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Falkland Islands NEWSLETTER

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SHACKLETON CHECKLIST p.2



No 5

SOVEREIGNTY NOT AT RISK: HMG Pledges

Beagle dispute and Falklands

British sovereignty over the Falkland Islands has been irrevocably asserted on several occasions by the British government although press reports have suggested that the government has concluded secret agreements with the government of Argentina. "Offshore Oil Weekly" reported in August that a change in sovereignty - a trade-off involving oil development - had been struck over the Islands' future during the World Cup, and in the "Observer" on October 8, it was reported that Dr. David Owen and his Argentine counterpart had agreed to Argentine sovereignty for the Islands but continued British sovereignty for their inhabitants.

Nevertheless, several British government ministers have affirmed the sovereignty position before both Houses of Parliament. On March 23, Mr. Ted Rowlands MP (the FCO minister currently in charge of the Falkland Islands and who was until recently responsible for the future of beleaguered Belize) told the House of Commons "As a consequence of its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, the United Kingdom enjoys sovereign rights over the continental shelf.....".

On June 13, Lord Goronwy Roberts, another Foreign Office minister, informed the House of Lords of the government's action after the Argentine occupation of one of the Falkland Islands Dependencies (a diplomatic protest) "to safeguard our sovereignty in that part of the Dependencies, as in every part of the Falkland Islands and its (sic) Dependencies.

Mr. Evan Luard MP told the House of Commons on June 19 that British officials in Argentina had been given "fresh instructions to re-affirm our sovereignty" following the "buzzing" by Argentine war planes of trawlers near the Falkland Islands. Mr. Luard, the minister who represents Britain at the UN of the Sea Conference, had informed the House eleven days previously that the "buzzing" took place outside British jurisdiction although it is now known that the action took place within territorial limits.

The strategic importance of the Falkland Islands is recognised in a recent issue of the U.S. military magazine "Parameters".

A lengthy article on the dispute between Chile and Argentina over the Beagle Channel, reviewed in Uruguay's "La Manana" newspaper, states that "if Argentina loses her dispute with Chile, her interest in the Falkland Islands will also be jeopardized".

The author, Stephen M. Gorman, suggests that Argentina is determined to stop the extension of Chile's military and economic interests in the South Atlantic, with its vast fish resources and oil potential. Chile was recently awarded, under international arbitration, islands in the Beagle Channel which gave her access to the Atlantic Ocean and reinforced her claims to the mineral rich Antarctic region.



The claims of Britain, Chile and Argentina to Antarctic territory overlap and the Falkland Islands and Dependencies are seen by the author as the key to this area.

To protect her vital sea routes around Cape Horn, the United States must ensure a balance of power between Argentina and her weaker neighbour, Chile, says the article.

TALKS IN DECEMBER

Doctor David Owen, Britain's Foreign Secretary, has announced that a review of the routine diplomatic exchanges on the future of the Falkland Islands will be made at a one day meeting in December between Mr. Ted Rowlands MP (Minister of State, FCO) and his Argentine counterpart Sr. Gaulter Allara.

Doctor Owen's brief and unexpected statement was issued following his meeting with Sr. Oscar Montes, Argentina's Foreign Minister, at the United Nations in New York during September.

Previous negotiations on the colony's future broke down earlier in the year, when the Argentine delegation walked out of a meeting in Lima, Peru.

The Argentines are known to have been putting their case within the United Nations and wrote a letter in August to Dr. Kurt Waldheim, General Secretary of the UN, stating that Britain's intention to extend her territorial limits around the Falkland Islands was prejudicial to any negotiations.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office have pointed out that the government is reviewing territorial limits around all-dependent territories, not only the Falkland Islands. It is likely, moreover, that the FCO has informed Dr. Waldheim that Argentina's continued illegal occupation of South Thule Island is not an ideal background for diplomatic negotiations.

W. Germans too

West German trawlers are now fishing the waters around the Falkland Islands under Argentine colours.

Reports from the Islands confirm that the fishing grounds are densely stocked and according to one German skipper, processed hake fillets are selling in Europe for £1,000 per ton. The German vessel could process 20 tons each day, he said.

Under an agreement with Argentina, the West Germans are fishing waters in the 'Argentine Sea' for the export trade, but the fish must be registered as exports from Argentina, where the ships are registered.

Shackleton checklist

In July 1976, Lord Shackleton and a team from the Economist Intelligence Unit presented a 400-page "Economic Survey of the Falkland Islands" to the British government. Listed here are the major recommendations and the action so far taken:

"IF FULLY REALISED, THE PROGRAMME WOULD COST AN ESTIMATED £5.4 MILLION OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS." Lord Shackleton

RECOMMENDATION

ACTION TAKEN

- **GENERAL** "... we have consulted a number of previous reports on many of the subject areas ... and we have been struck by an apparent lack of impetus within the Falkland Islands Government to implement their recommendations."

Appoint Chief Executive reporting to Governor

no action has been taken on this crucial recommendation

Appoint Development Officer

appointed

Establish community councils

no action

Strengthen dialogue between FIG and Falkland Islands Company

talks have taken place, but no significant change

- **AGRICULTURE** "... accounts for 90 percent of the Islands' primary economic output, of which wool production is overwhelmingly the main activity ... The wool is able to command premium prices."

Extension of the Grassland Trial Unit

ODM (Ministry of Overseas Development) funds now available

Establishment of an Agricultural Dept

action being taken by Falkland Islands Government (FIG)

Smaller farm development

"Green Patch" (90,000 acres) offered by Falkland Islands Company (FIC) for subdivision, FIG committee has recommended acceptance

Assistance in farm acquisition

under consideration

Wool marketing assistance

adviser appointed by FIG

- **AQUATIC RESOURCES** "The seas surrounding the Falkland Islands and Dependencies are rich in marine life ..."

Kelp (seaweed) resource study

development awaits sovereignty resolution and extended airfield

Major fisheries research and pilot programme and Krill (shrimp) research

strong British commercial interest awaits appropriate HMG decisions. South Atlantic Fisheries Committee formed through Falkland Islands Office to coordinate British fishing/agricultural/commercial/scientific interests and implement Shackleton recommendations

Fisheries management and conservation

ODM team to examine fish farming and inshore fishing possibilities

- **MINERAL OIL RESOURCES** "The (Professor) Griffiths work identified the Malvinas Basin west of the Falklands as the most promising area for hydrocarbon deposits in view of the thickness of deposits there, comparable with some areas of the North Sea."

Vest all mineral rights in the Crown in line with Ascension, Seychelles etc.

Under Advice

Flexible offshore sovereignty limits allowing for median lines

HMG discussions with Argentina

Appraise existing geological data and pursue research

joint oil majors/government research undertaken

● **INDUSTRY AND CRAFTS** "Currently, handicrafts are the only form of secondary economic activity in the Islands."

Government should financially encourage handicrafts etc and advise

Falkland Cooperative formed: tax reforms and cooperative legislation under consideration by FIG

Feasibility study for new meat collection and freezing industry

no action

Expand knitwear industry through specialised guidance and financial support

local enterprise Falklands Home Industries very active.

● **TOURISM** "The Falklands have a specialist tourist attraction for those interested in wildlife and in remote unspoilt scenery."

(Assuming extension of runway by 900 M.))

Tourism development study)

major proposal by travel agency awaiting FIG cooperation and support

Promotion)

Increased tourism facilities (banking, accommodation etc)

private enterprise projects await FIG decisions

● **TRANSPORT** "However, without the (airfield) extension, there is a strong doubt whether tourism, fisheries and other diversifying industrial potential would be realised to any significant degree."

Permanent airfield should be strengthened and lengthened for medium/long haul jets

The ODM, in reply to repeated parliamentary questions, will only say that an extension of the airfield depends on economic developments which, Lord Shackleton stated, depend on an extended airfield.

New internal airplanes and fare pricing structure

under consideration – fares now raised

Improve coastal shipping

under commercial consideration

Appoint road engineer Build Stanley/Goose Green Road

ODM grant of £1M to include road construction

● **INTERNAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND BROADCASTING** "One serious disadvantage in West Falkland is the impossibility of telephoning Stanley."

Replace R/T system ASAP

some government progress but mainly local initiatives

● **INVESTMENT AND BANKING** "Banking facilities in the Falkland Islands are of a basic and rudimentary kind."

Maximise local savings and retain in Islands

under study by FIG

Encourage specific investment by Government loans

under study by FIG

Loans for private enterprise

under study by FIG

Establish clearing bank branch, Relax exchange controls

not commercially viable at present

● **SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE** "... the need to raise the skills and abilities of young Islanders to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future."

Raise education to 'O' level standard)

Ensure reading and writing skills outside Stanley)

most educational recommendations awaiting completion of school hostel in Stanley in early 1979

Provide vocational training)

Provide boarding house for non-Stanley pupils

under construction

Appoint social & health workers

volunteers only

Improve Stanley hospital

X-ray equipment being provided

● **ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Establish advisory committee

no action known

Establish scientific research agency

under study by FIRADA at FIG request

Falkland Islands Research and Development Association

Chairman E W Hunter Christie B L

The first Annual General Meeting was held on October 19 at 16 Regency Street, London S.W.1. The following are extracts from the CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

"The Association was set up to provide the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee and its associated organisations with their own office and salaried staff in London; to incorporate a members' organisation to which sympathisers in Britain and the people of the Falkland Islands could subscribe, ultimate control of which would rest with the individual membership; to provide Falkland Islanders visiting Britain and anyone interested in the Falkland Islands with an information centre; and to stimulate the commercial implementation, in accordance with the wishes of the people of the Falkland Islands, of the recommendations made by Lord Shackleton's economic survey.

We have not yet made the progress for which we had hoped in achieving the implementation of the recommendations in Lord Shackleton's Report.

The British Government has moved exceedingly slowly and we are conscious that the plans of some of the long established commercial businesses with interests in the Falkland Islands for diversification and expansion of the Falkland Islands' economy have suffered severe frustration. The lack of progress in development has not been entirely due to the recession in trade. During the next year, one of our principal tasks must be to press on the Government in power their responsibilities to the people of the Islands and the interest which Britain has in assisting their economy to expand. It is worth noting that, under pressure in particular from those in this country who have now for ten years supported the Islands, some £9½ million of aid has been provided by the Ministry of Overseas Development.

Your Board's main achievement in the development field has been the setting up of the South Atlantic Fisheries Committee, with Mr. James Johnson M.P. as chairman. The object of the Committee is to establish a British fishing industry in the South West Atlantic on the general lines recommended by Lord Shackleton.

During the last eighteen months, a very large number of meetings have taken place between members of the Association with special qualification in various fields, and those who may in one way or another be able to assist in the presentation of the Falkland Islands case or who are interested in the Islands.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at the Houses of Parliament have organised meetings with Members of Parliament, discussions have taken place with

Government departments and with a very wide range of organisations interested in one way or another in the Islands, their people and their resources.

Local branches of the Association have been established in Swansea and Manchester and there is a possibility that a branch will be formed shortly in New Zealand.

The theme I suggest for our next year is a very simple one. The Falkland Islands need a British commitment to their future as never before, but it is not all one way. Britain needs a sterling source of vital raw materials and food which the Islands, with a land area two thirds the size of Wales as well as the seas around them, could provide. In twenty or even ten years time the resources of the Islands could make the difference between hunger and comfort to Britain, in a world which does not owe us a living."

● REFERENDUM PROPOSED

A meeting of Members of Parliament, Peers and Falkland Islanders concluded that a referendum should be held in the Falkland Islands.

At a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting in the House of Commons, it was suggested that the only way to prove the wishes of the Islanders was by following the example set in Northern Ireland, when a referendum on constitutional reform was held. The Ulster referendum showed that a majority in the province wished to retain links with the United Kingdom.

The colony of Gibraltar recently held a referendum to confirm the people's overwhelming preference for British, rather than Spanish sovereignty and the British colony of Belize has been promised a referendum on any proposals worked out with neighbouring Guatemala, which has territorial ambitions over Belize. Ninety seven per cent of the people in the Falkland Islands are of British stock.

● LEIF BARTON

Miss Leif Barton, who for more than a year was general secretary at the Falkland Islands Office in London, returned to the Falkland Islands in September.

She has been appointed as assistant to the new development officer, Mr. Bill Sloman working for the Falkland Islands government.

● RECEPTION

The annual Falkland Islands reception organised by the Falkland Islands Office will be held at Lincoln's Inn on Tuesday June 19 1979.

● CHRISTMAS CARDS

Attractive Christmas cards with a colour photograph of the Band of HM Royal Marines Beating Retreat at this year's London reception are on sale, with envelopes, from the Falkland Islands office at 12 pence each.

● FISH SURVEY RESPONSE AWAITED

The Minister of Agriculture, the Rt. Hon. John Silkin MP., has now acknowledged memorandum submitted to him in May proposing a government sponsored fisheries survey of the South Atlantic.

The memorandum was prepared by the South Atlantic Fisheries Committee group composed of fishing industry union and commercial members (and the White Fish Authority) and was presented to the Minister by the SAFC president Mr James Johnson MP (Labour, Kingston upon-Hull).

The powerful all-party House of Commons Expenditure Committee on the British Fishing industry presented a report to government this year which strongly criticised the Foreign Office for its lack of foresight during the Icelandic 'Cod War' in 1975 and continues: "...when arrangements for the Falkland Islands are being considered the fishing potential of the waters around them must be fully taken into account in any negotiations about their future".

● FALKLAND HERITAGE

A book which tells of the arrival of the pioneer farmers Wickham Bertrand and Ernest Holmsted in the Falkland Islands in 1868 has just been published. After an adventurous three-year journey via New Zealand and South America, the pioneers settled at Hill Cove, where they developed a sheep farm. The author's grandfather, Robert Blake, arrived three years later and joined the venture.

FALKLAND HERITAGE is fully illustrated and available from the author, Mary Trehearne, at £6.95 per copy. Her address is: Fisher's Mead, Keyhaven, Lymington, Hants.

● BATTLE DAY

The Cenotaph ceremony for Falkland Islands Battle Day will be held at 11.00 a.m. on December 9 1978. Battle Day commemorates the First World War naval victory off the Falkland Islands which gave the Royal Navy supremacy in the southern seas for the rest of the war. In the Second World War, the Battle of the River Plate was won by British squadrons based on the Falkland Islands.

Commander Scovill, who is Officer-in-Charge of the new HMS INVINCIBLE - the successor to flagship at the battle of the Falkland Islands - will be present at the Cenotaph ceremony, when wreaths will be laid. HMS INVINCIBLE was sunk at the Battle of Jutland in 1916 and her new namesake is about to be commissioned.

The Falkland Islands Office has opened a fund to present HMS INVINCIBLE with commemorative silver; the original plate was lost at the Battle of Jutland.