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Se refiere a:

MAY032030 – EXPOSICION DEL SECRETARIO DE DEFENSA JOHN NOTT (prem 19/624)

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MOD PRESS BRIEFING MADE BY MR JOHN NOTT, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE ON
3 MAY 82 AT 2030 HOURS IN CONCOURSE HALL, MAIN BUILDING

Q. You talk about the minimum use of force - was the attack the British made really using the minimum amount of force?

A. If there is a threat to our ships and men we have no possible option but to respond to that threat. Our first duty is to protect our own men and therefore it was quite correct that we attacked in the way we did.

Q. Is Britain engaged in a war with Argentina?

A. Certainly we have hostilities with the Argentines. It is not in legal terms, however, a war, although the ordinary layman would class it as a war. We have the right of self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

Q. Does the right to self-defence include the right to invade the Island if necessary?

A. We would operate in self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. These Islands are British.

Q. What would be your description of the way things have gone and the prospects ahead?

A. There does not seem to be a will to settle this matter by peaceful means on the Argentine side. I hope we can settle the matter peacefully.

Q. Do you expect it to be a bloody conflict?

A. I sincerely hope not. There is still time for a peaceful solution.

Q. Have the Americans to date aided any of the missions?

A. We have received no military assistance from the United States. Nor will we seek it. We were naturally delighted at the offer of materiel support but there are further talks going on about that. It has only been talked about in general terms so far. It may be in the form of logistic support.

Q. What is your response to the claims that have been coming from the Argentines?

A. We have made it quite clear that many of the claims coming from Buenos Aires are just inaccurate. We will do our utmost to give you facts.

Q. In the light of your early success what do you think it will take to make the Argentines surrender?

A. I don't wish for a surrender as such. We want a withdrawal from the Falkland Islands and then we are prepared to go into negotiations for the long term future of the Islands. We have always made that quite clear.

Q. Could we have finished the cruiser off completely?

A. I should imagine it would have been possible.

Q. Would it be the policy of the Royal Navy to assist if there are any survivors from an attack?

A. I believe the Royal Navy dropped some rescue equipment for the crew of the patrol craft that was sunk. I would hope where it is possible we can exercise every opportunity of helping in the rescue of any Argentines in that position, including the use of our medical and hospital facilities.

Q. What can you do to slow down the pace of military hostilities so that there is some chance of negotiations?

A. It has been 4 weeks now. Ever since the invasion the Argentines have continued to build up their forces on the Island. They attacked South Georgia after Resolution 502 was passed.

Q. The boot now seems on the other foot on the military level - are we going to give them a breathing space?

A. We will maintain the initiative on the military level. We will maintain the form of pressure on the Argentines to change their minds. They must withdraw their troops.

Q. Are you in charge of the Task Force or is Admiral Woodward - who is giving the orders?

A. The Task Force remains quite clearly under overall political supervision and control ultimately, of course, under the direction of the Prime Minister. All the actions they have taken have been based on Rules of Engagement agreed at a political level and that will remain the case. The tactical decisions must be a matter for Admiral Woodward; it cannot be any other way.

Q. What advice can you give to the Falkland Islanders to preserve their own safety in the light of any action the British will take?

A. We are doing our best to keep them informed of what is happening. The majority of the Falkland Islanders are believed to be in the countryside and not in Port Stanley. The safety of the Islanders themselves is paramount in any action we take.

Q. If the use of military force is one of the tools you are using to try to pressurize the Argentines do you feel you have a lot of room left to apply more force?

A. We have a great deal left and will continue to use military means in parallel to our genuine attempt to achieve a diplomatic solution to this problem.