

E86

DPR(Army)

Copy to:

PS/PUS

DUS(P)

CPR

DPR(Navy)

DPR(RAF)

DGMA

Head of DS11

1855

2

LESSONS FROM OPERATION CORPORATE - PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

We spoke today about PUS's minute of 24 June. This, as you know, laid upon me, in conjunction with CPR, the task of overseeing the review of PR, including the arrangements for restricting the flow of sensitive operational information to the media. As you know, the deadline is 15 October for the completion of this report and a note on how the work is to be tackled is required by 31 July.

2. We discussed how we might approach this remit. You explained that you already had a good deal of work in hand, much of which stemmed from decisions taken before the Falkland Islands crisis. There may also be points emerging from the HCDC Inquiry which we shall need to take account of. Subject to that, it seems to me that we need to cover the following areas:-

The PR Organisation

3. a. Do we require to look at organisational changes in the PR Staffs in the light of what we have learned from Operation Corporate? This is very much your business but it seems to me that questions like the size and working of the Press Office, the tasks of the Senior PR Staff, and in particular the relationship between their single service and functional responsibilities for crisis management all need to be looked at.
- b. As a development of 'a' above, I think we need to be fully satisfied that we have a SOP for emergencies and operations so that we can be confident that the PR organisation can "snap in" to an emergency mode of operation.
- c. As a particular aspect of all this, we do need to do much more to integrate the PR effort especially into the higher level Command Post Exercises like HILEX and WINTEX than we do. One clear lesson of Operation Corporate is the importance of PR and the care with which it must be handled in operational circumstances.

I know that you have some work in hand on all of this but it strikes me as being one of the key areas. If your organisational study requires outside assistance, I am sure that the Head of Man S Org would be able to give you some help.

Relations with the Press

4. We have already had some preliminary discussions with some of the Defence Correspondents about what I might call 'peacetime operations'. We canvassed the idea of regular briefings as

well as special briefings. We need to develop this and consider questions like the provincial press, foreign correspondents with an interest in defence, the whole business of accreditation so that we are satisfied that we are dealing with bona fide defence correspondents.

5. But of course one of the chief points that came out of Operation Corporate was relations with the press during an operation or crisis. The whole question of accreditation, of selecting correspondents to travel with an operational force, the conditions under which they operated, the way in which they were looked after and the basis of their selection all need to be firmed up. We ought to consider whether we should have a Standing List, agreed with the appropriate press authorities upon which we could draw during operations. I think it might be a good thing if you tasked one of the DPRs specifically with the whole of this area.

Communications

6. Again, in operational circumstances, the whole question of communications and facilities for copy, broadcasts, pictures, television and film needs a thorough review. There is the point you made to me that we also need to take account of rapid developments in technology, particularly in the transmission of television material. This again seems to me a study all on its own on which I think you may need the help of the Defence Signals Staff.

Relations with the Services

7. I think we need to look pretty carefully at the way in which Force Commanders and Commanding Officers are briefed on and educated in the PR task. My impression is that 13 years of conflict in Northern Ireland have brought the importance of this home rather more readily to some of the Army Commanders than perhaps in the other two Services. Again, you will have a much clearer view of this than I, but it seemed to me that rather too much was expected of the PR staffs with the Task Force and not enough provision was made by Commanding Officers in the way of charging an officer on their staff on the specific PR responsibilities. This may be a false impression on my part, if so I am glad. But we do need to be pretty sure about what is done in this area.

8. My understanding is that a good deal of this work is already in hand. I shall be grateful if you would let me have by the end of this week a brief note of how the work is being tackled and the timetable for completion in accordance with PUS's minute of 24 June. We shall obviously want to discuss all this further with CPR when he returns at the end of next month.

Military Communications Equipment

9. The present long-range communications to the Task Force are provided by narrow bandwidth military task force is operating at the edge of the area

J. M. Stewart

J M STEWART

AUS(DEFENCE STAFF)

28 July 1982

PR.

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

E83 F

PUS/82/929

9/3/82

AUS(D Staff)

Copy to:
CPR
DPR(N)
DPR(A)
DPR(RAF)
Head of DS11
Sec/DPBC
GF1 - Mr Andrews



British Film Institute
The Prince of Wales, 40, 41, 42, 43
Chairman/Sir Basil Eagon, KCB
Director: Anthony Smith
General Director: Garry Rankin

PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

We had a word about the handling of the remit you were given by CDS and myself in the minute we both signed at the end of June.

2. I think this has got to be a very comprehensive task and that we should have at least a major first report in the timescale indicated.
3. I suggested to you that it could be split up into a number of parts and various people tasked with the necessary investigations - for example, the provision of television facilities, still picture facilities, and censorship. The first task will be to identify the various issues to be examined and, in doing this, we must take full account of the evidence given (including written evidence) to the HCDC.
4. We should also take account of the views of the D Notice Committee, of which I had a meeting last night, and of which the Secretary, Admiral Ash, will provide you with the necessary background.

JK

FRANK COOPER
27 July 1982

Dr. Michael Tracey,
Head, Broadcasting Research Unit