

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MR NOTT-
OUTSIDE NO.10, 25 APRIL 1982

Prime Minister: Secretary of State for Defence has come over to give me some very good news and I think you would like to have it at once.

Secretary of State for Defence: British troops landed on South Georgia this afternoon shortly after 4 pm London time. They have now successfully taken control of Grytviken. At about 6 pm London time the white flag was hoisted in Grytviken beside the Argentine flag and shortly afterwards the Argentine forces there surrendered to British forces. The Argentine forces offered only limited resistance to the British troops. Our forces were landed by helicopter and were supported by a number of warships together with a Royal Fleet Auxiliary. During the first phase of this operation our own helicopters engaged the Argentine submarine Santa Fe off South Georgia. This submarine was detected at first light and was engaged because it posed a threat to our men and to the British warships launching the landing. So far no British casualties have been reported. At present we have no information on the Argentine casualty position. The Commander of the operation has sent the following message:

"Be pleased to inform Her Majesty that the White Ensign flies alongside the Union Jack in South Georgia. God save The Queen."

Prime Minister: Just rejoice at that news. Congratulate our forces and the marines. Goodnight gentlemen.

MOD are issuing the above statement by Mr Nott in the form of a press release to which they will add the following paragraph:

"The operation was conducted in pursuance of our inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. HMG nevertheless remains committed (on the basis of Security Council Resolution 502) to the continuing and intensive search for a solution by negotiation to this crisis provoked by Argentine aggression. But we have throughout made clear that our search for a negotiated solution does not rule out the use of force."