Mr. and Mrs. Sedgwick. — B. A. Trott (lieut., ret'd), Southsea, Hants.

Churchill's respects

WHEN HM submarine Churchill took a few days well-earned rest from South Atlantic duty, members of the ship's company paid their respects to the Falklands Antelope-Ardent memorial on Mount Campito. During their visit they placed a ship's badge among those already there.

Brums yomp for cash

LEAVE marching to the Army. That's the advice from four CPOs who yomped from San Carlos to Stanley.

In a bid to raise cash for charity the four — all from HMS Birmingham — set out to follow in the footsteps of the soldiers and Royal Marines who made that epic march in the battle for the Falklands.

Guided by Corporals Och O'Neil and Rick Tottle of the Royal Engineers, CWEM(R) John Yull and CWEM(O) Chris Farley, with CMEM(L) Tim Auton and CPOWEA John Hynes, leapt from their Gemini at their start point in San Carlos Water — only to stop within five minutes for tea at a nearby farm house.

GOOSE GREEN

But from there on it was best feet forward for Goose Green, via the 900ft-high Sussex Ridge, for the camp of the Coldstream Guards where they spent their first night.

Buoyant with their first day's progress, the fearless four and their soldier guides set off on stage two of the plod. But a re-

Battle

honours

RFA BLUE ROVER received her Falkland Islands battle honour during a visit to the Clyde Submarine Base. The tanker was one of the main suppliers of fuel during the South Atlantic campaign.

walk of eight miles covered one previous day, because they were unable to hitch a boat ride to Teal Creek, meant huge blisters for John Hynes and a slow pace for everyone else.

Hynes's feet became so raw that O'Neil and Auton made fast time to their next planned overnight stop at Mount Pleasant for medical help.

One look by the doctor and Hynes was official casualty No. 1 and out of the march.

Day three saw the team pressing on for Fitzroy, but by mid-afternoon and with only five miles to the town, they too were in trouble in an all-enveloping snow storm.

For 30 minutes they stumbled around in the blizzard without sense of direction.

When it cleared they found themselves heading in the wrong direction. But they made it in the end, spending the night in a shearing shed.

SNOWING

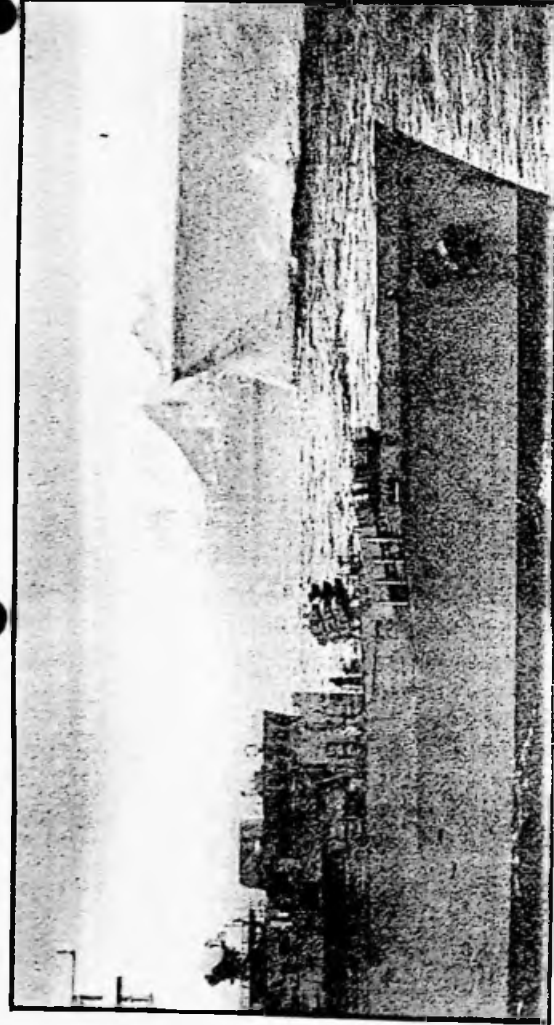
On the fourth and last day they left Fitzroy for Stanley. It was snowing hard and the wind was bitter, "but our rucksacks were a lot lighter than they had been on the first day," said Tim Auton.

Tracks, which until it snowed had been dry and firm, were now a morass of mud and clung to their boots, making them twice as heavy.

So it was more than just relief when a short distance from Stanley a Land-Rover appeared with Royal Engineer WO2 Dave Eales. "What a sight for sore eyes, not to mention feet," said Tim Auton.

Back at Stanley the four sailors agreed that, so far as marching is concerned, the troops can keep it.

"It's far too much like hard work," they said, "and we all take our hats off to them."



Sword's scenic break

WITH temperatures soaring to minus one degree Centigrade, HMS Broadsword enjoyed a five-day visit to South Georgia, providing a welcome break from patrolling the waters of the Falkland Islands.

Snow-capped peaks and extensive glaciers are features of majestic South Georgia, where the Broadsword was accompanied by the tanker mv Scottish Eagle.

The visit began with a scenic coastal passage. Easing past a large tabular iceberg aground in 700ft of water, the Broadsword entered the magnificent Drygalski fiord at the southern tip of the island.

There the icy peaks formed a dramatic backdrop for the traditional stirring of the Christmas pudding, a puddle and plenty of brandy ensuring that the mixture did not freeze before it was well stirred.

Sailing on there was opportunity for a look at St Andrew's Bay, which has one of the world's biggest colonies of King Penguins, before berthing

alongside the Scottish Eagle in Grytviken.

While some of the ship's company explored the old whaling station and visited Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave, others expended their energies in helping with the renovation of the old whaling ship Petrel.

After calling, cautiously, on elephant bull seals and staging a winter Olympics, the Broadsword closed on Bird Island to pick up mail from the three British Antarctica Survey personnel spending two years studying wild life.

Along the south coast the ship encountered several vast icebergs, one 200ft high and another three-quarters of a mile long.

Then it was back to the Falklands with only a few weeks left on patrol before returning home for Christmas.

A STIRRING party got to work on HMS Southampton's Christmas duff as the ship sailed to the South Atlantic.

JASTD Andrew Burns, the youngest rating, paddled the pud while the commanding officer, Capt. D. S. Dobson, Lieut.-Cdr. Peter Swan, and POCK Mo Morris beefed up the ingredients with some spirited extras.

Supply officer Lieut.-Cdr. David Allsopp added a quantity of £1 coins.

Show time

WHEN a planned Service show was cancelled, three of the ship's company of HMS Broadsword, leader of the Group Mike Southland Deployment, produced their own comedy evening.

Calling themselves "Trial and Error," they presented an hour-and-a-half of songs and sketches.

COMEDIANS

The team consisted of comedian / musician POSTD Herbie Wagner, linkman and comic LSTD Shiner Wright, and impressionist JRO(T) Biffo Burns, with help from Lieut. Duncan Triley on the guitar and CPOMEM(L) Jan Duke backstage.

After three performances in the Broadsword, the trio took their show to RFA Diligence and the tanker mv Scottish Eagle.

Left — HMS Broadsword nears one of several huge icebergs she encountered off South Georgia. Picture: Lieut Kevin Fox.

Below — All galley hands to the paddle for the stirring of the Christmas pudding. Picture: CPO WEA Duffin.

HMS Broadsword's Christmas pudding. In the background is Ross Glacier, South Georgia. Left to right are CK Trickey, LCK Norton, LCK Screen, CK Clarke, CK Dennis, POCK King and Capt. Tony Norman, commanding officer of the Broadsword.



GOODBYE TO THE ISLANDS

HMS AJAX headed home from the Falkland Islands on November 10. After brief visits to Guadeloupe and Antigua, she is due back at Devonport in the middle of December.

A varied programme of exchanges and activities kept everybody busy while the frigate was in the

South Atlantic, with most of the ship's company able to get ashore for a few days.

AB Des Hill of the Ajax heard that his brother, AB Graham Hill, had joined the patrol vessel HMS Sentinel, so plans were soon in hand for a family reunion.

Fish has figured large on the Ajax menu, thanks to the success of the ship's angling club. CWEA John Cole claimed the best fish award for the deployment with a 5½lb. sea trout, while POCK Ted Lacy was hard-pressed in the wardroom galley to keep up with the ship's first lieutenant, Lieut.-Cdr. Tony Fisher, who, appropriately, caught more than 75lb. of fish.

RUGBY TOURNAMENT

CWEA Bob Crang, POPT Gags Simkins and AB(M) Graham Williams made the RN squad for the Falkland Islands Inter-Services rugby tournament, and AB(S) Buck Taylor led the Ajax team to a creditable fifth place out of 12.

Other runners were CAEA Mick Cook, canteen manager Mr. David Berkeley, CMEM Jonah Jones, WEM(O) Baz Bromilow and MEM(M) Talf Dorey. POMEMs Frank Jewell and Bob Perrigo took part in another form of strenuous exercise, completing a four-day yomp from San Carlos to Stanley.

HMS Ajax's canteen manager, Mr. David Berkeley (left) and the ship's weapons electrical officer, Lieut.-Cdr. Russell Budge, dispense goodies at a barbecue on Saunders Island, West Falkland.



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Daily Mail
7th December 1984

Angry Tam wins the tag of top troublemaker

MP Tam Dalyell, scourge of the Prime Minister over the sinking of the Argentine battleship Belgrano, was yesterday named 'Parliamentary troublemaker of the year'.

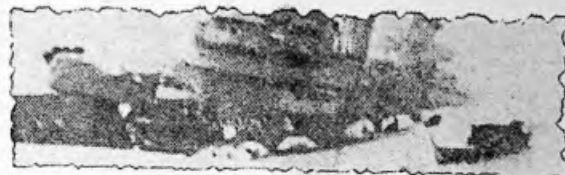
His citation, in awards organised by the Spectator magazine and a whisky firm,

commends his 'amazing persistence in battering the Government.'

But the Labour MP angrily rejected the tag and shunned the Savoy Hotel presentation ceremony. He said later that the title 'reveals a misunderstanding of what the Belgrano affair is all about'.

Daily Mail
6th December 1984

Nott 'sorry' on Belgrano affair



Belgrano sinking . . . cruiser was on her way home

SIR John Nott, Defence Secretary during the Falklands war, apologised yesterday for saying the Argentine cruiser Belgrano was sunk while 'closing in' on the British task force.

He confessed he was not aware of the precise course of the Belgrano at the time.

But he insisted the course of the cruiser was irrelevant since it posed a threat to British lives, and the first duty of any Government was to protect them.

By JOHN DICKIE
Diplomatic Correspondent

His admission came under intense questioning by the Commons Select Committee when he was challenged over his statement to the House in May 1982 after the Belgrano sinking. The statement was wrong—the vessel was going away. He knew it now. 'Of course I regret it,' he said.

But he refused to acknowledge he owed the House an apology for misleading them. The statement, he said, was made 'in perfect good faith. I regret that

I didn't use the words "in proximity".'

Sir John described the enormous pressures on him at the time, with constant demands for statements to Parliament, and to the Press and television, under great difficulties of communication, with the submarine Conqueror 8,000 miles away.

He said: 'What I find astonishing is that so few mis-statements were made.'

Sir John was asked whether he was angry at not being told of the change of course of the Belgrano so that it was known to be heading away from the British task force.

'No, not a bit,' he said. 'Why should I feel angry? It was not

relevant to the course of events.'

Sir John argued that the Belgrano could easily have changed course again and remained a threat which no Government could ignore.

He dismissed as 'quite ridiculous' claims that the Belgrano was sunk in an attempt to wreck peace negotiations.

Details of peace negotiations under way in Peru had not reached London when the attack was authorised, said Sir John.

Earlier Sir John had listened to Lord Lewin, Chief of Defence Staff, at the time of the Falklands war, insisting that there had been no conspiracy to conceal from the Government that the Belgrano had changed course.

£450m FOR ARGENTINA FROM CITY

By ANNE SEGALL
Banking Correspondent

BITISH banks are to provide Argentina with £450 million of new loans as part of a massive re-scheduling package aimed at resolving the country's debt problems, it emerged in London yesterday.

British banks fear the size of their contribution could spark off another political row similar to the storm which greeted news of their £150 million contribution to an Argentine loan in December 1982.

At the time, Mrs Thatcher came under fierce Parliamentary attack for allowing British banks to participate and for involving the British Government in an indirect contribution to Argentine finances through the International Monetary Fund.

The Prime Minister was forced to back the banks by arguing that their involvement was necessary to stave off the risk of an international financial crisis and to protect money already lent out to Argentina.

However, she intervened later, in the summer of 1983, to prevent the loan being disbursed until Argentina had provided the IMF with verbal assurances of its intention to remove sanctions against British companies in Argentina.

The latest British contribution is part of a £3.5 billion international loan agreed over the weekend in New York as part of a re-scheduling and new-money deal organised by the IMF.

The IMF is insisting that all banks with existing exposure to Argentina have to participate, providing British banks with little option.

Major role

Mr Guy Huntrods, a senior director at Lloyd's Bank International, represented British Banks at the marathon talks in New York which lasted 19 days.

He made clear that British bank involvement had received the implicit support of the British Government.

"I have no reason to suppose the Government will stand in the way of an international financing operation which has received the blessing of the IMF and in which British banks have an important part to play," he commented yesterday.

Mr Huntrods also indicated that the Government had been kept informed all along of the progress of talks.

A Whitehall spokesman confirmed yesterday that British banks would be free to put up new money for Argentina. "We recognise that commercial banks must pursue their own interests," he commented.

British banks already have £3 billion at stake in Argentina as a result of loans made before the Falklands conflict.

International banks, in addition to putting up new money, are to give Argentina an extra 12 years to repay some £11 billion-worth of debts falling due between 1982 and the end of 1985.

Raised fears

Argentina, the third biggest debtor in the world after Mexico and Brazil, owes £36 billion, of which around £26 billion is due to international banks.

The IMF is also planning to help Argentina resolve its economic problems by providing the country with £1.4 billion of official aid. But IMF assistance is being made conditional on banks doing their bit.

The British Government is a major contributor to IMF funds, accounting for roughly 7 per cent of its resources. There is little the British Government or the IMF can do directly to influence the way Argentina spends the money it receives.

This has raised fears in the past that funds supplied to Argentina could be used to boost military spending.

British officials point out, however, that the Argentine junta was replaced by a civilian Government under President Alfonsín following general elections last December.

Argentina seeks extra loans to pay off interest

By Peter Montagnon,
Euromarkets Correspondent

ARGENTINA is seeking additional bridging finance from governments in Europe, the Far East and Latin America to help it reduce interest arrears on its foreign debt before the end of the year.

The finance, which is being negotiated on a bilateral basis with individual governments, comes on top of a \$500m (£417m) short-term loan secured from the U.S. Treasury as part of last week-end's debt rescue package.

Bankers close to Argentina's debt negotiations declined yesterday to detail the amounts being sought, but noted that Argentina would need a total of \$1.25bn if it was to meet all interest payments on its public sector debt due up till December 31.

Of that, \$500m is already coming from the U.S. and a further \$250m from Argentina's own reserves, which theoretically leaves \$500m still to be found. The actual total of bridging finance sought could, however, be less as Argentina is only formally committed to paying \$750m before the year end.

But bankers believe that a determined effort by Argentina to reduce its interest arrears could help syndication of the \$4.2bn in new loans it is now seeking from its creditor banks.

A "critical mass" of subscriptions to the new loan have to be received from banks before the International Monetary Fund approves release of its own \$1.4bn loan to Argentina at a board meeting now scheduled for December 28. Only after that happens will the U.S. release its \$500m bridging loan.

Navy warships built up to a year quicker

By DESMOND WETTERN Naval Correspondent

THE Navy's latest warships are being built by up to almost a year quicker than earlier ships of their class.

At Swan Hunter's shipyard on the Tyne, where British Shipbuilders plan to make 2,100 workers out of 7,350 redundant by next February, the new 4,100-ton frigates Sheffield and Coventry are expected to be completed in four-and-a-half years.

The new ships, ordered exactly two years ago as replacements for the two destroyers of the same names sunk in the Falklands conflict, are due to join the Fleet in summer and autumn 1987, work on them having started on the slipways in March this year.

The quicker delivery times will mean a saving in costs of as much as 10 per cent., or

around £15 million on the price of each ship.

Following implementation of the "modified working practices agreement" last year, previous restrictive practices in the shipyard have now ended.

Working parties made up of men in several skills such as welders, electricians and plumbers are now employed on each ship with each man able to do some of the work of the others, if needed.

The time needed to fabricate hull plating, piping and other components has been reduced partly as a result of the introduction of increasing numbers of computers both to control machinery and to aid design work. In some instances time savings of 20 per cent. are being achieved.

Cuts in building times are also anticipated with the Type 23 frigates—the first of which is to be built by Yarrow on the Clyde—with the introduction of thicker hull plating.

FALKLANDS POST CHARGE VETOED

By Our Political Staff

The Government has backed down from its controversial decision to start charging British Servicemen in the Falkland Islands the full cost of sending their letters home. The Ministry of Defence is expected to make a statement today.

DAYELL IN MoD TALKS ON BELGRANO

By Our Political Staff

Mr Tam Dayell Labour MP for Linlithgow, who has persistently questioned the Prime Minister and Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, on the circumstances of the sinking of the General Belgrano was called yesterday to the Defence Ministry for talks with senior civil servants.

In a meeting with Sir Clive Whitmore, permanent under-secretary, Mr Dayell was asked whether he had the diary of Mr Narendra Sethia, a former officer on the nuclear submarine, Conqueror. Mr Sethia wrote an unofficial diary of the submarine's voyage during the conflict, extracts of which have appeared in the OBSERVER.

Mr Dayell said that he was "perfectly happy" to have meetings with ministers or civil servants at any time. He said he told Sir Clive that although he did not have the diary, he had read it two years ago.

The Times 5/12/84

Christmas log

Tam Dayell has received his first Christmas card. It bears the emblem of HMS Conqueror and is signed "With best wishes for Christmas and New Year from the president and members of the senior rates mess". The words "Proverbs 26:20" are written in the bottom corner. The verses in question read: "When the wood faileth the fire shall go out, and when the talebearer is taken away contentions shall cease"

Peter Hain reports on how Buenos Aires hopes to secure its debt rescue plan

Argentina rushes to meet Christmas deadline

COUNTING the days till Christmas has taken on a new meaning in the international banking community as Argentina and her top creditor bankers rush to meet an end-year deadline for implementing the \$20bn debt rescue package agreed on Sunday night.

A mammoth marketing effort has already started as full details of the package, which includes fresh loans of \$4.2bn and a rescheduling of \$14.5bn in foreign debt, were dispatched by courier yesterday to more than 300 creditor banks worldwide.

This is to be followed up by a world tour of top Argentine officials who will seek support for the package. The tour is likely to start in the U.S. at the end of this week and take in Japan as well as Europe. British bank creditors are to be invited to a presentation in Zurich, probably next Monday.

Mr William Rhodes, the senior Citibank executive who chairs the banks' negotiating committee with Argentina, said it is critically important that a favourable response be received to the package by Christmas.

This would pave the way for the International Monetary Fund board to approve before year-end the release of the \$1.4bn it has promised Argentina and put its \$45bn debt on a much sounder footing before creditor banks have to start drawing up their accounts for 1984.

But none of the senior

bankers who have just spent nearly three weeks in New York thrashing out the details of the most complicated rescheduling package yet are under any illusion that the task of winning broad creditor support will be easy. The market for Argentine loans has been soured by many months of intransigence at the negotiating table and interest payment arrears amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars.

Argentina and its top bank creditors now have to persuade even the most obdurate of small bank executives that the situation has changed since the despair of last summer when it seemed that the government of President Raul Alfonsín would never move to sort out its economic problems.

Senior bankers believe that one important card in this will be the money they have managed to win from Argentina as "an up-front payment for the package." Argentina is to pay at least \$750m in interest arrears by year-end and a further \$750m in the first quarter of next year. This latter payment makes up the balance of a \$1.1bn bridging loan arranged in 1982 which has so far not been repaid.

Under the deal all interest arrears are to be cleared by next June. Provided initial response to the package is positive, bankers believe the U.S. government agencies responsible

ARGENTINE DEBT

	1982	1983	1984
Bank loans outstanding	24,836	25,305	25,451
Interest due to banks	2,241	2,145	1,396
Foreign exchange reserves	2,586	2,282	3,169
			1,172

Source: American Express Bank

for regulating the banking system may decide as early as next month to lift their damaging "sub-standard" classification of Argentine debt.

Main details of the package agreed late on Sunday night are:

- The provision by banks of new loans totalling \$4.2bn or 16½ per cent of their existing exposure to Argentina. The loans would comprise a \$3.7bn, ten year loan bearing interest at a margin of 1½ per cent over Eurocurrency rates or 14 per cent over U.S. prime as well as a \$500m short term trade credit facility with a maturity of four years.

- Rescheduling of \$9.9bn in public sector debt with debt falling due in 1984 and 1985 rescheduled for 12 years and rescheduled over ten years. The interest margin will be 1½ per cent over Eurocurrency rates.

- Rescheduling for ten years of \$3.5bn in private sector debt maturing this year and next with the same interest margin as for the public sector. Separately Argentina has promised to complete by

December 15 the process of converting private sector debt due in 1982-83 into Government guaranteed debt backed by the issue of promissory notes.

- Banks are also asked to maintain their money market lines to Argentine banks at the level outstanding on September 30 with a similar agreement to maintain existing levels of short term trade financing.

Bankers say that the details of the package now being sent to all creditors will contain an endorsement by M. Jacques de Larosiere, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund who remains confident that Argentina is sticking to the terms of its economic stabilisation programme worked out with the Fund last September.

Support from the IMF as well as from top U.S. officials is designed to help swing the international banking community behind the programme. The U.S. is to turn this support into action with the provision of a \$500m bridging loan, while the bank package is expected to be complemented by loans from governments and official agencies totalling around \$1bn.

The IMF will separately provide a further \$270m from its Compensatory Financing Facility.

If it works, the package will mean that the last major debtor in Latin America will have concluded an agreement to put its international debt on an even keel. In the short run, Argentina could expect to draw some \$2bn from its new loan facilities as soon as late February.

It will also mean that its IMF programme can be officially approved before the year-end without which Argentina would forfeit \$100m in IMF money under revised loan ceilings for member countries due to enter force next year.

As in the recent Mexican rescheduling deal creditor banks are to receive limited authorisation to switch their loans into their own domestic currencies when the debt is rescheduled. There will also be a very limited option for them to choose which state entity should benefit from the new money loans they are making available.

It was technical details such as these which kept the negotiations going throughout last weekend carrying the final announcement beyond the end-November deadline that had previously been set by the banks. But the 11-bank negotiating committee was adamant in seeking a water tight package that would have the best chance of success in a still rather sceptical world.

Argentine debt package lifts bank shares

By ANNE SEGALL

IN A MAJOR breakthrough, Argentina yesterday announced that it has finally reached agreement with its international bank creditors on a massive financial package aimed at resolving the country's \$43.6 billion (£36.3 billion) debts crisis.

The package is part of a wider financial agreement involving the International Monetary Fund and carries the personal endorsement of IMF managing director Jacques de Larosiere.

News of the IMF-backed deal for Argentina was greeted with relief in London yesterday, in spite of the fact that banks will have to put up a large amount of new money as part of the agreement. Bank shares gained all round, with Midland Bank shares leading the way at 358p, up 19p on the day.

This reflects the fact that Midland has more at stake in Argentina than the other British banks—largely because of the involvement of its American subsidiary, Crocker National of California. Between them, Midland and Crocker have roughly £750 million on loan to Argentina.

A solution to the Argentine debts crisis comes almost exactly a year after the election of President Raul Alfonsin and follows months of frustration and anxiety for international banks. At one stage, many senior bankers began to question whether Argentina really intended to honour its international obligations.

Since the summer, banks have been swapping or selling Argentine loans at discounts of around 30 p.c. while banks able to afford it have made substantial provisions against their Argentine credits.

Standard Chartered, for example, shocked other British banks by revealing that it would set aside 25 p.c. of its Argentine loans as potential bad debts.

The Argentine package is by far the most complicated of all those agreed so far for troubled third world debtors. A deal was struck late on Sunday after a 19-day marathon negotiation session in New York involving the country's leading creditor banks.

British banks were represented at the negotiations by Guy Huntrods, an executive director of Lloyds Bank International.

The Argentine debts package involves the rescheduling of nearly \$10 billion of public sector debts and \$3.5 billion of private sector debts.

In addition, international banks are being required to provide the Argentine government with \$4.2 billion of new money to help it cover its financing needs between now and the end of 1985.

Under the rescheduling agreement, Argentina will be given 12 years to repay those debts falling due this year and next and 10 years to repay those debts which fell due in 1982 and 1983. There will be a three-year grace period before repayments begin. Banks will receive interest of 13½ p.c. over their own cost of funds on rescheduled loans.

The new money element of the Argentine debts deal represents a compromise, with Argentina having originally requested nearly \$1 billion more. Even so, this part of the package could prove difficult to get off the ground because of past frustration with Argentina's attitude towards its creditor banks.

The Argentine debts deal has come just in time to save international banks from the need to make substantial provisions against their Argentine loan portfolios.

As part of the deal, Argentina has committed itself to paying off \$750 million of interest arrears before the year end.

It is also pledged to clear all remaining interest arrears by the middle of next year.

Emergency loan of \$500m offered to Argentina

From Alex Brummer in Washington

The US Treasury announced yesterday that it is ready to extend an emergency loan of \$500 million to Argentina following the preliminary agreement between Buenos Aires and its bankers on rescheduling loans of \$4.2 billion.

The American loan, which will help relieve the pressure on the beleaguered Argentine economy, will be made as soon as the International Monetary Fund reports that its board has formally approved a new \$1.4 billion loan to the country. The IMF and Argentina settled their economic differences in October but the fund declined to release money until the banks had done their part in a refinancing package.

The agreement with Argentina is significant since it is the only major debtor country which had failed to reach a full accord on managing its debt problems since the debt crisis sprang on to the international scene in summer of 1982. With Argentina's problems out of the way the IMF will be able to concentrate on what has become known as Stage Two of the crisis in which it will seek to ensure the terms of private sector loans to debtors are im-

proved and rescheduled over several years.

The IMF said yesterday that the fund's executive directors would meet before Christmas to review the bank financing package and its own loan agreement. Their approval will trigger the American loan. The bank agreement was hammered out over the weekend. It will also allow Argentina to stretch out some \$13.4 billion of debt which had been due by the end of 1985. The agreement was reached by the bank advisory committee, which includes Lloyds Bank, after a visit from the managing director of the IMF Mr Jacques de Larosiere at the end of last week. Its final approval will depend on some 320 banks worldwide who have taken part in syndicated loans to the country.

Because of the sensitive politics of its emergent democracy Argentina's financial problems have been of particular concern in Washington. The US Treasury loan is clearly designed to alleviate pressure on the Alfonsín government. However, it has been careful on this occasion to make its loan conditional on IMF agreement. An earlier loan which failed to do this drew criticism from Britain for undermining the IMF's authority.

Belgrano was no threat, says officer



Narendra Sethia—"cruiser
was first target"

By Richard Norton-Taylor

NARENDRA SETHIA, an officer on the submarine Conqueror which sank the General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict, said last night that he did not believe the Argentinian cruiser was a threat to the British task force when it was attacked on May 2, 1982.

In the first interview by a member of the Conqueror's crew, Mr Sethia also said that fleet headquarters at Northwood, Middlesex, were told by signal early on the afternoon of May 1—24 hours before the war cabinet gave the order to attack—that the Belgrano was in the Conqueror's sights.

Mr Sethia said that Northwood immediately acknowledged receipt of the signal. Lord Lewin, chief of defence staff at the time, has said that the message did not get through until about midnight and that he was not informed until the following morning.

Mr Sethia, a lieutenant on the Conqueror responsible for supplies and secretarial work and the author of an unofficial diary of the submarine's voyage, was speaking on Granada Television's World in Action programme.

If the cruiser had been a threat, he said, the commanding officer, commander Christopher Wreford-Brown, would have told Northwood.

"But the situation never arose." The Belgrano's movements outside the exclusion zone suggested that the Argentinian captain believed the cruiser was safe, he said.

Asked whether the Argentinians should have been told of the May 2 change in the rules of engagement which allowed the Conqueror to attack the Belgrano—Argentina was not told until May 7—Mr Sethia replied: "I think they should have been told, and I think had they been told it would have been very stupid of them to have stayed in the area."

In part of the interview which was cut for lack of time, Mr Sethia said that the Belgrano, rather than its escorting destroyers equipped with Exocet missiles, was the first target on May 2 for psychological reasons.

As in the Second World War, he said, tonnage was important for morale. The intention was to attack the destroyers after the cruiser.

He denied that he was responsible for the Conqueror's missing control room log and said on the World in Action programme that it was extremely unlikely that anyone on board the submarine took it.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, said in the programme that he had been told that GCHQ at Cheltenham intercepted the order from Argentina's naval command to recall the Belgrano—an order sent on the evening of May 1—and that this was known by the war cabinet before it ordered the Conqueror to sink the cruiser.

Argentina and banks agree \$16bn loan refinancing

From Douglas Tweedale, Buenos Aires

Argentina has reached an important agreement with its foreign creditors to refinance \$16 billion (£13 billion) of its \$45 billion debt. It will receive close to \$5.5 billion in fresh credit to meet balance of payments deficits next year.

The president of the Central Bank Señor Enrique García Vazquez, announced details of the accord yesterday in Buenos Aires after he returned from three weeks of negotiations with the 11-bank steering committee of Argentina's 300 creditor banks. He said the deal would open the doors to a \$1.4 billion standby loan Argentina is seeking from the International Monetary Fund.

The banks have agreed to

refinance \$11 billion of public sector debt and \$5 billion of private debt falling due between 1982 and 1985. Those loans will be rolled over for 12 years with a three-year grace period.

The banks will also contribute \$4.2 billion of fresh loans with a 10-year maturity, and a three-year grace period.

An additional \$1 billion will come from official lending agencies of the creditor nations and \$270 million from the IMF.

The agreement comes after nearly a year of sometimes acrimonious negotiations in which Argentina sought to renegotiate its crippling debt burdens without having harsh austerity measures imposed by the IMF.

It is an important political achievement for President Raul Alfonsín, who had vowed to have the debt problem under control before he celebrates a year in office next Monday.

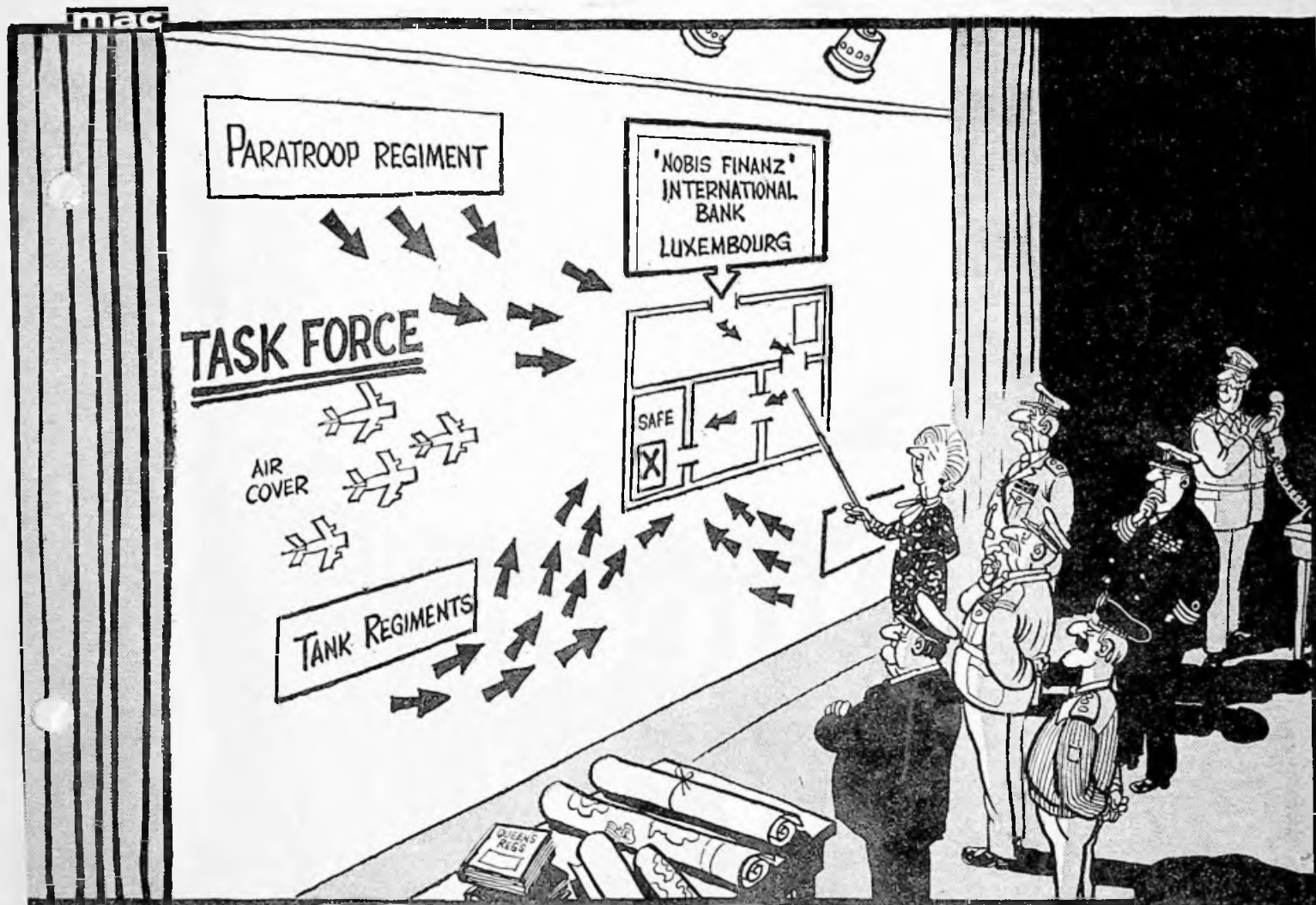
The deal includes what Argentine officials said were more lenient terms than those obtained in a frustrated negotiating effort by the outgoing military government last year. Señor García Velasquez said "friendly nations" had intervened to make the agreement possible.

However, the accord is likely to draw criticism from Argentina's powerful Peronist labour unions, most of which are completing internal elections to renew their leaderships.

Señor Eduardo Setti, a Peronist economist linked to the unions, predicted yesterday that the Government's renegotiating strategy would result in a profound recession next year.

Señor García Vazquez denied charges that the conditions Argentina had accepted were recessionary, and said that an agreement with foreign creditors "will make the rules of the game clearer in Argentina and open the way for investment."

The \$16 billion loan refinancing will carry an interest rate of 1-3/8 over the London interbank offered rate (Libor). The new \$4.2 billion loan will accrue interest at 1-5/8 over Libor, or 1-1/4 above the US prime rate.



'Just how many ships and troops do you want called back from the Falklands, Prime Minister?'

MAC'S YEAR is now available in bookshops, published by Sphere Books at £1.95

Brabant Island — last leg

AS Britain cools into winter, 16 servicemen were precipitating the onslaught of cold by flying off to Antarctica.

The final party to leave for the Joint Service expedition to Brabant Island, the group were to carry out scientific studies on the island where temperatures dip down to as low as minus 40 degree.

Led by a Royal Navy lieutenant Commander, but with the biggest contingent from the Army, the group were flying to the Falklands where they were to be met at Christmas by HMS Endurance and journey by sea on to Brabant Island to arrive in the New Year.

Helping to load their gear on to Endurance at Portsmouth in the picture are (left to right): Sergeant Willie Lawrence, RE; Lance Bombardier Martin Hughes, RA; Lieutenant Allistar Moffat, RE; Captain Tony Williams, RAMC; Lance Corporal Kerry Gill, R Sigs;



Second Lieutenant Simon Allen, 3 RTR; Captain Stuart Martin, RAMC; Lieutenant Richard Clements, R Anglians; Staff

Sergeant Graham Greenway, REME, and team leader Lieutenant Commander Clive Waghorn, RN. Picture: DOUG PRATT

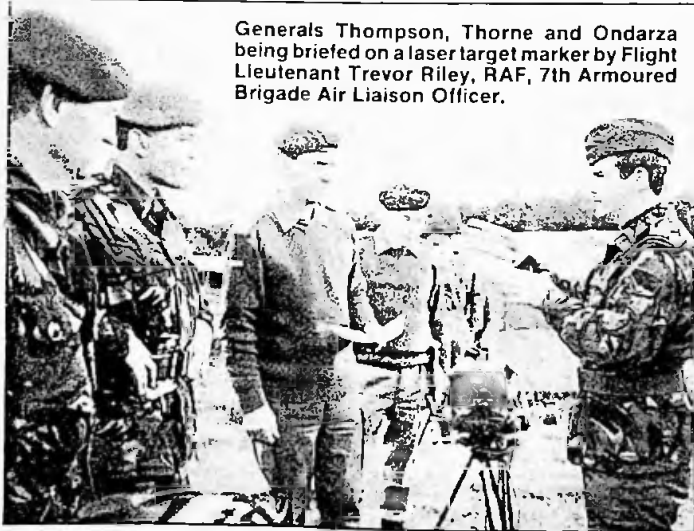
6

MAJOR GENERAL Sir David Thorne, Commander 1st Armoured Division and his HQ staff left their offices 'en masse' for a day to host a visit to Hohnle Training Area by Major General Henning von

Ondarza, Commander 1st Panzerdivision, and his officers.

This was the 10th anniversary of this 'Tactical Picnic', an annual event that gives the senior Armoured Division's staff a chance

Generals Thompson, Thorne and Ondarza being briefed on a laser target marker by Flight Lieutenant Trevor Riley, RAF, 7th Armoured Brigade Air Liaison Officer.



A TACTICAL PICNIC...

to meet their German counterparts, discuss matters of common interest and examine new equipment.

Among the special guests at the get-together was Major General Julian Thompson, Major General, Royal Marines (Training and Special Forces).

General Thorne warmly welcomed General von Ondarza, Brigadegeneral Graf von Schweinewitz, the Deputy Commander, and their staff to the Hohnle ranges before they saw a spectacular display of the latest in British Army equipment, some of it still under trial.

First piece of hardware to be put through its paces for the appreciative audience was Challenger, Britain's latest main battle tank, skilfully handled by men of 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, who recently received their first Challengers.

Also on display was the new

tracked Rapier air defence missile system, in service with 22 Air Defence Regiment RA, and MCV 80, a new mechanised combat vehicle on trial with 1st Battalion, Irish Guards. Having a top speed of 46 mph, MCV 80 is equipped with a 30 mm Rarden gun and a 7.62 mm machine gun.

SURPRISE

A surprise was in store for the spectators when the rear doors of the vehicle burst open and a Guardsman dashed out to exhibit SA80, the latest infantry weapon system, and new webbing which is still on trial.

A Chinook from RAF Gütersloh provided a grand finale to the show, bringing in a 105 mm Argentinian gun captured by 4 Field Regiment RA in the Falklands, to demonstrate this twin-rotor helicopter's underslung-load ability.

Argentina agrees rescheduling deal with banks

BY PETER MONTAGNON, EUROMARKETS CORRESPONDENT

ARGENTINA reached agreement in principle with its leading commercial bank creditors last night on a \$2bn (£1.6bn) package to help restore orderly servicing of its \$45bn foreign debt.

Details of the package, which is to include an additional \$4.2bn loan as well as rescheduling of \$16bn in public and private sector debt, were set to be made known overnight. This follows two full days of intensive talks in New York over the weekend.

The new money loan is split into a \$500m new short-term trade facility and a \$3.7bn, ten-year loan, bearing interest at a margin of 1½ per cent over London Eurodollar rates or 1¼ per cent over U.S. domestic money market rates.

Mr William Rhodes, the senior Citibank executive who chairs the banks' negotiating committee with "Argentina," said last night it was critically important that banks commit subscriptions to this loan by Christmas. As part of the deal Argentina has undertaken to reduce outstanding interest arrears on its foreign debt by at least \$750m before the year end.

Public sector debt due this year and next will be rescheduled over 12 years with repayments beginning after a grace period of three years. Debt that fell due in 1982 and 1983 will be rescheduled over ten years. The interest margin

on the rescheduled public sector debt is to be 1½ per cent over Eurodollar rates or appropriate equivalents in other currencies.

The agreement, which will reschedule debt due as far back as 1982, is one of the most complicated rescheduling deals ever and needed meticulous preparation bankers said.

Senior bankers, who had previously resisted offering Argentina a credit as large as \$4.2bn, had also been worried that the package might meet a hostile reception from a banking community increasingly resentful of Argentine interest arrears stretching back to last May.

Most of Argentina's foreign debt was recently declared substandard by U.S. Government agencies responsible for supervising the banking system.

However, top U.S. officials, including Mr Donald Regan, Treasury Secretary, and Mr Paul Volcker, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, had put their weight behind a speedy solution to Argentina's debt problems. This is expected to be symbolised in a \$500m U.S. Treasury bridging loan accompanying the debt package.

Leading creditor banks were keen to resolve Argentina's problems before their year-end balance sheet and profit reporting deadlines. They believed that a solution for Argentina would improve the climate for other debt negotiations, particularly those with Brazil.

Daily Telegraph 3/12/84

BELGRANO INQUIRY

By GUY RAIS

A FORMER Navy lieutenant who kept a diary of events leading to the sinking of the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano during the Falklands war in 1982 has been interviewed by officers of the serious crimes squad at Scotland Yard.

Mr Narendra Sethia, 28, who left the Royal Navy two years ago and now lives in the Caribbean island of St Lucia, returned to London last week and was questioned by detectives inquiring into the disappearance of the log of the submarine Conqueror, which sank the Argentine cruiser in May 1982.

Mr Sethia, who was at Harrow School and Dartmouth, was understood to have told officers that he knew nothing about the disappearance of the submarine's log, and that excerpts from his diary, which he admitted keeping, had been published in a newspaper without consent.

Belgrano diary probe

By CATHERINE STEVEN

OFFICERS of the serious crimes squad at Scotland Yard have interviewed a former Navy lieutenant who served in the nuclear submarine Conqueror during the Falklands War and kept a diary of events concerning the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano.

The former lieutenant, Mr Narendra Sethia, 28, who now lives in the Caribbean island of St Lucia, left the Navy in 1982.

He was in London last week and was questioned at Scotland Yard on Wednesday. He is now understood to be back on St Lucia.

Mr Sethia's diary included some details of the Conqueror's

manoeuvres in the South Atlantic and naval opinion is that, as a whole, it was sensitive and that publication was undesirable.

It recorded what happened on May 2, 1982—the day the Belgrano was sunk—and the feelings of the rest of the crew afterwards.

It said: "As I write I am still overwhelmed by the enormity of what we have done. We can't go back and apologise now—it's too late."

"I wonder how many died? I wonder even more what the reaction will be? The lads have taken it very well a couple were frightened outwardly and the rest of us made do with being frightened inwardly."

Mr Sethia appears in the

1981 Navy List of officers with an "S" specialisation against his name, meaning that he was in the supplies and secretariat branch. That would cover crew welfare and the supply of all basic requirements aboard the submarine. All submarine crew, however, have operational duties during "action stations."

A serviceman may keep a diary, provided that if it contains classified information, it must be recorded and treated as a classified document. It is known that the Defence Ministry has a copy of the diary and is aware that it was written by Mr Sethia.

Extracts have been published in the *Observer* newspaper. Last night, Mrs Joan Sethia, the former officer's mother, who lives in the family's holiday home in Barbados, said that her son had been upset about the diary's publication and that he had not known it would happen.

Mr Sethia took seven days leave from his job as an office accountant and skipper for a yacht chartering company in St Lucia, which began last Saturday. Yesterday, Mr Ted Bull, his employer, also a former serviceman, described him as an efficient worker and said that he expected him back tomorrow.

There is no evidence that Mr Sethia knew anything about the missing control room log of the Conqueror.

Last Wednesday, the editor of the *Observer*, Mr Donald Treford, was called to the Defence Ministry by the Permanent Secretary, Sir Clive Whitmore, and the head of personnel, Mr Richard Hastie-Smith, on what was said to be a matter of national security.

They asked Mr Treford for the diary to be handed to them because it contained important security information. But Mr Treford replied that the copy of the diary was no longer in his newspaper's possession. He did not disclose the *Observer's* source.

The Guardian 3/12/84

Dalyell to meet defence official over Conqueror diary extracts

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, will see a senior Defence Ministry official tomorrow about the publication of part of a diary written by a member of the crew of the submarine which sank the Belgrano.

The ministry says it is concerned about the extracts from Mr Narendra Sethia's diary, which appeared in the *Guardian* in April and the *Observer* last month.

It gives an account of the Argentinian cruiser's movements and a description of the reaction on the Conqueror to the sinking with the loss of 368 lives on May 2, 1982.

Mr Dalyell, a persistent critic of the Falklands war, is to meet Sir Clive Whitmore,

permanent secretary at the ministry and a former principal private secretary to Mrs Thatcher, at the request of the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine.

Mr Heseltine has already seen Mr George Foulkes, a Labour foreign affairs spokesman who has also asked a series of detailed questions about the conflict, notably the events surrounding the sinking.

It is understood that Mr Sethia, who lives on the Caribbean island of St Lucia, was questioned in London last week by Scotland Yard's serious crimes squad. He has said that the extracts were published without his knowledge or permission.

Mr Sethia, aged 28, works for a yacht-chartering com-

pany. He left the navy with the rank of lieutenant shortly after the Falklands campaign in 1982 and was responsible for supplies, welfare and secretarial work on the Conqueror.

He has denied that he knew anything about the Conqueror's missing control room log which is also being investigated by Scotland Yard.

Mr Dalyell said yesterday that he was invited to see Mr Heseltine personally today but could not do so because he will be observing miners' picket lines at Polkemet colliery in his constituency in West Lothian.

"Of course if a defence secretary of whatever party asks to see me as an MP it is my duty to go," he said.

Sunday Express
2nd December 1984

STAMPS

by TED GARTELL

WHEN a warship comes near to shore or Commandos go on an exercise in the Falkland Islands the first to take cover are the grebes.

When frightened, or pursued by a predator, they will dive and swim away under water with their young on their backs.

Grebes are the only known birds to do this.

Most grebes can fly but only with difficulty, using a very rapid wing beat.

The Falklands grebes are pictured on the islands' new stamps.

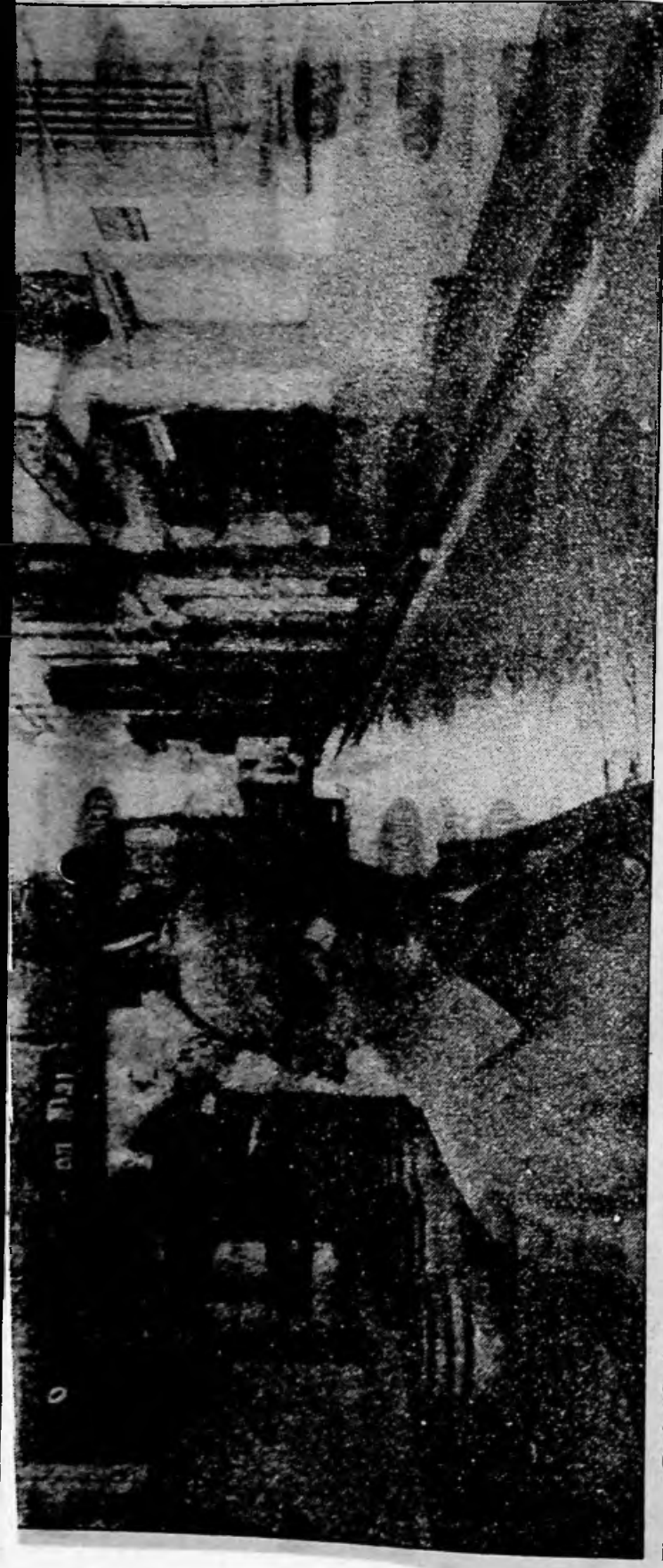
The Great Grebe with its long upturned bill is on the 17p stamp.

These birds are visitors to the Falklands and have been spotted diving for krill about the islands.



On the 22p is the Silver grebe and on the 52p stamp the Rollands is seen sitting on a marshy river bank with a fish in its strong sharp beak.

These stalk fresh water ponds where shoals of fish, each about an inch long, dart about the shallows.



Firm as a Rock: "Spain can talk forever... but Britain will not give Gibraltar away against the wishes of the people", says Sir Joshua Hassan

The Rock goes ape over all the 'bloody nonsense' from Spain

QUICK. Count the apes. With Gibraltar in a clear state of panic and alarm last week the seasoned political commentator headed straight up on to the Rock. According to persistent legend, the British will remain on Gib so long as a bunch of thieving Barbary monkeys stays on site ripping windscreen-wipers off passing Dormobiles. After the past week, we must surely be down to our last two or three Macaca Sylvana. (Let's be technical about this.)

At five minutes to midday on Wednesday, Gibraltar was going quietly about its business. The amateur drama festival, dripping with Noel Coward, was about to open. The new Roman Catholic bishop had been named. And a delegation of British MPs was landing in all innocence for a fact-finding mission.

Five minutes later, a news-flash from Brussels sent a chill through the 30,000 inhabitants of this three-mile by one-mile outcrop. Everyone had expected Sir Geoffrey Howe and the Spanish foreign minister, Fernando Noran, to announce that the frontier with Spain would reopen in February, after 15 years. (Hoorah. The siege economy will end. No more water from Northumberland.) But what no one here began to anticipate was that, for the first time in their 280 years here, the British would now permit a jubilant Spain to discuss its claim to the only place in the Mediterranean where you can buy Dolly Mixtures.

For two days Gibraltar reeled, and on my way to count the monkeys I heard the people's fears in the pubs and the shops and the Wimpy bars of Gibraltar, which is, by the way, like a cross between Cadiz and Polperro.

Of course, they are pleased that the border will open, but at what price? According to last week's agreement in Brussels, Spaniards will, in seven years' time, be eligible to work and buy property in Gibraltar. What will stop them buying up the region brick by brick in a

STEPHEN PILE



on Gibraltar's reaction to re-opening the border

bloodless takeover via the estate agent? What effect will 6,000 unemployed Andalucians on the border at La Linea have on the 5.3% Gibraltarian unemployment? And how will Gibraltar pay the medical services and pensions which Spanish invaders can now claim by right?

Meanwhile, the politicians, like the monkeys, have taken to squabbling among themselves. Shakespeare could have done a lot with this Dogberry-like contingent. Joe Bossano, the leader of the Gibraltar socialist opposition, blamed Sir Joshua Hassan, the chief minister, for selling out to the Foreign Office, while the Democratic Party of British Gibraltar blamed Bossano for refusing to take part in negotiations that involved Spain at all, while the Gibraltar Marxist Party would have condemned all of them except that it collapsed a week last Wednesday, due to internal wrangling.

The only actual demonstration all week was by a handful of dock workers who paraded past the post office with placards saying: "better red than Spanish", and "better dead than Spanish", which everyone thought was pushing it a bit far. By Wednesday night the Gibraltar

Photographs by Peter Dunne

tar Broadcasting Corporation was showing bleak and fearful studio discussions of resounding gloominess, in which it was clear that mistrust of Spain has not lessened with the arrival of democracy in those parts.

And so, on the third day, there was no alternative but for Sir Joshua to take the rare step of making a ministerial broadcast to set minds at rest. The next scene, if dramatised and set to music, would be called "Sir Joshua pulls it off".

The 68-year-old charmer gave a bravura display on why he has been elected chief minister at every general election except one, since the office began in 1950. First he said that Spanish jubilation over their sovereignty progress was "bloody nonsense", which is an illustration of Sir Joshua's much-vaunted common touch. Then he brought a meeting of his party (Labour and Advance-ment of Civil Rights) to its feet with a passionate speech saying that everything is all right and would I, your old mate Sir Joshua, drop you in it with these paelia-chewing bullmoles?

He explained that the Span- ish can talk forever and probably will, but "the pre- amble to our constitution says that Britain will not give Gibraltar away against the wishes of the people". And that is that.

Everyone went home re-assured because, as Sir Joshua explained, "if I tell them something they trust me".

At this meeting I learned that all apes on the Rock are named after Gibraltar's prominent citizens. (Sir Joshua's wife

declined to be twinned in this way with a monkey, as did the leader of the opposition.) The one named after Sir Joshua disappeared in 1964, unlike the chief minister himself, who has been seriously talking about retirement since 1972, but suspects that he might have to stand again at the next election.

I left with the clear awareness that Gibraltarians are not just ex-pat Brits and odd-ball Span-

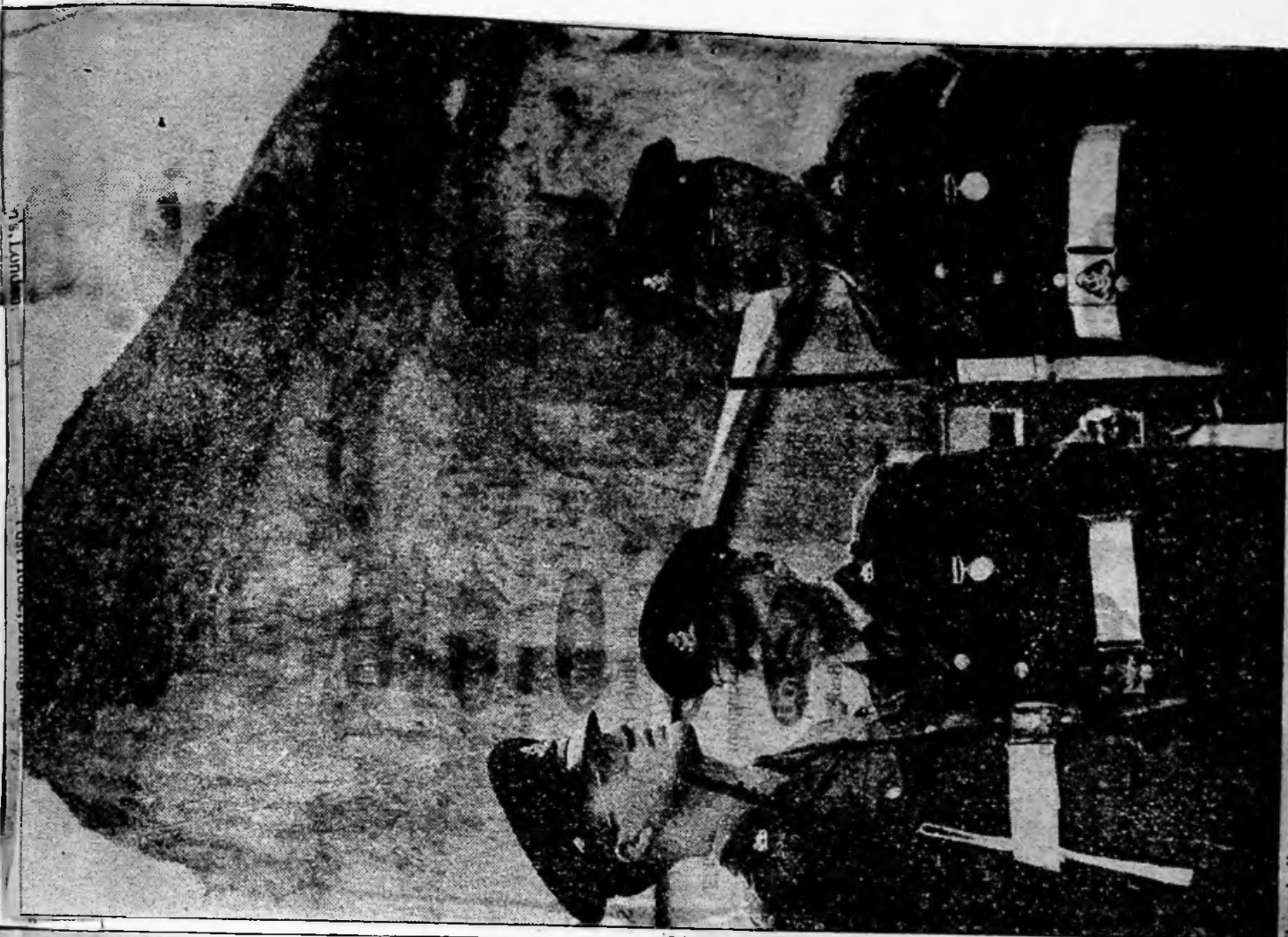
ards with a taste for egg and bacon, but have their own identity. A blend of Moors, Britons, Maltese, Asians, Genoese and Spaniards, they speak English and Spanish simultaneously in the same sentence and in Yanito they have a growing local vocabulary of Hispanised English words that is the beginning of a dialect.

The British MPs left, by contrast, with the promise of two Rock apes for a zoo in Scotland, which brings me to my main point. Amid dark clouds and heavy rain I made it to the top of the Rock, where there was news to hearten flag-wavers and patriots.

Ape Latest: Bad news for exaggerated.

Spain. Eleven apelets have just been born - Tim, Dick, Jane, Miles, Ginny, Germaine, four others and one named after Princess Alexandra. There is now a 20th-century record number of 53 awful scavengers in residence, compared with five in 1923.

"They are very healthy," explained Sergeant Alfred Holmes, who has been "NCO in charge of Rock apes" for 22 years. Furthermore, no ape has had an operation in the naval hospital since the unfortunate hernia case some years ago. Macaca Sylvana, like the Gib-raltarians themselves, are great survivors. Rumours of extinc-tion are in both cases greatly exaggerated.



They shall not pass: Under the shadow of the disputed edifice, members of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment are maintaining a vigilant border watch for the time being at least



ARGENTINA

New war-graves plea

ARGENTINE Protestant churchmen want fresh inter-government discussions to enable relatives to visit the graves of Argentine servicemen who fell in the Falklands.

Members of a nine-strong delegation visiting Britain under the leadership of Professor Jose Migues-Benito, said last week that they wanted to see the whole matter 'depoliticised.' The best thing would be to put arrangements in the hands of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The delegation have been

here as guests of the British Council of Churches, which hopes to send a delegation of its own to Argentina next year.

The British Council of Churches and the Argentines want 'to create a new climate in which negotiations about the Falklands are possible.' The Argentine churchmen say they take a long-term view, but are firm on two points.

It is the British Government that is blocking peaceful discussion, they say; and the 'Malvinas' (Falklands) are part of Argentina.

Conqueror diarist in Yard quiz

by DAVID LEIGH

THE AUTHOR of the diary that revealed the circumstances in which the submarine Conqueror sank the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, is former Lieutenant Nyenra Sethia.

Mr Sethia, 27, who retired from the Royal Navy soon after the Conqueror returned from the Falklands in July 1982, has been questioned by Scotland Yard detectives inquiring into the disappearance of the Conqueror's log. He returned to London last week from the West Indies, where he has set up a yacht-chartering business, but has gone back following the interview.

Mr Sethia's solicitors say he has categorically denied being connected with the log's disappearance. Speaking from home in Barbados, his mother, Mrs Joan Sethia, who is English, said the fact that he had been allowed to leave London was clear evidence of his innocence. She was uncertain about his present whereabouts.

This development comes after a week in which the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, called in Scotland Yard to investigate the missing logbook. At the same time, he and his senior officials have been making strenuous efforts to secure copies of the diary, extracts from which were published in *The Observer* last week.

Mr Sethia comes from a distinguished Indian family. Both his brothers are doctors in Britain, in Glasgow and Oxford. His father is dead.

Last Wednesday, the editor of *The Observer*, Mr Donald

Treford, was called to the Defence Ministry by the Permanent Secretary, Sir Clive Whitmore, and the head of personnel, Mr Richard Hastie-Smith, on what was said to be a matter of national security.

They asked for the diary on the grounds that it contained important security information. Mr Treford explained that a copy was no longer in the paper's possession. He did not disclose *The Observer's* source.

On Friday, Mr Heseltine issued a statement on the investigation into the loss of the log, which confirmed that it could not be traced.

He also announced that Chief Supt Ron Hardy, who has been employed by the Government on numerous 'leak' inquiries, would extend his probe into the circumstances surrounding Mr Sethia's diary to cover the disappearance of the log.

Mr Richard Morley, a former naval officer and a friend of Mr Sethia, said yesterday that he had been asked to see Rear Admiral Lang, the MoD's director of naval security, last week. Mr Morley, now an actor in Birmingham, said he had been asked to keep the issues confidential.

Solicitors for Mr Sethia, Neale Turk, of Basingstoke, Hampshire, said yesterday: 'During the [Falklands] campaign, our client kept a diary.' They stated that extracts from it had been published in *The Observer* without Mr Sethia's consent.

They added: 'Our client did not take or remove any order, data or log book from the Conqueror. Any suggestion to the contrary is simply a lie.'

MANDRAKE

Sir Nicholas looks again at the Falklands factors

LATER this week, Sir Nicholas Henderson will travel to France for discussions on the Falkland Islands with the Argentine Foreign Minister. The man who was our man in Washington when Galtieri jumped is back on familiar ground.

This time, however, Sir Nicholas is working for the BBC rather than the Government. He is making a "Brass Tacks" programme on the future of the Falklands. It will be shown next week to coincide with the publication of a report on the islands by the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Those who admired the untidy elegance which accompanied his successful struggle to win and hold American support during the crisis and conflict will be delighted to know that his large collar wings still stray out and over his jacket lapels; that although the hair is more ruly, the charm is untrimmed; and that his Knightsbridge home is no less gracious than expected, if less grand.

But let's get down to brass tacks. Sir Nicholas himself is strongly in favour of fresh negotiations with the Argentines. He agrees there must be a

declaration from the Argentines that hostilities have ceased, that agreement will take a long time, that the wishes of the islanders cannot be ignored.

But "at some stage we have to establish a working relationship between the islands and the neighbouring mainland." And, yes, there is no prospect of any accommodation unless sovereignty is up for discussion.

He points to the cost, "out of all proportion" to other spending abroad. And the figures are indeed staggering. Perhaps the most graphic illustration is that each of the 1,800 islanders is costing us over £1 million each year as things and Fortresses Falklands stand.

It is not surprising, then, given all this, that Sir Nicholas is equally strongly opposed to the recently announced cuts in the BBC's external services. "Shortsighted to a degree of folly," he says.

Forward Mandrake of Little

TEN YEARS AGO

From The Sunday Telegraph of December 1, 1974

Fears that Mr John Stonehouse, MP, has been abducted and possibly murdered by an international gang have been conveyed by Scotland Yard to police at Miami Beach, Florida, where he disappeared 11 days ago.

England. What is the point of broadcasting to foreigners, of offering up our culture on the British Council plate? What, basically, at the end of the day, is it for us? No lofty dismissal from Sir Nicholas. Not even the merest hint of a grimace of distaste.

Well, he explained, it was about attaining and exerting influence. Well, yes, there was trade to be gained from it, but there was a bit more to it. "To say it's about gaining a contract for a generator or something is putting it much too crudely. The dividends and the returns of having influence are not so easily quantifiable." It was more to do with the belief that we had special traditions, institutions and qualities to offer the world and the sense of fulfilment in the impact they made.

A moral lead? Sir Nicholas was not too happy with that, but he did think the Falklands had shown the world and in particular the Americans, who had been inclined to belittle us, that we were prepared to take risks and incur danger if that was necessary.

Forward Mandrake, the disarming unilateralist. Why not a moral lead there? "There is this impression that the weaker you are the more notice people take of you. I don't believe it at all. The idea that you achieve things just by some moral example is nursery language."

No, said Sir Nicholas, "most



John Whelan

Sir Nicholas Henderson: time to talk

of diplomacy is a very slow, undramatic process. That was why he liked gardening so much. "As distinct from my official career you can see a result coming from what you do. Things really do what they're meant to. Annually, to my eternal surprise, they arrive."

Sir Nicholas has also been Ambassador in Poland, Germany and France. In France, when he mentioned he liked gardening, they had looked at him aghast and asked, "You mean you actually dig?" This took us to his other great interest, dogs, and a favoured Dalmatian in particular. The one that won the Warsaw dog show and bit a

Polish washerwoman in the left thigh.

And the same one which Sir Nicholas, resplendent in large, white, ill-fitting sweater, would take for a walk every morning up and down the Champs-Élysées. "Fie!" they used to say, "C'est l'ambassadeur de l'Angleterre." "He was very disciplined," said Sir Nicholas. "Every morning he would lift his leg on that famous public lavatory immortalised by Proust."

We were back at the unquantifiable and intangible British influence. "Giscard," said Sir Nicholas, "had great respect for that. It was the discipline, you see."

INTERNATIONAL

Oh, all right, says Hongkong

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN HONGKONG

In the next few days Britain's house of commons will be asked to approve the draft agreement between Britain and China under which Hongkong will be returned to China in 1997. Assuming that the commons says yes, Mrs Thatcher will go to Peking on December 18th to sign the agreement which was initialled there in September. Next year Britain's parliament will pass legislation allowing Britain to return to China the bit of Hongkong—about a twelfth of the present territory—which was, in theory, given in perpetuity to Britain (the rest is on a 99-year lease). China's National People's Congress also has some legislating to do. By next June, the legal formalities, if not all the details, should have been dealt with. Britain will have finally accepted notice to quit one of its last bits of empire.

Mrs Thatcher has said that the agreement must be acceptable to the people of Hongkong. When the British members of parliament debate the matter, they will have an "assessment" of local opinion carried out by the Hongkong government and monitored by Sir Patrick Nairne, a former Whitehall mandarin and now head of an Oxford college, and Mr Simon Li, a judge of the Hongkong high court. The assessment got off to a bad start when it was disclosed that the opinions offered by Hongkongers would be made public—not for 30 years, to be sure, according to the Hongkong government, but this did not seem to reassure nervous opinion-expressers. Since the agreement was unchangeable, the assessors added, no suggested changes would be welcomed.

The Hongkong government later changed its mind, promising to destroy individual statements after the agreement has been ratified, and saying that all views would be of interest. In the event, Hongkong's 5m people produced fewer than 3,000 letters from individuals, plus submissions from 250 local groups.

Most of the Hongkongers who spoke up seemed to feel that the draft agreement is a lot better than the plan the Chinese had threatened to impose off their own bat if no

agreement with the British had been achieved. This shrug-of-the-shoulders, best-we-can-do attitude was reflected in an opinion poll of 6,140 Hongkongers published on November 25th.

According to 77% of those polled, the agreement is not very good, but the best that could be expected in the circumstances. The majority did not consider the agreement a "sell-out" by Britain. But many people were worried that the policies of China's present leader, Mr Deng Xiaoping, would not be continued by his successors. Summing up the survey, the English-language South China Morning Post said that people were torn between a feeling of national loyalty to China and mistrust of the Chinese government.

Getting down to basics

The interest in Hongkong has now shifted to the question of how the agreement is to be carried out. The main issue is the "basic law" for Hongkong to be enacted by the National People's Congress in Peking. The law will be Hongkong's constitution, replacing the Letters Patent and the Royal Instructions of the British colonial sys-

tem when Hongkong becomes a "special administrative region" of China in 1997. It is supposed to guarantee that Hongkong will be allowed to continue its capitalist way of life and retain its other freedoms for at least 50 years after 1997.

Hongkong wants to have a say in the drafting of the basic law. China dislikes any suggestion that "outsiders" should presume to suggest how a Chinese law should be drafted. Step forward the Sino-British joint "liaison group".

This body, originally proposed by China, will be made up of two groups of diplomats, one Chinese and one British. It will start work next July, and on Britain's suggestion it will continue until the year 2000—three years after the hand-over. From 1988 on, it will be based in Hongkong. The head of the British section will probably be a British diplomat but some serving or retired members of the Hongkong government may join the group. The liaison group is their best way of trying to get a say in the way China draws up that basic law.

Most people in Hongkong would like to see the basic law settled well before 1997, but the draft is not expected to be completed before 1990. One problem is language. It has been agreed that British law will be retained in Hongkong after 1997. At present Hongkong courts conduct their business in English. So a generally acceptable translation of English law into Chinese is needed before the British



The Hongkonger in the street doesn't trust China

INTERNATIONAL

leave. The Hongkong solicitor-general, Mr J. K. Findlay, said last week:

If we are going into 1997 with our common law tradition, we believe it will be more safely preserved if it is already in Chinese. If it doesn't exist in Chinese, people will be impatient with the traditional sources and be tempted to throw them out of the window.

Meanwhile, Hongkong's government is to be made a bit more democratic. The Chinese would probably prefer the existing system. All real legislative power now rests with the governor. For this concentration of power to be handed over to a Peking-nominated chief executive would presumably be fine by the Chinese. The British think it less than satisfactory. So more power to the people is in the offing.

At present, the 47-member legislative council is composed of 18 civil servants and 29 local magnates appointed by the governor. The Hongkong government last week proposed that from September next year the council should be increased to 56 members, of whom 24 will be indirectly elected by other bodies, 22 will be appointed and 10 will be officials. From March, even earlier, two thirds of the members of the 18 district boards will be directly elected. There will be more elections in 1988. Some people have argued the case for direct election to the legislative council, and perhaps indirect elections to the executive council (the Hongkong equivalent of a cabinet).

China still declines to endorse even this modest exercise in democracy. And, as it happens, a lot of middle-class Hongkong Chinese are suspicious of western-style "confrontation" politics. The Chinese prefer to work out a "consensus" rather than the western system, which mean a loss of face for the loser. So this issue may not be as big a problem as many Britons think.

Other things worry the Hongkongers, though. Under the terms of the agreement, they note, some Hongkongers who are non-Chinese or of mixed blood could become stateless. The worriers also believe the independence of the judiciary may be undermined: nearly a quarter of Hongkong's 220 barristers have declined to endorse the agreement. But the biggest cause for concern, as this week's opinion poll revealed, is whether China will honour the agreement. Some members of the executive council want the British parliament to say that the transfer of sovereignty will not be automatic, but dependent on the guarantees in the agreement being fully implemented.

The optimistic view is that Hongkong has long depended on China's goodwill for its survival, and it is in China's interest to see that it continues to prosper. Even cynics about China's intentions take the view that the galley-slave is not thrown overboard while he is still pulling his oar.

Belgrano inquiry

Scotland Yard has been called in to investigate the disappearance of logs from HMS Conqueror, the submarine that sank the General Belgrano during the Falklands conflict

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Yard is called in over missing log books of Falklands submarine

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

The Metropolitan Police has been called in to investigate the disappearance of control room logs from HMS Conqueror, Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, said yesterday, after the failure of a naval board of inquiry to locate the six documents covering much of the Falklands war during which the submarine sank the cruiser General Belgrano.

The board, a captain and two commanders on the staff of Admiral Sir William Staveley, Commander in Chief of the Fleet, also failed "to identify a roven explanation for their disappearance".

But Mr Heseltine disclosed in a Commons written answer that the three-week inquiry had found that proper procedures for the safe handling and custody of control room logs had not been followed "for many months", including between March and October 1982, covered by the missing logs.

The police investigation, headed by Detective Chief

Superintendent Ronald Hardy, Scotland Yard's unofficial "mole" hunter, is under way, the Director of Public Prosecutions office said last night.

In addition a "specially-constituted team" of senior naval officers will carry out further searches for the logs, which contain a full list of signals sent to London by the Conqueror before and after the Belgrano sinking.

Mr Heseltine, who received the findings of the naval board on Thursday, said there were several possible causes for the log's loss. Although there was no proof they ever left the submarine, they could have been "inadvertently destroyed" after the Conqueror returned to Devonport or lost in transit between the MoD records office at Hayes.

"They could also have been... deliberately and unlawfully destroyed although there is no evidence to suggest this; or removed as souvenirs or for the assumed political or financial value".

Mr George Foulkes, a Labour frontbench spokesman and leading critic of the Government's handling of the Belgrano affair, said the report implicated the Government in a major cover-up. It requires an extraordinary imagination to believe the board's report.

While the ministry claimed it did not know where or when the logs were lost, Mr Foulkes said he understood all logs and documents were delivered intact to the ministry "after the most extensive debriefing of the crew." "The Government is responsible for the log and it is reprehensible that they should blame individual crew members for its loss."

Mr Denzil Davies, Labour's chief defence spokesman, said Mr Heseltine's failure to find the log "is as cowardly as it is extraordinary". "Is he now washing his hands over the matter or is he going to pursue it with the same kind of zeal as he did with the cases of Sarah Tisdall and Clive Ponting?"

Banks to offer Argentina \$4 billion

By John Lawless

Western bankers yesterday agreed Argentina could be offered just over \$4 billion under a new money loan. But they apparently failed to meet their end of November deadline for agreeing a package of terms under which the money will be lent.

Argentina, will be disappointed with the offer. It had been seeking \$5.45 billion. The banks had rejected that demand before the talks started in New York a week ago, and had been suggesting between \$2.8 billion and \$3.5 billion.

It now seems likely that Argentina will have to look to the US Government for a bridging loan. It needs to have a complete financial package in place quickly in order for the International Monetary Fund to formally approve its request for a \$1.4 billion stand by credit by the end of December.

The IMF managing director, Mr Jacques de Larosière, has always said that a debtor country must have secured sufficient new money commitments before he will submit its economic recovery programme to his executive board for approval. There is still a danger, therefore, that the IMF package, worked out by September, could collapse.

Although the negotiations are the most difficult the banks have faced in two years of Latin American debt reschedulings, the pressure is clearly on the Argentines to agree to tight conditions.

Although Argentina is likely to get a multi-year rescheduling agreement, covering debts falling due between 1982 and 1985, it is highly unlikely to get the favourable terms advanced to Mexico this year under a similar scheme.

One US banker said yesterday that Argentina had become a victim of its own intransigence. It has angered the 320 banks worldwide, which will be asked to subscribe to the new loan, by seriously delaying interest payments on previous loans. The \$2.5 billion owed since May will have to be instantly repaid from any settlement.

Falklands mail saved by MP

Free aerograms home for troops serving in the Falklands, which cost £200,000 a year, are to be continued, thanks to the intervention of Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark, Conservative MP for Birmingham Selly Oak.

Mr Beaumont-Dark visited the Falklands recently, where he discovered that the concession was threatened

FALKLANDS CRASH

By Our Port Stanley
Correspondent

A Harrier fighter crashed in Port Stanley in the Falklands yesterday, but the pilot was able to eject safely. The unnamed pilot is being treated in hospital.

Police inquiry on loss of Conqueror log

By BRENDA PARRY

POLICE have been called in to investigate the disappearance of the six-volume control room log from the submarine Conqueror. Mr Heseltine, Defence Secretary, announced yesterday.

The decision was taken by Sir Thomas Hetherington, Director of Public Prosecutions, after a naval board of inquiry failed to "locate the missing logs or identify a proven explanation for their disappearance," he said in a Common written answer.

But proper procedure for handling the logs was not followed for "many months" on the submarine, he said. This included the period covered by the logs during which the Conqueror sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano in May, 1982.

Mr Heseltine also said the inadvertent destruction of the logs "cannot be ruled out" although there was no proof that they ever left the submarine.

Political value

There were several possible causes for their loss, although "loss in transit between the submarine and Ministry of Defence records office - at Defence records office at Hayes, mishandling at Hayes and dispatch to an incorrect address are all considered unlikely," he said.

Some material had been

burnt at Devonport Dockyard when the submarine was refitted in January and the logs might have been destroyed at that time. They might also have been left in a locker that had since been destroyed.

But Mr Heseltine acknowledged that they could have been deliberately and unlawfully destroyed "although there is no evidence to suggest this—they could have been removed as souvenirs—or for their assumed political or financial value."

Statement promised

Disciplinary action against those responsible for breaching the rules would be considered after the latest round of investigations.

Mr Heseltine said he could not give further information while investigations were continuing, but he promised a Commons statement when they were concluded.

Mr Denzil Davies, Labour's defence spokesman, said Mr Heseltine's decision to make a written reply was "as cowardly as it was extraordinary."

"This is a serious matter, not just because of the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Belgrano, but perhaps more importantly, as Mr Heseltine himself says, if the log fell into the hands of an enemy power it could give crucial information about the operational capabilities of our hunter-killer submarines."