

NOTE TO PRESS OFFICERS

FALKLAND ISLANDS: 26 MAY

*Copy to all
JK*

UNITED NATIONS

On the Record

1. Provisional agreement was reached late last night on an amended version of the Irish draft Security Council Resolution. We for our part were ready to proceed to a vote, but the Argentine Foreign Minister asked for a delay.

2. The Resolution would reaffirm SCR 502 and request the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts to secure its implementation asking him in particular to enter into contact immediately with the parties with a view to negotiating mutually acceptable terms for a ceasefire.

British Position

3. For the British position at the UN I refer you to Sir A Parsons' statement last night in right of reply to the Argentine Foreign Minister, the text of which is available. The heart of the matter is expressed in its concluding paragraph: 'The cause of the conflict is the Argentine invasion of the Falklands and Argentina's refusal to withdraw in accordance with the mandatory demand contained in Security Council Resolution 502 (1982). The effect is the conflict which is causing all of us such grave concern. Remove the cause, the illegal Argentine presence on the Islands, and the effect will disappear. We have no other desire but to protect the rights under the Charter of the United Nations, under international law, of the Falkland Islanders, to redress the wrong which has been done, to demonstrate that political disputes cannot and must not be settled by the use of armed force, and to demonstrate beyond any shadow of doubt that aggression must not and cannot be allowed to pay.'

Unattributable

4. Argentine intransigence in diplomatic negotiations has made it necessary for us to use force in exercise of our right of self defence under Article 51 of the Charter. We are in the process of re-possessing the Islands. By one means or another

we shall finish the job.

5. Calls for a ceasefire hold no attraction for us since they would leave the aggressor in possession of his spoils. A ceasefire could be envisaged in order to promote the complete withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Islands in accordance with SCR 502.

6. This means that some of the drafts that have been floated in New York are plainly unacceptable. It does not mean indiscriminate British hostility to all of them. We are working in consultation with others for an outcome to the Security Council Debate in which the Council will be faithful to its own decision of 3 April (SCR 502)

7. Thus, we are not saying that the door to a negotiated settlement is closed. We are saying (Prime Minister in the House on Tuesday, 25 May) that 'there can be no progress without Argentine withdrawal', and that if they will not go peacefully then they must be pushed.

HELICOPTER CREW IN CHILE

8. The British Embassy issued the following statement late last night: 'Embassy can confirm that the Ambassador was summoned by the Foreign Minister at 1745 today who told him that the three missing crew members of the British helicopter had been found. This followed the Ambassador's request to the Foreign Minister on 20 May to mount a search for these men. The Ambassador expressed gratitude for the efforts made by the Chilean authorities to find them. We are naturally very pleased and have informed their next of kin that they are safe and well. The crew are now in the hands of the Chilean authorities and we hope to have access to them shortly. We shall issue another statement tomorrow (26 May) when we have more information.'

9. We have nothing to add to that statement. (Questions about how the crew got to Chile are for the Ministry of Defence, who will not answer.)

HAIG LEAK

On the Record

10. We have no comment on press reports of a message from Secretary Haig.

Unattributable

11. As we have made clear throughout, we have remained in close touch with the Americans and with the Secretary since his own mediation efforts ceased. There is no change in the US position and no diminution of US support for us. Specifically, we are not being asked to halt our military action.

12. Naturally we are looking also to the future when we have achieved our aim, which remains as it always has been, the removal of the Argentine aggressors from the Islands.

RIVER PLATE

On the Record

13. There is a lot of nonsense talked about this. The Treaty of Rio de la Plata of 1973 between Argentina and Uruguay establishing a line at the mouth of the River Plate from Punta del Este to Punta Rasa de Cabo San Antonio. In a communication to the Government of Uruguay, the Government of the United Kingdom made clear that they did not intend to engage in any military activities in-shore of that line. We shall do nothing to infringe the rights and interests of Uruguay, and a glance at the map will show that references to Paraguay and Bolivia are irrelevant.

14. This position was set out in a letter to the President of the Security Council from Sir A Parsons yesterday.

15. There is no question whatever of blockading the River Plate, as has been made clear *inter alia* by public statements by the President of Uruguay.