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University of
Kent

Government Media Policy during the Falklands **War**

A thesis presented by

Joanna Margaret Thornton

to the

**School of History,
University of Kent**

In partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
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Abstract

This study addresses Government media policy throughout the Falklands War of 1982. It considers the effectiveness, and charts the development of, Falklands-related public relations' policy by departments including, but not limited to, the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The literature of the 1980s concerning the media during the conflict still dominates the historiography of the subject. This thesis is the first significant reappraisal of the work offered during the decade in which the war occurred. It is informed by recently released archive material and newly conducted interviews, and boasts an extensive analysis of the content of the printed press during the conflict.

There are a number of central hypotheses contained in this research (as well as many lesser theories). This thesis argues that media policy observed by the MoD in relation to the Task Force journalists was ill-prepared, reactionary, driven by internal MoD motivation and that ultimately, control of policy was devolved to the men on the ground. This thesis advances that MoD media policy in Britain, while as reactive as that rolled out to the Task Force, became *more* effective as the war progressed. The MoD failed to adequately cater for the British media until the middle of May 1982, at which time a number of sensible and potentially successful initiatives were introduced – specifically the News Release Group and the Military Briefing Group. It is also the contention of this work that the machinery developed centrally, by the Cabinet Office and No.10 Press Office in the form of the South Atlantic Presentation Unit and Information Group, had the potential to be successful additions to the regular organisation of Government. However, neither had enough authority and were plagued by departmental rivalries. While the media-related initiatives of the MoD ultimately became more successful, those of wider Government became less effective. Finally, this thesis provides a serious analysis of the printed press in order to substantiate the hypothesis that much of what had been argued about the printed press was generalised and oversimplified – its reliance on Argentine source material, its jingoistic nature, the dominance of reports on armed conflict and its aversion to a diplomatic settlement.

Dedicated to my parents

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This PhD is dedicated to my parents. They have taught me the value of hard work and dedication. My mother has suffered my whinging, whining and screaming – and not just over the past three years. She is the most caring, loving and dedicated cheerleader. Without her enduring strength to draw from and her ceaseless love to take comfort in, I may have surrendered to this thesis. My father has spent more hours than either of us would care to note reading my work, highlighting grammatical mistakes (very few), evaluating the structure and amending details. As a former journalist, this is an emotive subject for him, yet he has disregarded his own feelings and discussed with me the positives of my work and the drawbacks of some of my *opinions*. Without my father, his love and his efforts, I would be not only a poorer person, but my thesis would be a poorer thing.

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Abbreviations

ACAS	Assistant Chief of the Air Staff
ACDS	Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff
ACGS	Assistant Chief of the General Staff
ACNS	Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff
ACPR	Acting Chief of Public Relations
ARA	Armada de la Republica Argentina (Navy of the Argentine Republic)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDOHP	British Diplomatic Oral History Programme
BUFVC	British Universities Film and Video Council
C.A.	Churchill Archives (Cambridge)
CAS	Chief of Air Staff
CDS	Chief of Defence Staff
CGS	Chief of General Staff
C-in-C	Commander in Chief
CNS	Chief of Naval Staff
CO	Commanding Officer
CoI	Central Office of Information
CoS	Chiefs of Staff
CPR	Chief of Public Relations
CPS	Chief Press Secretary
DCPR	Deputy Chief of Public Relations
DPR	Director of Public Relations
EEC	European Economic Community
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FoI	Freedom of Information
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
GUMG	Glasgow University Media Group
HCDC	House of Commons Defence Committee
HMS	Her Majesty's Ship
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationary Office
HQ	Headquarters
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority
IG	Information Group
IO (s)	Information Officer (Officers)
IRN	Independent Radio News
ITN	Independent Television News
ITV	Independent Television
IWM	Imperial War Museum
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee
MARISAT	Maritime Telecommunications Satellites
MEZ	Maritime Exclusion Zone

MIO	Meeting of Information Officers
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoDPR	Ministry of Defence Public Relations
MoI	Ministry of Information
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
No.10	Number Ten (Downing Street)
NoK	Next of kin
NPA	Newspaper Publishers' Association
NRG	News Release Group
NUJ	National Union of Journalists
OD (SA)	Defence and Oversea Policy Committee (Sub-Committee on the South Atlantic and the Falkland Islands)
PA	Press Association
PPG	Parkinson Presentation Group
PJHQ	Permanent Joint Headquarters
PMPU	Prime Minister's Policy Unit
PR	Public Relations
PRO (s)	Public Relations Officer (Officers)
PS	Personal Secretary
PUS	Permanent Under Secretary
Q&A	Question and answer
RAF	Royal Air Force
RC	Resident Clerk (MoD)
RFA	Royal Fleet Auxiliary
RM	Royal Marines
RN	Royal Navy
SAPU	South Atlantic Presentation Unit
SAS	Special Air Service
SBS	Special Boat Service
SCOT	Shipborne Communications Terminal
SCR	Security Council Resolution
S of S	Secretary of State
SS	Steamship
TA	Territorial Army
TEZ	Total Exclusion Zone
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
TV	Television
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US (A)	United States (of America)
UXB	Unexploded Bomb

Note on Citations

The Ministry of Defence's collection of documents held at Portsmouth Naval base are referred to throughout this thesis as the 'MoD archive'. In footnotes they are recorded as 'MoD'.

The National Archives, Kew, are noted as 'TNA'.

Books are referenced by their author, chapters and articles are referenced by the author and title of work.

Referenced material should be assumed to be from 1982 unless otherwise stated.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

During the Falklands conflict (2 April – 14 June 1982), the British Government was fighting a war on two fronts: a very real war in the South Atlantic and an information war at home. For Britain, in military terms, the Falklands War was an anomaly: a unique, limited campaign, fought 8,000 miles from its shores which posed distinct challenges to the armed forces. In terms of the media, the war was equally irregular: the first instance in which the British media was embedded with the Services for the entirety of a campaign, the first war fought in the era of modern, mass communications and the first conflict in which the British Government and media appeared so opposed to the other's handling of the conflict.

This thesis seeks to clarify the Government position on the media during the Falklands by exploring the way in which policy towards the media was constructed, and developed, throughout the crisis. It constitutes an assessment of the most significant ways in which the Government attempted to improve and sustain media relations – both in the South Atlantic and in Britain. Its original contribution to knowledge on the subject of the media during the Falklands War is substantial: it is the first work to fully address Government bodies constructed for the sole purpose of managing the Government's presentation effort, it is the most comprehensive analysis of Government policy catering to the Task Force journalists *and* the British domestic media and it offers the only quantitative assessment of the content of the printed press during the war.¹

The media has 'A DUTY TO INFORM' was the message behind a *Times* editorial in May 1982. It said that the developing dispute over the reporting of the Falklands War needed 'to be treated as more than a petty sideshow'.² *The Daily Telegraph*, almost three weeks later, questioned why 'toffee-nosed' grandees of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) thought 'Mr and Mrs Average Briton' were 'not entitled to know precisely what is happening in the Falkland Islands?'³ *The Daily Mirror* claimed that '...you may bet your second-best boots that months or even years from now it will be revealed that while all this to-ing and fro-ing

¹ See Chapter Six for content analysis.

² *The Times*, 13 May 1982, p.13.

³ 'Come Clean!', *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 Jun., p.14.

was going on, there was a piece of the jigsaw we weren't told about'.⁴ Already, during the war, there was a sense of the importance of the mounting quarrel between the Government and the media. As the regulations given to journalists with the Task Force noted, and as subsequent commentaries on the role of the media in the Falklands have highlighted: 'The essence of successful warfare is secrecy. The essence of successful journalism is publicity'.⁵ The divergent aims of each side - in the Falklands, the military and the media; in Britain, the Government and the media - dictated that any situation in which they would have to co-operate would be fraught with difficulties.

1. Literature Review

The Falklands War has been the theme of a plethora of books, articles and papers. The crisis presented a peculiar conflict, which many have argued was avoidable.⁶ Published work on the Falklands range from military histories to political histories, cultural works to social studies. The war also supplied one of the most varied selections of first-hand accounts any British conflict ever afforded. Ludmilla Jordanova wrote that any 'new' information by itself is 'not necessarily particularly significant; rather it is the ways in which they are used and connected up with previous accounts that really matter'.⁷ Throughout this thesis the importance of the historiography concerning the media and the Falklands is emphasised. The existing literature surrounding the subject is so dense that in order to rationalise this study, a constant valuation of what has already been discovered is essential to the reading of any new research.

⁴ K. Waterhouse, 'Our secret society', *Daily Mirror*, 22 Apr., p.10.

⁵ Ministry of Defence, *Regulations for Correspondents Accompanying an Operational Force* (MoD, 1958) The motivations of the two are noted in: R. Harris, 'Gotcha!': *The Media, the Government and the Falklands Crisis* (Faber, 1983) p.16.; S. Badsey, 'The Falklands Conflict as a Media War', in Eds. R. Havers and M. Grove, *The Falklands Conflict Twenty Years on: Lessons for the Future* (Frank Cass, 2005) p.46.; Eds. P. Eddy, M. Linklater and P. Gillman, *The Falklands War: The Full Story by 'The Sunday Times' Insight Team* (Andre Deutsch, 1982) p.210.; L. Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign: War and Diplomacy*, v.ii. (Taylor & Francis, 2005) p.34.

⁶ Works which speculate on whether the war was avoidable: J. Arquilla and M. Moyano Rasmussen, 'The Origins of the South Atlantic War', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 33, 4 (Nov. 2001) pp.739-775.; C. Bluth, 'The British Resort to Force in the Falklands/Malvinas Conflict 1982: International Law and Just War Theory', *Journal of Peace Research*, 24, 1 (Mar. 1987) pp.5-20.; G. Hopple, 'Intelligence and Warning: Implications and Lessons of the Falklands War', *World Politics*, 36, 3 (Apr. 1984) pp.339-361.; L. Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign: The Origins of the Falklands War*, v.i. (Taylor & Francis, 2005).

⁷ L. Jordanova, *History in Practice* (Hodder Education, 2006) p.31.

1a. General Texts

There are a number of ‘general’ texts on the Falklands War which cover both military and political aspects of the campaign.⁸ Whilst nearly all have advantages or benefits, for the purpose of simplicity this thesis outlines two texts which have, arguably, had the greatest impact on the study of the conflict: Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins’ 1983 account, *The Battle for the Falklands*; and Professor Sir Lawrence Freedman’s *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign*.⁹ The journalists, Hastings and Jenkins – one having accompanied troops to the South Atlantic, the other having witnessed the effects of the war in Britain – created a wide-ranging and instant history of the campaign which benefited from privileged source material and an abundance of interview matter. In 1997, ahead of Freedman’s official publication, the authors added a new introduction to their book in which they claimed ‘the account of the war we wrote immediately it was over has not been superseded in any important respect since its publication’.¹⁰ Indeed, the pair were correct. Despite efforts to supply more all-purpose interpretations of the Falklands, the unique positions from which the journalists approached the subject dictated that theirs was the most thorough account of both the military and political histories of the war.¹¹

Since Hastings and Jenkins’ volume, Professor Sir Lawrence Freedman’s official history, published in 2005, has been regarded as the most in-depth and well-supported work on the Falklands. Commissioned by New Labour in 1997, Freedman was granted unfettered access to a vast range of previously classified Government archive material in order to script Britain’s definitive account of the war. The first volume of Freedman’s history was based on the origins of the war – the dispute over the ownership of the islands and the diplomatic events leading up to the Argentinian invasion. In some circles, particularly among Falkland islanders, this volume has been criticised as being too sympathetic to

⁸ Examples: H. Bicheno, *Razor's Edge: The Unofficial History of the Falklands War* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2006); D. Blakeway, *The Falklands War* (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1992), D. G. Boyce, *The Falklands War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); L. Freedman and V. Gamba-Stonehouse, *Signals of War: The Falklands Conflict of 1982* (Faber, 1990); M. Middlebrook, *Operation Corporate: The Story of the Falklands War, 1982* (Viking, 1985).

⁹ M. Hastings and S. Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands* (Joseph, 1983) and Freedman, v.i. and v.ii.

¹⁰ Hastings and Jenkins, p.xii.

¹¹ A separate historiographical debate exists about the ethics of ‘justifying war’. This thesis is not specifically concerned with such issues. For perspectives on ‘just war’ theory see: M. Walzer, *Arguing about War* (Yale University Press, 2004); O. O’Donovan, *The Just War Revisited* (Cambridge University Press, 2003). For a concise synthesis of the complex historiography see: J. Fox and D. Welch., ‘Justifying War: Propaganda, Politics and the Modern Age’, in Eds. D. Welch and J. Fox, *Justifying War: Propaganda, Politics and the Modern Age* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) pp.1-20.

Argentinian claims.¹² One of Freedman's earlier works took account of both sides. In 1990 Freedman and Virginia Gamba-Stonehouse produced an integrated account of the war which included the perspectives of both Britain and Argentina.¹³ The text drew on material including Argentine documentation which had not been made public and interviews with key political and military figures in both countries.

The second volume dealt with the conduct of the war itself, picking up with the Argentine invasion. In addition to the sources mentioned above, in the later volume Freedman made extensive use of the findings of post-war Government inquiries like the HCDC inquiry and the Falkland Islands Review ('Franks Report'). The volume endeavoured to cover several aspects of the campaign – diplomatic and political, as well as military. An attempt was made to address some elements of the campaign which concerned the media. However this effort was limited in length and scope.

1b. The Literature of the Media and the Falklands War

The controversy surrounding the media during the war dictated that interest in the post-mortem of the issues would evoke interest. This was compounded by the commission of a House of Commons Defence Committee (HCDC) inquiry into the Government's handling of the press and public information during the conflict.¹⁴ The importance attached to the media was denoted by the fact that the HCDC's was the first of the post-war inquiries to be announced – in June, before troops had even secured victory. The inquiry, printed in December 1982, paved the way for a multitude of works, speculating on the importance of the media in times of war, and specifically throughout the Falklands.

1b (i). Media-Focused Texts of the 1980s

As a direct consequence of the prominence of the topic, promoted by the HCDC, a spate of media-oriented texts was produced throughout the 1980s which addressed various issues regarding the dissemination of news during the war. Since the 1980s, however, attempts to consider exclusively the media and the Falklands have decreased significantly. Save a few valiant efforts to readdress aspects of the subject in book chapters, there has been no work

¹² J. Copping, 'Official British history of the Falklands War too pro-Argentina', *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 Feb. 2010 <www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/southamerica/falklandislands/7331547/Official-British-history-of-the-Falklands-War-is-considered-too-pro-Argentina.html>.

¹³ Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse.

¹⁴ HCDC, *The Handling of Press and Public Information During the Falklands Conflict, v.i: Report and Minutes of Proceedings* (HMSO, 1982); HCDC, *The Handling of Press and Public Information During the Falklands Conflict, v.ii: Minutes of Evidence* (HMSO, 1982).

which ‘revised’, to any great extent, the work of the 1980s.¹⁵ For the purpose of simplicity, this thesis outlines a number of ‘key’ texts from the 1980s which provide the foundation for current research.

Following the end of the war, the MoD commissioned two academic studies relating to media aspects of the conflict. Eleven universities were approached with a potential subject area: ‘The relationship in time of armed conflict between newspapers and other media and the Ministry of Defence, including the armed forces’.¹⁶ The first study commissioned was that of Valerie Adams from Kings’ College, London. Adams’ work dealt with media speculation during the conflict and aimed to address two central questions: without reliance on ‘leaks’ from official sources, how well informed was it possible to be about military operations; and how accurate was the media’s commentary?¹⁷ The overriding premise of the work concerned the criticism focused on the media for resorting to the use of ‘armchair admirals’ to hypothesise over options open to the British armed forces. Adams used countless broadcasts and some newspaper material, as well as documentary evidence provided by the MoD, to contextualise this debate. Adams judged that the media’s resort to speculation was as a result of the lack of information provided by the MoD. But she also criticised the media for lending itself to the deception of the MoD. Her work offered new vivacity concerning old arguments, namely that of the importance of the speculation of the media. Adams, who was uniquely qualified for her new project, having worked at the MoD, produced the book, *The Media and the Falklands Campaign*, in 1986 as a result of her research.

The second MoD-commissioned work belonged to a research team from University College, Cardiff, led by Derrik Mercer. Mercer, Kevin Williams and Geoff Mungham carried out a study of the policy adopted by the MoD during the Falklands and then presented comprehensive findings on how the MoD’s experience in the Falklands affected policy towards the media in subsequent areas of conflict including the 1983 invasion of Grenada and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The research was presented to the MoD in July 1985, presented to Parliament in July 1986 and published as the book, *The Fog of*

¹⁵ See: K. Foster, ‘The Falklands War: A Critical View of Information Policy’, in Ed. P. Young, *Defence and the Media in Time of Limited War* (Routledge, 1992); Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’; K. Dodds, ‘Contesting War: British Media Reporting and the 1982 South Atlantic War’, in Eds. M. Connelly and D. Welch, *War and the Media: Reportage and Propaganda, 1900-2003* (I. B. Tauris, 2005).

¹⁶ F. Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.27, q.65. and MoD, 18 Aug., MoD, *Ministry of Defence Notes of the HCDC Hearings*, DEFE31/221 f.E42.

N.B. Hereafter the Ministry of Defence Archives are noted as ‘MoD’.

¹⁷ Freedman in V. Adams, *The Media and the Falklands Campaign* (Macmillan, 1986) p.ix.

War, in 1987.¹⁸ *The Fog of War* is perhaps the most relevant of all existing literature to this PhD. The dominant line of study contemplates specifically MoD policy. The study is divided between assessment of the MoD's central policy - that relating to the experiences of the Task Force journalists (the 29 journalists who were to accompany the British Forces to the Falklands) - the accusations that the MoD willingly deceived the British media and manipulated coverage and the way in which the military with the Task Force viewed the media. Mercer et al. judged that there was no coherent policy adopted by the Government during the Falklands War – that policy was developed on an *ad hoc* basis – but that this approach had been successful in the case of the Falklands.¹⁹ In many ways this thesis supplements the work of Mercer et al., which focused chiefly on the policies developed by the MoD, not on those developed by the wider Government. In other ways, this thesis contributes entirely original research based on issues which attract little more than brief reference in the MoD-commissioned study on policy.

There were two other significant and detailed works produced in the 1980s.²⁰ Pursuant to the war, journalist Robert Harris, produced the first narrative account of the media's involvement in the Falklands crisis, and the first based on the newly published HCDC report.²¹ Inspired by the infamous *Sun* headline, 'GOTCHA', in reference to the sinking of the Argentine ARA *General Belgrano*, Harris' work contributed an entertaining and remarkably thorough critique of the media's performance in the crisis – specifically that of the printed press. There were two main themes to Harris's work. He gave an overall appraisal of Fleet Street's treatment of the Falklands, focusing mainly on the tabloids. He delved into such issues as circulation and competition, concentrating on the battle between *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror*. The second theme Harris picked up on was that of the political controversies surrounding the media and the rows which ensued between the Government and the media. The first publication to make use of the HCDC's inquiry into the media, and the first exclusively media-oriented study, *Gotcha* constituted an initial, and sound, *preliminary* overview of the role of the media in the Falklands.

¹⁸ D. Mercer, G. Mungham and K. Williams, *The Fog of War: The Media on the Battlefield* (Heinmann, 1987) p.viii.

¹⁹ Mercer et al., p.19. and p.61.

²⁰ Other media-centred works of the 1980s: S. Greenberg and G. Smith, '*Rejoice!*': *Media Freedom and the Falklands* (Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, 1983); Glasgow University Media Group (GUMG): L. Broadbent, J. Eldridge, G. Kimmett, G. Philo, M. Spaven and K. Williams, *War and Peace News* (Open University Press, 1985); Eds. Eddy et al.

²¹ Harris, *Gotcha*.

Whilst the works of Harris, Mercer et al. and Adams were valuable in generating a better understanding of the debates surrounding the subject, what was lacking was a more detailed look at the individuals involved in the media controversy. This gap was filled before the end of the decade by sociologists, David Morrison and Howard Tumber by their 1988 publication, *Journalists at War: The Dynamics of News Reporting during the Falklands Conflict*.²² Morrison and Tumber's work aimed to be a general 'treatise' on journalism, with the Falklands War serving as an exceptional case study. There were three distinct and separate parts to the work. These three sections allow the authors to cover extensive ground within the book – each chapter drew on the previous and added another layer to the complexity of the study. As the authors put it themselves, the book dealt with 'the journalists, then the politics, then the public'.²³ What was unique to the book, and amongst other media-centred texts, was its ethnographic approach to the study of journalism. The first section of the book (eight chapters) was devoted to telling the story of the Task Force journalists through direct quotes from extensive interviews. Morrison and Tumber interviewed *every* member of the media who accompanied the Task Force in April 1982, as well as the 'minders' – their study is still the only of its kind.

The second section of the book examined the handling of news in London. There, it focused on the political controversy surrounding the media in the war, the way news was reported and the manner in which the MoD treated and released information. The issues touched upon are really an extension of the work produced the previous year by Mercer et al. The subject field overlapped considerably. Morrison and Tumber's study, however, was poorer for the fact that, unlike Mercer et al., it was not given privileged access to the MoD or its files.

The final segment of analysis contributed a completely original aspect to the existing research on the subject – a quantitative approach to the media.²⁴ One chapter offered a far-reaching content analysis of television (TV) news bulletins during the war. Another chapter dealt with the results of a national survey of public opinion. The poll questioned the public about the news it witnessed and attitudes towards the media itself. Because *Journalists at War* was a sociological study, conclusions offered tended to focus on different 'social groups' involved in the conflict. The study was more critical of the

²² D. Morrison and H. Tumber, *Journalists at War: The Dynamics of News Reporting during the Falklands Conflict* (Sage, 1988).

²³ *Ibid.*, p.xiv.

²⁴ See Chapter Six.

Government and the MoD than previous works had been (particularly when contrasted with Adams' work). What Morrison and Tumber contributed to the historiography was a series of arguments surrounding the ethics and integrities of journalism, and an overall judgement on the priorities and motives of the MoD and Government.²⁵

Ib (ii). Media-Focused Texts since the 1980s

Professor Sir Lawrence Freedman wrote that 'scholarly work on the Falklands has hardly been a prominent feature of British university life'.²⁶ Yet, aside from the 'main texts', there have been some modest studies since the 1980s which have made efforts to address the role of the media in the war. They can be distinguished from those analytical texts of the '80s: crudely, they either *narrate* the experience of the media and do not draw significant, new conclusions, or they are short in length and have not been fully able to tackle all the issues necessary. All important contributions to the literature came about as the product of conferences.

A conference was held in Brisbane to mark the 10th anniversary of the Falklands War, the subject of which was 'Defence and Media in Time of Limited Conflict'. The outcome of the assembly was a book of relevant lecture material. Kevin Foster, a lecturer in Communication Studies, spoke on information policy during the war.²⁷ Foster's work converged on the work of Mercer et al. Foster judged that the MoD's information policy during the war, which was sanctioned by the Government, was a policy of propaganda.²⁸ Like the other, brief summaries which followed it, Foster's work perhaps attempted to do too much – it considered the conduct of the MoD in Britain, but also covered the same ground as a variety of previous studies: the experiences of the Task Force journalists, for example, attracted substantial focus.

As a result of a 2001 conference at the University of Kent, Mark Connelly and David Welch edited a collection of essays on war and the media in the 20th Century. This collection included a submission from Klaus Dodds, an expert in Geopolitics, who has worked extensively on issues relating to the Falkland Islands.²⁹ Dodds' work contemplated

²⁵ Morrison and Tumber, *Journalists at War*.

²⁶ Freedman, 'Bridgehead Revisited: The Literature of the Falklands', *International Affairs*, 59, 3 (1983) p.450.

²⁷ Foster, 'The Falklands War: A Critical View of Information Policy', in Ed. P. Young, *Defence and the Media in Time of Limited War* (Routledge, 1992).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.155.

²⁹ Dodds, 'Contesting War: British Media Reporting and the 1982 South Atlantic War', in Eds. Connelly, M. and Welch, D., *War and the Media: Reportage and Propaganda, 1900-2003* (I. B. Tauris, 2005).

the major issues concerning the media during the war - in as much depth as the length of a chapter allowed. Dodds explained the background to the war, agreeing with the accepted argument that the trigger for the invasion of the Falklands was the political activity of summer 1981. He described the scramble for journalist places with the Task Force and the difficulties of communication. He claimed misinformation and MoD news management was evident throughout the war. Dodds also included a valuable reflection on how the lack of effective opposition to the war and the censorship of critics 'helped to maintain the claims of the British government that the Falklands was worth dying for'.³⁰ However, what this chapter constituted, essentially, was a concise digest of those works which had previously appeared.

Stephen Badsey, Professor of Conflict Studies, spoke at a conference held at Sandhurst to mark the 20th anniversary of the Falklands conflict. The book which was produced as a result was the fifth in a series originating from the Sandhurst Conference Series and was comprised of various lecture papers. What Badsey's paper offered was a far-reaching summary of the most important media-related issues which arose from the conflict. Perhaps the most interesting part of his work was a review of the literature on the subject of the media in the Falklands.³¹ The only other detailed summary of the literature was contributed in a 1983 journal article by Freedman.³² Badsey assessed the available works on the topic, as well as the Government committees which were established as a direct result of the furore surrounding the media in the crisis: the HCDC as well as the committee formed to deal with issues of censorship in 1983.³³ What the key studies which followed the literature of the 1980s had in common was that they were, firstly, all the result of academic conferences. And secondly, although thorough in their appraisals and overviews of the subject, none significantly revised the arguments or detail that had been entrenched by the work of the '80s.

Examples of Dodds' work: 'Consolidate! Britain, the Falkland Islands and Wider the South Atlantic/Antarctic', *Global Discourse*, 3, 1 (Jul. 2013) pp.166-172.; 'The Falkland Islands as a 'Strategic Gateway': Britain and the South Atlantic Overseas Territories', *RUSI Journal*, 157, 6 (Dec. 2012) pp.18-22.; Dodds and M. Benwell, 'Argentine Territorial Nationalism Revisited: The Malvinas/Falklands Dispute and Geographies of Everyday Nationalism', *Political Geography*, 30, 8 (Nov. 2011) pp.441-449.

³⁰ Dodds, 'Contesting War', p.230.

³¹ Badsey, 'The Falklands Conflict as a Media War', in Eds. Havers, R. and Grove, M., *The Falklands Conflict Twenty Years on: Lessons for the Future* (Frank Cass, 2005) pp.49-50.

³² Freedman, 'Bridgehead Revisited'.

³³ Study Group on Censorship, *The Protection of Military Information: Report of the Study Group on Censorship* (HMSO, 1983).

Aside from the chapters in books which emerged as the product of conferences, there were two more specific studies which concerned the media and the Falklands. Each was a specialist consideration of an aspect of the 'media war': Zoe Anderson's 'Empire's Fetish' - work which contemplated the role of tabloid newspapers in 'sexualised nationalism' during the conflict - and Alasdair Pinkerton's award-winning 'Strangers in the Night' - an analysis of the role of the radio in the Falklands War.³⁴ Both works provided interesting and original assessments of their chosen field. Neither, however, significantly altered previous assumptions about the media and the war.

Ib (iii). First-Hand Accounts

A useful adjunct to the general literature on the Falklands is another body of text invaluable to the study of the Government and the media in the Falklands: first-hand accounts. Published first-hand accounts of the conflict provide historians with the personal perceptions of many prominent figures who have submitted to the public their take on events. Approached sensibly and with caution, memoirs can be invaluable.³⁵ The most relevant accounts to the subject matter of this thesis are those which have emerged from two types of author: politicians and Task Force journalists. In addition to these perspectives, the wealth of material which has emerged from those members of the Armed Forces in the South Atlantic is valuable.³⁶

Wars generate assessment and provoke reflection. The end of the Falklands War triggered a rush to publish work. The MoD's information policy and the vast amount of speculation over the conduct of the war created an incentive to tell the 'real' story as soon as possible.³⁷ The drive of Task Force journalists to fill in the gaps, publish censored material and correct conjecture, therefore, came in the form of their personal accounts. It is clear, however, that from the outset of the journey south, the journalists had future publications on their mind: John Shirley of *The Sunday Times* had been told before he left that he would

³⁴ Z. Anderson, 'Empire's Fetish: Sexualised Nationalism and Gendering of the Falklands War', *National Identities*, 13, 2 (Jun. 2011) pp.189-204.; A. Pinkerton, "'Strangers in the Night': The Falklands Conflict as a Radio War', *Twentieth Century British History*, 19, 3 (2008) pp.344-375.

³⁵ For the value of first-hand accounts and memoirs: J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (Longman, 2006) pp.63-66.; Eds. P. Hampl and E. Tyler May, *Tell Me True: Memoir, History, and Writing a Life* (Borealis Books, 2008) pp.3-7.

³⁶ Central are: N. Barker, *Beyond Endurance: An Epic of Whitehall and the South Atlantic* (Leo Cooper, 1997); M. Clapp and E. Southerby-Tailyour, *Amphibious Assault Falklands: The Battle over San Carlos Water* (Orion, 1997); D. Hart Dyke, *Four Weeks in May: A Captain's Story of War at Sea* (Atlantic Books, 2008); J. Thompson, *3 Commando Brigade in the Falklands: No Picnic* (Pen & Sword, 2007); J. Woodward, *One Hundred Days: The Memoirs of the Falklands Battle Group Commander* (Naval Institute Press, 1992).

³⁷ Freedman, 'Bridgehead Revisited', p.445.

need to prepare his contribution to the paper's 'Insight Team's' book on the campaign.³⁸ John Witherow and Patrick Bishop (of *The Times* and *The Observer* respectively) had also agreed to collaborate on a book - the deal was done before they had even left British territorial waters.³⁹ Without exception, all the journalists who published works on the war went on to do so within a year of the conflict ending. This dictated that from the start - and certainly from the end of the war - the media would attract literary attention. The journalists catered to a wide audience which necessitated the content also be broad. The market was not interested in the ethics of journalism, or the intricacies of filing copy - that information was supplied by the HCDC inquiry - instead it wanted anecdotes and an exclusive perspective on the campaign. As such, the Task Force journalists concentrated in their writings on the war - not on themselves, the media. The Task Force journalists were responsible for six books on the conflict.⁴⁰ Later, others would also include the Falklands in their autobiographies.⁴¹

Political memoirs are abundant in the literature surrounding the Falklands. Political accounts of the crisis are advantageous to this thesis. Since the construction of policies concerning the media were intrinsically linked with political characters, the mass of political biographies and autobiographies are of importance.⁴² Although none of the memoirs cover the Falklands exclusively, the conflict was extraordinary enough that it warranted chapters in the work of most contemporary political players.⁴³

1c. The Wider Academia of the Media

The term, 'media war', developed following the 1991 Gulf War. It was explicitly related to the way in which the news media interacted with the political and military circumstances

³⁸ Eds. Eddy et al.

³⁹ P. Bishop and J. Witherow, *The Winter War: The Falklands* (Quartet, 1982).

⁴⁰ Bishop and Witherow, R. Fox, *Eyewitness Falklands: A Personal Account of the Falklands Campaign* (Methuen, 1982); R. Fox and B. Hanrahan, *'I Counted them all out and I Counted them all Back': The Battle for the Falklands* (BBC Books, 1982); R. McGowan and J. Hands, *Don't Cry for Me, Sergeant Major: A Unique Portrait of the Falklands War - from the Sharp End* (Futura, 1983); Eds. Eddy et al. and Hastings and Jenkins.

⁴¹ Hastings, *Going to the Wars* (Macmillan, 2000); M. Nicholson, *A Measure of Danger: Memoirs of a British War Correspondent* (HarperCollins, 1991).

⁴² Of particular importance are: B. Ingham, *Kill the Messenger* (Fontana, 1991); J. Nott, *Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: Recollections of an Errant Politician* (Politicos, 2002); M. Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (HarperCollins, 1993); C. Parkinson, *Right at the Centre* (George Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1992)

⁴³ P. Carrington, *Reflect on things Past: The Memoirs of Lord Carrington* (Colins, 1988); R. Hunt, *My Falkland Days* (David & Charles, 1992); A. Parsons, 'The Falklands Crisis in the United Nations, 31 March-14 June 1982', *International Affairs*, 59, 2 (1983) pp.169-178.; F. Pym, *The Politics of Consent* (Hamish Hamilton, 1984).

of war.⁴⁴ Separate from the literature directly on the Falklands conflict lies a wealth of work on the relationship between the media and the ‘establishment’ during times of war. Throughout the early years of this century, a number of new studies emerged which dealt with the concept of a ‘media war’. These texts generally included discussion of the Falklands, the conflict as a case study, or at least compared the war with others in which media-related issues were central. A series of comparative studies also arose in the years following 1982. This distinct body of text serves to better inform researchers by revealing not only the requirements and motivations of both sides (the media and the Government) during times of war, but also allows one to perceive how previous experiences affected censorship policies and news management throughout the Falklands campaign. In relation to the Falklands, these works can broadly be divided into three groups: those which pay attention to the way in which war has been reported and which use the Falklands conflict as a case study – usually with specific reflection on the role of the war correspondent; those which focus on previous, limited wars, and news management in those conflicts, which equip the student of the media in the Falklands with the knowledge to define how the Falklands example broke with the accepted system of war reportage; and those which deal expressly with the implications of news journalism in Falklands for future wars – particularly the Gulf conflict of 1991.⁴⁵ The most essential volume of study to this thesis is the first category.⁴⁶

Those studies which relate to war reportage and which include assessment of the Falklands campaign are a vital requirement for anyone wishing to place the experience of the Falklands ‘media war’ into the wider context of the way in which war coverage developed over the 20th Century.⁴⁷ Two of the works which this thesis advocates as the ‘main’ texts

⁴⁴ Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’, p.42.

⁴⁵ Examples of studies which informed this thesis are: D. Hallin, *The ‘Uncensored War’: The Media and Vietnam* (Oxford University Press, 1986); M. McCarthy, *Vietnam* (Penguin, 1969); L. Curtis, *Ireland: The Propaganda War. The British Media and the ‘Battle for Hearts and Minds’* (Pluto, 1984); E. McCann, *The British Press and Northern Ireland* (Northern Ireland Socialist Research Centre, 1972); D. Miller, *Don’t Mention the War: Northern Ireland, Propaganda and the Media* (Pluto Press, 1994); J. Halliday and B. Cummings, *Korea: The Unknown War* (Viking, 1988).

Examples relating to the future implications of the Falklands: A. Finlan, *The Royal Navy in the Falklands Conflict and the Gulf War: Culture and Strategy* (Routledge, 2004); P. de la Billière, *Call for Fire: Sea Combat in the Falklands and the Gulf War* (John Murray Publishers, 1995); D. Willcox, *Propaganda, the Press and Conflict: The Gulf War and Kosovo* (Routledge, 2005).

⁴⁶ A separate category of work which is essential to the study of the media in times of war is that which relates to the construction of the news: A. Hetherington, *News, Newspapers and Television* (Macmillan, 1985); M. Conboy, *The Language of the News* (Routledge, 2007); GUMG: Eds. J. Eldridge and G. Philo, *Glasgow Media Group Reader, v.i: News Content, Language and Visuals* (Routledge, 1995); Eds. M. Gillespie and J. Hartley, *Understanding News* (Methuen, 2001).

⁴⁷ Other works which may not include the Falklands as a specific case study: Eds. S. Allan and B. Zelizer, *Reporting War: Journalism in Wartime* (Routledge, 2004); Eds. T. Allen and J. Seaton, *The Media of Conflict: War Reporting and Representations of Ethnic Violence* (Zed Books, 1999); Eds. P. Dennis and J.

relating to the media and the Falklands have included studies which compare the Falklands to previous or future conflict. Valerie Adams' work, for example, included an assessment of the way news was controlled and censored in previous conflicts such as World War Two, Korea, Vietnam, Suez and Borneo.⁴⁸ Each of these conflicts Adams judged to have had an impact on the way in which the Falklands was reported and news was controlled. In Mercer et al.'s *The Fog of War*, Vietnam (which the authors dub 'the first living room war') was explored and its lessons were outlined in relation to the Falklands. Future conflicts were also analysed, as mentioned, such as the invasions of Grenada and Lebanon. Yet a wider range of literature was produced which integrated comparative studies of the Falklands - perhaps the most famous of which was Phillip Knightley's *The First Casualty*.⁴⁹ Knightley's was, fundamentally, the history of the war correspondent from the Crimean War to the Gulf War. Knightley argued that the Crimean War could be seen as the birthplace of modern military censorship. As such, the book is useful to trace the genesis of policies which would later influence the creation of policy in the Falklands War. Miles Hudson and John Stanier, both former military personnel, created a study of the relationship between war and the media in 1997.⁵⁰ From their advantaged viewpoint, the authors examined the Falklands War against a background of studies on the Crimean War, the Great War, World War Two, Korea and Vietnam, Suez, the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland, and in relation to the Gulf War, Somalia and the Balkans.⁵¹

An additional mass of work essential to the completion of this thesis related to the interaction between the media and the political sphere. Some key publications dealt with integral issues concerning this thesis: the way in which the Prime Minister's Press Office operated, for example. Three central texts involving this subject are Michael Cockerell, Peter Hennessy and David Walker's *Sources Close to the Prime Minister*, Lance Price's *Where Power Lies* and Seymour-Ure's, *Prime Ministers and the Media*.⁵² Cockerell et al. shed light on the formerly veiled processes by which political news was disseminated from the echelons of Government in 1984. The included study of the Lobby system and role of

Grey, *The Military, the Media and Information Warfare* (Army History Unit, 2009); A. Hoskins and B. O'Loughlin, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War* (Polity, 2010).

⁴⁸ Adams, pp.22-43.

⁴⁹ P. Knightley, *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to the Falklands: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist and Myth Maker* (Pan Books, 1989).

⁵⁰ M. Hudson and J. Stanier, *War and the Media: A Random Searchlight* (Sutton, 1997).

⁵¹ See: Eds. M. Connelly and D. Welch, *War and the Media: Reportage and Propaganda, 1900-2003* (I. B. Tauris, 2005); Ed. P. Young, *Defence and the Media in Time of Limited War* (Routledge, 1992).

⁵² M. Cockerell, P. Hennessy and D. Walker, *Sources Close to the Prime Minister: Inside the Hidden World of the News Manipulators* (Macmillan, 1985); L. Price, *Where Power Lies: Prime Ministers v the Media* (Simon & Schuster, 2010); C. Seymour-Ure, *Prime Ministers and the Media: Issues of Power and Control* (Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

the Prime Minister's Press Secretary in particular formed a foundation for Chapter Five of this thesis. In 2010 Price's book emphasised the adversarial nature of the relationship between the media and specifically the Prime Minister, generally, the Government. He considered the tenure of Prime Ministers throughout the 20th Century – from David Lloyd George to Gordon Brown. Seymour-Ure's 2003 contribution was an evaluation of the ways in which Prime Ministers have communicated with the public, with specific focus on Downing Street's Press Secretaries of the past and the Press Office's varying functions.⁵³

2. Project Outline

This thesis is, principally, a study of the way in which British Government policy towards the media was developed and organised throughout the Falklands conflict. It considers the public relations' (PR) efforts of key departments involved in the crisis: the Prime Minister's Office, the Cabinet Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the MoD. Broadly, there are two parts to this thesis: analysis of Government policy and structure in response to the media during the Falklands crisis; and an analysis of the content of the printed press during the campaign – the first of its kind.

Analysis of policy is divided into four sections (and four chapters). Firstly, the way in which Government policy – specifically that of the MoD – was arrived at in the week following the Argentine invasion of the islands. This includes discussion of who took decisions, and why, regarding the departure of journalists with the Task Force, as well as postulations over the motivations for specific choices - like the use of Ascension Island. It concludes that the Public Relations Department at the MoD (MoDPR) was ill-equipped and unprepared to construct a coherent information policy in April 1982.

Secondly, MoD policy towards those journalists seconded to the Task Force is discussed in greater depth than ever before. While the strained relationship between the MoD and the headquarters (HQ) of the Commander in Chief of the Task Force (C-in-C), Northwood, is exposed, it is suggested that Northwood played a relatively minor role in the development of policy than has typically been assumed. It is argued that there were two central lines of policy extended to the Task Force journalists: incident reporting and censorship. Policy towards incident reporting is assessed along the basic framework provided by existing

⁵³ Other works include: Y. Cohen, *Media Diplomacy: The Foreign Office in the Mass Communications Age* (Frank Cass, 1986); R. Kuhn, *Politics and the Media in Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Eds. A. May and K. Rowan, *Inside Information: British Government and the Media* (Constable, 1982).

literature, but developed to address when reviews of policy took place, what events impacted the progress of policy (like the sinking of the *Belgrano*, HMS *Sheffield* and the Argentine fishing vessel, the *Narwhal*), and what arrangements were made to allow the efficient reporting of incidents in the South Atlantic. Chapter Three boasts a detailed assessment of what policy arrangements were made to facilitate the censorship of journalists with the Fleet, outlines the various stages of censorship and how they were imposed on the correspondents and provides the most thorough appraisal of the role of the service Public Relations Officers (PROs). It goes on to consider how the process of ‘double vetting’ in London was enforced and ponders the principle of censorship – indeed, whether such extreme levels were required at all.

The third section relates to the public relations policy of the MoD in *Britain*. The relationship between MoDPR and the FCO News Department is evaluated and the conclusion advanced that the success of the FCO News Department in handling the media over the first month of the conflict was due to its established structure and expertise. The MoD, on the other hand, failed to properly prepare for the commencement of the military campaign around the Falklands. This is reflected, it is judged, in the lack of facilities offered by the MoD until a relatively late stage in the war. The facilities at the MoD are considered at length: MoD unattributable briefings and the physical facilities at the MoD ‘Concourse’, or press centre, for example. Further, methods of keeping the media in Britain informed of events are examined, including the Military Briefing Group, the Meetings with Editors conducted by the Permanent Under-Secretary (PUS), Sir Frank Cooper, and the News Release Group (NRG), established to ease the process of releasing news from the MoD. It is judged that there was a distinct lack of provision made for the media by the MoD throughout April 1982. Mostly, the groups established by the MoD were done so far too late in the campaign to be of any real benefit to either the media or the MoD.

The fourth section of this thesis deals directly with the way in which Government information policy was co-ordinated, the ways in which control over the presentation of Government was exerted and the machinery established in an attempt to ensure the Government’s successful media image. The chapter provides the first detailed analysis of the role of the Number 10’s (No.10) Press Office and its Chief, Bernard Ingham. It considers the position of the Press Office within the Government and analyses its sources of authority. Necessarily, the organisations associated with the Press Office during the

conflict are reflected on in depth - the Meetings of Information Officers (MIOs) and the Information Group (IG), for example. The South Atlantic Presentation Unit (SAPU) is also explored in an attempt to provide the first commentary on its role during the crisis. Cecil Parkinson, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Paymaster General and Chairman of the Conservative Party, and his role in this initiative, and subsequent others such as the Parkinson Presentation Group (PPG), are examined intensely.

The second half of the thesis consists of one large study – a content analysis. Much of the secondary work on the role of the media during the Falklands has speculated on the subject and content of the printed press during the Falklands. Other content analyses concerning the product of television news during the crisis have been offered. The analysis presented here originates from the study of the content of the four highest circulation, national, daily newspapers published in Britain during the war. The analysis is extensive and conducive to a more thorough reading of the way in which the media has been viewed. It also allows for future researchers focused on the media in the conflict to assess the role of the printed press more accurately than has ever before been possible.

2a. Rationale for Study

The rationale for this study was simple and can be reduced to two main factors: the abundance of new, archival material; and the need to update and supplement the existing literature on the topic. Firstly, research for this PhD was embarked upon in September 2011. The National Archives, in accordance with the '30-Year Rule', released documents pertaining to the Falklands War in January 2013. The hope was that this thesis would present the first work on the media during the Falkland conflict with the benefit of unrestricted access to Government documents.

The second factor which affected the direction of enquiry was the literature which existed surrounding the subject. As previously mentioned, the majority of analyses of the role the media played in the war were created in the 1980s. By the 2000s, there had been relatively little added to the field for some time. There was a handful of papers or chapters produced early in the century, most of which took a general view of the conflict between the media and the Government, often focusing on the experiences of the journalists who accompanied the Task Force.⁵⁴ A thorough appraisal of existing work on the media and the Falklands

⁵⁴ S. Carruthers, *The Media at War: Communication and Conflict in the Twentieth Century* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Dodds, 'Contesting War'; Badsey, 'The Falklands Conflict as a Media War'.

demonstrated that what was required was not a study of media-related events in the South Atlantic - or in Britain itself - nor was analysis of the consequences of media policy necessary. What was essential to any revision of the field was an examination of the derivation of the problems experienced by both the Government and the media, and as outlined during the HCDC inquiry by the 'injured' parties. The policy which the Government developed, or to which the Government adhered (and not to which the MoD *specifically* adhered), demanded greater attention.

2b. Research Questions

Necessarily, any work which attempts to tackle such an expansive subject requires specific focus. Thus, this research originated from a number of key research questions (or 'research intentions') developed after an initial reading of the existing literature. Firstly, it was the goal to chart how Government media policy developed *throughout* the crisis – not just at the beginning – and how events at home and in the South Atlantic affected the way in which media policy was adapted by the Government (be it the MoD, the FCO or No.10). Secondly it was the intention to shed light on the way in which the wider Government approached media policy – not just the MoD. Partly because of the HCDC inquiry, and partly because the MoD-commissioned studies immediately after the war, the dominant assessments of the Government tend to focus mostly on the MoD. It was important that this thesis consider more. Thirdly, what drove much of the research behind this thesis, and ultimately became paramount, was a desire to unearth information about those groups which had been mentioned, or alluded to, in studies like *The Fog of War* and those of Adams and Morrison and Tumber, but had not received any sustained attention – the SAPU, the Military Briefing Group, the NRG, the PPG and the IG, for example. Lastly, the content analysis was driven by a need to readdress what had been argued concerning the printed press, and to approach the topic in a quantitative manner. It supplements previous studies and establishes a precedent from which others can work in future studies.

2c. Main Research Focus and Hypotheses

Fundamental to part of this study is the explanation of structures and organisations previously largely undocumented and the way in which the policy adopted by the British Government during the Falklands War developed over the course of the conflict. There are a number of central hypotheses contained in this research (as well as many lesser theories). This thesis argues that the media policy observed by the MoD in relation to the Task Force

journalists was ill-prepared, reactionary, driven by internal MoD motivation and that ultimately, control of policy was devolved to the men on the ground.

This thesis advances that the MoD media policy in Britain, while as reactive as that rolled out to the Task Force journalists, became more effective as the war progressed. The MoD failed to adequately cater for the British media until the middle of May 1982, at which time a number of sensible and potentially successful initiatives were introduced. The NRG and military briefing panel, had they been created earlier, may have had a significant impact on - not only relations between the media and the MoD - but also, by extension, relations between the MoD and wider Government.

This thesis also contends that the machinery developed centrally by the Cabinet Office and No.10 Press Office in the form of the SAPU and Information Group, had the potential to be successful additions to the regular organisation of Government. However, neither had enough authority and was plagued by departmental rivalries. While the media-related initiatives of the MoD ultimately became more successful, those of wider Government became less effective.

Finally, this thesis provides a serious analysis of the printed press in order to substantiate the hypothesis that much of what had been argued about the printed press was generalised and oversimplified – its reliance on Argentine source material, its jingoistic nature, the dominance of reports on armed conflict and its aversion to a diplomatic settlement.

3. Sources and Methodologies

3a. Archival Research

The source material on which this thesis is based is that which one might expect following the opening of the archives in 2013. A vast amount of evidence included originated from those files held at the National Archives at Kew. However, the importance of the media in Government policy is not necessarily reflected by the way in which documents have been filed (or not filed). The files most relevant to the construction of this work were: the Cabinet Office files – relating to the SAPU; the Prime Minister's Office – relating to the Press Office; the MIOs and the IG; the MoD – relating to the MoDPR; the office of the Permanent Under-Secretary; the FCO – relating to the News Department; and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office – relating to the PPG and the SAPU.

There were, however, a number of difficulties which emerged over the course of research. There was a distinct lack of documentary evidence concerning certain areas. The PPG was somewhat of a mystery at Kew. The IG's minutes were dispersed across a number of Cabinet Office files. Defence communications concerning the media were found in FCO, Cabinet Office and MoD files. The litter of documents across department and subject file boundaries meant that the vast majority of archive holdings on the Falklands at Kew had to be accessed.⁵⁵ The department which presented the poorest resources was the MoD. Certainly, the rapid deployment of the Task Force over the first week of the crisis and the *ad hoc* manner in which the remainder of policy was constructed determined a distinct lack of notes originating from MoDPR. There was, for example, a complete absence of documents pertaining to the meetings of editors, the Military Briefing Panel, the NRG or *any* substantial details of the way in which MoDPR was administered.

As a result of the poor crop at the National Archives, the MoD was approached about the possibility of accessing archival documents withheld by the ministry. The withholding of MoD files has attracted significant attention in recent years. In 2013 it was publicised that the MoD was 'unlawfully holding thousands of files that should have been declassified and transferred to the National Archive under the 30-year rule...' ⁵⁶ In early 2014 access to MoD files earmarked for the National Archives, but had not yet been fully reviewed, was granted to the author. Thus, many of the most intricate arguments contained in this thesis (for example, on MoD policy, the NRG, Editors' Meetings and the Military Briefing Panel) are based on material which is not yet publicly accessible – and may not be for quite some time.⁵⁷

In addition to the files at the MoD and Kew, other archived material was utilised in the research of this work. As well as evidence gathered from the Imperial War Museum (IWM) and King's College's Liddell Hart Archives, information collected from the Churchill Archive at Cambridge University was pivotal to the sections of this thesis which contemplate the workings of the Prime Minister's Press Office. Not only are the personal and political papers of Margaret Thatcher stored at the Churchill Archive, but also those

⁵⁵ Only files referenced in the body of this thesis are referenced in the bibliography.

⁵⁶ I. Cobain, 'Ministry of Defence holds 66,000 files in breach of 30-year rule', *The Guardian*, 6 Oct. 2013 <www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/oct/06/ministry-of-defence-files-archive> [Accessed 7 Oct. 2013].

⁵⁷ Files accessed at the MoD: *Falkland Islands – Policy on PR and Release of Information*, DEFE24/2196, *UK and Colonies Public Relations*, DEFE24/2266, *Falkland Islands – Operation Corporate*, DEFE24/2355, *Falklands Crisis – The Media and the Public*, DEFE31/220 and DEFE31/221.

belonging to Bernard Ingham, her Chief Press Secretary (CPS).⁵⁸ Much of the documentation contained in Thatcher's papers has been digitalised and is available via the website of the Thatcher Foundation.⁵⁹

The advantages and disadvantages of documentary and archival research have been noted by many historical practitioners and theorists. The bulk of source material examined and presented by this thesis originates from central archives and the majority of it is from various Government departments.⁶⁰ Assessing this kind of material necessarily has its pitfalls. No historical source should be approached in a way which assumes its veracity. The usual parameters of source material were carefully considered in the construction of this work.⁶¹ In this thesis there were specific matters peculiar to it and thus required particular consideration such as authorship, motive and bias and the type of document and its implications. While most internal Government documents had, at their root, a single author, that author was working within an institutional framework and under a number of more senior figures. Issues of motive and bias also posed precarious difficulties. The atmosphere surrounding the construction of Government policy in 1982 was one of intense competition and infighting between Government departments.⁶² Depending on the recipient, the confidentiality level of the document and the nature of the document, different levels of motivation applied. Finally, a large percentage of documentary evidence observed was the product of various meetings – mostly the *minutes* of meetings – such as the Chiefs of Staff (CoS) meetings, MIOs, Editors' Meetings or IG meetings. The value of meeting minutes, in this thesis, is extensive, since much of the material (from the IG meetings, Editors' Meetings and MIOs) has not been accessed before. However, it is essential to recognise that meetings were (and are) not always *fully* recorded. Minutes at different meetings varied according to the scribe. In some of the key Editors' Meetings, an 'editor' was quoted, but the quote was not attributed to a named individual. In addition, when conflict arose, this was not necessarily logged, yet we understand it to have existed from the statements of witnesses.

⁵⁸ In addition to those of Thatcher and Ingham, the papers of Nott, Julian Amery, Neil Kinnock and Nicholas Ridley are also held at the Churchill Archives.

⁵⁹ A small amount of material from the Ingham and Nott papers is also available via the Thatcher Foundation <www.margarethatthatcher.org/>.

⁶⁰ Commentary on primary source material: J. Black and D. MacRaild, *Studying History* (Palgrave, 2000) pp.87-92.

⁶¹ The limitations of primary sources: B. Ziemann and M. Dobson, *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth and Twentieth Century History* (Routledge, 2009) pp.5-15.

⁶² See Chapter Five.

3b. Government Reports

A complete analysis of the HCDC inquiry into the way the media was handled during the Falklands War is fundamental to any study on the topic. Many works have made use of the minutes of evidence submitted to the committee.⁶³ This thesis, however, presents the most thorough dissection, and extensive use, of the inquiry. Evidence and memoranda from each of the two sizeable volumes of minutes is used throughout to support documentary sources and other testimonies. Other Government inquiries were also employed, specifically the Franks Report - which reported on the culpability of the British Government and its decisions in the approach to the Argentine invasion – and the Study Group on Censorship’s report of 1983.⁶⁴

3c. Interviews

A large percentage of the 1980s’ literature on the media and the Falklands employed interviews as part of the research process. Mercer et al., Morrison and Tumber and Adams’ work all benefited from communication (by telephone or face-to-face) with significant figures.⁶⁵ In the course of research for this thesis, 19 interviews were conducted ‘on-the-record’. Twenty two other interviews, or informal discussions, took place with people who preferred to remain anonymous.⁶⁶ In addition to this, this thesis exploited a number of transcripts (or audio files) of interviews conducted for archive initiatives. The IWM and the Churchill Archives have both led pioneering attempts to memorialise the thoughts of prominent political figures by storing transcripts of interviews for various initiatives like the British Diplomatic Oral History Programme (BDOHP) and the IWM’s Sound Archive.⁶⁷ The British Library also boasts a sound archive which includes collections of the House of Commons staff and Whitehall decision makers, as well as a small but interesting archive of interviews on the Falklands War in the collection, ‘Observing the 1980s’.⁶⁸

⁶³ For example: Mercer et al., Morrison and Tumber, Harris and Adams.

⁶⁴ *The Falklands Islands Review: Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors*, Cmnd.8787. (HMSO, 1983) and the Study Group on Censorship.

⁶⁵ Adams interviewed 16 men. Mercer et al. included evidence from interviews with 21 different sources in their account of the Falklands, some of whom wished to maintain their anonymity. Morrison and Tumber interviewed all the Task Force journalists, as well as representatives of the MoD, journalists in Britain and military personnel.

⁶⁶ All interviewees who agreed to be attributed are listed in the bibliography.

⁶⁷ Churchill Archives, BDOHP <www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/bdohp/> and IWM Sound Archive: <www.iwm.org.uk/collections-research/about/sound/>.

⁶⁸ British Library Oral History, ‘Politics and Government’ <www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/sound/ohist/ohcoll/ohpol/politics.html>.

There is a distinct difference between interviews conducted for archival purposes and those interviews performed for a specific project. The first tends to be a 'life' interview in which the interviewee is asked to reflect on their entire lifespan over a series of meetings.⁶⁹ The second is usually conducted by an individual researcher on a specialised topic.⁷⁰ Oral history, as a subject, is vast. It has been widely emphasised that it is the oldest form of history.⁷¹ The method of oral history gained a renewed currency amongst British historians during the 1970s - with the creation of the British Oral History Society, the journal, *Oral History*, and the Department of Sound Records at the IWM.⁷² Historians have typically been wary of issues relating to oral history. Memory as a historical source has generated intense debate amongst academics.⁷³ A number of disadvantages to the pursuit of the method have been outlined by various critics including, not only questions over the reliability of memory, but the implications of the bias, training and technique of the interviewer, historians' interpretation of memory and the contradictory nature of the testimony of witnesses to the same event.⁷⁴

There are, however, significant advantages to be gained from engaging in oral history. Generally, oral history has been attributed with promoting history from the perspective of those who might not be considered by traditional histories, those who have been referred to as 'small, nameless people'. Necessarily the field in which oral history has perhaps had the most impact is that of social history.⁷⁵ In the case of this thesis, oral testimony was supplied by politicians, civil servants and former members of the Armed Forces – all of which have separate implications for each of these categories of participant.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Work on oral history archives: R. Filippelli, 'Oral History and the Archives', *American Archivist*, 39, 4 (Oct. 1976) pp.479-483.; D. Lance, 'Oral History Archives: Perceptions and Practices', *Oral History*, 8, 2 (Autumn 1980) pp.59-63.; E. Swain, 'Oral History in the Archives: Its Documentary Role in the Twenty-First Century', *American Archivist*, 66, 1 (Summer 2003) pp.139-158.

⁷⁰ For the distinction between 'life' interviews and project interviews: B. Sommer, and M. Quinlan, 'A Guide to Oral History Interviews', *History News*, 55, 3 (Summer 2000) p.2. For a definition of the individual researcher: A. Seldon, and J. Pappworth, *By Word of Mouth: 'Elite' Oral History* (Methuen, 1983) p.11.

⁷¹ See: A. Hoffman, 'Oral History', *History News*, 30, 1 (Jan. 1975) p.21.; P. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford University Press, 1978) p.25.

⁷² For detail on the origins of oral history: T. Charlton, L. E. Myers and R. Sharpless, *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology* (AltaMira Press, 2007); Hoffman, 'Oral History', p.21.; A. Thomson, 'Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History' *The Oral History Review*, 34, 1 (Winter 2007) pp.49-70.

⁷³ For an appraisal of the various debates: Eds. R. Perks and A. Thomson, *The Oral History Reader* (Routledge, 1998).

⁷⁴ For thorough appraisals of oral history: Thompson, Eds. Perks and Thomson and A. Green, 'Oral History' in Green and K. Troup, *The Houses of History: A Critical Reader in Twentieth-Century History and Theory* (Manchester University Press, 1999) pp.230-252.

⁷⁵ Hoffman, 'Oral History', p.21.

⁷⁶ For the implications of interviewing military and political figures: E. M. Coffman, 'Talking about War: Reflections on Doing Oral History and Military History', *The Journal of American History*, 87, 2 (Sep. 2000)

Thorough preparation for the interview process is a prerequisite of a successful dialogue. Many commentators have supplied accounts of how best to conduct an interview – often emphasising common pitfalls.⁷⁷ A particularly useful addition to those studies which advise on the topic is that belonging to Anthony Seldon and Joanna Pappworth. The authors outlined 10 possible limitations of an interviewee, three limitations of the interviewer and nine limitations of the *nature* of interviewing.⁷⁸ In addition to literature explaining the confines of the interviewing process, a smaller number present step-by-step guides to approaching oral history interviews.⁷⁹ Consequentially, interview material presented in this thesis was gathered under strict conditions and with the benefit of full comprehension of the technique. In all aspects this thesis conforms to the ethical regulations of the University of Kent. Details of the approach taken to interviews can be located in Appendix Three.

In many ways it was essential that this research include interview material – if only to reappraise, in the same way as the literature was, the opinions of some of the chief people involved at the time. There exists certain advantages to personal testimony in this thesis. Facts not recorded in documentation pertaining to the time were revealed, allowing for a deeper understanding of relationships between the key figures involved; in some cases information aided the interpretation of existing source material and a number of colourful and interesting anecdotes were communicated. However, it should be stressed that in no way are the hypotheses presented in this thesis *dependant* on the evidence gathered in interviews. Where this work benefitted most from interviews is where evidence was used in *conjunction* with archival material. Each strand of argument stands independent of oral testimony and advanced by documentary evidence.

pp.582-592.; S. Lofgren, 'The Status of Oral History in the Army: Expanding a Tradition', *The Oral History Review*, 30, 2 (Summer 2003) pp.81-97.; B. Harrison, 'Oral History and Recent Political History', *Oral History*, 1, 3 (1972) pp.30-48.; W. Baum, 'The Other Uses of Oral History', *The Oral History Review*, 34, 1 (Spring 2007) pp.13-24.

⁷⁷ K. Anderson and D. Jack, 'Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses', in Eds. Perks and Thomson; R. Grele, 'History and the Languages of History in the Oral History Interview: Who Answers Whose Questions and Why?', in E. McMahan and K. Rogers, *Interactive Oral History Interviewing* (Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994); Rogers, 'Critical Choices in Interviews', *Oral History Review*, 15, 2 (1987) pp.165-184.; V. Yow, 'Do I Like Them Too Much?' Effects of the Oral History Interview on the Interviewer and Vice Versa', *Oral History Review*, 24, 1 (1997) pp.55-79.

⁷⁸ Seldon and Pappworth, pp.17-35.

⁷⁹ Sommer and Quinlan 'A Guide to Oral History Interviews', and Oral History Society <www.ohs.org.uk/ethics.php>.

3d. Falklands' 'Footage'

Bodies of source material which have contributed to the construction of this thesis have been those relating to the product of the media – the Falklands' footage. Despite the majority of evidential material contained in this thesis being of an archival nature, both broadcast and print material is used extensively. Resources relating to broadcast material include the British Universities Film and Video Council (BUFVC), the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and ITN Source (Independent Television News).⁸⁰ Each of the three resources provide an internet database of thousands of television and radio reports, public statements and images relating to the Falklands War.

Print material was accessed from a range of sources. The content analysis contained in this thesis dictated that four newspapers would require intense analysis. Online access to *The Times* and the *Daily Mirror* archives was permitted via University of Kent subscription. Every copy of *The Sun* and *The Daily Telegraph* was analysed at Colindale Newspaper Library. Other publications were also accessed at Colindale. Copies of *The Guardian* and *The Observer* were available on microfilm at the University of Kent. In addition to this, a number of veterans either gave or lent contemporary newspapers to the researcher.⁸¹

There has been contention over the categorisation of newspapers as a 'primary source'.⁸² The accepted rule has been that a newspaper may be considered as primary evidence if it is of the time about which the historian is researching. However, it has been argued that certain newspaper articles published during the period of study should be classified as 'secondary' material. For example, a report penned by a journalist in 1982, but based on the reports of other journalists, or other primary material, might be considered a 'secondary source'.⁸³ Since the area under investigation in this thesis is the media itself (rather than purely the subject of a newspaper story), newspapers produced in 1982 are all considered 'primary' sources. The complexity of a newspaper as a source, however, should not be

⁸⁰ BUFVC < www.bufvc.ac.uk/>, JISC Media Hub < www.jiscmediahub.ac.uk/> and ITN Source < www.itnsource.com/en/>.

⁸¹ Each article or broadcast referenced *directly* is included in the bibliography.

⁸² The history of the newspaper and its study can be located in: Eds. G. Boyce, J. Curran and P. Wingate, *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (Constable, 1978); J. Curran and J. Seaton, *Power without Responsibility: The Press, Broadcasting and New Media in Britain* (Routledge, 2003); S. Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain: The Twentieth Century, VII* (Hamish Hamilton, 1984); D. Linton, *The Twentieth Century Newspaper Press in Britain: An Annotated Bibliography* (Mansell, 1994); J. Tunstall, *Newspaper Power: The New National Press in Britain* (Clarendon Press, 1996); M. Walker, *Powers of the Press: The World's Great Newspapers* (Quartet Books, 1982).

⁸³ This argument is advanced in: Jordanova, p.95., J. Huston, 'Classifying "Sources" for Clarity in Teaching', *The History Teacher*, 22, 2 (Feb., 1989) p.141.; R. McGuinness, 'How to Read a Newspaper', *Revue de Musicologie*, 84, 2 (1998) p.291.; S. Vella, 'Newspapers', in Eds. Dobson and Ziemann, p.90.

understated. Unlike most other ‘cultural products’ of the time – such as letters, diaries or memoirs, newspaper articles exist as a product of more than one author. In fact, behind an edition of a newspaper ‘lies a vast, complex machinery of literary production and layered social networks, for which no single individual is wholly responsible...’⁸⁴ Consequentially, assessment of newspaper articles should take into account the author (and the usual issues of bias and motive), editors, *how* the article is written, which information is *presented* and which is *absent*, the political affiliations of the newspaper, the readership and circulation, and *where* any given article appeared in the newspaper’s format.

3d (i). Falklands’ Footage: Content Analysis

Chapter Six of this thesis features a content analysis of the printed press during the Falklands War. Contained in that chapter is extensive discussion of the way in which the study was formulated, developed and conducted. Content analysis has evoked much disagreement amongst the academic community. Perhaps the most straightforward of requirements – definition – is the most difficult to agree on precisely. In 1954, Bernard Berelson wrote that: ‘Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication’.⁸⁵ As it was increasingly assumed that content analysis could be applied to subjects *other* than those concerning communication, that definition was simplified in 1969: ‘Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages’.⁸⁶ Since the 1960s, the art of content analysis has developed significantly. In 1980, Klaus Krippendorff suggested an even more streamlined definition which would take into account that content analysis as a tool was being extended to more than just text – it was ‘a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context’.⁸⁷ For the purpose of this thesis and the ensuing discussion, the following definition of the technique is offered: content analysis is a research method by which quantitative (though not necessarily exclusively quantitative) methods can be objectively applied to produce results, most commonly in numerical terms.

Different forms of communication have typically been the subject of content analysis studies. Historically, communications have been identified specifically with the field of journalism. Perhaps the first significant study of this type was conducted by John Gilmer

⁸⁴ Vella, ‘Newspapers’, p.193.

⁸⁵ B. Berelson, *Content Analysis in Communications Research* (Hafner, 1954) p.489.

⁸⁶ O. Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Addison-Wesley, 1969) p.14.

⁸⁷ K. Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology* (Thousand Oaks, 1980) p.21.

Speed in 1893. Speed considered the reading matter in New York newspapers between 1881 and 1893, using theme classifications such as: editorials, religious stories, scientific stories, and political, literary, gossip and scandal-related stories. He showed how gossip, sports and scandal columns were being allotted an increasing percentage of newspaper space.⁸⁸ Over the course of the 20th Century, the application of studies which contained this form of analysis greatly increased.⁸⁹ The development of computers and the improvement of information accessibility via the internet have added impetus to the use of content analysis.

One important feature of the literature of the Falklands conflict has been the use of newspaper product to supplement various arguments. The treatment of the press in this literature has been overwhelmingly generalised. The dominant benefit of a study of this kind is that it allows one to consider large amounts of information *on the whole*, concisely and, for the most part, accurately. Jason Toynbee and Marie Gillespie wrote that ‘the most immediate benefit of quantitative methods such as content analysis is that they offer greater potential to *generalise* than do qualitative ones.’⁹⁰ The employment of such an analysis in this thesis gives structure to what has previously been unstructured data.

4. Conclusion

This thesis presents findings which are the first of their kind. It is based on information never before accessed. It contributes the most thorough account, so far, of the media policy which the British Government developed and adhered to during the Falklands War. The existing body of work on the media’s role during the crisis is in need of revision. The ‘orthodox’ approach to the subject has left it looking somewhat stale and stuck in the decade in which the events played out. This thesis is not written as a history of the media, nor as a history of the media during times of war. It is a hybrid of different histories. At its heart is a form of political history in that it deals with the upper echelons of British Government and the way in which its policy was constructed. It dips its toe in the pool of military history in that it considers policy adapted and developed by men on the ground, and traces events throughout a significant war in British history. It flirts with cultural history in that part of it concerns itself exclusively with the cultural product of the contemporary society. It is quantitative and qualitative history. And it’s not just history. It

⁸⁸ G. Speed, ‘Do Newspapers now Give the News?’ *The Forum* (Aug. 1893) p.707.

⁸⁹ According to Holsti, p.20., during the first two decades of the 1900s, 2.5 content analyses appeared, on average, each year. Over the course of the next three decades, 13.3, 22.8 and 43.3 studies appeared each decade respectively.

⁹⁰ Eds. M. Gillespie and J. Toynbee, *Analysing Media Texts* (Open University Press, 2006) p.120.

is informed by media studies, journalism studies and communications studies. Utilising this hybrid of histories allows this research to fully present the topic at hand – a rounded and thorough assessment of media policy.

CHAPTER TWO

Initial Policy

Without exception, every academic of the Falklands War who has considered the role of the media has written on Government ‘policy’ of some kind. As Morrison and Tumber pointed out in 1988, ‘the two themes of censorship and information policy attracted more debate and more complaint than any other aspect of the coverage of the Falklands campaign’.¹ Discussion of Government policy demands that one define the term. The dictionary states that ‘policy’ means: ‘A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organisation or individual’.² Here, the word ‘policy’ is given to mean just that: the line of action proposed by the Government, most specifically the MoD (more narrowly MoDPR), to facilitate the smooth running of public relations both in Britain and in the South Atlantic. Whilst historians have pointed to the effect of the Government’s strategy for handling the media, they have rarely considered the formation and management of that policy. The most thorough work to date is one of the MoD-commissioned pieces, *The Fog of War*.³ The authors pay by far the greatest attention to the organisation of MoD and the running of MoDPR than any other media-centred work. Given the co-operation they were afforded by the MoD, it is easy to understand why theirs might be considered the definitive work. However, what the authors were not able to contribute was a complete break-down of media policy *throughout* the war. Policy - adapted as the conflict progressed - was sculpted and modified in response to the changing situation in the South Atlantic. Consequentially, the policy in place on 14 June, at the end of the war, was a very different creature to that which was born at its beginning. Foster contributed to the limited debate on information *policy* in 1992.⁴ While Foster’s work followed the chronological events of the Falklands War, specifically considering the plight of the Task Force journalists, his work on the actual composition and maintenance of policy was somewhat superficial compared to that which came before.

This chapter will shed light on the various stages of policy construction, following the MoD’s efforts to create a media strategy which might satisfy the Government, the media

¹ Morrison and Tumber, p.189.

² Oxford Dictionary, <www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/policy> [Accessed 14 Aug. 2014].

³ Mercer et al.

⁴ Foster, ‘The Falklands War’.

itself, and the public. What this, and subsequent chapters, offers is in-depth consideration of what in other histories has often been bypassed: PR policy which was put into effect in the first week of April 1982. It tenders a complete assessment of the formulation of policy, as well as considering why formulation of policy might not have been effective. In addition to this, where this chapter covers established arguments, it presents new thoughts, insights and contentions supported by new archival material. This chapter acts as a foundation for subsequent chapters which deal with the implementation of policy both with the Task Force and in Britain, as well as the co-ordination of policy and the actual reporting of the war.

1. The Machinery of MoDPR

The PR department at the MoD was an amalgamation of civilian and military staff. The history of the department was discussed by Alan Hooper of the Royal Marines in his study on the military and the media.⁵ For further information, Appendix Five provides a history of MoDPR and of its relations with the media before the Falklands War.

This section presents the argument that the apparatus in place for dealing with the media and for formulating an adequate PR policy was faulty, the department was ill-prepared and consequentially, the subsequent PR policy was vague, weak and driven by non-essential factors. It identifies four major hindrances to the efficient formulation of plans. These hindrances determined not only who would make PR policy, but how it would be shaped. Firstly, MoDPR was caught by surprise and without any contingency plan. Secondly, it had no permanent head. Thirdly, those who were ill-qualified for the task of running media policy assumed control of ministry public relations – those who were more than capable of driving a coherent and long-term policy were forced to take a back seat. Lastly, and most crucially, the ministry did not understand the needs of the media.

1a. The 1977 Plan

During the HCDC's hearing it was claimed that a plan did exist within the MoD, but that the press office had neglected to consult it. This was very serious criticism. Worse than having no plan at all, is having one and not bothering to put it into action. In December 1977 a plan entitled 'Public Relations Planning for Emergency Operations' was drafted. Its purpose was to 'give guidance on the handling of Public Relations when it is anticipated that units of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, the Army or the Royal Air Force may be

⁵ A. Hooper, *The Military and the Media* (Dartmouth, 1982) pp.197-205.

brought to higher states of readiness and deployed overseas to meet situations of crisis and increased tension'.⁶ It gave a brief outline of the steps to be taken concerning the media in the event that any service was involved in urgent overseas' activity. The paper included a checklist of steps to be taken as 'initial action'. It proceeded to give very general guidance on issues like communication, transporting the media and how to deal with press interest at airfields and ports. The plan was drawn up by a former Director of Public Relations (Army) (DPR(A)), General Martin Farndale. The Acting Chief of Public Relations (ACPR), Ian McDonald, has been heavily criticised for having apparently ignored plans which were in place should an emergency of this nature arise, and for having taken but five minutes to 'think it out'. Kevin Foster viewed that 'in the confusion the most recent plan from 1977 was entirely forgotten'.⁷ Adams judged 'that so short a time was allowed to devise a policy illustrates better than any argument the MoD's initial failure to grasp the importance of their arrangements for disseminating information about the conflict'.⁸

The Chief of Public Relations (CPR), Neville Taylor, who considered the document after the war, assessed that '...the procedures that were spelt out in the draft document were more relevant, in my view, to a land situation in Europe than they were to a maritime situation or amphibious situation'.⁹ The HCDC ruled rather generously that 'no contingency plans could have coped altogether smoothly with the accreditation arrangements for the conflict...'.¹⁰ There were, however, two reports separate to that of 1977, which might have been of value to MoDPR when formulating policy. In January 1982 DPR(A), Brigadier Ramsbotham, persuaded McDonald that a study was required to deal with 'an emergency of this kind'. The ACPR requested that DPR(A) should institute a study immediately. Ramsbotham went on to produce a first draft.¹¹ In addition, in May 1981, the CoS had produced a paper on the 'administration of public relations in times and tension and war'. The CPR was asked to report on the media's requirement of military communications in relevant situations. By the time the crisis broke, MoDPR was still to report to the Chiefs of Staff. The fact that there were moves made throughout the year, prior to the invasion of the Falklands, to mould a media policy in case of a similar conflict is adequate indication that, contrary to Sir Frank's view that the war was not expected, the MoD at large had requested media plans for exactly that: war.

⁶ MoD, *Public Relations Planning for Emergency Operations*, 1977, HCDC, v.ii, p.275.

⁷ Foster, 'The Falklands War', p.155.

⁸ Adams, pp.5-6.

⁹ N. Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.253, q.925.

¹⁰ HCDC, v.i, p.xxxvii, q.84.

¹¹ I. McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.256, q.945.

1b. Ian McDonald

Ian McDonald had become ACPR in January 1982. He had applied for the permanent position but was rejected shortly after his interview. The Civil Service Department gave an update on the quest to find a suitable candidate: ‘Mr McDonnell [sic], did well but the difficulty about appointing him is that he is an administrator and his appointment would upset the Information Officer Class’.¹² Five months before the war then, McDonald was identified as unsuitable because of his background in administration. McDonald was a career civil servant. He had been Assistant Secretary in Charge of the Ministry’s Pay and Recruitment Section until 1979 when he moved to MoDPR. Until then, McDonald had very little by way of media experience. He spoke of his past exploits with the Press: ‘I have had some dealings with them in the context of previous jobs not as a press officer or controlling the press but responding to inquiries’.¹³ His position was only tenable until the newly appointed CPR, Neville Taylor, could transfer from his current employment as Chief Information Officer at the Department of Health and Social Security. As a former MoD Chief Press Officer and Deputy Director of PR for the Navy, Taylor undeniably was the better fit for MoDPR. Taylor’s transfer was intended for 16 June 1982.

Many have pointed to McDonald’s lack of media-related knowledge and identified his inexperience as a reason poor policy choices were made in April 1982. The HCDC found that ‘whatever the basic judgement, the evidence which we have received indicates overwhelmingly that the lack of an experienced professional public relations officer at the head of the Ministry of Defence PR organisation was widely felt in the Ministry’s response to the need to make arrangements for press coverage of the Falklands campaign’.¹⁴ The ministry itself submitted to the Committee that ‘the Ministry of Defence agrees that the vacancy in the post of Chief of Public Relations at the time the crisis began inhibited the PR organisation’s ability to make arrangements for the media coverage of the campaign’.¹⁵

At the time it was argued that the MoD missed a trick when it failed, on the morning of 2 April, to call the man who was scheduled to take over the Press Department two months later - the professional who could conduct and organise the media in a way in which

¹² M. Sloman, 10 Dec., the National Archives, Kew, *Proposed Head of the Information Officer Group*, BA19/672 f.1.

N.B. Hereafter the National Archives are noted as ‘TNA’.

¹³ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.398, q.1764.

¹⁴ HCDC, v.i, p.xxii, q.46.

¹⁵ Nott, *The Handling of Press and Public Information during the Falklands Conflict: Observations presented by Secretary of State for Defence, House of Commons Papers 17-I-II 1982-83* (HMSO, 1983) p.4, q.9.

McDonald could only hope to aspire. Bernard Ingham, this Prime Minister's Chief Press Secretary for example, imagined that 'If he [Taylor] had been in the post when the Falklands invasion occurred the British Government would have had an experienced professional at the helm'.¹⁶ In fact, when McDonald learnt of the invasion he closed the door of his office in attempt to 'think it out for five minutes'.¹⁷ This meant that the bulk of media policy would be shaped as and when issues arose and needed to be dealt with – preparations would have to be devised haphazardly. Undoubtedly then, McDonald's lack of experience affected the successful implementation of PR policy.

1. Control of MoDPR

McDonald was responsible to the MoD's Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Frank Cooper. Cooper had established a serious base of power within the MoD, having been a civil servant since 1948 and having been associated with high-profile issues like the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland, the Irish Republican Army, sovereignty disputes, and a plethora of Defence Reviews. Cooper had progressively risen through the ranks of the MoD. He was considered, and still is, one of Britain's most successful and effectual civil servants. However, Cooper was even less qualified to run media policy than his ACPR. Hudson and Stanier contended in 1997 that when the crisis erupted the CoS and the military took over the running of general policy and consequently, 'suddenly shorn of its erstwhile strength, the Civil Service cast about for what was left' – control of information.¹⁸ Frank Cooper took more than an interest in information and PR policy - he took firm control from the start of the crisis.

Cooper oversaw the development of policy as early as the first weekend of April. He acted as a go-between for a number of organisations regarding media accreditation to the Fleet. The place of Reuters' correspondent, Leslie Dowd, with the Task Force was attributed to the authority of Cooper.¹⁹ Dodds wrote that '...it was clear that Sir Frank Cooper of the Ministry of Defence was instrumental in drawing on-the-spot guidelines for the media...'²⁰ Cooper was wary of the media. As a result, one of the first directives he issued to MoDPR was one banning PR staff from communicating directly with the press in any way.²¹ All subsequent press releases would be made by ACPR. Cooper's position was highlighted

¹⁶ Ingham, p.289.

¹⁷ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.258, q.955.

¹⁸ Hudson and Stanier, p.178.

¹⁹ Harris, p.24.

²⁰ Dodds, 'Contesting War', p.224.

²¹ This directive cannot be located in the National Archives, nor at the MoD.

after the war by Secretary of State for Defence, John Nott, who claimed that neither he, nor Cooper, needed to be briefed for the HCDC as they were the two people ‘who were actually handling this matter... There is nobody else in the Ministry of Defence who knows more about it than we do, so there is nothing really on which to brief us’.²² A letter from Cabinet Secretary, Robert Armstrong later clarified that Cooper himself was really ‘in the thick of the matter...’²³

Cooper’s control of policy was consolidated when he began to host meetings with the editors of media organisations.²⁴ The meetings of the Overseas Defence Committee (South Atlantic) (OD(SA)), or rather, ‘the War Cabinet’, certainly utilized Sir Frank’s new position as chief ‘editor-liaison’. The OD(SA) had been established on 7 April following advice from both Cooper and former Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan.²⁵ Cooper attended several meetings of the OD(SA).²⁶ In addition, he received instructions directly from the group. For example, on 10 May issues concerning media speculation were discussed. It was agreed that problems should be urgently addressed by Cooper ‘at one of his regular meetings with Editors...’²⁷ Throughout the conflict, various documents served to highlight Cooper’s authority over the running of public relations policy. On 7 May Cooper wrote to Sir Douglas Wass at the Treasury demanding that the Secretary of State, Geoffrey Howe, consider organising briefings for British journalists, perhaps from the Bank of England, about the state of the Argentine economy.²⁸ Cooper worked internally within the MoD to adapt PR policy, often ordering meetings between MoDPR staff.²⁹ When the News Release Group was established it was under orders from Cooper.³⁰ The group would also be directly responsible to him.³¹

Alan Protheroe, the Assistant Director-General of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), wrote in 1982 that ‘the experts, military and civilian, in the government information services have been discounted and virtually eliminated from full and proper

²² Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.443, q.1874.

²³ R. Armstrong to Thatcher, 8 Aug., TNA, *Broadcasting. BBC TV programme about handling of information by the Ministry of Defence and media during the Falklands crisis*, PREM19/663 f.1.

²⁴ See Chapter Five.

²⁵ Hennessy, ‘‘War Cabinetry’’: The Political Direction of the Falklands Conflict’, in Eds. Havers and Grove.; Notes on conversation with Macmillan, 6 Apr., C.A., *Papers on the Falklands collected by Margaret Thatcher, 6-10 April 1982*, THCR1/20/3/5 f.10.

²⁶ On 25 April, 2, 6, 16 and 30 May.

²⁷ OD(SA), 10 May, TNA, *Defence and Overseas Policy Committee*, CAB148/211 f.99.

²⁸ Cooper to D. Wass, 7 May, MoD, DEFE24/266 f.E1.

²⁹ Taylor to Cooper, 10 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/6.

³⁰ Cooper to AUS (D Staff), 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E40.

³¹ See Chapter Four.

participation by the administrative civil servants'.³² What is clear is that Cooper had an unprecedented amount of control over the formation and implementation of PR policy during the Falklands War. Whether, as *The Sunday Times* Insight Team argued, the reason for Cooper's seizing control was as a result of his lack of power over any other sphere, the fact remains that he assumed responsibility of MoDPR to the detriment of those who usually worked within the department.³³

One of the most significant effects of Cooper's assumption of power over MoDPR was that the department's employees – the men who were familiar with defence correspondents, the men who were practiced in dealing with the media - their demands and needs - were denied the opportunity to do their jobs. It is possible to distinguish three levels of authority within MoDPR: senior civil servants – Frank Cooper, Ian McDonald and the upper echelons of the career civil service; the military PR machine – the Services' Directors of Public Relations (DPRs) and their subordinates; and the Press Officers which made up the majority of MoDPR, who manned the desks and answered the telephones. There was a DPR for each of the Services: DPR(A), Brigadier Ramsbotham, DPR for the Navy (DPR(N)), Captain Sutherland and DPR for the Royal Air Force (DPR(RAF)), Air Commodore Miller.

Commentators have typically argued that the real casualties were the DPRs.³⁴ Yet the civilian PROs also experienced severe restrictions on their usual occupation for the duration of the war. The chief limit on the staff of MoDPR was the lack of information they would be given. Harris accused McDonald, in his 1983 work, of concentrating power in his own hands by not only forbidding his staff to speak to the Press, but by creating a system by which only he had access to information on Task Force operations: he personally drafted the Ministry's public statements and, largely, it was he who briefed the media.³⁵ ITN considered that 'the impression was that the DPRs were not privy to the fuller background enjoyed by the Deputy Chief Press Officer who had been briefed by the Permanent Under-Secretary'.³⁶ This, however, had an adverse effect on MoDPR since the credibility of the office was called into question when it became apparent to journalists that even MoDPR were being kept in the dark.

³² A. Protheroe, *The Listener*, 3 Jun.

³³ Eds. Eddy et al., p.210.

³⁴ For example: Morrison and Tumber, p.194.; Harris, p.106.; Mercer et al., pp.65-79.; Hooper, p.159.

³⁵ Harris, p.105.

³⁶ ITV memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.70, q.c.

Although the DPRs and PROs were in the same boat, suffering the same restrictions at the start of the conflict, they were, towards the end of May, permitted access to the Defence Situation Centre – the hub of all operational information.³⁷ For the PROs, the situation remained unproductive – even humiliating. Regional Portsmouth and Sunderland newspapers said that ‘some MoD staff, known to our man personally, were privately embarrassed by the negative instructions they had been given when handling press inquiries. Several said, “We understand your problems and only wish we could be more helpful” ’.³⁸

There was heavy tension within MoDPR. The media unquestionably picked up on it during the conflict. Independent Television (ITV) claimed that ‘tensions built up between the civil servants who were controlling the information, the military PR men, who thought they should be controlling it, and the poor ‘desk officers’ who knew little, said little, and received flak from the press corps’.³⁹ David Nicholas, Editor for ITN, said ‘there were times when it seemed to us that one side did not know what the other side was doing. We were quite conscious of tensions there’.⁴⁰ Thus, the regular equipment of MoDPR was neglected: Press Officers *and* DPRs found their hands tied and their ability to meet the needs of the media was seriously diminished.

1d. Understanding the Media

This section proposes that MoDPR did not appreciate the needs of the media, and that lack of understanding meant that policy was ill considered. Of course, Britain had not witnessed foreign military action on such a scale since the Suez Crisis of 1956. Consequentially, MoDPR had little experience of dealing with the media during times of crisis. Various historians have pointed out that the MoD did not fully appreciate the role the media might play in a prolonged conflict. *The Official History* evaluated ‘...that the Government effort was basically unprofessional, unsympathetic to the demands of deadlines and the appetite for hard information to fill the pages and the airtime they were ready to devote to such unusual and historic events’.⁴¹ Yet no work has paid any particular attention to the accusations of journalists, following the war, that MoDPR simply did not understand the needs of the media. In an interview with Ingham and McDonald in 1982, a radio presenter judged that ‘one of the major complaints by pressmen during the crisis was the feeling that

³⁷ T. Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.342, q.1387.

³⁸ Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.139.

³⁹ ITV memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.70, q.C.

⁴⁰ D. Nicholas, HCDC, v.ii, p.82, q.258.

⁴¹ Freedman, v.ii, p.406.

they were dealing with Ministry people that didn't really understand the media'.⁴² Perhaps the most stunning example of the MoD's failure to appreciate the needs of the media can be seen in the process of accreditation to the Task Force. The MoD's failure to organise accreditation of correspondents to the Task Force fairly and efficiently was the fundamental cause of many problems which plagued the Task Force later.

The accreditation process has been covered in detail in a range of works on the period, therefore this thesis merely touches on the main events.⁴³ Most of those who have written on the topic have been in agreement that the accreditation process was unclear and chaotic. The HCDC found that 'in many respects, the accreditation arrangements made for the Falklands conflict were haphazard to the point of being farcical'.⁴⁴ The clamber amongst the media to secure a representative onboard one of the ships bound for the South Atlantic, and its frustrations, has been well-documented.⁴⁵

Eventually, by 9 April, 29 places had been reserved for the media aboard the Fleet. In its provision for journalists, it was clear that not only did MoDPR not understand the needs of a democratic media, but they also did not appreciate media structures, or the way information was actually reported. During the accreditation period MoDPR exposed their lack of knowledge about the media when they suggested to *The Standard*, for example, that they did not need a correspondent with the Task Force because the *Daily Express* would represent *The Standard* and the *Star*, 'as you are the same group'.⁴⁶ This impression was born from the fact the newspapers were owned by the same corporation. This attitude betrayed a complete misunderstanding of the newspaper industry – the publications had different staff, different approaches to the news and certainly different perspectives. Further to this, there was a complete lack of comprehension as to the role of the regional press in the UK. The only regional titles to send representatives to the Falklands were the *Glasgow Herald* and the *Wolverhampton Express and Star* (the latter was replaced for medical reasons at Ascension Island by a delegate from the *Yorkshire Post*). Originally, the *Glasgow Herald* was told by MoDPR that 'the PA [Press Association] will cover for all

⁴² Ingham and McDonald, 'Government Split on Falklands Media Coverage', *IRN* (Unknown date, 1982) <www.bufovc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/002330005902>.

⁴³ See Morrison and Tumber pp.2-6.; Harris, pp.17-18.; Dodds, 'Contesting War', p.223.

⁴⁴ HCDC, v.i, p.xxxvi.

⁴⁵ See, for example: Fox, p.2-3.; Harris, pp.17-24.; Hastings, p.269-275.; Morrison and Tumber, pp.2-19.; Nicholson, p.211-215.

⁴⁶ *The Standard* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.100.

you regional people'.⁴⁷ This demonstrated the MoD's misunderstanding of the regional press.

Poor facilities and a lack of understanding and co-operation were not only reserved for British journalists. MoDPR did not permit foreign journalists to travel with the Task Force, despite many desperate representations to the Press Office. The decision had considerable benefits, but some serious drawbacks. By limiting journalists to those of British origin, the MoD ensured the war would be reported with a pro-British slant. In a conversation with Hudson and Stanier, Margaret Thatcher told the authors: 'We certainly didn't want any foreigners reporting what we were doing down there!'⁴⁸ Not only did the decision ensure pro-British reporting of the war, it also made censorship of the journalists an easier task to administer.⁴⁹ In a summary of the criticisms levelled at the Ministry, it was noted that 'MOD apparently unaware of the needs and importance of the media in a free democratic society; MOD lacked will to overcome the problems and difficulties experienced by media'.⁵⁰

This thesis contends that MoDPR, at the beginning of the war, lacked the suitable apparatus to work proficiently, which prohibited an efficient formulation of policy. It was the unhappy coincidence of time which dictated that when the conflict broke there was no permanent head at the helm of the department. The fact that there was no experienced professional to take charge meant that policy was thrashed out at the beginning of the conflict, then adapted haphazardly as the crisis progressed. The situation was made more severe by the fact that the PUS - without a specific role to fulfil in the ministry whilst the CoS handled military aspects of the campaign - assumed control of information policy. The senior Civil Service echelons of the PR Department and the PUS lacked experience and stamped their amateurish seal on the early policy of the MoD. The situation was aggravated by the gagging of Press Officers and the restrictions placed on both the officers and the DPRs. A more experienced department might have recognised the need for representation of the regional press, or the necessity of briefing and informing the international media, yet both requirements were inadequately dealt with by the MoD, indicating a considerable lack of understanding. A sufficient starting point for a PR policy

⁴⁷ I. Bruce cited in Morrison and Tumber, p.17.

⁴⁸ Hudson and Stanier, p.170.

⁴⁹ There was a restriction of the number of journalists who could be accommodated with the Fleet – the failure was to have no foreign representation. For debates concerning the number of journalists: Freedman, v.ii, p.35.; Harris, p.17.

⁵⁰ Information for CPR, 26 Aug., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.E42.6.

for the Falklands might have been a contingency plan for such a crisis. The lack of such a plan (or access to it) determined that policy had to be constructed on the spot, in reaction to events. PR policy, as devised by MoDPR, suffered from a serious inadequacy. The equipment with which policy might be satisfactorily constructed was deficient.

2. Initial Policy

This section contemplates the initial policy put into place by MoDPR and argues that its main failing was that it was one-dimensional. It aims to supplement those works which touch only lightly on media policy, by examining initial policy in detail – how it was formulated and what it was. Having established that the tools and machinery necessary to produce a successful media policy were not in place at the MoD in April 1982, evaluation of the policy which MoDPR did develop is obligatory. There was one dimension to policy during the first week of the conflict; journalists should be sent with the Task Force. Whilst the co-ordination of the procedure to send journalists with the Task Force was critical, the lack of consideration for how the MoD might handle relations with the media in Britain whilst the Task Force sailed demonstrated the MoD's inability to grasp the potential of both the crisis and the British media.

The poor consideration of PR policy at the start of the Falklands campaign, it has been argued, cemented the difficulties which would later arise. Hastings and Jenkins wrote, in their 'instant history' of the war, that 'most of the disagreements which followed between the Ministry of Defence and the media both at sea and at home were the product of the lack of a considered policy or plan for the reporting of a British war'.⁵¹ There were two aspects of policy concerning the Task Force journalists which required the MoD's immediate attention. Communications with the Fleet would have to be explored in order to enable the transmission of journalists' copy or broadcasts, and a form of censorship would have to be implemented in order to ensure no operational details were conveyed.

The British Government had two significant factors working in its favour when the Fleet set sail: the MoD had complete control of the warzone; and only British correspondents would be travelling with the Task Force. The Falkland Islands are over 8,000 miles from Britain. For access to the islands, correspondents were completely at the mercy of the MoD. It might have been possible for the media to try to reach the Falklands

⁵¹ Hastings and Jenkins, p.417.

independently, but when Britain announced the Maritime Exclusion Zone (MEZ) around the Falklands on 7 April, it served to deter any real efforts to reach the Falklands. The only non-British reporters to set foot on the islands during the conflict were the Argentine media representatives their Forces had brought with them to report on the successful ‘emancipation’ of the isles. ITV’s *News at Ten* even reported during the conflict that ‘In the same way that Britain has refused to allow foreign journalists to travel with the British Fleet, only Argentine correspondents are on the Falklands’ (see Figure 2.1).⁵²



Figure 2.1: *Still of an Argentine reporter on the Falklands*⁵³

2a. Communication

Robert Fox, correspondent on the Falklands for BBC Radio, said that the MoD were lucky in that they had the three ingredients to manage the media in a campaign: ‘accreditation, access and outlet control’.⁵⁴ Control of the outlet by which journalists’ material would be transmitted was addressed from two angles: censorship of copy, and communication of that copy. The first issue addressed was how the journalists were to communicate with their organisations at home. The literature on the Falklands and the media is saturated with accounts of the communications’ facilities onboard vessels and the difficulties the journalists faced in getting their material back to the UK. This thesis need not dwell on the issue save to outline the key issues which arose.⁵⁵ Pressmen were able to file their copy by signal. While the signals were graded ‘priority’ (lower than a ‘flash’ signal, but above ‘routine’), signals had to be typed by the ships’ Signal Officers. Journalists’ copy was, in addition, constantly competing with military signals which

⁵² ‘Falklands: Media Coverage’, ITV, *News at Ten*, 13 May <www.jiscmediahub.ac.uk/record/display/039-00010218>.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Fox, Interview, 16 Feb. 1992, IWM, f.12427.

⁵⁵ Works which detail the difficulties of communications: Mercer et al., pp.143-155.; S. Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’, p.46., p.223.; Dodds, ‘Contesting War’, p.218.; Freedman, v.ii, p.37.; T. Royle, *War Report: The War Correspondent’s View of Battle from the Crimea to the Falklands* (Mainstream, 1987).

needed to be sent. Communications were poor for the military also. On 20 May CINCFLEET sent a signal to the main Task Group informing them that:

1. ...THERE ARE NOW ONE THOUSAND PRIORITY AND ROUTINE SIGNALS AWAITING TRANSMISSION ON THE SHIP BROADCASTS AT WHITEHALL COMMCEN
2. IN GENERAL TERMS FLASH AND IMMEDIATE TRAFFIC IS GETTING ON TO THE WHITEHALL BROADCASTS BUT PRIORITY AND ROUTINE TRAFFIC AT A STANDSTILL AND BUILDING UP FAST
3. IT IS CLEARLY IN THE INTERESTS OF OP CORPORATE TO KEEP ALL SIGNAL TRAFFIC TO A MINIMUM
4. SHIPS PASS TO EMBARKED FORCES.⁵⁶

Radio reporters were reliant on a system of maritime telecommunications satellites (MARISAT), which was able to transmit voice reports and went directly to the broadcasting organisation to which the reporter belonged in parallel with the MoD. Not every ship had a MARISAT telephone installed. It was an insecure system – one Navy signals expert said that ‘anybody with a satellite dish can listen to what is going to and from on the system. You just point the disc towards the satellite and you can listen in’.⁵⁷ Because MARISAT was not secure, most of the Navy vessels did not have access to it – only auxiliary vessels did. Given, however, that the journalists were onboard naval vessels the majority of the time, they often had to hitch lifts and rely on the good will of pilots to transport them – or a recording of them - to an appropriate vessel. Television reporters were forced to file voice reports also, since the facility for transmitting images was not available. For radio and print journalists the MoD had a clear-cut option as to how the journalists might transmit their copy. Their policy, in this respect, was dictated for them. There was no way to improve communications for those media, since the vessels had left Britain and there was no opportunity to, for instance, fit the aircraft carriers with MARISAT.

There were efforts, particularly in the first week of April, to provide facilities to transmit television images. McDonald met with the Editors of ITN and BBC TV News on 3 April. It was at this meeting that it was decided that each broadcasting company might send one reporter each, both of whom would be served by a shared cameraman and sound recordist. An ITN engineer would be permitted to travel with HMS *Hermes* in order to test the Shipborne Communications Terminal (SCOT) system’s suitability. At a further meeting on 8 April McDonald agreed that two television engineers might be permitted access to the operational satellite earth station at RAF base, Oakhanger. On 14 May a technical conference

⁵⁶ CINCFLEET to CTG317.0, CTG317.8, MODUK, COMMCEN WHITEHALL, SHIPS, 20 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E56.

⁵⁷ Mercer et al., p.146.

was held at which ITN and BBC were present under the chairmanship of Commander Peter Longhurst with the staff of Royal Signals and Radar Establishment, Defford.⁵⁸ When it became clear that the SCOT system would only relay black and white images at the expense of all military traffic for a duration of 20 minutes or more, ITN ordered their engineer onboard *Hermes* home.

One issue which has provoked disagreement amongst the academic community is whether the obstacles which prevented the successful transmission of television pictures were a result of genuine logistical problems or by MoDPR's reluctance to deliver the facilities which would have enabled moving images to be transmitted back from the Fleet. Susan Carruthers proposed that the circumstance the journalists found themselves in was 'suggestive of at least as good a measure of cock-up as conspiracy on the military's part'.⁵⁹ Foster, on the other hand, argued that the MoD's information policy during the Falklands was 'fostered in part by the military and sanctioned by the government, was a policy of propaganda', and thus an intentionally obtrusive one.⁶⁰ Stephen Badsey believes that the underlying problem was 'a lack of political will'.⁶¹

Television images proved to be the most contentious aspect of communication from the Task Force. For the first 52 days of the 74 day conflict, no images of the war were transmitted. By the time victory was sealed, only three batches of film had reached London.⁶² Of all MoD input in communications policy in the first week of the war, the MoD put the most effort into securing facilities for TV images. The other way in which the MoD acted in order to secure a lasting policy was to invent a system of censorship which would apply to material being communicated back from the Fleet. Prior to the accreditation of Task Force journalists, there was no arrangement for, or agreement to, censorship. Only television crews had been subject to any prior agreement. They would have to pool their material as a condition of their authorisation to travel.

2b. Censorship

There was no coherent policy concerning censorship which endured the *length* of the conflict. MoD's initial policy included some guidelines on how best to manage the media delegation aboard the Task Force – but well-thought-out parameters were not instituted.

⁵⁸ ITN memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.75. q.f.

⁵⁹ Carruthers, p.121.

⁶⁰ Foster, 'The Falklands War', p.155.

⁶¹ Badsey, 'The Falklands Conflict as a Media War', p.47.

⁶² Dodds, 'Contesting War', p.218.

Instead, policy was ‘...reviewed as particular problems arose and in accordance with advice from senior military staff’.⁶³ When the Fleet set sail ‘There were no written instructions on how the vetting should be done...’⁶⁴ This meant that rules had to be concocted domestically by MoDPR, then relayed to the Task Force. It was clear that information transmitted from the Task Force would have to be monitored to ensure that operational details were not conveyed, but a system to achieve this was non-existent. McDonald met with the DPRs to discuss how scrutiny of copy might best be implemented. He also met with the CoS: ‘...we ourselves, and the Chiefs of Staff, were working out what to do; there was no absolute plan at that stage, it was being formulated’.⁶⁵ In addition to this, just after the Task Force departed, Sir Arthur Hockaday, Second Permanent Under-Secretary of State, the Directors of Service Security and a member of the secretariat had a meeting to put together proposals on censorship – the outcome of which was that vetting of the Task Force journalists should be established and that it was advised that military representatives with the Task Force should be the ones to vet copy.⁶⁶

During the weekend of 3 April, the issue of who would be sent to oversee the journalists had been provocative. In a similarly chaotic and hectic fashion to that in which the journalists were deployed, so too were the Press Officers accompanying the Task Force. The *Daily Mail* felt, in 1982, that the PROs ‘were literally plucked from the four most senior men on duty in the Press Office and told to pack their bags ready to sail’.⁶⁷ However, the process was a little more complex. A senior ministry official involved in the organisation of the PR Team told Morrison and Tumber that: ‘First of all there was no question of sending any of the service PROs because their rank alone would have meant that you’d chosen a Navy man, a captain. And if we’d sent the Army man you’d have had a brigadier landing on the Falklands with a brigadier in charge of the operation. So we decided to go for [civilian] PR staff’.⁶⁸ In addition to this, a Senior Information Officer (IO) at the MoD, who had volunteered to go, told Mercer et al. that ‘Ian was convinced the media war would be fought in London and that’s where he wanted his senior men’.⁶⁹ In the event, because of the preliminary worries concerning the potential clash of ranks, no military Information Officers were sent by MoDPR to the South Atlantic. Six civilian

⁶³ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.409, q.3.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.258, q.955.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

N.B. Minutes of this meeting do not exist, but its taking place was testified to by McDonald

⁶⁷ *Daily Mail* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.122.

⁶⁸ Morrison and Tumber, p.14.

⁶⁹ Mercer et al., p.42.

Public Relations Officers travelled south (one was forced to leave at Ascension Island, so only five travelled south from there).⁷⁰ As Freedman notes, the PROs, who became known as the ‘minders’, had, ‘like the journalists, been sent without proper preparation or briefings, and also found themselves caught between the need to support the work of the journalists and preventing the wrong sort of disclosure’.⁷¹ The minders were to become one of the most controversial aspects of the Task Force journalists’ experience in the South Atlantic.⁷² As civilians, they knew little of military matters. As MoD PROs, they were used to a less demanding role and lacked knowledge of the media and their requirements.⁷³

It was decided that the minders would not be the ones to vet copy, as per Hockaday’s recommendations, it was the senior Servicemen onboard who were to be the censors. This meant that on naval vessels the Commanding Officer (CO), the Captain of the ship, would be responsible for vetting journalists’ copy. A signal sent to the Fleet on 27 April from CINCFLEET made the situation very clear: ‘WHILE EMBARKED MOD PR OFFICERS ARE TO GIVE REGULAR GUIDANCE TO THE PRESS IAW REF B PARAS 6 AND 7, THEY ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURITY. SCRUTINY OF PRESS MATERIAL LEAVING SHIPS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMANDING OFFICERS’.⁷⁴ The immense pressure of having to perform the role of censor, on top of that which the captain was actually trained for - the role of a captain sailing his ship towards war - meant that relations between captains and the media on the passage south was less than amicable. The situation altered, however, when the campaign became a land operation.⁷⁵

No historian has ever directed concentrated attention to the issue of how censorship policy altered *throughout* the campaign, though almost all who have devoted time to the subject judge that it was inconsistent and crippling.⁷⁶ The use of ‘censorship’ as a term in relation to the Falklands War is somewhat problematic. The House of Commons Defence Committee could not definitively judge that ‘censorship’ took place in the Falklands:

⁷⁰ See Appendix Two.

⁷¹ Freedman, v.ii, p.36.

⁷² For the duration of this thesis, ‘MoD PRO’ is used interchangeably with the term ‘minder’; See Chapter Three.

⁷³ See Hastings and Jenkins, p.417. and Freedman, v.ii, p.36.

⁷⁴ CINCFLEET to CTG, HERMES, INVINCIBLE, FEARLESS, CANBERRA FORT AUSTIN, 27 Apr., HCDC, v.ii, p.474.

⁷⁵ See Chapter Three.

⁷⁶ Dodds, p.224.; Freedman, p.35.; Mercer et al., pp.128-129.; Nicholson, p.215.

It appears to us that during the Falklands Campaign there was no clear view as to whether the procedures which applied to clearing material for publication could properly be termed censorship or whether they were a hybrid form of vetting in part accepted voluntarily by the media.⁷⁷

In this thesis the term is used in relation to the conflict without reluctance. The definition of the word states that material which is to be published is subject to scrutiny – any sections of it which are considered ‘obscene, politically unacceptable or a threat to security’ are suppressed.⁷⁸ Material subjected to vetting procedures in the Falklands had references to units, the weather, locations and names concealed because of the threat to security. And issues of tone and taste were regularly the reasoning behind the suppression of sections of copy. The term is thus used freely in this thesis.

Censorship was introduced within a day of the aircraft carriers’ departure from Portsmouth. The HCDC publication included a copy of a signal sent to the Task Force, apparently on 8 April. It was most simply a 10-point guide as to which matters were to be avoided when ‘TALKING TO OR BEING OVERHEARD BY PRESS...’⁷⁹ However, the same signal content was actually sent two days earlier. According to the information submitted by the MoD to the HCDC, the communication of 8 April was sent from MODUK NAVY to CINCFLEET and CINCNVHOME (to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse, and to Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command, Admiral Sir Arthur Desmond Cassidi). This information has formed the basis of some prominent works’ arguments. For example, *The Fog of War* argues that the guidelines sent to the Task Force regarding PR policy allowed for inconsistencies and were open to interpretation and, most crucially, that not everyone who was to be involved in the censorship of journalists’ copy were sent the guidelines.⁸⁰ However, the archives provide evidence that there were, contrary to the information supplied by the MoD to the HCDC, two signals sent on 6 April regarding PR policy. The first, instructed the PR staff embarked only on the Carrier Battle Group (CTG 317.8) that: ‘THE DEPUTY FLEET PRO, CINCFLEET STAFF, IS THE PRINCIPAL ADVISOR TO CTG 317.8. HE HAS OVERALL PROFESSIONAL CHARGE AND DIRECTION OF ALL MOD PR STAFF EMBARKED AND IS THE LIAISON OFFICER FOR CIVILIAN JOURNALISTS IN THE GROUP’.⁸¹ The document listed only four of the six PROs (missing Graeme

⁷⁷ HCDC, v.i, p.iii, q.123.

⁷⁸ Oxford Dictionary, <www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/censor?q=censorship#censor_20> [Accessed 15 Aug. 2014].

⁷⁹ MODUK to CINCFLEET, CINCNVHOME, 8 Apr., HCDC v.ii, p.469.

⁸⁰ Mercer et al., p.156.

⁸¹ CINCFLEET to CTG 317.8, 6 Apr., TNA, *Falkland Islands Crisis: reports from the media with the UK Task Force*, FCO7/4646 f.1.

Hammond on *Hermes* and Allan George, due to travel with SS *Canberra*). The Deputy Fleet PRO was Robin Barrett, who held the title in the United Kingdom (UK) of Deputy Head of Public Relations at HQ, Northwood. Unfortunately, Barrett was forced to leave the Task Force at Ascension Island due to a nervous breakdown – thought to have been provoked by professional stress.⁸² There were two implications of this for PR in the South Atlantic: that the policy of one ‘minder’ assuming control in the South Atlantic was never actually applied; and that for more than two weeks during the campaign the Commander Task Group and Flag Officer, Rear Admiral John ‘Sandy’ Woodward, had no press adviser or MoDPR presence on board (these would turn out to be the weeks in which Woodward’s opinion of his media contingent would be shaped).

The second signal communicated to the Fleet on 6 April was the same as detailed in the HCDC, but sent two days earlier. It provided 10 basic guidelines or points of information which stressed the need for ‘tight security’ and gave advice to avoid giving information to the media.⁸³ Where the difference in signals became particularly problematic was with regard to the address to which it should be sent. As stated, a central tenet of Mercer et al.’s work was based on the premise that the signal detailing guidelines was not sent to everyone involved. The copy of the signal contained in the archives proves that not only was it sent on 6 April, but it was also sent from CINCFLEET, on 9 April, to 28 vessels.⁸⁴

Although policy might not have been effective and lasting, it is clear that a policy of sorts was created over the first week of the conflict. This policy would lead to inconsistencies, errors and inaccuracies throughout the whole campaign. Policy did alter later in the campaign, though largely it was in reaction to the dire situation which emerged in the South Atlantic. One thing historians are agreed on is that discrepancies with regard to censorship were promoted by the fact that guidelines were open to interpretation. Mercer et al. even pointed out that ‘the guidelines made it difficult to know what reporters could publish if the MoD signal was interpreted literally’.⁸⁵ Morrison and Tumber pointed out that, considering the PROs had little or no operational knowledge, it was ‘all the more

⁸² Harris, p.34.

⁸³ CINCFLEET to multiple, 6 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4646 f.2.; See Appendix Six.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

N.B. Sent to: HMS ships: *Endurance*, *Glamorgan*, *Antrim*, *Glasgow*, *Sheffield*, *Coventry*, *Brilliant*, *Arrow*, *Plymouth*, *Fearless*, *Alacrity*, *Hermes*, *Invincible*, *Broadsword*, *Yarmouth*, *Antelope*; RFA ships: *Resource*, *Stromness*, *Tidespring*, *Olmeda*, *Fort Austin*, *Brambleleaf*, *Sir Geraint*, *Sir Lancelot*, *Sir Galahad*, *Sir Percival*; SS *Canberra* and MV *Elk*

⁸⁵ Mercer et al., p.156.

difficult for them to make consistent decisions'.⁸⁶ Valerie Adams touches on this subject also in her 1986 work, *The Media and the Falklands Campaign*.⁸⁷ Indeed, there were 10 subjects which should be avoided according to the MoD including tactics, equipment and communications (see Appendix Six).⁸⁸

It has been argued that '...guidelines remained largely as they had been conceived on 8 April', however, policy did alter throughout the course of the conflict, but mostly in *reaction* to an event or complaint or, indeed, the Ministry's own discomfort at the situation.⁸⁹ The MoD demonstrated a clear disregard for long-term planning – whether it expected war or not, the most prudent move would have been to plan for it.

2c. The Ascension Option

Another way in which MoDPR failed to consider a durable policy concerns the use of Ascension Island (a British-owned island in the mid-Atlantic, leased to the US). MoDPR failed to use the island as an asset to PR – to board or disembark journalists. McDonald's own preference was reportedly to have the correspondents flown to Ascension to meet the Task Force. This option would have allowed over a week for publications and broadcasters to select their representative, and for both their organisation and the MoD to brief them properly. But, as McDonald pointed out: 'Operationally that was not on...we could not take the risk of telling journalists they should wait to get to Ascension Island and then finding that we could not get them there'.⁹⁰ McDonald said that the decision not to send journalists to Ascension came from Fieldhouse.⁹¹ Fieldhouse countered this: 'I have a much simpler explanation about why the press were not taken to Ascension to join the Task Force, which is that nobody thought of it and nobody asked until it was all over'.⁹² Ascension was leased by the British to the United States' (US) Air Force. The rationale for restricting media-access to the island was that they might report on the sensitive operations. Neville Taylor agreed that McDonald had made the right decision, since it was the view of the Services that Ascension was too 'operationally sensitive' to host journalists: 'The risk was too great for it to be argued strongly that there should be any facilities in Ascension'.⁹³ However, this thesis breaks with convention to add a further

⁸⁶ Morrison and Tumber, p.191.

⁸⁷ Adams, p.160.

⁸⁸ CINCFLEET to multiple, 6 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4646 f.2.

⁸⁹ Mercer et al., p.167.

⁹⁰ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.260, q.971.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.261, q.977.

⁹² J. Fieldhouse, HCDC, v.ii, p.353, q.1456.

⁹³ Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.354, q.1457.

option: the real consideration was the view of the US - specifically her view on her *own* correspondents' presence on the island.

The decision not to allow journalists on to Ascension was taken at a CoS meeting on 11 April, the day before the Carrier Group arrived there.⁹⁴ However, there had been much discussion between the Foreign Office, the MoD and the British Ambassador to the US, Sir Nicholas Henderson. On the same day that the first wave of journalists left Britain, Henderson sent a telegram to MODUK. He advised:

U.S. ABILITY TO HELP US AT ASCENSION ISLAND WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE DEGREE OF PUBLICITY GIVEN TO SUCH ASSISTANCE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT TOLD US THIS MORNING THAT THIRTY U.S. CORRESPONDENTS WISHED TO FLY TO ASCENSION ISLAND...⁹⁵

This message indicated that it was not the British journalists that worried America's State Department, it was the American correspondents' presence on Ascension - those journalists who could charter their own transport and were free to write about the Island unreservedly and, perhaps, to speculate on American assistance to Great Britain in the face of their very public, neutral stance. Britain, it seems, took the potential of US assistance in the conflict as an incentive to keep journalists (of all nationalities) off the Island. The British Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym, replied to Henderson the following day reassuring him that 'WE FULLY SHARE YOUR CONCERN ABOUT THE NEED TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM SECURITY IN ORDER TO ENSURE CONTINUING AMERICAN COOPERATION'.⁹⁶ Further to this, on 16 April, the OD(SA) heard that 'In order to avoid embarrassment with the Americans, every effort was being made to minimise publicity for military activity involving Ascension Island'.⁹⁷ Just how significant the American media were to the decision not to allow British journalists on the Falklands can be inferred from a conversation held between the Prime Minister and Alexander Haig, Secretary of State for the US on 14 April. Despite American *and* British journalists being denied access to the volcanic island, Haig complained immediately of a 'difficult complication' regarding Ascension: 'The news reporting here in Washington alleging unusual American support for

⁹⁴ CoS, 11 Apr., TNA, *Falkland Islands Conflict: minutes of Chiefs of Staff meetings*, FCO7/4472 f.5.

⁹⁵ N. Henderson to MODUK, 5 Apr., TNA, *Falkland Islands Crisis: military co-operation between the UK and USA*, FCO7/4534 f.4.

⁹⁶ Pym to Henderson, 6 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4534 f.8.

⁹⁷ OD(SA), 16 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.30.

Great Britain in intelligence and operational matters'.⁹⁸ The second call that day between the couple saw Haig refer to 'very mischievous press reports' and their allegations.⁹⁹

Other historians have highlighted the ludicrousness of the Ascension option being discounted, but have not had access to documents in order to understand why - *if*, indeed, as Fieldhouse doubts, the option was even considered.¹⁰⁰ Two other issues serve to demonstrate the argument that security concerns were driven by other factors than the MoD purely wishing to minimise 'risk'. Firstly, it was not just commercial journalists who were prevented from gaining access to Ascension; the RAF faced a wall of obstacles in April 1982 when trying to get one of its IOs on to the island to pen an article for the *RAF News*. According to Mercer et al., at his first attempt he was evicted by the Island's naval Commander.¹⁰¹ Secondly, three journalists did in fact pass through Ascension to join or leave the Task Force. It is commonly supposed that two journalists left the Task Force between Portsmouth and Ascension – the actual figure was three. Peter Archer of Press Association (PA) was flown home within 24 hours of leaving Britain. Martin Lowe of the *Wolverhampton Express and Star*, opted to leave at Ascension. Archer's replacement, Richard Saville (also of the PA), and Lowe's substitute for the provincials, Derek Hudson (*Yorkshire Post*), were both sent to Ascension to link up with the Fleet.¹⁰² Lowe was evacuated to Wideawake airfield on the island.¹⁰³ Three journalists were delivered on to and off the island without presenting a security risk to the UK.

3. Conclusion

In April 1982 the Public Relations Department of the MoD should have faced a crisis for which it had a plan, the apparatus to act on it and the internal structure and knowledge to be able to effectively see out its design. In practice, though, MoDPR spent the week floundering in reaction to the news of the invasion, and trying to get journalists – any journalists – onboard the Fleet. This thesis contends that there were four significant reasons why the MoD was ill-prepared in April 1982; firstly, despite the existence of the 1977 plans to which MoDPR did not have access, there were two additional plans in the draft

⁹⁸ Thatcher conversation with Haig, 14 Apr., TNA, *Argentina. The Falklands Crisis: Further diplomatic activity including the second visit of the United States Secretary of State to London*, PREM19/617 f.76.

⁹⁹ Thatcher conversation with Haig, 14 Apr., TNA, PREM19/617 f.70.

¹⁰⁰ Harris, p.17.; Hastings, p.281.

¹⁰¹ Mercer et al., p.106.

¹⁰² D. Hudson, 'My Voyage to War...from Cabin A86 on the Canberra to D-Day in the Falklands', *Yorkshire Post*, 9 Apr. 2007, <www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/features/my_voyage_to_war_from_cabin_a86_on_the_canberra_to_d_day_in_the_falklands_1_2451734>.

¹⁰³ Bishop and Witherow, p.62.

stage which would have been applicable to the circumstances. Secondly, MoDPR had no permanent head. The ACPR was not a seasoned professional and had little PR experience, thus policy was formulated and operated by an apprentice, not a master. The third way in which the MoD was poorly prepared for the conflict was perhaps a consequence of the second: people who were not proficient in PR assumed direction of policy. Cooper took control of PR matters from the start of the crisis principally because the war machinery of Government absorbed his regular responsibilities. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that those with tangible PR experience were excluded from policy decisions, as well as from speaking to the press, and were denied access to information. Finally, MoDPR proved to the media, during the accreditation process, that those managing policy had little working knowledge of the media. The rush of events during the first week of April has had a lasting effect for historians of the conflict, since there is an acute shortage of documents which emanated from MoDPR.

During the formation of policy there was one major mistake for which the MoD was culpable - PR policy had only one dimension: it neglected the media *in* Britain and only considered the Task Force journalists. The policy which was born of the first week in April was one constructed to deal with the practicalities of carrying 29 journalists 8,000 miles towards an imminent warzone. As Carruthers, Trevor Royle and Phillip Knightley have pointed out in their work on the Falklands, the MoD had the advantage when it came to forming policy on the Task Force and the media.¹⁰⁴ The MoD controlled the media's access to the warzone, it had control over which journalists could accompany British Forces (thus correspondents were all British and the majority of the contingent represented national organisations) and, it had control over the means of communication: not only could the MoD vet copy, but it dictated how and when, indeed, *if*, copy would be transmitted back to Britain. Accordingly, there were two initial strands to media policy – censorship and communication policy.

Communication with the Task Force was at the forefront of MoD consciousness. Because the facilities to transmit written copy were available on all naval and commercial vessels with the Fleet, and audio communication could be transmitted via MARISAT on commercial vessels (mostly the auxiliary vessels), there was one avenue which the MoD explored further: the transmission of television images. Despite arguments from many journalists and subsequently, historians, that the MoD failed to facilitate the broadcast of

¹⁰⁴ Carruthers, p.123.; Knightley, pp.434-5.; Royle, p.219.

TV images from the Fleet to serve its own interest in keeping violent scenes away from the concerned British public, efforts were made to establish effective communication early on. The practicalities of transmitting television images proved to be insurmountable. There is no evidence that the failure to transmit TV images was part of a malicious MoD initiative. Quite the reverse; the evidence presented in this thesis implies that until very late in the conflict the options were being seriously, and continuously, considered.

Censorship of the media delegation with the Task Force was established as early as 6 April, when the MoD restricted subjects which servicemen could speak about with, or within earshot of, the media.¹⁰⁵ The MoD's policy was transmitted to ships on 6 and 8 April: COs would be responsible for vetting all copy, MoD PROs would guide the Task Force journalists and oversee their needs, and there was a list of subjects about which speaking was forbidden, as well as the general guidelines noted in this chapter. Despite some arguments to the contrary, there *was* a policy of censorship implemented at the beginning of the war. It was not all-encompassing or particularly detailed, but the basic premise by which censorship would be performed was established very early in the campaign. Thus, at the start of the war, despite being poorly prepared and focusing primarily on policy only concerning journalists with the Task Force, MoDPR did roll out a PR policy of sorts. It primarily concerned censorship with the Task Force, but efforts were certainly made to improve communication with the Fleet. The development of early policy, and policy in general, has been neglected in much of the literature. However, the following chapters discuss how policy towards both the Task Force and the British domestic media changed over the course of the conflict.

¹⁰⁵ CINCFLEET to multiple, 6 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4646 f.2.

CHAPTER THREE

The MoD and PR Policy in the South Atlantic

The only line of policy which was pursued by MoDPR in the first week of the Falklands crisis was that concerning the Task Force journalists. The focus of this chapter is the subsequent public relations' policy implemented in the South Atlantic. It is the contention of this thesis that there were two distinct features to MoDPR's South Atlantic policy: policy regarding censorship; and policy involving the reporting of incidents from the warzone.

The PR instructions contained in signals to the Fleet between 6 and 9 April (as outlined in the previous chapter) were to remain in place as the principal form of guidelines for the Force until halfway through the conflict. It will be asserted that the Government's censorship policy was fraught with problems which led to inconsistencies in the reporting of news. Those who were ill-qualified to administer public relations policy were already in place, not only in MoDPR, but also in the South Atlantic. It will also be disputed that, contrary to the dominant line of argument, MoDPR transferred a large degree of power to those handling PR in the South Atlantic by allowing the civilian 'minders', as well as both military PROs and their commanders, a considerable amount of autonomy to sculpt PR policy from the frontline.

For MoDPR, a higher priority than censorship policy was that in connection with incident reporting. In May MoDPR embarked on a re-evaluation of PR policy, specifically that relating to how major incidents were reported from the Task Force. Commentators have argued that the sinking of the Argentine fishing vessel, *Narwhal*, was the significant factor in MoDPR's decision to reassess policy.¹ This chapter proposes that it was not, in fact, the sinking of the *Narwhal* which prompted a change in policy. Policy concerning the reporting of incidents was a priority long before 9 May, when *Narwhal* was sunk. More attention was paid to policy concerning incident reporting than to censorship for two reasons: incident reporting affected the MoD more directly than censorship, and MoDPR, by May 1982, had become embroiled in an additional battle with the Argentines – the battle for media credibility.

¹ Morrison and Tumber, p.217.; Mercer et al., p.197.

The most thorough account of the PR strategies of the MoD was provided by Mercer et al. in 1987. A chapter on ‘The Government’ discusses general PR policy throughout the conflict.² While the literature is enhanced by this assessment of policy, it is without a detailed analysis of the instructions sent to the Fleet and the policy which MoDPR developed in *response* to the worsening situation in the South Atlantic. No other history of the media and the Falklands has contributed a thorough analysis of the signal traffic to and from the Task Force in an attempt to decipher the exact policy applied by MoDPR. In addition, none has offered a comprehensive assessment of policy - and the incentives which drove it. This history benefits from a plethora of source material. This chapter specifically profits from newly-released archival records and interview material. It makes use of original interview material with those who played integral parts in applying PR policy, but who were not questioned by the HCDC. The archival records of signals sent to the Task Force, and internal MoD documentation, provide a solid foundation from which to consider who ran PR policy, who created it, *why* they created it and how it was implemented.

1. Control of Policy

Before embarking on analysis of the policy disseminated to the Task Force, it is necessary to pay attention to the role the military – rather than the civilians of the MoD – played in policy construction. Only brief discussion is included here, but a more comprehensive analysis can be located in Appendix Seven.

The administration departments of the MoD were, by and large, based in Whitehall. The Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) were based at Northwood, a former RAF coastal command in the suburbs of London. Since C-in-C, Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse, had his own headquarters at PJHQ, Northwood became the commanding HQ for the operation to retake the Falklands.

Task Force journalists, and subsequent literature, has accused those running the war from Northwood of also running a private campaign against the journalists. Nicholson, of ITN, wrote:

² Mercer et al., pp.17-61.

...there was a determined covert campaign to silence us. It was directed by Sir John from his comfortable war bunker at naval headquarters...and it was enthusiastically obeyed by most officers aboard *Hermes* and her sister carrier *Invincible*.³

Fox also identified Northwood as dictating procedure.⁴ Indeed, to many of the journalists who gave evidence to the HCDC, Northwood appeared to be the main executor of policy and essentially, the one running the show. One reason Northwood was viewed as managing policy was because most signals originated there. The sign for C-in-C at Northwood, 'CINCFLEET', was on many, if not the majority, of the signals transmitted to the Task Force containing instructions or guidance on PR.⁵ Major General Jeremy Moore, Commander of the Land Forces, claimed that all instructions on PR 'were issued from the Fleet Headquarters...'⁶ The origin of signals gave the overall impression that South Atlantic PR policy was developed and orchestrated by Northwood. However, in reality, Northwood's role was limited.

MoDPR and Northwood clashed over a number of issues regarding policy. The two central reasons for tension were: firstly, a lack of machinery to allow for smooth communication between the departments; secondly, information from the South Atlantic was not transmitted through Northwood to MoDPR in sufficient time or in enough detail.⁷ Typically, the role of Northwood in PR has been emphasised because of its unique position in the 'chain of command'.⁸ The most thorough appraisal of the chain was contributed by Mercer et al.⁹ There were two significant implications of the existing chain of command on policy; that information contained in signals was often not disseminated to the appropriate personnel; and that the majority of information relayed from the Task Force was communicated directly with CINCFLEET – and then had to be separately communicated from Northwood to the MoD.¹⁰

2. PR Policy and the Task Force: Incident Reporting

The chain of command seriously affected the transmission of information to the MoD. Communication of news or updates from the South Atlantic was to become an issue which afflicted the MoD throughout the whole campaign. It is the position of this chapter that

³ Nicholson, p.215.

⁴ Fox, pp.9-10.

⁵ Fieldhouse, HCDC, v.ii, p.350, q.1432.

⁶ J. Moore, HCDC, v.ii, p.281, q.1109.

⁷ See Appendix Seven.

⁸ Morrison and Tumber, pp.8-10.; Freedman, v.ii, pp.409-410.

⁹ Mercer et al., pp.96-103.

¹⁰ See Appendix Seven for more details on these factors.

there were two lines of Task Force-related policy which MoDPR pursued throughout the course of the conflict. The first of which concerned the reporting of military incidents. MoD was anxious about the procedure for reporting events from the warzone. The sooner MoDPR received information, the sooner it could adapt, ascertain whether the news should be released, and prepare statements or press conferences.

The two priorities relating to South Atlantic policy - incident reporting and censorship – did not carry the same significance for the MoD during the war. There was one subject which dominated policy, and remained in the forefront of the minds of those in MoDPR. Incident reporting had precedence over any other issue concerning the reporting of the war. The accurate and timely reporting of incidents or events was crucial to the successful presentation of the conflict. There was one reason it attracted so much attention within the MoD: efficient incident reporting had an overt effect on the ministry and the maintenance of British public support.

2a. MoD Credibility

The credibility of the MoD, nationwide and internationally, was called into question by inaccurate reporting of events and by the fact that Argentina was often able to release news before the British. During the campaign the MoD was dogged by inaccurate, or piecemeal, information. This led, on occasion, to incorrect information being released. There was one crucially significant instance during the war in which the MoD struggled to have information confirmed by Northwood or by the Fleet. When, on 9 May, the *Narwhal* was captured by British Special Forces, the news of its capture was released before all the facts had been obtained. Suspected of carrying out intelligence operations for the Argentine Forces, the *Narwhal* had been given a warning to leave the Total Exclusion Zone (TEZ) and return home 10 days earlier.¹¹ The TEZ had come into force on 30 April, the consequence of which was that any aircraft or sea-going vessel which entered the zone was liable to attack from the British forces. A memo, distributed within the MoD the day after the event, showed that the announcement was made with only confirmation from CINCFLEET that an attack had taken place.¹² The attack occurred at 1230GMT. Confirmation of ‘the attack’ was given by CINCFLEET at 1530.¹³ A statement was made

¹¹ Freedman, v.ii, p.364.

¹² P. Francis, 10 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/9/2.

¹³ Ibid.

at 1800 that the ship had been captured with no casualties or loss of life.¹⁴ At 1830GMT, Reuters carried a report from the Argentine official press agency, Telam, claiming that British planes had returned to strafe lifeboats when the crew had abandoned ship. It was not until 1950, when the MoD spoke to the Fleet, that it knew casualties had been sustained. A later statement at 2100 alleged that that *Narwhal* had been hit, but that there were no casualties ‘among the prisoners’. However, later, MoD rechecked with CINCFLEET to be told that Navy Ops had received ‘indications that the statement made at 2100 might not be correct’.¹⁵ Copy from journalists with the Task Force confirmed that one man had died and that there were 12 casualties, one of whom had serious injuries. At 2350GMT, a statement was put out which was checked by the Secretary of State. However, even at this time, the MoD ‘had still not received signal confirmation of the action and the casualties from the Task Force’.¹⁶ The early release of inaccurate news in this instance damaged the credibility of the MoD, especially when conflicting information from Argentina proved accurate.

The issue of credibility was to prove to be a major consideration of the MoD over the weeks that the crisis lasted. The credibility of the British Government had been questioned from the beginning of the crisis. Much has been written on the importance of the Ministry’s credibility and its battle to maintain it.¹⁷ Patricia Karl argued that the credibility of the Government as a whole had been damaged before the conflict even started, since the British attempted to out-bluff Argentina when she looked set to invade.¹⁸ The MoD’s credibility was affected as early as the first days of the crisis when it caused uproar by failing to correct reports that HMS *Superb* (a nuclear-powered submarine) had sailed for the Falklands.¹⁹ In reality she was destined for Faslane, news which was released by the MoD on 16 April.²⁰

The credibility of the MoD was important because it constituted a considerable advantage over the Argentines. Freedman judged that the rationale behind MoD thinking was that ‘on balance it was better to make a thin announcement early (particularly before the Argentines)

¹⁴ McDonald, 9 May, TNA, *Argentina. The Falklands crisis: visit of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to New York; the Peruvian peace initiative; sinking of HMS Sheffield; continuing dialogue with the United States Secretary of State*, PREM19/624 f.142.

¹⁵ Francis, 10 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/9/2.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ See: Adams, p.65.; Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, p.77.; Eds. Eddy et al., p.211.; Freedman, v.ii, p.461.

¹⁸ P. Karl, ‘Media Diplomacy’, *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, 34, 4 (1982) p.145.

¹⁹ Reports on *Superb*: J. Warden, ‘Falkland Fiasco’, *Daily Mirror*, 31 Mar., p.1.; ‘A-sub go on alert to protect Falklands’, *Daily Mirror*, 31 Mar., p.2.; ‘British sub on the move’, *The Times*, 31 Mar., p.1.

²⁰ CoS, 17 Apr., TNA, *Falkland Islands Conflict: minutes of Chiefs of Staff meetings*, FCO7/4473 f.42.

than a fuller one later'.²¹ The British media was sceptical of Argentine information, particularly when Argentine claims appeared ludicrous. The British media reported on Argentina's fanciful claims that, for example, the Argentine Fleet had sunk HMS *Invincible*. The *Daily Mirror* unearthed this as the 'BIGGEST LIE OF THE WAR', and *The Sun* pointed out 'GLARING ERRORS'.²² *The Daily Telegraph* outlined a number of 'HEIGHTS OF FANTASY', as well as 'DISTORTED NEWS IN ARGENTINA'.²³

2b. Incident Reporting from the Falklands

As outlined above, it was essential that incidents were properly and swiftly reported to preserve the credibility of the MoD. Thus PR policy was adapted throughout the campaign, not to alleviate the considerable problems experienced by the Task Force or their contingent of journalists, but to suit the needs of the MoD. There is only one study which grapples with the subject of policy: *The Fog of War*.²⁴ Yet the importance of incident reporting policy is neglected. Mercer et al. argue that there was a reorganisation of general 'policy' in May 1982. They attribute this reorganisation simply to the embarrassment brought about by the early and incorrect announcements concerning *Narwhal*'s capture. This stems from the claim during the HCDC that 'the confusion concerning the announcements on the *Narwal* [sic] prompted urgent consideration within MoD of incident reporting procedures...'.²⁵ Equally, Morrison and Tumber considered that the *Narwhal* experience had prompted 'urgent reconsideration...of its [MoD's] procedures for reporting incidents'.²⁶ This claim is dominant within the historiography of the subject. However, it is the contention here that PR policy - expressly policy on incident reporting - was actually reassessed *before* the attack on *Narwhal*. If there was any event which affected the reorganisation of policy, it was the sinking of HMS *Sheffield* (exacerbated by the sinking of the *General Belgrano* on 2 May). The taking of the *Narwhal* did not spur reform of PR policy. It did, however, add impetus to changes already in place. This work constitutes the only thorough assessment on incident reporting systems used during the war.

It has been established that during the Falklands MoDPR suffered from a lack of tangible information from the Fleet. After the guidelines of early April, which gave basic

²¹ Freedman, v.ii, p.461.

²² P. Connew, 'BIGGEST LIE OF THE WAR' *Daily Mirror*, 1 Jun., p.3.; J. Akass, 'GLARING ERRORS', *The Sun*, 5 May, p.6.

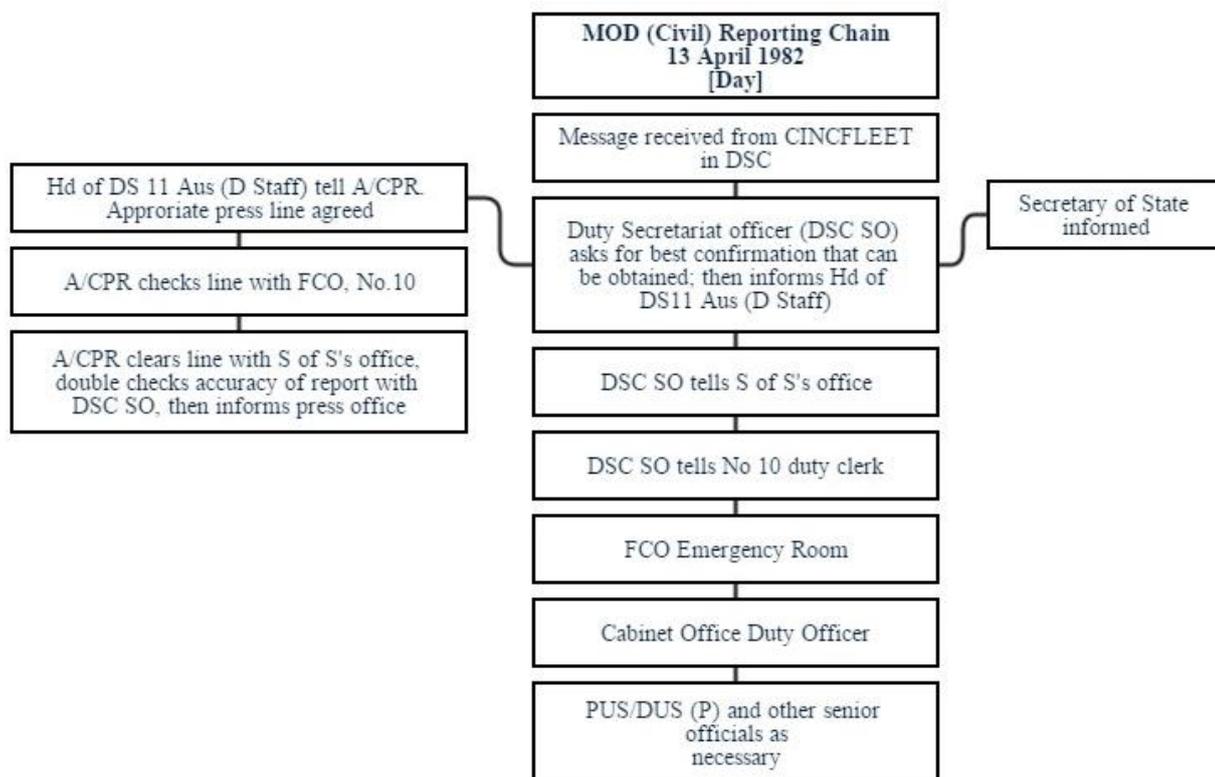
²³ K. Clarke, 'HEIGHTS OF FANTASY', *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 May, p.34.; R. Gedy, 'DISTORTED NEWS IN ARGENTINA', *The Daily Telegraph*, 12 May, p.4.

²⁴ Mercer et al.

²⁵ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.428, q.3.

²⁶ Morrison and Tumber, p.217.

instructions for handling the media contingent, there was little communication to the Task Force concerning policy issues until the subsequent month. There was, however, on 13 April, a procedure established for the *civil* reporting of any military incidents.²⁷ This document established the way in which the MoD would be notified of any incident in the South Atlantic. There was a ‘night’ chain and a ‘day’ chain – each time catered for appropriately (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2). The details of the chain of reporting, however, started with the news arriving at CINCFLEET. There were no directions to the Task Force and there is no evidence that suggests the Task Force was ever made aware of the existence of this chain of reporting. The document, and the subsequent procedure, was provoked by McDonald who, in a minute on 11 April declared there would be problems with the ‘mechanics of political clearance’.²⁸ The chain was actually devised, not by a member of MoDPR, but by the Acting Private Secretary of Sir John Nott, Nicholas Evans. He conceived the idea and suggested it because ‘it would seem to me sensible’.²⁹ So, as of 13 April there *were* some parameters to adhere to when reporting incidents. However, the reporting chain laid out on 13 April proved to be inadequate. Cooper felt bound to review to readdress the system in May 1982.



²⁷ N. Evans to McDonald, 13 Apr., MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E22.

²⁸ McDonald to Nott, 11 Apr., MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E17.

²⁹ Evans to McDonald, 13 Apr., MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E22.

Figure 3.1: Diagram to represent the 'Day' reporting chain outlined to MoD on 13 April 1982³⁰

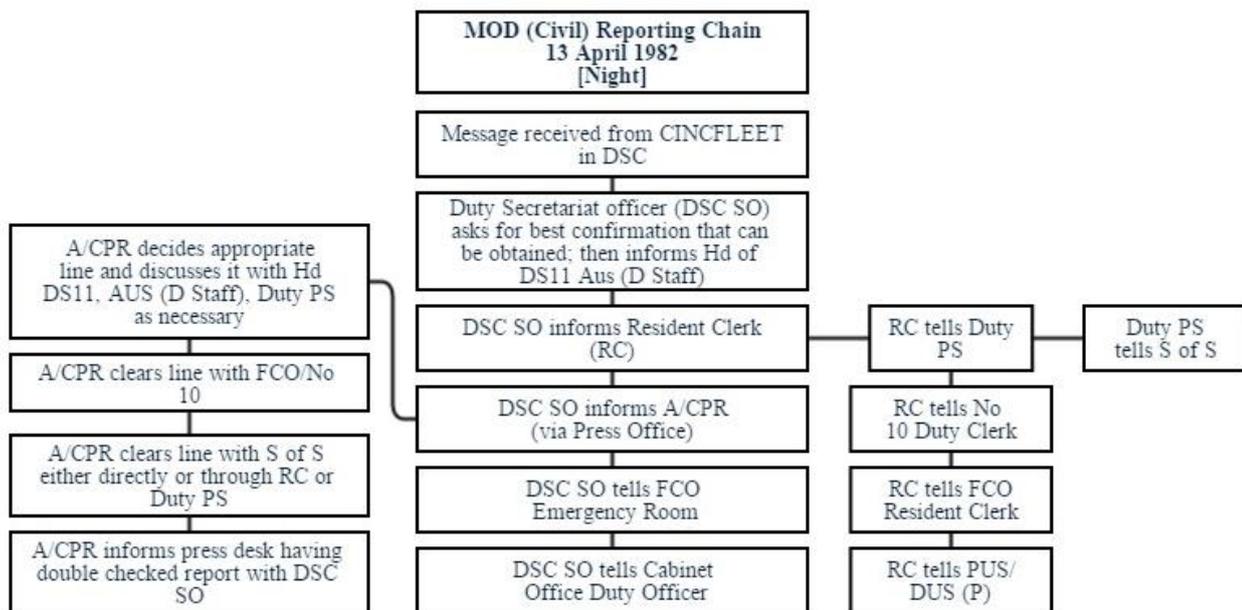


Figure 3.2: Diagram to represent the 'Night' reporting chain outlined to MoD on 13 April 1982³¹

There was no other reference to incident reporting within, or outside, the MoD, until 22 April. By then a military campaign was probable – with the impending recapture of South Georgia but days away. Mostly, though, MoDPR lamented the lack of information of anything from the Task Force which might attract media attention. On 22 April, McDonald told the CoS meeting that ‘he was taking steps to improve notification by the Task Force of major press events, such as the interview given the previous day by the Commander of the Task Group of which he had no forewarning’.³²

By 22 April the MoD had developed the suspicion that incident reporting may be more problematic in the future. Although military incidents as such had not been experienced at that time (save the landing of Special Forces on South Georgia which was not publicised), incidents which attracted the interest of the media had not been suitably relayed to MoD, or MoDPR, in order for them to prepare for the inevitable questions such incidents would provoke. The weaknesses in the incident reporting were becoming apparent as early as mid-April.

³⁰ Diagram constructed from information in J. Ridley to AUS, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E24.

³¹ Ibid.

³² CoS, 22 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4473 f.50.

2b (i). Incident Reporting: the 'Sheffield' and the 'Belgrano'

Between 22 April and the first days of May there was very little done within MoDPR to combat these flaws in policy. However, by mid-April incident reporting was certainly on the agenda. It was the events of 2-4 May which cemented MoDPR's belief that the system should be altered. On 2 April the *Belgrano* was sunk by a torpedo from the submarine, HMS *Conqueror*. The sinking of the *Belgrano* has attracted much, if not too much, attention within the history of the conflict.³³ The absence of a proper incident reporting system was, in the case of the *Belgrano*, obvious. Nott made a statement in the Commons about the attack on 4 May. A fact not communicated to MoD was that the *Belgrano* had changed its course. Nott's subsequent statement in the House claimed that the surface group to which the *Belgrano* belonged was 'close to the total exclusion zone and was closing on elements of our task force...'³⁴ The repercussion of inexact information flow from Northwood to the MoD was that the Secretary of State, and through him the Government, disseminated incorrect information on the campaign.

The issue was compounded two days later when the Argentine air force mounted an attack against the British HMS *Sheffield*. The MoD announced the news of the fate of the *Sheffield* before Northwood and the Fleet desired.³⁵ The Task Force journalists were forbidden to transmit copy on the attack. The final way in which the defects of the current reporting system were highlighted was the announcement of the news on British television before the House of Commons was informed. On 4 May the *Sheffield* was hit at 1400GMT. It was not until 1800GMT that a meeting was convened in Thatcher's office in the Commons in order to decide how best to handle the news. However, by 1940GMT, the BBC had been informed by 'political sources' of the name of the ship and had been given an indication of the extent of the damage. The House was in session that evening, but instead of making an announcement in the Commons, Nott agreed to allow McDonald to go back to the MoD and make a statement on the incident. The BBC's *Nine O'Clock News* was interrupted by the presenter in order to air McDonald's statement: 'Sorry to interrupt John Cole there, but we've just heard from the Ministry of Defence in London that they

³³ See: M. Rossiter, *Sink the Belgrano* (Corgi, 2007); C. Ponting, *The Right to Know: The Inside Story of the Belgrano Affair* (Sphere, 1985); D. Rice and A. Gavshon, *The Sinking of the Belgrano* (Secker and Warburg, 1984); S. Prebble, *Secrets of the Conqueror: The Untold Story of Britain's Most Famous Submarine* (Faber & Faber, 2013).

³⁴ Nott, House of Commons' Debate, 4 May, v.xxiii, c.30.

³⁵ McDonald, 'Falklands War: HMS *Sheffield* Sunk', *IRN Radio*, 4 May, <www.bufovc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0119a00135003>.

have a new statement on the Falklands crisis, we're going over there now...'³⁶ The announcement confirmed the earlier rumours broadcast.

Those who were in the House of Commons, but who had heard reports of the attack on the television, demanded that Nott come back in order to inform the House of the situation. Denis Skinner MP stood to ask: 'About an hour ago it was mentioned on television that one of the British ships, HMS *Sheffield*, had been destroyed in the South Atlantic. Has the Prime Minister indicated whether she intends coming to the House tonight to explain precisely what happened?'³⁷ Demands grew as MPs awaited news of the vessel. The Deputy Speaker instructed the House that a statement might be made the next day, to which Leo Abse inquired 'what possible condition exists to justify the Rt. Hon. Gentleman's statement that tomorrow is the day to make a statement and not tonight when we are all assembled and when the nation expects a statement from a Minister, so that we all know who is responsible, what is to occur and what fresh initiative will take place before further lives are lost?'³⁸ It was the commotion in the Commons which provoked Nott's return to make a statement at 2300. Nott announced that 'in the course of its duties within the total exclusion zone around the Falkland Islands, HMS *Sheffield*, a Type 42 Destroyer, was attacked and hit late this afternoon by an Argentine missile. The ship caught fire, which spread out of control'.³⁹ To make matters worse, the MoD had not yet put a casualty information cell in place to deal with the tragedy, so many families were forced to wait for news of their loved ones.

Both the sinking of the *Belgrano* and the *Sheffield* highlighted that incident reporting was not running smoothly. The transmission of information in the case of the *Belgrano* was late and unsuitable for the statements and conferences which would have to be made by members of the MoD. Nott even announced erroneous facts about the way in which the ship was sunk. The *Sheffield* highlighted a range of different problems encountered by MoD, the most significant of which was the fact that MoD had no system for receiving reports of incidents, and acting on them swiftly.

³⁶ 'The Reunion Programme: HMS *Sheffield*', *BBC Radio Four*, 20 Apr. 2012.

³⁷ D. Skinner, HC Deb., 4 May, v.xxiii, c.106.

³⁸ L. Abse, HC Deb, 4 May, v.xxiii, c.108.

³⁹ Nott, HC Deb., 4 May, v.xxiii, c.120.

2b (ii). Incident Reporting: the Effect of the ‘Sheffield’ and the ‘Belgrano’

Three days after HMS *Sheffield* was attacked, MoDPR embarked on a large-scale review of its incident reporting procedures. On 7 May the PUS, Cooper, requested that the department prepare notes on the ‘current procedures for dealing with release of information about operations in the Falkland Islands and make...recommendations about how they might be tightened up’.⁴⁰ The hope was that the appraisal of existing policy would clear up a number of issues. For example, the DS11 Duty Officer should manage the process of reporting incidents – to prevent further embarrassment like that experienced over *Sheffield*.⁴¹ The appropriate Service Departments should be made responsible for ‘covering welfare and personnel considerations’. Essentially, the suitable Service would assume control of the casualty reporting system. It was clear by 7 May that incident reporting arrangements were inadequate. James Morey Stewart, the Assistant Under-Secretary, Defence Staff, was effectively Cooper’s second in command. He wrote that ‘current arrangements are essentially ad hoc and, as a result, delays which are damaging to our public case often arise’.⁴² Stewart asked in a letter to the PUS whether the MoD might consider how best to ensure ‘quick and frequent reports from the Task Force’.⁴³ Stewart suggested the best way to readdress the speed at which information was passed from the Task Force to the appropriate people in the MoD, was to reorganise the structure of reporting procedure. The result of this suggestion was the creation of an alternative reporting chain to that outlined on 13 April. The chain was simpler, but relied very heavily on the role of, and the judgement of, the DS11 Duty Officer. This officer would have to consult with the Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (ACDS) about which departments needed to be made aware of the incident. He would also clear with the appropriate Service Department that operations were underway to inform the next of kin (NoK) and release the names of casualties if relevant. The officer would then go on to inform ‘as necessary’ the Private Secretary of the Secretary of State, No.10, Cabinet Office and senior MoD officials (see Figure 3.3).

⁴⁰ J. Stewart to AUS Defence Staff, 7 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E1.

⁴¹ DS11 – MoD Department which dealt with out of area defence.

⁴² Stewart to AUS Defence Staff, 7 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E1.

⁴³ Stewart to Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E1a.

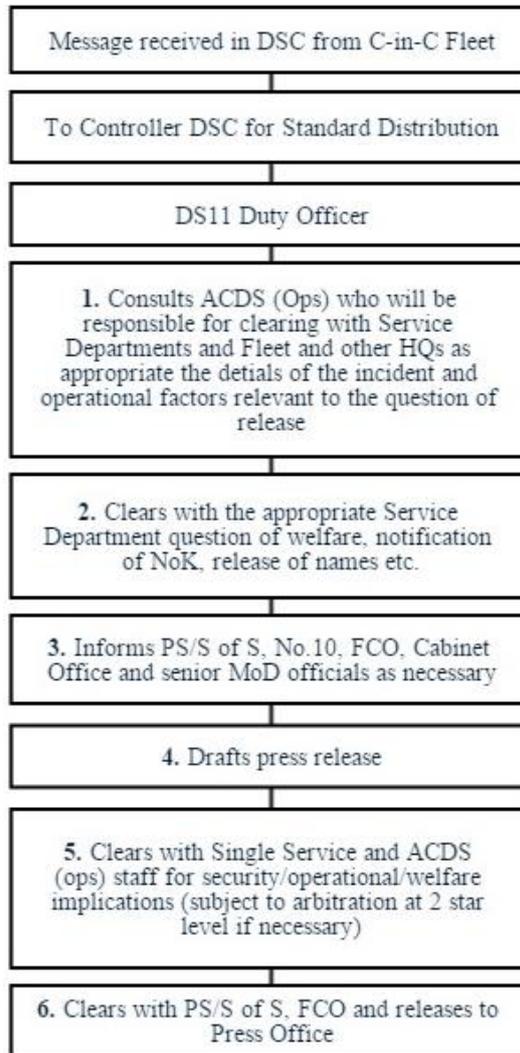


Figure 3.3: *Diagram to Show the Procedures for Dealing with PR Aspects of Operation Corporate, 7 May 1982*⁴⁴

It was evident that one of the main motivations for this review was the need to announce news from the South Atlantic before Argentine accounts of events could be released. Stewart felt that when considering any changes in policy, the department should realise that their position required the MoD ‘to release information as rapidly as possible...to counter Argentine disinformation...’⁴⁵ But an aspect which may have had a significant impact on MoD’s review of policy, which no other history of the subject has been able to focus on, was the complaints made to the MoD by the editors of major news organisations about the incident reporting system. Frank Cooper established Editors’ Meetings at the start of the war.⁴⁶ After meeting on 6 May, Cooper noted that there were a number of practical steps the MoD must take to ensure a smoother PR service. These steps included

⁴⁴ Diagram constructed from information in Stewart to PUS, 7 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E1-9.

⁴⁵ Stewart to AUS Defence Staff, 7 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E1.

⁴⁶ See Chapter Four.

ensuring the MoD had ‘regular reports from the Task Group’ in order to ‘feed a full – even unspectacular - diet to our own press’. He also identified the need to ‘make decisions about whether to release information quickly’.⁴⁷ Editors told Cooper ‘...there was a risk of the UK starting to lose public and international sympathy through appearing to be holding back on news when the Argentines had no hesitation about deluging the media with misleading and inaccurate information’.⁴⁸ Three specific points were mentioned which lends weight to the argument that editors’ complaints influenced the MoD review of policy, specifically incident reporting policy, on 7 May:

- A) Delays in announcing that operations had taken place...
- B) Inability of MoD to confirm or deny stories originating overseas...
- C) The return of photographs and film from the Task Force and South Georgia was non-existent...⁴⁹

Thus, the MoD was prompted to review policy on 7 May, not only by the embarrassment surrounding the announcement of the tragedies of *Belgrano* and *Sheffield*, but by forceful complaints by the editors of Britain’s media outlets.

2b (iii). Incident Reporting: the ‘Narwhal’

The HCDC heard that it was the confusion surrounding the capture of the Argentine fishing vessel, the *Narwhal*, which motivated a review of policy in May 1982. The work of both Morrison and Tumber, and Mercer et al., argue this point.⁵⁰ It was certainly true that the incident emphasised the problems MoD was experiencing with regard to incident reporting. However, it did not provoke the change, it merely accelerated the process. The day after *Narwhal* was attacked by the British, the CoS heard the point made that ‘the capture of the NARWAL the previous day had highlighted the difficulties of obtaining early and accurate reports from the Task Force’.⁵¹ The apprehension of *Narwhal* has been used by authors as a classic example of MoDPR getting its facts wrong during the course of the war.⁵² Whilst the *Narwhal* did not *incite* policy review, the implications the occasion had for incident reporting were nonetheless significant. On the day, the last MoD statement on the subject was issued at midnight.⁵³ The fundamental problem, as outlined by the MoD, was it ‘...needed to provide what information was at the time available and we were

⁴⁷ Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E6.

⁴⁸ Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Morrison and Tumber, p.217.; Mercer et al., p.197.

⁵¹ CoS, 10 May, TNA, *Falkland Islands Conflict: minutes of Chiefs of Staff meetings*, FCO74474 f.87.

⁵² Hooper, p.159.; Royle, p.222.; Morrison and Tumber, p.216.

⁵³ Francis, 10 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/9/2.

assured by the Naval Staff that this information particularly in respect of casualties – was reliable...⁵⁴ The next day, Taylor - on the instructions of Cooper - met with the DPRs, the Secretary of the D-Notice Committee, Admiral William Ash and a number of IOs in an emergency meeting. They concentrated on the problem of speeding communications from the Task Force. The meeting identified that two courses of action were undesirable: defensively ‘trailing behind some Argentine claim’, or ‘waiting too long for every single detail to emerge before volunteering anything’.⁵⁵ Due to the previous day’s event, a signal to the Task Force had been drafted ‘spelling out the essential requirement for operational flash signals to be made to CINCFLEET copy MODUK immediately an incident is in progress’.⁵⁶ By copying all flash signals to the MoD, the intermediary role of Northwood would be eroded. The enhanced sense of urgency that the *Narwhal* created persuaded Cooper to host a meeting on the evening of 10 May, in order to further the discussions of that morning by Taylor and his cohort. Cooper met with Taylor, Nott, Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), Admiral Lewin, and McDonald. Nott identified what was the ‘most pressing problem’ as being the failure of the reporting chain to keep the MoD informed ‘in as speedy and full a way as they required for effective PR action’.⁵⁷ At this meeting the draft signal for the Task Force was approved. The signal would remind the Fleet of the necessity of swift incident reporting:

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT MOD RECEIVES PROMPT AND CLEAR REPORTS OF ANY ENGAGEMENT OR OPERATIONAL INCIDENT NOT ONLY DO MINISTERS NEED TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT THE ARGENTINIANS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PUT TO IMMEDIATE PROPAGANDA USE INFORMATION THEY HAVE...⁵⁸

The signal went on to admit that ‘MOD HAS BEEN EMBARRASSINGLY WRONG FOOTED ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION, MOST RECENTLY OVER THE NARWAL INCIDENT ON 9 MAY’.⁵⁹ The use of the term ‘most recently’, as has been argued here, suggests that the *Narwhal* was merely the latest incident, not the only one. What the signal demonstrated was the lack of guidelines which had hitherto been issued to the Fleet on incident reporting. The signal even instructed, in idiot-proof fashion, the right way in which to send a signal.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Taylor to Cooper, 10 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.27/5.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ D. Omand, 11 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/13

⁵⁸ MoDUK to CTF 317, 11 May, HCDC, v.ii, p.481.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ See Appendix Nine.

2b (iv). Incident Reporting: Reviewing Policy

The most significant outcome of the meeting on the evening of 10 May was that an initial review of general policy was initiated. On 11 May Taylor issued a minute on PR to senior members of the MoD. It proposed three main points.⁶¹ Firstly, that flash signals to CPR MODUK should indicate the nature of copy to be filed from ships. The Senior Information Officer onboard should give the intended release time for the MoD to consider: a) simultaneous London release b) later London release or confirmation merely in answer to questions or c) if necessary, an immediate reply to CTG to impose an embargo. Secondly, MoD would undertake to transmit its intention to release material its end. Finally, the last point defined what Taylor envisaged the role of the MoD Press Centre to be. He wrote it ‘should be able to give quick assessments of some operational events...’⁶²

This initial review of policy was an example of how MoDPR’s elite was not qualified to construct the military’s media policy. This document was a PR-friendly document. It aimed at alleviating the humiliating errors which were a product of incident reporting, as well as easing the transmission and release of Task Force copy. However, the initial suggestions offered by Taylor were rejected by Rear Admiral David Brown, ACDS (Operations). In communication between Brown and senior MoDPR staff, he calls the 11 May review ‘unacceptable’.⁶³ Rear Admiral Brown went on to point out that:

The subsequent procedure suggested is both complex and unclear, leaving the Task Group Commander in the dark on each occasion until MOD has decided how to react to each and every incident. How the decision will be arrived at in MOD and by whom is not covered. The implication is that the decision would be made solely by the PR staff. This is obviously unsatisfactory from the operational and security points of view.⁶⁴

Brown carried particular weight within, not only the MoD, but the OD(SA). Brown had the fortunate task of briefing the OD(SA) on events in the South Atlantic. His objections to the plan rolled out by MoDPR was a significant blow for Taylor and his subordinates. Brown suggested an alternative system of incident reporting. The proposed process better served the military, but was less PR-orientated. Brown’s version would eventually, on 13 May, be disseminated to the Task Force as official procedure.

⁶¹ Taylor, 11 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/11.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ D. Brown, 12 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E18.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

On 13 May a document was circulated in the MoD which related Brown's modifications to the incident reporting chain. The document outlined the civilian procedure once the news had been received from the Fleet. Under the new reporting system ACDS would be responsible for ascertaining the views of Service Departments and Fleet (and any other HQs) relevant to the release of news.⁶⁵ The Duty Officer would still approach the relevant Service regarding questions of welfare and notification of the NoK. Similarly, the Duty Officer would maintain the responsibility of alerting the Secretary of State's private office, No.10, FCO and the Cabinet Office. Where the regulations seriously departed from those of 7 May was regarding information which would have a 'hold' applied to it. As soon as the Task Force transmitted a flash signal to CINCFLEET and MoD, the media onboard would be 'inhibited' from sending copy. The MoD would then decide whether to place a 'hold' on the news. There were two circumstances in which a 'hold' would be imposed on the release of copy: where the Controller in the DSC was informed of Argentine losses which, for a particular reason, he felt should not be made public; and when the British experienced 'loss/damage/casualty'. In the case of British loss, damage or casualty a 'hold' would be automatically enforced.⁶⁶ The document also outlined the chain of reporting required when no 'hold' applied (see Figures 3.4 and 3.5). When the Task Force signalled CINCFLEET and the MoD, the Task Force journalists' copy would *still* be restricted until the MoD signalled the Task Force with an intended time that it would release the news, then that the Task Force correspondents would be permitted to release copy.

⁶⁵ Minute, 13 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E49/1.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

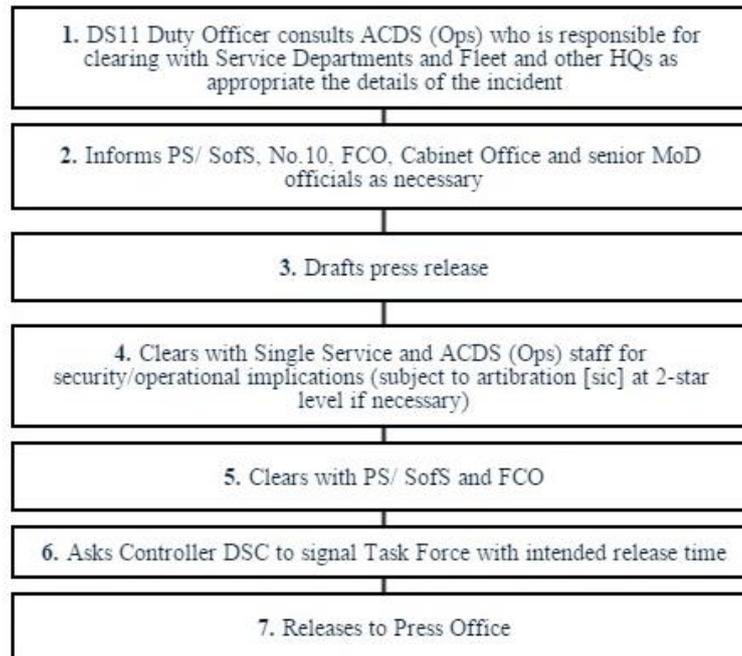


Figure 3.4: *Diagram of reporting chain if 'hold' did not apply, 13 May 1982⁶⁷*

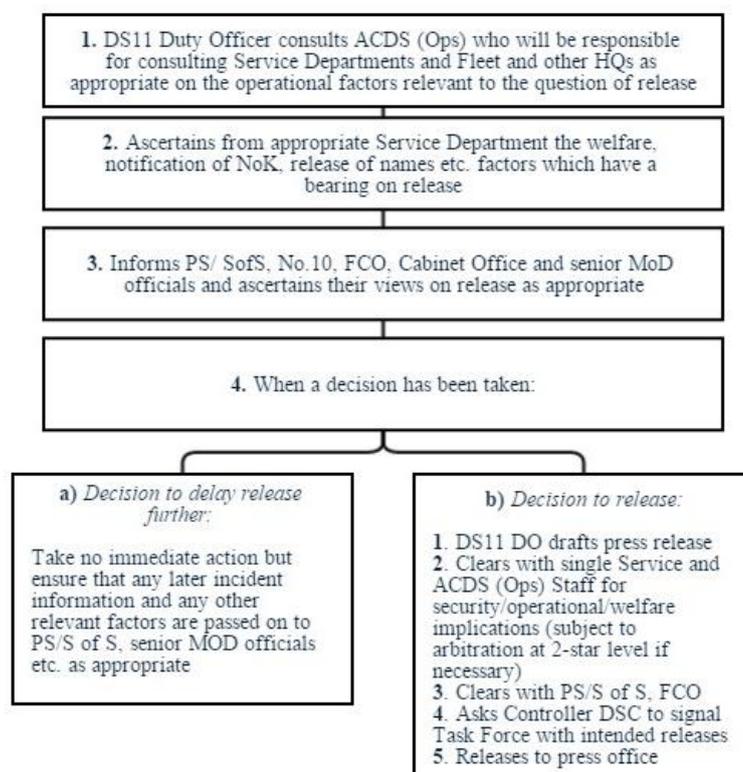


Figure 3.5: *Diagram of reporting chain in 'hold' applied, 13 May 1982⁶⁸*

On 13 May the Task Force was relayed a copy of its instructions on the topic of incident reporting.⁶⁹ Although the new incident reporting system ensured the MoD received news

⁶⁷ Diagram constructed from information in: MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E1-9.

⁶⁸ Diagram constructed from information in: MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E49-1.

⁶⁹ See Appendix Ten.

more speedily, and the MoD and Fleet were clearer about their own responsibilities, one of the drawbacks of the modified system was that there were still potential delays for correspondents with the Task Force. On 14 May this point was highlighted by Graeme Hammond, a civilian PRO with the Force. Hammond was perhaps the finest of the minders. Nicholson reported that he ‘did his damndest for us under very difficult circumstances’.⁷⁰ Hammond sent a signal to MODUK stating that, while he was ‘grateful’ for the guidance, ‘TERMS STILL DO NOT MEET EMBARKED PRESS REQUIREMENT TO BE FIRST WITH NEWS...’⁷¹ He also stressed that the ‘SUCCESS OF SYSTEM WILL DEPEND ON AMOUNT OF DELAY BETWEEN YOUR SENDING AND MY RECEIVING RELEASE SIGNALS’.⁷² Hammond’s message rather assumed that ‘success’, in this case, related to the effective release of journalists’ copy. The definition of ‘success’, from the perspective of the MoD, was more likely to involve journalists’ copy being delayed until it had announced the news in London, and checked the incoming stories, avoiding any embarrassing faux pas such as those previously experienced.

The major shortcoming of MoDPR throughout the war, was that it failed to consider policy in *advance*. It always reacted with policy to fit the campaign once a development had been made. For example, the final change to the incident reporting system was made on 21 May, the day the British landed at San Carlos. When the landing of British troops on the Falklands became a realistic prospect, PR policy was considered more critically. For example, Rear Admiral Anthony Whetstone, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) and a member of the News Release Group, wrote to Taylor on 18 May that ‘I think we should look seriously now at how we propose to deal with PR on the assumption that a landing on the Falkland Islands takes place’.⁷³ Ahead of the landing, on 19 May the OD(SA) met and discussed the public presentation of the landing. The committee agreed to the MoD sending the Task Force instructions as to how the media should be briefed before the 21 May.⁷⁴ Later that same day the draft signal was circulated to the MoD.⁷⁵

On the day of the landings the incident reporting system was altered (for the last time during the conflict). The original document which detailed the changes was supplied on 19

⁷⁰ Nicholson, HCDC, v.ii, p.172, q.399.

⁷¹ CTG 317.8 to MODUK, HMS *Invincible* and CTF 317, 14 May, MoD, DFE24/2266 f.E36.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ A. Whetstone to Taylor, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E49.

⁷⁴ OD(SA), 19 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.136.

⁷⁵ DS11 to MoD, 19 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E51/4.

May by the Assistant Private Secretary to John Nott, Jennifer Ridley. There was a serious lack of communication between MoDPR and the Secretary of State's office. Ridley wrote to the information staff proposing amendments to the civil reporting chain which was in place on 13 April. Nott's office was unaware that new incident reporting guidelines had been sent to the Fleet and circulated to the MoD. Nevertheless, the reporting chain suggested by Ridley is considered for the land campaign (Figure 3.6). There was one main difference: the Resident Clerk (RC) would assume responsibility for notifying the Private Secretary of the Secretary of State for Defence. The Secretary would then inform Nott and advise him whether to inform the FCO and No.10 RCs. The Secretary would also be in charge of alerting the PUS. The revised reporting chain issued on 19 May (in place on 21 May) is indicative of the reactive nature of the MoD's policy throughout the Falklands.

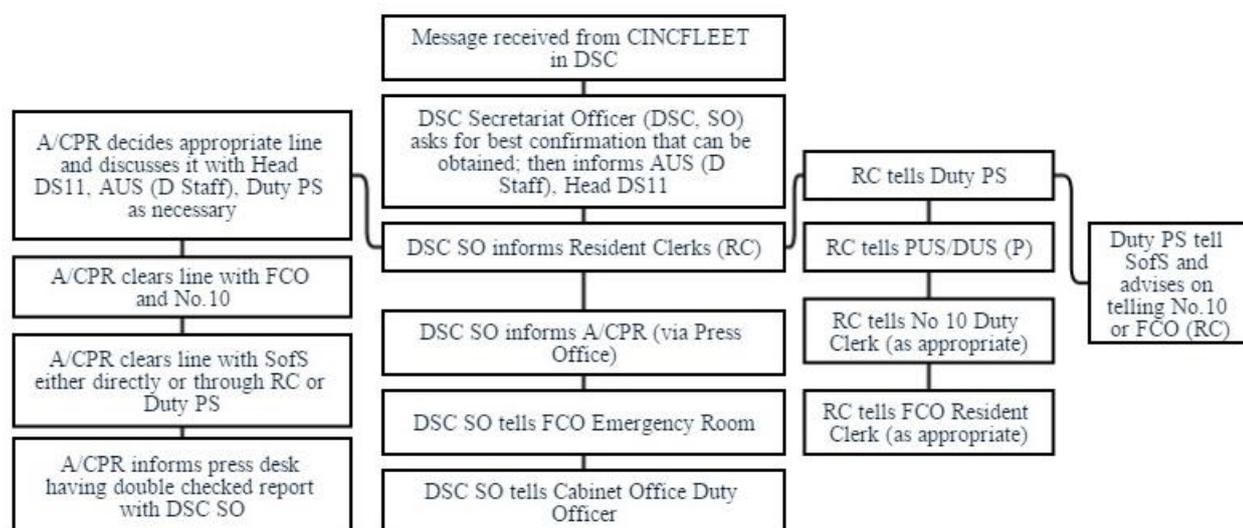


Figure 3.6: Altered MoD civil reporting chain, 19 May for 21 May 1982⁷⁶

During May there was a flurry of activity within the MoD in order to address the weaknesses of the incident reporting system. The reason incident reporting attracted so much attention from the MoD was because timely and accurate reporting of events would allow the MoD to maintain the credibility it so desperately needed to rebut information emanating from Argentina. The increased action in May, this thesis argues, was a direct result of the way information was handled following the sinking of the *Belgrano* and *Sheffield*. The British capture of the *Narwhal* merely accelerated the process of policy review. In light of the events of the previous week which had caused embarrassment, adapting incident reporting became a priority. The changes to incident reporting also

⁷⁶ Diagram constructed from information in MoD, DEFE24/2266.

uncovered the conflict between military and public relations concerns. That Taylor's review suggestions of 11 May were dismissed in favour of Rear Admiral Brown's proposals reveals the importance of military considerations over those of PR. The succeeding policy, rolled out to the Task Force on 13 May, not only catered more to the superior military, but it actually made the process of filing copy more arduous and subject to greater delays than the previous system.

3. Censorship Policy and the Task Force

The second dominant feature of MoDPR's South Atlantic policy related to censorship. As was established in Chapter Two, the initial guidelines on censorship were transmitted to the Task Force on 6 April, then 8 April.⁷⁷ From 8 April to 12 May there were no new guidelines sent to the Fleet. Censorship has been the nucleus of many different assessments of the media and the MoD during the Falklands. Nearly all works which touch on the media's role in the crisis pay significant attention to how the correspondents with the Fleet were censored.⁷⁸ Of course, discussion of regulations restricting the journalists was at the heart of most of their first-hand accounts.⁷⁹ The only history which provided a comprehensive assessment of policy on censorship was *The Fog of War*. Broadly, they argue that the guidelines of 8 April were too wide-ranging. If the guidelines were interpreted literally then it was impossible for those in charge of censoring the correspondents to know exactly what the correspondents *could* report.⁸⁰

There were, according to Mercer et al., two categories of information the authorities sought to protect through the use of censorship. The first was political, and concerned the Government's diplomatic stance in any negotiations. This, they said, was relatively simple to protect since diplomacy, by its very nature, takes place discreetly. The second category was military. This category had the potential to involve things like troop movements, the use of equipment or machines, and a list of other information which might potentially hinder British success.⁸¹ What this chapter aims to contribute to the literature on censorship in the Falklands is a detailed assessment of what policy arrangements were made to facilitate censorship onboard and on land, and how those policy arrangements impacted the campaign or shaped journalists' experience on the ground. Some aspects of discussion will

⁷⁷ Referred to as the signal of 8 April.

⁷⁸ See: Freedman, v.ii, pp.34-5.; Dodds, 'Contesting War', p.224.; Mercer et al., p.171.; Harris, p.32.; Adams, p.160.

⁷⁹ See: Nicholson, p.215.; Fox, p.10.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.209.; Hands and McGowan, p.277.

⁸⁰ Mercer et al., p.156.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.155.

be intentionally brief since the subject is vast and many historians have already investigated the consequences of policy. This section argues that lack of policy directives from MoDPR, along with an increased autonomy given to the Services on and off the Falklands, led to inconsistent censorship across the board. Because people (in London and with the Task Force) were ill-qualified to direct PR policy, there was almost no consistency.

3a. Censorship: Guidelines

The signal of 8 April instructed that COs were to ensure correspondents reported responsibly and avoided speculation, COs could stop transmission if warning on speculation were not observed and, although TV and radio ‘may be more difficult to control’, Information Officers ‘should do their best to ensure guidelines are met.’⁸² Perhaps the most obvious implication of the signal of 8 April, however, was that segment which related to who would be responsible for censoring copy. The signal stated that the ‘minders’ were not responsible for any security. Instead, COs would be accountable for the content of copy leaving their ships.⁸³ During the passage to the Falklands, COs were often the captains of ships. Not only were captains untrained in dealing with the media, they suffered from a lack of guidelines. Guidelines sent on 8 April were often forgotten, many do not remember any guidelines being issued to the crew at all. The demanding roles assumed by captains, on top of their regular responsibilities, took its toll on captains and they increasingly turned to their subordinate officers for assistance in vetting copy. Captains’ attitudes towards the media dictated how well-treated or successful the journalists were able to be.

The House of Commons Defence Committee, in reference to the guidelines of 8 April, found that, ‘whatever the rights and wrongs of the situation, the instructions of the Ministry of Defence to the Task Force Commanders were quite clear’.⁸⁴ One area of consensus between members of the Services was that few of them recall seeing, or hearing, any guidelines which restricted their engagement with the media, or any instructions as to how to handle them.⁸⁵ Captain Peter Dunt, Woodward’s Personal Staff Officer, when asked if

⁸² CINFLEET to multiple, 6 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4646 f.2.

⁸³ CINFLEET to all CTG, *Hermes, Invincible, Fearless, Canberra* and RFP *Fort Austin*, 27 Apr., HCDC, v.ii, p.474.

⁸⁴ HCDC, v.i, p.xxiv, q.54.

⁸⁵ Consensus existed among: Clapp, Interview, 20 Mar. 2014; A. Bennett, Interview, 11 Feb. 2014; D. Bernest, Interview, 3 Jun. 2014; P. Dunt, Interview, 5 Mar. 2014; J. Sanders, Interview, 10 Feb. 2014; M. Reed, Interview, 1 Apr. 2014; C. Keeble, Interview, 1 May 2014; P. Woodhead, 28 Mar. 2014.

he had seen guidelines said, 'I think I must have done but I didn't keep them and I can't remember them. So if I did it was pretty cursory'.⁸⁶ Woodward's Staff Operations Officer, Captain Jeremy Sanders, who worked alongside the signal equipment on HMS *Hermes*, believed that he had never seen any guidelines on what should or should not be said to the media.⁸⁷ Even when 5 Infantry Brigade set sail on board the *QEII* on 12 May, its commander, Brigadier Tony Wilson, was given no guidelines whatsoever to equip him for dealing with the media.

The captains who were to carry out censorship, and the majority of their men, had invariably not been given any sort of media training to prepare them for having the media aboard a vessel, much less for censoring its product. Both Alan Hooper and Mercer et al. have investigated what form of training the MoD provided their officers before 1982. Most had received but a day's training when attending a mandatory course. Sometimes the media relations course was even optional.⁸⁸

Not only did captains with the Task Force suffer from a lack of training, but they also suffered from a lack of PR advice. Captain Jeremy Black, captain of *Invincible*, later related that he found the process of vetting challenging: '... it was surprisingly difficult, you could easily gloss over something which was particularly important'.⁸⁹ Of the most senior commanders on the Falklands - Woodward, Brigadier Julian Thompson, Commodore Michael Clapp, Major General Moore and Brigadier Wilson - only one had a civilian media adviser stationed with him. Woodward had an adviser for seven days after departing from Portsmouth on 5 April. The MoD PO who had sailed with the ship, Robin Barratt, left *Hermes* at Ascension Island. If experienced media advisers had sailed south with the Force, there is every possibility those vetting copy would have found it easier to adapt to their new roles.

There is much evidence to suggest that the role of censor bestowed upon the captains of ships with media onboard was too much for them to manage. Michael Nicholson later regretted much of the angst he caused the Captain of *Hermes*, Linley Middleton, claiming he had 'more than enough on his plate'.⁹⁰ The Captain of HMS *Fearless*, Jeremy Larken, whose ship hosted journalists through much of the land campaign, remembered that by the

⁸⁶ Dunt, Interview.

⁸⁷ Sanders, Interview.

⁸⁸ See: Mercer et al., pp.70-72.; Hooper, pp.185-187.

⁸⁹ J. Black, Interview, 13 Oct. 1993, IWM, f. 13445.

⁹⁰ Nicholson, pp.227-8.

time he got to the Falklands, he had to read in excess of 1500 signals a day: ‘Whenever I got a spare minute I seemed to be turning over signals’.⁹¹ The literature on censorship in the Falklands has failed to identify an integral part of the censorship process. The duties of the captains became too much to bear as the campaign progressed. Increasingly, captains turned to their secretaries to help lighten the load. As early as 16 April Black demanded that all copy be cleared through his secretary, Richard Acland. Woodward turned over command of vetting to his secretary, Dunt. Brian Hanrahan of the BBC said ‘it was often the Admiral’s secretary who checked the information to be transmitted on behalf of the Admiral’.⁹² Nicholson claimed that Dunt ‘served as his shield’.⁹³ The MoD minder, Hammond said that journalists’ copy was submitted to him: ‘I then submitted it to the Admiral’s logistics officer (who was also his secretary), and in 90 per cent of the cases he did all the military vetting’.⁹⁴ Captain Sanders remembered that Dunt took on ‘dealing with the press’, as an ‘additional task’.⁹⁵ Dunt viewed his role with classic military-mindedness: ‘I was not their minder as such. It’s what I call ‘divisional officer’ - so as one of the Admiral’s staff I had to have some sort of responsibility for the press.’⁹⁶

As Woodward pointed out in 1982, all the captains with journalists embarked were ‘operating under the same instructions’, although those instructions, as Mercer et al. have argued, were interpreted differently.⁹⁷ Fieldhouse even claimed: ‘...with the benefit of hindsight I should have been very much better placed had the captains of the ships had well thought out and clear instructions as to how to handle the press under these particular circumstances’.⁹⁸ The most serious consequence of the MoD putting COs in charge of censorship was the inconsistencies which emerged as a result. It is a common assertion that the despatch of copy was dependent upon the ship from which it was sent and how favourably disposed a captain was towards the correspondents.⁹⁹ The various attitudes of COs has been documented elsewhere.¹⁰⁰ The MoD later judged that the ‘interpretation of the security guidelines did vary. In some cases ships’ commanding officers were evidently

⁹¹ J. Larken, Interview, 17 Aug. 1993, IWM, f.13304.

⁹² Hanrahan, HCDC, v.ii, p.157, q.347.

⁹³ Nicholson memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.167.

⁹⁴ G. Hammond, HCDC, v.ii, p.380, q.1611.

⁹⁵ Sanders, Interview.

⁹⁶ Dunt, Interview.

⁹⁷ Woodward, HCDC, v.ii, p.278, q.1077.

⁹⁸ Fieldhouse, HCDC, v.ii, p.278, q.1077.

⁹⁹ See: Carruthers, p.125.; Hudson and Stanier, p.171.; Mercer et al., p.90.

¹⁰⁰ See: Hastings, p.275.; Larken, Interview, IWM, Nicholson, p.226-228.; Harris, pp.25-32.; Hudson and Stanier, pp.170-171.; Fox, p.11.

inclined to be more restrictive than London'.¹⁰¹ Inconsistencies in censorship policy was one - if not *the* - major cause of the friction cultivated as the Fleet progressed south.

Inconsistency in the approach COs took to censorship was a problem, particularly, while the journalists were onboard ships. When the COs on land became responsible for vetting copy they largely delegated the task to the PROs they had as part of their Brigade or Battalion. In addition, there were two main communications stations available at which journalists could file copy: Ajax Bay and *Fearless* which was stationed off the islands.

3a (i). Censorship: the 'Sheffield'

The issue of inconsistency with regard to attitude was common knowledge within the MoD. Complaints had been heard by Cooper at the Editors' Meeting of 20 April. Cooper commented that 'this was inevitable since some would be in more sensitive locations than others and Commanding Officers varied in outlook; but MOD would try to get more consistency'.¹⁰² However, MoD's attempts to secure a more consistent form of censorship did not materialise in policy until the middle of May. Although worries about censorship and operational security being released dominated consideration of the Task Force journalists, there was very little tangible policy which related to its administration.

The major turning point for censorship policy was the attack on *Sheffield*. The assault affected censorship in a similar way in which it affected policy on incident reporting: it encouraged the MoD to reconsider its guidelines. It was the first occasion of importance in the campaign where the ineffectiveness of censorship policy was perceptible. The journalists were not permitted to file any copy on the sinking of the *Sheffield*: there was a complete news blackout. The journalists heard the news broadcast to them on the BBC World Service. The most ironic aspect of this was that the initial reports which were banned from being transmitted were reassuring and less distressing than the news which emerged from Nott in the Commons and McDonald from the MoD.¹⁰³

The *Sheffield* was not the first incident in which the journalists were gagged by the MoD. Journalists had also been prevented from reporting Vulcan, long-range attacks on Stanley airfield on 1 May, and on the sinking of the *Belgrano* on 2 May. The events of 1 May were

¹⁰¹ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.410, q.2.

¹⁰² Note for the record, 21 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.2.

¹⁰³ Nicholson memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.166., McDonald, 'Falklands War: HMS *Sheffield* Sunk', *IRN Radio*, 4 May <www.bufvc.ac.uk/tvandrado/lbc/index.php/segment/0119a00135003_McDonald;> 4 May, TNA, PREM19/624 f.142. and Nott, HC Deb., 4 May, v.xxiii, c.120.

of particular significance. In an operation codenamed 'Black Buck', several bombing raids were mounted from Ascension Island. A series of mid-air refuelling missions were carried out (11 in total). The raids, at the time, were the longest-raged bombing raids in history.

John Witherow of *The Times*, explained how journalists had been silenced:

We knew of the first attack on May 1 but we were told that, because it was top secret, we could not report it... Within half an hour the BBC World Service was quoting the Defence Ministry about the attack and we were confronted by bewildered and embarrassed naval officers.¹⁰⁴

By 14 May members of the Task Force were warning that:

IF EMBARKED PRESS ARE MADE TO FEEL THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR POSITION WITH THE FLEET THEY ARE UNABLE TO GET WORD OF EVENTS TO THEIR OFFICES UNTIL SEVERAL HOURS AFTER A MOD STATEMENT IS ISSUED THEY ARE LIKELY TO CONCLUDE THAT THEY MIGHT AS WELL BE SAFELY AT HOME IN THE SUNSHINE.¹⁰⁵

The *Sheffield* was the first major event of significance in which the inconsistency of censorship was highlighted. Not only could copy from correspondents with the Task Force have reassured worries about events in the South Atlantic, but it could have had a valuable impact on British public support for the Task Force which ebbed after the loss of *Sheffield* – the first of Her Majesty's ships to be sunk since 1945.

A review of censorship policy occurred at the same time as the review of incident reporting from the Force. However, it was provoked by different considerations. The events surrounding the *Sheffield* had emphasised the inconsistencies of censorship with the Task Force. On 8 May the CoS made clear their thoughts on allowing journalists to transmit their stories before London had released the news. While it was acknowledged that there was a need to 'improve the general situation in regard to the need to retain the goodwill of the media', 'it was illusory for the embarked correspondents to believe that they would receive, and be able to release, the first news of any incident involving the Task Force'.¹⁰⁶ However, on 9 May CINCFLEET contacted the MoD representing worries about correspondents. Northwood stressed that the situation onboard was coming to the point where the trouble correspondents were causing 'IS NOW NEGATING BENEFITS OF HAVING EMBARKED PRESS'.¹⁰⁷ Attention was also drawn to the problem of inconsistencies between ships: 'CHECKS ARE BEING APPLIED UNEVENLY IN

¹⁰⁴ Witherow, 'How we were scooped at the Falklands front', *The Times*, 21 Jul., p.8.

¹⁰⁵ *Invincible* to CTF 317, MODUK, CTG 317.8, 14 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E36/1.

¹⁰⁶ CoS, 8 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.84.

¹⁰⁷ CINCFLEET to MODUK, CTG, 9 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E4.

DIFFERENT UNITS, ESCALATING PRESS FRUSTRATIONS IN SOME CASES AND ALLOWING SECURITY BREACHES IN OTHERS. SHIPS HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT IS BEING RELEASED BY MOD OR WHEN'.¹⁰⁸ This complaint evoked a sense of urgency among the MoD. The situation was enflamed two days later by the publication of a first-hand account of the journalists' struggle against delays and censorship. Alfred McIlroy, *The Daily Telegraph* man in the South Atlantic wrote a piece entitled, 'CONCERN AT NEWS DELAYS'.¹⁰⁹ McIlroy claimed that 'the situation is the result of an apparent lack of co-ordination between the Ministry of Defence in London and the Royal Navy in how and when certain military developments can be released'.¹¹⁰

One area of censorship which the MoD did attempt to address in early May 1982 was the naming of individuals within Task Force copy. Since the use of personal details in journalists' product had little impact on censorship policy as a whole, these changes are not explored in-depth here – but for an inclusive assessment of policy concerning, what were known as 'Local Boy' stories, see Appendix 11.

3a (ii). Censorship: the 'Minders'

The lack of PR guidelines from the MoD had a significant impact both on censorship and the censors. The civilian PROs sent to the South Atlantic, or 'minders', suffered from a lack of regulation and instruction. This thesis need not discuss the role of the minders in detail, since it has been the subject of much debate and criticism in the literature of the Falklands. Despite the claim by Badsey that 'theirs [the minders'] remains one of the largely untold stories of the media side of the Falklands', there is an abundance of material on the experiences and capabilities of the civilian information officers.¹¹¹ Two of the five minders sent were interviewed by the HCDC in 1982. Hammond and Martin Helm both submitted evidence to the inquiry. Task Force correspondents dedicated discussion to the minders in their accounts of the war.¹¹² In addition to this, the minders were interviewed by Morrison and Tumber for their study.¹¹³ A number of works published since have supplied assessments of their effectiveness, including the *Official History*.¹¹⁴ Because there is an abundance of analysis of their role, the minders only attract minor discussion in this work, and only in regard to how they adhered to, or implemented, policy.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ McIlroy, 'CONCERN AT NEWS DELAY', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11 May, p.28.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Badsey, 'The Falklands Conflict as a Media War', p.46.

¹¹² Eds. Eddy et al., p.212., Fox, p.37., Hastings, p.345. and Hastings and Jenkins, p.417.

¹¹³ Morrison and Tumber

¹¹⁴ Freedman, v.ii., p.410.; Royle, p.220.; Carruthers, p.124.; Ingham, p.288.

The minders suffered from a lack of detailed instruction throughout the campaign. Helm, referring to the guidelines of 8 April, said that ‘there were basic guidelines given to us on what should be sent back and what should not’.¹¹⁵ In the communication sent to the Fleet on 6 April (and 8 April), COs were instructed that they should, through their information officers, ‘ensure correspondents report responsibly and avoid speculation’.¹¹⁶ The signal went on to recommend that if IOs were not ‘taken heed of’, COs would be able to stop the transmission of copy. The only guidelines that referred specifically to the minders after that, directed that they were not to have charge of the process of vetting copy. On 27 April, for example, a signal was sent stating that minders should give ‘regular guidance’ to the press, but they were not responsible for security:

SCRUTINY OF PRESS MATERIAL LEAVING SHIPS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF
COMMANDING OFFICERS...DELEGATION OF THIS DUTY IS NOT TO BE MADE TO
MOD PR OFFICERS AFLOAT WHO ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO IMPLEMENT SECURITY
DUTIES...¹¹⁷

Directives, then, were a little jumbled: the minders were to ensure that speculation was not entered into, but they were not supposed to vet copy. When the minders embarked on their journey with the Task Force they, like so many of the crew and journalists, left without a thorough briefing. Without clear and transparent directions, their role was to become one of the most confused of the war.

One reason the MoD felt that the minders were ‘unqualified’ to censor material was because they had very little, if any, operational knowledge.¹¹⁸ This argument has been a feature of many of those studies which deal with the PROs. Morrison and Tumber maintained that because they had no practical experience in, or knowledge of, the military, ‘it was therefore all the more difficult for them to make consistent decisions’.¹¹⁹ As a consequence, their prescribed duty of ensuring that the journalists did not engage in speculation, or act irresponsibly by releasing sensitive information, was very difficult. The minders often became pernickety over details about which the journalists could not appreciate the danger. Bishop of *The Observer* claimed that the journalists ‘quickly

¹¹⁵ M. Helm, HCDC, v.ii, p.378, q.1602.

¹¹⁶ CINFLEET to multiple, 6 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4646 f.2.

¹¹⁷ CINCFLEET to CTG, *Hermes, Invincible, Fearless, Canberra* and *Fort Austin*, 27 Apr., HCDC, v.ii, p.474.

¹¹⁸ See: Hastings and Jenkins, p.417.; Freedman, v.ii, p.410.; Morrison and Tumber, p.14.; Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’, p.46.

¹¹⁹ Morrison and Tumber, p.191.

discovered that even the most trifling details were regarded by MoD men as potential newsy titbits for Argentine intelligence and they slashed away at the facts with enthusiasm'.¹²⁰ The minders with the Task Force experienced a lack of specific and unambiguous instructions from which to perform their roles and they were hindered in what they were ordered to do by a lack of operational knowledge.

3a (iii). Censorship: 'London' Policy

The minders with the Task Force, during and after the conflict, were accused of running London's policy. In this case, 'London' refers to the MoD. Henceforward, 'London' is used to represent the MoD because much of the dominant literature refers to 'London's' policy when discussing policy implementation in the South Atlantic. This has been a prevalent line of argument among studies of the conflict.¹²¹ Academics have argued that the PR problems experienced in the South Atlantic were a direct result of policy instigated by the MoD in London. However, this thesis argues that PR policy from London was in short supply and, instead of simply implementing policy in the South Atlantic, the MoD actually allowed those members of the Task Force dealing with PR an impressive amount of authority over the censorship system in particular. The only exception to this was the Task Force minder, who was not allowed any autonomy and who had little choice but to carry out blindly the will of London. If 'London' had initiated a more structured and detailed censorship policy, one which had been agreed to at the start of the war (or as near to the start as possible), it would have prevented much of the ensuing controversy.

The minders have been inculcated by the correspondents themselves for senselessly inflicting London's orders. Alistair McQueen of the *Daily Mirror* wrote that, since sailing, 'signal after signal - in code - has arrived on Canberra [sic] ordering Captain Christopher Burne...and the team of Ministry of Defence Press Officers aboard to impose petty instructions on us'.¹²² Hastings and Jenkins later described the only contribution to the reporting of the war the PROs made was 'rigorously to enforce increasingly erratic restrictions on outgoing news'.¹²³ The main reason journalists suspected this was because the minders often referred the journalists back to London when they disputed a decision (made mostly by the CO). McGowan said that 'there was always a mysterious man with CINCLEET or hiding in the bowels of the MoD who had sent them a message...'

¹²⁰ Bishop memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.103.

¹²¹ Royle, p.220.; Carruthers, p.124.; Harris, p.27.

¹²² A. McQueen, 'The stories we cannot tell', *Daily Mirror*, 14 May, p.2.

¹²³ Hastings and Jenkins, p.417.

One occasion when the minders translated their instructions too literally was during the Argentine surrender of the Falklands. The surrender of South Georgia had received international attention and had caused Argentina much embarrassment. The British wished to ensure nothing could endanger peace negotiations for the Falklands, particularly since the Argentine commander in Stanley, General Mario Menendez, was under orders from President General Leopoldo Galtieri not to concede. Instructions came initially from MoDPR, but were signalled to the Fleet from CINCFLEET, that there should be no media permitted into, or near negotiations.¹²⁴ When the minders received this instruction it was decided, according to Helm, that ‘there would be for a period a total blanket ban on material actually leaving the Falklands’.¹²⁵

Confusion was created by the ban on journalists’ copy *after* the negotiations had closed. Nicholson maintained that he was prevented by a MoD PO from reporting the ceasefire on the evening of 14 June. Nicholson claimed that Helm misinterpreted instructions in a bid to carry out the directive to the letter.¹²⁶ Helm refuted Nicholson’s account of the event, stating: ‘I was categorically told nothing could go back’.¹²⁷ Whether or not Helm was carrying out orders, or whether he misinterpreted his instructions, the consequence was the same: Argentina announced the surrender before the British.

The closest to an accurate description of the position of the minders came from Brian Hanrahan, of the BBC, when he claimed that ‘the policy was being made in London at a considerable distance and they [the minders] were just given blanket directives which they had to operate and they had no discretion...’¹²⁸ Fred Emery, Executive Editor for news at *The Times*, was perhaps the first in the UK to question the role of the minders when he wrote on 10 June: ‘Not an impressive group from the first... Since the task force entered the warzone these unhappy bureaucrats have become mere flotsam drifting meaninglessly from ship to ship, occasionally enforcing the latest restrictions from London...’¹²⁹

The only directive the minders were *clear* about was that they were there to carry out London’s instructions. Mercer et al. quoted a confidential report to which the MoD

¹²⁴ Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.262, q.980.; Helm, p.263, q.985.

¹²⁵ Helm, HCDC, v.ii, p.263, q.985.

¹²⁶ Nicholson memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, pp.67-68, q.b.

¹²⁷ Helm, HCDC, v.ii, p.263, q.985.

¹²⁸ Hanrahan, HCDC, v.ii, p.155, q.332.

¹²⁹ F. Emery, ‘‘Kit’ and ‘minders’ dictate flow of news from the front’, *The Times*, 10 Jun., p.6.

permitted access. The report was submitted to Fleet HQ after the war. On ‘the minder’ it noted:

...he did not fully appreciate the conflicts of priorities facing the command. He was not able to brief the journalists because he did not possess a sufficiently detailed knowledge or understanding of naval operations. For the same reason he could not have been used to vet copy, even if signalled instructions had not forbidden the allocation of such duties to MoD PR officers.¹³⁰

Caught between being unqualified and not having sufficient authority, the only option open to MoD minders was to enforce the instructions issued to them.

Despite the minders being proponents of London’s policy, there is evidence to suggest that, contrary to the dominant line of argument amongst much of the literature, the MoD did not completely dictate policy in the South Atlantic. Much of the time, there was a sizeable degree of autonomy awarded to the men on the ground. Morrison and Tumber judged that the journalists were, at first, suspicious of the minders who seemed to be preventing them from sending copy. However, they argue that ‘...in fact, it was London’.¹³¹ There was certainly an element of confusion about who was running policy on the Falklands. Fox contended that even the authorities were confused and were unclear about who was in charge: ‘Fleet (at Northwood), MoD, the Task Force Commander, or the local command and the MoD press officers’.¹³²

3a (iv). Censorship: the Military ‘Minders’

The servicemen who played the most significant role in policy, particularly during the land campaign, were the relatively unfamiliar breed of ‘military minder’, or PRO, attached to individual Brigades. In theory each ship should have had an officer who was trained in media relations, who would serve as the ship’s PRO. However, whether a ship had such an officer or not was dependent on both the ship and the captain. Aboard Middleton’s command, *Hermes*, the men of the ship had very little idea of who - if, indeed, such a person existed - had the role of PRO. The Chief Aircraft Engineer on board, Trevor Whalen, said that he had never heard of anyone with that responsibility.¹³³ The Chief Petty Officer, Iain Shickle, was similarly unaware of the post, or the man who filled it.¹³⁴ There was, in fact, a PRO on *Hermes*, Commander Tony Moran. Although Moran did not feature

¹³⁰ Mercer et al., pp.88-89.

¹³¹ Morrison and Tumber, p.213.

¹³² Fox memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.141.

¹³³ T. Whalen, Interview, 26 Aug. 2013.

¹³⁴ I. Shickle, Interview, 26 Aug. 2013.

in evidence of the HCDC, and seems to have escaped most of the literature of the conflict, an article in 1982 quoted Nicholson as saying that Moran helped ‘to create and foster suspicion on all sides’.¹³⁵ His negative attitude was further documented by an interview with *Hermes*’ Intelligence Officer, Rupert Nichol.¹³⁶ In an interview, Moran himself admitted that his training really amounted to spending a morning in the Navy DPR’s office.¹³⁷ On some of the other vessels the PRO was recognised as such, but did not have military authority. Lieutenant Bryant and Lieutenant Butler remembered HMS *Brilliant*’s PRO, Bob Davidson, the Duty Staff Officer.¹³⁸ On HMS *Andromeda* the situation was comparable. Neil ‘Nobby’ Hall was still in training to be an officer in April 1982. As part of his responsibility on board he was appointed to the post of Deputy PRO.¹³⁹ The PRO was the ship’s doctor. Mostly, Nobby’s duties centred on organising pen pal letters which had been flooding in from the *Daily Star*.¹⁴⁰ Most ships’ PROs had other responsibilities which dictate that, as the conflict progressed, and the strategic importance of their natural occupation amplified, the duties of the PRO were increasingly abandoned. If a ship had a PRO, he was likely not to be anyone with significant command, authority, or time, which meant that, during the conflict, ships’ PROs played a minor role.

Conversely, as a direct result of experience in Northern Ireland, the Army and the Royal Marines had their own Service PROs, who were well known amongst the men, and who had the ear of their COs. It is generally accepted that operational PR was more successful on land than it was at sea. The Marine and Army PROs were the primary reason for this. With each of the two Brigade HQs on the Falklands there was a PRO: Captain David Nicholls with 3 Commando Brigade, and Lieutenant Colonel Dunn with 5 Infantry Brigade.¹⁴¹ The advantage afforded to these men was that they were, unlike the civilian minders, qualified in both spheres – the military and PR. Another significant benefit was that each had solid relationships with their COs. Julian Thompson said in an interview following the war that:

¹³⁵ ‘Other battle of the Falklands pitted military against media’, *Deseret News*, 29 Jul., p.9.
<www.news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Aul-kaQHnToC&dat=19820729&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

¹³⁶ R. Nichol, Interview, 25 Jul. 2002, IWM, f.23450.

¹³⁷ T. Moran in Mercer et al., p.89.

¹³⁸ N. Butler and B. Bryant, Interview, 24 Jan. 2014.

¹³⁹ N. Hall, Interview, 6 Oct. 2013.

¹⁴⁰ Because the *Andromeda* had been informally named ‘Star Ship Andromeda’, the newspaper had adopted the ship as her own.

¹⁴¹ Mercer et al., pp.89-95.

I said he was to see me every day and that he was going to be part of the command team. He was to be totally in the picture as to what we were doing so the staff, who know him anyway, also know that he was trusted by me and part of the essential scene.¹⁴²

Thompson reiterated his confidence in Nicholls 32 years later. He said he never gave an interview himself. Thompson viewed that it was the PRO's duty to take daily briefings and to interact with the press.¹⁴³ The relationships between PROs with the Marines and Army, conflicted sharply with that which was enjoyed on the ships. The land minders assumed the responsibility of handling day-to-day dealings with the press, briefing them and vetting their copy. The CO would be left to the principal concern of directing battle. This was not just the case for the two PROs attached to Brigade HQ. According to Fox, Colonel Tom Seccombe of the Marines, and Deputy Commander of 3 Commando Brigade, had become, whilst travelling south, 'fed up with the squabbles over filling arrangements and the petty rules now being laid down by the MOD information officers...'¹⁴⁴ Seccombe ordered Major Mike Norman, who had been the commander of the Marines on the Falklands when the Argentines invaded, to take over supervision of the media attached to 3 Commando Brigade. Fox called Norman the 'Super-minder' – he was capable of correcting technical, military detail and also enjoyed rendering his grammatical expertise.¹⁴⁵ The principal difference between the PR of the land campaign and that which was observed at sea, was that the role of managing the press had been delegated to officers with authority, access to COs and operational knowledge – qualities to which the civilian minders could never really aspire. These officers allowed for a smoother PR service and freed their COs to run the war.

Late in 1982 the HCDC recognised that Service PROs 'should have played a bigger role' in the Falklands.¹⁴⁶ They possessed a number of attributes which made them more endearing to the journalists, and more successful in administering PR policy than the civilian minders. Other texts have explored the credentials of the Service PROs and for this reason, the debate pertaining to the superiority of the Service PROs is merely touched upon here.¹⁴⁷ There is a consensus that the Service PROs were superior to the civilian minders and generally better equipped for the job. Freedman considered that, because the military minders carried out their duties so efficiently, from the start, 'sending public relations

¹⁴² Thompson in Mercer et al., p.91.

¹⁴³ Thompson, Interview.

¹⁴⁴ Fox, p.36.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p.37.

¹⁴⁶ HCDC, v.i, p.ix, q.138.

¹⁴⁷ Fox, pp.36-37.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.420.; Freedman, v.ii, p.409.; Harris, p.134.

officers – the ‘minders’[civilian] – was bound to fail’.¹⁴⁸ The testimony to the HCDC by journalists supported this notion. The evidence or memoranda supplied by Protheroe, PA, the *Daily Star*, Hastings, Bishop, Nicholson and Hanrahan all highlighted the weaknesses of the civilian minders compared to their military counterparts.¹⁴⁹

Military minders had more authority than their civilian equivalents for a number of reasons: they had operational knowledge, they were of the officer class and therefore had a natural standing, they were often able to organise transportation for journalists which the civilians were not and, most crucially, military minders had control over censorship. Whilst writings on the minders are common, accounts tend to place the role of these men into the greater context of PR policy. It is suggested here that the advent of the military minders signalled a phase in the policy of public relations in the conflict which was dominated by on-the-ground management. Whereas civilian minders were explicitly prohibited from engaging in the vetting process, military minders were able to partake in censorship because they had the operational knowledge to do so – they could recognise a phrase which might endanger ‘operational security’, and could identify information which might be gratuitous to the Argentines. In many ways, as the campaign progressed, so too did the influence of the Service PROs. One prominent example of how the Service PROs’ authority may have exceeded that which was allotted to them is when it came to censoring copy. Captain Nicholls claimed in an interview that: ‘We could delete and did so. The most crucial area was future operations and indicating areas and strengths’.¹⁵⁰ Military minders were not afraid to delete sections of correspondents’ writing under the premise that it might compromise security. Bishop claimed that ‘once we got ashore the MoD men both on the ground and in London appear to have stifled any suggestion that the campaign was doing anything but rolling inexorably towards victory’.¹⁵¹ On 27 May, Bishop authored an article which declared that the British advance was in danger of being bogged down. However, ‘by the time this was released in London the references had been removed and the piece began about halfway through on a more optimistic note’.¹⁵² Despite the warning of April, that ‘OFFICERS SHOULD NOT SEEK TO INTERFERE WITH THE STYLE OR

¹⁴⁸ Freedman, v.ii, p.409.

¹⁴⁹ Protheroe, HCDC, v.ii, p.59, q.194.; PA memorandum, p.313, q.10.; *Daily Star* memorandum, p.116.; Hastings, p.216, q.659.; Bishop memorandum, p.103.; Nicholson, p.174, q.405.; Hanrahan, p.162, q.366.

¹⁵⁰ D. Nicholls in Mercer et al., p.168.

¹⁵¹ Bishop memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.103.

¹⁵² Ibid.

CONTENT OF PRESS MATERIAL UNLESS IT COMPROMISES SECURITY’, deletions were made.¹⁵³

The most significant turning point in how South Atlantic PR policy was administered in the warzone came on 12 May. One action signalled a distinct departure, not only from the policy which had been previously adhered to, but from London’s control of PR policy. It is the contention here that guidelines dispensed to the Task Force on 12 May signalled the MoD’s reluctance to directly manage PR, and signalled a phase of autonomy for those preparing to land on the islands. A document was distributed from *Canberra* to other Task Force vessels on 12 May. The document was entitled, ‘UK Press ashore of the Falklands Guidelines’.¹⁵⁴ Nicholls, aboard *Canberra* - the ship with the largest contingent of media aboard - was the creator of these guidelines. As previously explained, there had been no communication from London which had significantly updated the guidelines of 8 April. Nicholls, along with the three civilian minders on *Canberra* (Helm, George and Alan Percival), came up with the new regulations for reporting on land. The document was more structured in style and clearer in content than that of early April. The aims of the policy, the responsibilities of COs and how regular media interaction, such as briefings, communications, movements etc. should be approached, were all outlined in the document. The text was far more positive than the last had been. Instead of listing what could not be discussed in the presence of journalists, for example, the document outlined what *should* be done in order for PR policy to run more efficiently. For example, COs were to keep the journalists informed of military developments and were to ‘guide journalists on what they may or may not report or photograph...’¹⁵⁵ The importance of the media was explained at the start of the message:

The journalists will have the important function of keeping the British public informed of developments on the island. They will also be in an excellent position to counter any Argentinian disinformation which is broadcast about our operations.¹⁵⁶

As an annex to the guidelines was a list of journalists and to which units they might be assigned for the duration of the land campaign (Figure 3.7). The unit to which a journalist was to be assigned was the topic of speculation as the Task Force neared the TEZ. Hastings wrote in an article published the day after the landings that ‘it is a journalistic reflex

¹⁵³ CINCFLEET to CTG 317.8, 6 Apr., HCDC, v.ii, p.466.

¹⁵⁴ ‘UK Press ashore’ guidelines, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E28.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

remorselessly to harass the powers that be for the improbable, in the hope that after much haggling one will be granted a small portion of the possible'.¹⁵⁷ He went on to explain that:

...we have fought ferociously for the right to report a possible Falklands landing from somewhere near the van. It was rather an alarming anti-climax when the staff considered, consulted, and came back to say that everybody would be delighted to take us, and would we like to go with the forward companies, or the next ones behind?¹⁵⁸

The process of assigning places with the land Forces was controlled by Thompson on board *Fearless*. His PRO, Nicholls, made recommendations and drew up the document listing the allocations. Thompson said 'we organised them as best we could'.¹⁵⁹ He personally took responsibility for the decisions regarding individual journalists and their unit distribution. That the MoD had no input in this arrangement demonstrated just how much power it had relinquished. Some of the correspondents had developed close relationships with particular units on the voyage south. Fox wrote of his dismay that he would disembark with 2 Para, when he had made 'tentative arrangements to disembark with either 3 Para or 40 Commando', as he had 'got to know officers and men in both well'.¹⁶⁰ In actual fact, Fox rationalised, Thompson thought he 'would be one of the first ashore with 2 Para and would have a commanding view of the anchorage, being able to get despatches back for the BBC and World Service quite easily'.¹⁶¹ On 18 May a document on the PR organisation of the amphibious Force was sent to Neville Taylor. It was copied to the DPRs and the Assistant Chiefs of Staff. The document clarified which journalist would accompany which unit (see Figure 3.7).¹⁶² This was the first communication of the plan sent directly to MoDPR and further established how remote the MoD was from PR policy on the Falklands by the middle of May.

¹⁵⁷ Hastings, 'The sword and the pen', *Daily Express*, 22 May, p.4.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Thompson, Interview.

¹⁶⁰ Fox, p.71.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p.72.

¹⁶² 'PR Organisation of Amphibious Force', 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E46/3.

Press Team A	
Major Mike Norman	PRO Royal Marine
Petty Officer Peter Holdgate	Commando Forces Photographer
Robert Fox	BBC Radio
Alistair McQueen	<i>Daily Mirror</i>
Press Team B	
Alan Percival	Civilian Senior Information Officer
Sergeant Dave Munnely	PRO 3 Commando Brigade
Tom Smith	Noted as PA Photographer but from <i>Daily Express</i>
Robert McGowan	<i>Daily Express</i>
40 Commando Royal Marines	
Patrick Bishop	<i>The Observer</i>
Jeremy Hands	ITN
Bob Hammond	Cameraman (ITN)
John Martin	Soundman (ITN)
42 Commando Royal Marines	
John Shirley	<i>The Sunday Times</i>
Max Hastings	<i>Standard</i>
Kim Sabido	IRN
45 Commando Royal Marines	
Charles Lawrence	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Ian Bruce	<i>Glasgow Herald</i>
2 Parachute Regiment	
David Norris	<i>Daily Mail</i>
3 Parachute Regiment	
Derek Hudson	<i>Yorkshire Post</i>
Leslie Dowd	Reuters

Figure 3.7: *Distribution of journalists with landing units as recognised by MoD, 18 May 1982*

On the document, only 16 of 29 journalists with the Fleet were named. Based on only these 16 names, the MoD contacted the Fleet to authorise the allocation of places. The MoD gave Nicholls and Thompson the authority to act at their discretion:

FOLLOWING TELECON TODAY WE AGREE ALLOCATION OF PLACES FOR EMBARKED PRESS TO COVER FUTURE OPERATIONS SHOULD BE AT DISCRETION OF CTF 317.8’.

‘YOU SHOULD AGREE THE DISTRIBUTION OF MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR OWN PREFERENCE AND AVAILABLE AND SUITABLE LOCATIONS.’¹⁶³

¹⁶³ MODUK to CTG 317.8, 18 May, HCDC, v.ii, p.488.

The allocation of journalists to units was discussed in the Editors' Meeting of 20 April. Cooper explained that '...with the amalgamation of the various elements of the Task Force, some redistribution of correspondents between ships was taking place...' ¹⁶⁴ Cooper also justified a decision made in the South Atlantic which would come to plague five in the journalist's party. He told editors that 'priority would be given to those who had had less good access to material on the voyage south, eg those in Canberra'. ¹⁶⁵

The missing names from the document of 18 May belonged to the BBC TV crew and their reporter, Hanrahan, and the five journalists who had travelled on HMS *Invincible*. Hanrahan, who was on *Hermes*, explained that he was not allowed to land with the amphibious group like the journalists on *Canberra*: 'It had been agreed in our absence that the team that came down on the Canberra [sic] would cover the landing and the rest of us would stay with the Naval side of it and cover the Naval battle and the air battle'. ¹⁶⁶ The *Hermes* journalists were permitted onto the Falklands two days after the landings – even then they were not allowed to stay on shore *permanently* until a full week after the landing. ¹⁶⁷

The *Invincible* journalists, however, prevented from landing with the main force on 21 May, landed first on 25 May, but were forcefully returned to the carrier because, they were told, they had insufficient kit to stay. It was not until 3 June that the five journalists would get ashore to report the campaign in earnest. The decision to permit only those who had travelled on *Canberra* was taken by Thompson and Nicholls. Those journalists aboard *Canberra* had not had as much access to information or been permitted to file as much copy as those on board *Invincible*. To readdress the balance, the decision was taken to send *Canberra*'s journalists ashore, restricting those who had been more successful in the run-up to the landings. The decision to enforce this policy was transmitted from *Canberra* to MODUK on 6 May. DPR(N) contacted Cooper's secretary immediately to inform him that 'because of inhibitions put upon the press embarked in SS CANBERRA due to her role, it has been suggested that this shall be the party to go ashore if and when there is a landing on the Falklands'. ¹⁶⁸ Captain Black contacted MoDPR on the journalists' behalf:

CTG 317.0 [*Canberra*] VIEW IS THAT HIS EMBARKED PRESS HAVE SO FAR HAD LITTLE TO REPORT AND DESERVE FIRST GO AT LANDINGS....MY CURRENT

¹⁶⁴ Note for the Record, 21 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.5.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Hanrahan, HCDC, v.ii, p.160, q.362.

¹⁶⁷ Press Association memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.108, q.40.

¹⁶⁸ I. Sutherland to Omand, 6 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E5.

INTENTION IS TO TRANSFER MY PRESS AND MOD REPRESENTATIVE TO RFA RESOURCE WHERE THEY WILL HAVE ACCESS TO MARISAT AND, PERHAPS, A BETTER CHANCE OF COVERING LANDINGS, PARTICULARLY AFTER DAY ONE.¹⁶⁹

Black's pleas fell on deaf ears and, despite him transferring his five journalists to RFA *Resource* the same day, they were not even to catch sight of the islands for another four days. The events which saw the '*Invincible* five' ashore the Falklands on 3 June have been investigated in several well-known works on the media and the Falklands. Perhaps the most compelling narrative can be located in '*Gotcha!*'.

Thompson maintains that there was no conspiracy involved in the decision to send only *Canberra*'s journalists ashore.¹⁷⁰ In fact, there was another argument why the *Invincible* five should not have been permitted ashore: they were not properly trained. Moore said that there was:

...a feeling, after the landing, that the journalists who had been down with the military embarked in the amphibious and merchant vessels that the military forces were travelling in, had done a lot of training with them and had been at their briefings and were ready to go ashore with them...¹⁷¹

Taylor supported this view of proceedings, claiming that the press who had been on *Invincible* 'were not trained, were not equipped, were not familiarised, and we refused in London to issue instructions that they should be put ashore'.¹⁷² Taylor gave the impression that London was very much in control of this area of policy. However, at the HCDC, no one in the MoD could effectively pin-point from where the decision had originated. Helm, civilian PRO, was told, when on *Invincible*, that the decision had been made for security reasons.¹⁷³ McDonald said he brought up the issue at a CoS meeting to be instructed that there was a valid security reason why the option had been enforced.¹⁷⁴ However, the decision did not emanate from the CoS. Lewin recounted that the matter was 'brought to my attention and we passed it through the Commander in Chief down the line and the Task Force Commander came back with what to me was an extremely adequate reason and I would back him up on that'.¹⁷⁵ The decision to restrict the movements of the *Invincible* five, and promote those of the *Canberra* journalists, for whatever reason, was a significant effect of policy control being centred firmly in the South Atlantic by mid-May.

¹⁶⁹ *Invincible* to MODUK, CTG 317, CTG 317.0, CTG 317.8, 20 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f. E55/2.

¹⁷⁰ Thompson, Interview.

¹⁷¹ Moore, HCDC, v.ii, p.282, q.1114.

¹⁷² Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.282, q.1114.

¹⁷³ Helm, HCDC, v.ii, p.381, q.1632.

¹⁷⁴ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.380, q.1632.

¹⁷⁵ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.345, q.1405.

3b. Policy and the Landings

The landings on the Falklands marked an important stage in PR policy. The new guidelines of 12 May made for a more efficient system of operation. Hastings and Jenkins judged that ‘it is extraordinary that the importance of news management was not recognised long before the San Carlos landing, and a senior officer – of at least the rank of colonel – sent south to handle it’.¹⁷⁶ The importance of PR had been increasingly recognised – particularly in the South Atlantic, but also in CoS meetings. The system for communication and censorship when on land has been examined in a number of studies on the war. All the Task Force journalists’ first-hand accounts include discussion on how the PR land campaign differed from PR at sea.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, it is not the intention to delve further into the journalists’ experiences on the Falklands, merely to outline the PR policy which was set out at the start of the land operation.

On 18 May a signal was circulated within the MoD which originated from *Canberra*. It outlined the immediate provisions for PR policy ashore the Falklands.¹⁷⁸ During the initial stages of the landing the Amphibious Task Group, headed by Commodore Michael Clapp (CTG317.0) and 3 Commando Brigade (CTU317.1.1) would co-locate in *Fearless*. Once 3 Commando was firmly established on land, CTU317.1.1 would move HQ ashore and press traffic on military communications would be passed through 317.0 in *Fearless*. Once Moore, Commander of the Land Forces, arrived, press traffic from both Brigades would pass through *Fearless*. The PR organisation is depicted in Figure 3.8.

¹⁷⁶ Hastings and Jenkins, p.420.

¹⁷⁷ See: Fox; Hastings; Nicholson; Bishop and Witherow; McGowan and Hands. Also see: Moore, ‘The Falklands War: A Commander’s View of the Defence/Media Interface’, in Ed. P. Young, *Defence and the Media in Time of Limited War* (Routledge, 1992).

¹⁷⁸ ‘Operation Corporate News Release Policy’, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E46/3.

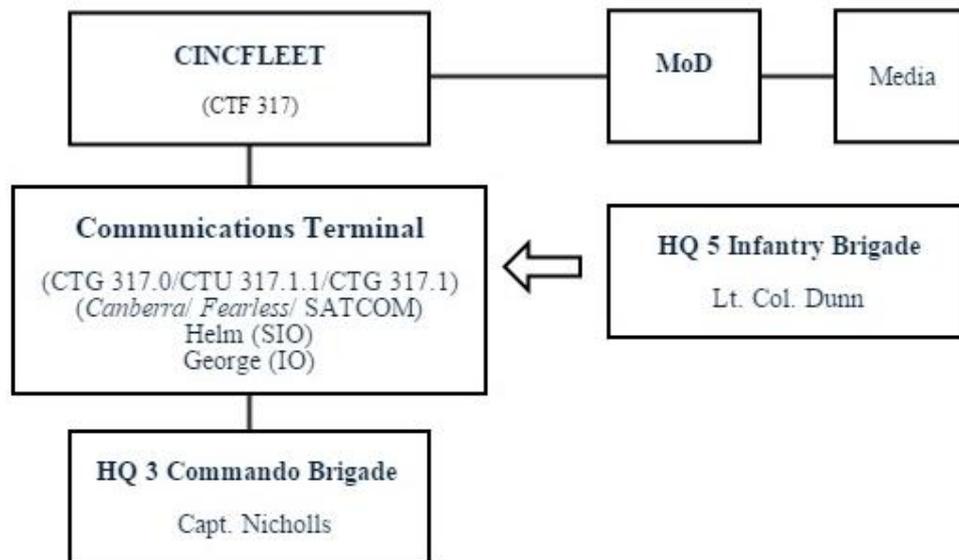


Figure 3.8: Diagram to show the PR organisation of the amphibious force, 18 May 1982¹⁷⁹

The two Brigades, 3 Commando and 5 Infantry, were to run parallel policies when on the Falklands. Five Infantry sailed to the islands on board *QEII*. The Brigade did not arrive on the Falklands until 10 days after the initial landing - on 31 May. According to Mercer et al., the PROs, Nicholls and 5 Infantry Brigade's PO, Dunn, were only in touch once during the course of the war, shortly before 5 Brigade landed.¹⁸⁰ Nicholls related his arrangements to Dunn, telling him about the allocation of journalists to Units. Dunn said he would do similar. Thus, each Service PRO adapted the policy of 12 May to suit their own Brigade's requirements.

The media experience on land has been well recorded. Typically, journalists would be attached to specific Units. It was envisaged that they would remain with their allocated unit throughout the campaign. Some did opt to stand by their Unit, for example Ian Bruce of the *Glasgow Herald* yomped across the width of the east island with 45 Commando. The *Telegraph's* Alfred McIlroy, and the *Mail's* David Norris persisted with their Units, the Scots Guards and 2 Para respectively. Those who 'unit hopped' fared better in that they transmitted more copy – the most prominent examples include Hastings and Fox. There were two ways to file copy for the print journalists on land: Ajax Bay and HMS *Fearless*. There was, of course, also the possibility that journalists might dictate copy via a MARISAT link. Radio reporters were forced to remain reliant on MARISAT, along with TV reporters, whose recorded images had to be sailed to Ascension, then flown to the UK.

¹⁷⁹ Diagram constructed from information in: MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.46-3.

¹⁸⁰ Mercer et al., p.96.

PR policy during the land campaign remained consistent with the guidelines of 12 May until the end of the war. Of course, there were occasions on which exceptions were made. The most notorious example of this was on 31 May, after Hastings had landed on Mount Kent. The Special Air Service (SAS) permitted Hastings to transmit his copy on the Service, via its own secure communications with HQ in Hereford. At HQ they transcribed the report and then forwarded it on to the MoD.¹⁸¹ Subsequent articles published included, 'HOW THE SAS MADE IT', 'I go in with the British daredevils', and 'Learning the lethal lessons of modern war'.¹⁸² Although the report was delayed at the MoD for three days, the event had, for many, confirmed the fact that some journalists on the Falklands were doing better than others. This theory was cemented on 14 June when Hastings became the first man into Stanley.¹⁸³ Subsequent headlines penned by Hastings included, 'Marvellous! The welcome from a jubilant priest', 'Tactics and luck pay off' and, most famous, 'THE FIRST MAN IN STANLEY'.¹⁸⁴

Policy regarding the censorship of information was, technically, adjusted only once throughout the conflict – on 12 May by Thompson and Nicholls. It has commonly been supposed that PR policy was being run from London during the war. Even after the war this conjecture endured. Contrary to the majority of the literature, this thesis insists that the MoD awarded the men in the South Atlantic an increasing degree of power. When the Service PROs assumed greater control over PR policy during the land campaign, this signalled a departure from a MoD-run policy to one managed from within the warzone.

3c. Censorship Twice Over

Although the guidelines of 12 May marked a significant devolution of power to the Falklands arena in one respect, during May provisions were put in place to ensure the MoD had the final say, not on *how* censorship was executed in the South Atlantic, but on what was released. The BBC submitted to the HCDC that 'one of the most dismaying features of the handling of information by the Ministry of Defence was the confusion that existed between those advising correspondents with the Task Force, and the further attempts at

¹⁸¹ Hastings, p.334.

¹⁸² Hastings, 'HOW THE SAS MADE IT', *Sunday Express*, 6 Jun., p.2.; 'I go in with the British daredevils', *Daily Express*, 3 Jun., p.3.; 'Learning the lethal lessons of modern war', *The Guardian*, 2 Jun., p.3.; 'Mass of men and weapons', *Daily Mirror*, 3 Jun., p.2.

¹⁸³ Hastings, pp.374-377.

¹⁸⁴ Hastings, 'Marvellous! The welcome from a jubilant priest', *Daily Mirror*, 16 Jun., p.2.; 'Tactics and luck pay off', *The Guardian*, 15 Jun., p.2.; and 'FIRST MAN IN STANLEY', *Evening Standard*, 15 Jun., p.1. Others by Hastings: 'The defeated have time for regret', *Daily Express*, 17 Jun., pp.2-3.; 'Pride restored at a high price', *The Guardian*, 16 Jun., p.3.

“censorship” by the Ministry of Defence in London’.¹⁸⁵ ‘Double vetting’ was introduced on 21 May. It was a system whereby already censored copy or broadcasts from the Falklands would be checked again in London. Double vetting is a concept which is often mentioned in the literature of the Falklands - however, very few studies consider the phenomenon in any depth. Harris provided a preliminary discussion of the system, which was enhanced by the work of Mercer et al., with the help of MoDPR. Mercer et al., perhaps, provide the definitive account of the system which requires little improvement.¹⁸⁶ This work does not, in this instance, seek to expand the work to any extent, merely to supplement it with consideration of how the policy ran and how it complemented, or detracted from, simultaneous South Atlantic policy.

There was considerable debate over where censorship was best placed – with the Task Force or in London. Largely, the Task Force and Northwood were both in favour of censoring journalists’ copy in London, leaving the military free to concentrate on the matter at hand. Generally, the MoD in Whitehall favoured censorship at the sharp end, on the front line. There seemed benefits to both concepts, and disagreements proceeded into May. Those who argued that censorship should take place with the Task Force validated their arguments by claiming that the military in the South Atlantic understood better what information might be dangerous to the conduct of the campaign. Hanrahan, when asked where he thought censorship was more critical replied that: ‘The critical end is the sharp end because the people there know what is damaging in military terms, when you remove it to the blunt end...the temptation to use it for some other purpose is too great’.¹⁸⁷

By and large, the majority of the MoD favoured censorship at the sharp end. Mercer argued that the MoD sought to ‘place responsibility for censorship on Northwood and the Task Force’.¹⁸⁸ Indeed, Taylor was personally in favour of censorship from the ‘front’. In a letter to the PUS, dated 10 May, Taylor explained that ‘the question of censorship is one on which FLEET feel strongly that responsibility should be moved to MOD to take the heat off CoS. I feel equally strongly that it is a function which should be and could be best done at the sharp end’.¹⁸⁹ Nott’s Private Secretary demonstrated another reason why MoDPR was so keen to maintain censorship at the sharp end when he wrote to Taylor on 11 May declaring that: ‘It was felt that the correspondents would accept such censorship more

¹⁸⁵ BBC memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.42.

¹⁸⁶ Mercer et al., pp.165-171.

¹⁸⁷ Hanrahan, HCDC, v.ii, p.158, q.354.

¹⁸⁸ Mercer et al., p.171.

¹⁸⁹ Taylor to Cooper, 10 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/6.

readily if it was done on board ship, since the journalists shared the common dangers of all those with the Task Force'.¹⁹⁰ However, advocates of censorship in London included both the military, and some members of the media in Britain. Woodward outlined how arduous censorship on the front line could be. One of the chief concerns was, whilst the South Atlantic censors could determine what might endanger military security, they could not be aware of what might endanger the diplomatic situation: '...censorship at the front end of the line is a very difficult thing for us to do effectively...I do not think there is any way in which we can cope with political sensitivities back in the United Kingdom'.¹⁹¹ The Editor of *The Times*, Charles Douglas-Home thought that 'censorship...should have been exercised in London and not actually at the Task Force. It seems to me it would have been possible, if a priority had been given to facilitating press coverage... to have let all the material come to London and the supervision to be exercised on it then...'.¹⁹² In fact, the Task Force and Northwood made representations to the MoD to move the focus of censorship to Britain. On 3 May Captain Black sent as urgent priority, a signal to the MoD requesting that copy be sent embargoed to the MoD for simultaneous release with MoD announcements.¹⁹³ The MoD told the HCDC that this was refused. However, a week later, Black signalled the MoD again stating, 'I HAVE STILL NOT RECEIVED APPROVAL TO SEND COPY, VETTED ONLY FOR ACCURACY AND SECURITY, TO YOU FOR RELEASE CONCURRENTLY WITH MOD ANNOUNCEMENTS'.¹⁹⁴ On 9 May Northwood went as far as signalling the MoD directly to suggest why a different procedure might benefit the MoD as well as the Task Force:

STRONGLY RECOMMEND CORRECT SOLUTION IS FOR ALL COPY TO BE FILED TO MOD FOR SECURITY BY SPECIAL SOUTH ATLANTIC PRESS OFFICE. MARISAT. BROADCASTS COULD BE HELD BY TV UNTIL SIMILARLY CLEARED. IMMEDIATE OPERATIONAL SECURITY VETTING COULD BE DONE ONBOARD. THIS WILL A. ENSURE UNIFORM STANDARDS B. REMOVE MUCH OF LOAD FROM COS AND CAUSE OF IRRITATION TO PRESS ONBOARD C. CONFORM WITH EFFICIENT NORTHERN IRELAND PROCEDURE OPERATED BY DPR (ARMY) UNDERSTOOD TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO PRESS.¹⁹⁵

There is some debate as to when exactly double vetting began. Mercer et al. advanced the argument that vetting in London started before the 21 May when it became official. They contended that 'from the first week, long before a shot was fired, guidelines were drawn up

¹⁹⁰ Omand to Taylor, 11 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/13.

¹⁹¹ Woodward, HCDC, v.ii, p.290, q.1163.

¹⁹² C. Douglas-Home, HCDC, v.ii, p.361, q.1495.

¹⁹³ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.412, q.2.

¹⁹⁴ *Invincible* to MODUK and CINCFLEET, 10 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E5.

¹⁹⁵ CINCFLEET to MODUK, Navy and CTG, 9 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E4.

by the MoD to control reporting by Task Force correspondents and public relation officers began to scrutinize copy – in London as well as in the ships'.¹⁹⁶ They went on to maintain that 'copy sent through military channels had been checked from 8 April'.¹⁹⁷ Although the MoD submitted to the HCDC that the London stage of vetting was created on 21 May, Mercer et al. describe how women military officers attached to the DPRs, and IOs at MoD, would check all incoming copy.¹⁹⁸ One of the DPRs conceded that: 'It laid us open to the criticism that the London vetting was concerned with political not operational interests'.¹⁹⁹ This thesis argues that, whilst the second tier of censorship had been established very early on in the conflict – as Mercer et al. argue – that second tier did not function seriously or thoroughly until the beginning of May. Harris reasoned that there were two events which altered MoD perceptions on the control of policy: Fieldhouse being informed via television of an event in the warzone, and the announcement of *Conqueror* as the submarine which sunk the *Belgrano*.

On 1 May Fieldhouse is supposed to have been very angry at hearing the news on television that two Argentine Mirages had been shot down over the Falklands.²⁰⁰ However, Jonathon Band, Flag Officer to Fieldhouse during the war, remembered multiple occasions when the media reported news from within the TEZ before Northwood had been informed; for example, that troops were cross decking at Gritvyken when *QEII* arrived off South Georgia, the loss of the SS *Atlantic Conveyor* and a host of other incidents during the land campaign because 'once they were on the Falklands it was easier for them to get their stuff away'.²⁰¹ The event which certainly did have a significant impact on the decision to implement an official tier of censorship in London was the naming of the *Conqueror*. On 3 May Nicholson, aboard RFA *Olmeda* in order to file using her MARISAT system, overheard on the bridge the name of the submarine responsible for the attack. He broadcast the information in a despatch to ITN's *News at One*. The HCDC noted in its report that the decision was taken as a result of the report by Nicholson.²⁰² The reason the report was so significant was not only because the whereabouts of submarines was top secret, but because from other reports that day, Nicholson made it possible to establish exactly where individual Units were on the islands. As early as 2 May, McDonald felt the need to remind

¹⁹⁶ Mercer et al., p.166.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p.169.

¹⁹⁸ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.4049, q.5.

¹⁹⁹ DPR in Mercer et al., p.169.

²⁰⁰ Harris, p.108. argues this, so did Hanrahan, HCDC, v.ii, p.156, q.338.

²⁰¹ Band, Interview, 20 Feb. 2014.

²⁰² HCDC, v.i, p.xxix, q.65.

the CoS meeting that MODPR could not edit reports sent by press representatives with the Task Force: ‘Detailed reports...should be vetted for security breaches under Task Force arrangements before transmission’.²⁰³ The gravity of the situation was noted on 4 May when it was decided that it was essential to devise ‘effective controls over the security aspects of reports being sent from press correspondents with the Task Force’.²⁰⁴ Shortly after this affair, plans for a more considered form of London censorship were put in place.

The women officers and IOs gave way to more senior men as censorship in London became a more official pursuit. The MoD understood that from 21 May onwards, at least one of the DPRs saw the ‘earmarked press’s copy’ before it was passed to the relevant publication.²⁰⁵ The most crucial issue with the second tier of censorship was the fact there was a complete absence of guidelines from which to apply censorship. One censor said they were told: ‘Imagine you are in command down there. What would you not want to be known?’²⁰⁶ *The Guardian* claimed after the event that the ‘censorship arrangements imposed in London...apart from the delay that they caused, also brought some irritation at the inconsistencies of the criteria laid down’.²⁰⁷ There were significant inconsistencies in how copy was treated in London – what was edited and even what was deleted. Mercer et al. conducted a study into how copy was handled by the MoD between 8 April and 16 June. They studied one fifth of the 627 despatches logged by the MoD and found that at least eight contained deletions.²⁰⁸ The extent to which the authors investigated the key issues surrounding double vetting was so thorough that no further examination is warranted.

Evidence suggests that much of the trouble taken over censorship was unnecessary. It was the opinion of many who experienced the war that the Task Force journalists self-censored. As Philip Taylor pointed out, ‘bullets and bombs do not discriminate between military personnel and journalists’.²⁰⁹ The Study Group on Censorship found that ‘few, if any, journalists would ever willingly publish information which would put lives at risk or damage operations’.²¹⁰ It was one thing for the journalists to self-censor when their lives

²⁰³ CoS, 2 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.74.

²⁰⁴ CoS, 4 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.78.

²⁰⁵ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.8, q.8.

²⁰⁶ Mercer et al., p.167.

²⁰⁷ *The Guardian* memorandum HCDC, v.ii, p.198.

²⁰⁸ Mercer et al., p.169.

²⁰⁹ P. Taylor, ‘War and the Media’, *Lecture delivered at Military-Media Relations conference*, Royal Military Academy, 1995, <www.leeds.ac.uk/papers/vp01.cfm?outfit=pmt&folder=34&paper=39>.

²¹⁰ Study Group on Censorship, p.31, q.134.

might be at stake, but it was another for them to be neutral. It was clear from the reporting of the correspondents that none could be neutral. Hastings even wrote articles entitled 'Why none of us can be neutral in this war' and 'Why I'm proud to take Britain's side'.²¹¹ Kim Sabido told his listeners: 'If you're under the impression that I've become something of an uncritical Marine groupie over the last couple of weeks, you'd be only partly right...when one is brought to realise...that one's very existence depends on a British victory, the angle on that perspective is bound to change'.²¹² Nicholson reflected that '...it was our war; it was my war. I felt it was as much my war as the marines and the paras because it was a British war'.²¹³ If the journalists' product needed censoring - and double censoring - it was probably only until the land campaign commenced and the bullets started flying. The policy of censorship is yet another example of how the MoD left it too late.

Many authors, particularly those who specialise in the theory of media in times of war, have pointed out how controversial censorship was during the Falklands because it was inflicted on a democratic and free media.²¹⁴ Another, less recognised reason why so much interest focused on the censorship of the media - indeed the media in general - was because the journalists with the Task Force, and the British media in general, drew wide attention to the problem. During the war there was a large quantity of articles produced which directly commented on ministry policy. One of the most renowned articles was written by McIlroy and published on 11 May. It placed the blame for delays in copy reaching the UK solely on the lack of co-ordination in the MoD.²¹⁵ Sabido spoke openly about the difficulties facing correspondents.²¹⁶ Commentators in Britain also had their say, condemning the ministry for their colleagues' discomfort.²¹⁷ Cartoons were also produced (see Figure 3.9). The attention focused on the media, particularly the censorship of the media, during and after the Falklands War was partly due to the media highlighting its own plight against the MoD.

²¹¹ Hastings, 'Why none of us can be neutral in this war', *Daily Express*, 8 Jun., p.1.; Hastings, 'Why I'm proud to take Britain's side', *The Times*, 9 Jun., p.10.

²¹² K. Sabido, 'Kim Sabido on Reporting from the Falklands', *IRN*, 9 Jun., <www.bufovc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0010700014015>.

²¹³ Nicholson, 'Falklands: Nicholson: Home', *News at Ten*, 26 Jun. <www.jiscmediahub.ac.uk/record/display/03900010282;jsessionid=A9362DFB612F0FABCDA983CF58A28D12>.

²¹⁴ Foster, 'The Falklands War', p.164.; Karl, 'Media Diplomacy', p.145.; Carruthers, p.129.; Knightley, p.434.

²¹⁵ McIlroy, 'CONCERN AT NEWS DELAY', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11 May, p.28.

²¹⁶ See: Sabido, 'Kim Sabido on Reporting from the Falklands', *IRN*, 9 Jun.; 'Falklands War – Sabido Reflections', *IRN*, 23 Jun.

²¹⁷ See: P. Tory, 'TV's Navy man is all at sea', *Daily Mirror*, 13 May, p.13.; Emery, 'Kit' and 'minders' dictate flow of news from the front', *The Times*, 10 Jun., p.6.

Mercer et al. proved that the second tier of censorship was inconsistent and even succumbed to deleting text.²¹⁸ While most journalists might have accepted the need for a second level of vetting most, as Protheroe suggested, ‘would like the people who are operating that second level... to be very much more clear in their minds as to why they are applying that, and not to indulge in observations about the taste and the tone of despatches...’²¹⁹ It is the contention of this thesis that double vetting started in earnest at the beginning of May, though the practice of double checking copy had begun as early as 8 April. The only reason the MoD needed to institute such a system was as a result of the lack of coherent censorship policy in the South Atlantic. If guidelines had been clearer, and the job had been given to the correct people, the inconsistencies witnessed in the censorship of copy would not have existed, making a second tier of vetting superfluous. In the event, censors in both the South Atlantic and in London suffered from a lack of clear guidelines which would dictate that PR policy did not run smoothly and had to be adapted to changing events in the warzone.



Figure 3.9: P. Brookes, *The Times*, 21 Jul. 1982, p.8.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Mercer et al., pp.165-171.

²¹⁹ Protheroe, HCDC, v.ii, p.61, q.220.

²²⁰ To accompany Witherow's, 'How we were scooped at the Falklands front'.

4. Conclusion

In pursuing PR policy concerning the South Atlantic there were two distinct aspects which drew attention: censorship and incident reporting. In both areas, significant changes to policy were only implemented when action started in earnest, at the beginning of May, with the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the *General Belgrano*. The fact that policy was only adapted in May 1982 made two factors clear. Firstly, policy, rather than being considered and applicable for the length of a potential campaign, was reactive in nature. Only when existing policy was tested to any real extent did the weaknesses, sometimes identified beforehand, become significant enough to provoke the MoD to reconsider procedure. The sinking of the *Belgrano*, and two days later, *Sheffield*, cemented the need for change in the process of incident reporting. Similarly, it was the announcement of the name of the submarine which sunk the *Belgrano*, and the inconsistencies made apparent by the sinking of the *Sheffield*, which drove a new phase of censorship – double vetting. The second factor which became evident was that the MoD had not put in place sufficient guidelines for either the reporting of incidents or censorship throughout the first month of the conflict. The general policy guidelines transmitted on 8 April effectively constituted a list of things not to do. What was lacking was a coherent, clear and fool-proof set of instructions on just how MoD envisaged and expected PR policy to be run from the warzone. In the case of censorship, both those responsible in the South Atlantic, and those who adopted the responsibility in London, suffered from a lack of guidelines on how to censor material. The most serious element of this was that censors with the Task Force were inconsistent. However, there was also a dearth of advice – during the first month at least – on how the Fleet was expected to report events in the South Atlantic. If incident reporting had been considered before incidents started to occur, the MoD would have been better placed, not only to handle in-coming copy, but to announce accurate news promptly. Incident reporting constituted, perhaps, the most unforgivable area in which the MoD failed to prepare. Whereas censorship may have had to be tested, and adapted to suit the purpose, incident reporting was a fairly simple procedure which would most certainly have had to be addressed at some time.

Throughout both strands of policy, the priorities of the MoD were clear. The MoD was not overly interested in promoting more efficient reporting of the campaign, it was primarily concerned with its own image. The credibility of the MoD was called into question on numerous occasions from the outset of the crisis. The MoD conducted a public battle with Argentina, outside the military sphere – a battle to be the first of the belligerent countries

with the news. MoD's self-interest was also evident from the amount of concentration focused on incident reporting over other issues like censorship. Certainly it was important that the British public, and the families of Task Force personnel, be informed of important news from the Task Force correctly and promptly. However, the MoD, apparently, had more to lose than just the race to announce updates: MoDPR was receiving increasing criticism as a result of its handling of a number of incidents including the *Belgrano*, the *Sheffield* and the capture of the *Narwhal*. The fact that incident reporting provoked a total review of policy on 11 May, demonstrates the significance attached to it.

What is distinct is that the MoD did not control all aspects of information or PR policy in the South Atlantic. Contrary to the claims of several historians, this thesis argues that control over censorship policy – and, increasingly, general policy – was devolved to the men on the ground in the South Atlantic. It is key to note that the MoD only allowed the Task Force limited control over issues which had a direct impact on the standing of the MoD. Double censorship was brought in, just as the land campaign commenced, in order to protect the MoD from any omissions which may have caused it embarrassment – operational information had already been deleted. The MoD treated policy within the warzone at arm's length, yet incident reporting policy was still enforced from London because it had an immediate effect on the public image and credibility of the Ministry. Any efforts made by those with the Task Force to find alternative solutions to manage PR (such as the suggestion of embargoing copy for simultaneous release with a MoD announcement), and which might have affected MoD operations in London, were swiftly rejected.

The chaotic nature of PR policy in the South Atlantic was a symptom of the Ministry's ailing organisation. Guidelines and plans for managing the media contingent with the Task Force were neglected in favour of the pursuit of a successful form of incident reporting. This thesis does not dispute the importance of obtaining reports of events from the warzone. It contends that other areas of policy were neglected in favour of pursuits to perfect the reporting system in order to maintain the Ministry's image.

CHAPTER FOUR

MoD Public Relations Policy in Britain

Cooper told the House of Commons Defence Committee that there were two groups of the media with which the MoD was concerned, ‘one out with the Task Force in the Falkland Islands and we had correspondents here trying to get as much into the press and media as they possible could’.¹ Chapter Three of this thesis dealt with MoD policy towards the media with the Task Force. This chapter relates to PR policy advanced by the ministry in *Britain*. Principally, it focuses on how the MoD provided for the British media, what facilities it provided and how exactly information was relayed to the expectant broadcasters and press. The facilities the MoD provided will be shown to have been delivered too late to have any significant effect on how the war was reported. The MoD maintained less of a discernible ‘policy’ in Britain than it did in the South Atlantic. There were a series of highly important events which affected the way which information about the war, or the war itself, could be reported. In this chapter, the ‘policy’ of the MoD is analysed by the actions it took when faced with different events or issues. What remained constant with policy in the South Atlantic was that PR procedure was reactive.

The academic subject field of the Falklands is littered with accounts of the Task Force journalists and their exploits. Yet a substantial percentage of those who have considered the media and the Falklands have also devoted attention to how the media was handled in Britain. The vast majority discuss the system of briefing. There are some key texts which contributed more than others. Mercer et al. provided a succinct overview of all Government policy – including domestic policy. The account is an excellent synopsis of the topic, yet is restricted to comment on the organisation of MoDPR and its place within the superstructure of Government PR.² Whereas Mercer et al. were at the forefront of analysis, their treatment of domestic media policy was limited by the fact that others had contributed extensively to the subject prior to its publication. Harris wrote comprehensively on the British media in 1983.³ He appraised the role of the MoD in the ‘information war’. While there was not much commentary on the policy which was implemented in Britain, there was extensive examination of the effect policy had on the

¹ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.34, q.94.

² Mercer et al., pp.42-48.

³ Harris.

media. When Harris did contemplate the MoD, he primarily concerned himself with the organisation of the ministry – predominantly the struggle for power between the ACPR, and the new Chief.⁴ In 1985, the Glasgow University Media Group’s study was comprised of analysis of different aspects of television coverage.⁵ Necessarily, the Group’s study was intrinsically concerned with the representation of information, and therefore involved assessment of the MoD.⁶ The literature of the 1980s was completed by Morrison and Tumber’s 1988 work which included a chapter assigned to censorship and information policy, both in Britain and with the Task Force.⁷

Thus there was penned a multitude of general comment on how the MoD behaved and how it handled the British media throughout the crisis. This chapter will present a general impression of how the MoD responded to the media in Britain during the war.

Accordingly, some ground which was covered by previous texts will be reiterated.

However, there are three ways in which this work will enhance the existing literature.

Firstly, substantial attention is paid to Cooper’s meetings of editors. For the first time, notes on the content of Editors’ Meetings have been accessed, allowing for closer scrutiny of the meetings and their role in controlling the media. Secondly, methods by which the MoD attempted to better regulate the release of information will be explored fully. The News Release Group and the Military Briefing Group are both considered in greater depth than any previous investigation.

One issue which deserves attention and which should be explained before embarking on discussion of the Government’s policy in Britain is the difference between ‘unattributable’, or ‘non-attributable’ and ‘off-the-record’ briefings. Mercer et al. are the only authors which consider definitions of these phrases. They argue there is a ‘small but crucial’ difference between the two: non-attributable means that ‘information can be used but not attributed to any identifiable source’; off-the-record should mean ‘just that’, ‘although such information can hamstring a journalist who later discovers it from less covert sources’.⁸ This thesis adopts these definitions. Off-the-record information cannot be used at all by a journalist, unattributable information can, as long as the source is not identified.⁹

⁴ Harris, pp.104-109.

⁵ GUMG, *War and Peace News*.

⁶ See: GUMG, p.3., pp.8-12., pp20-24., pp40-41. and pp.84-87.

⁷ Morrison and Tumber, pp.189-226.

⁸ Mercer et al., p.184.

⁹ Oxford Dictionaries online <www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/off-the-record?q=off+the+record> and

<www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/unattributed?q=unattributable#unattributed>.

1. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Public Relations

The role of the FCO in handling the media during the Falklands War is often neglected. One reason this has been the case is because the HCDC evaluated the handling of the media only by the MoD. The FCO was held largely responsible, in April 1982, for the Argentine invasion of the islands – for neither anticipating nor guarding against it. During the first weekend of the crisis, the media in Britain led a campaign for the ‘guilty men’, who had allowed the invasion to occur, to be expelled from their positions in the Government. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Peter Carrington, thus, was the first casualty of the war. It has been argued by historians, such as Badsey and Hastings and Jenkins, that Carrington resigned as a direct result of the media’s crusade to out the guilty.¹⁰ Certainly the humiliation of articles such as, ‘The British Lion is Caught with his Trousers Down’, and calls for Thatcher to ‘Sack the Guilty Men!’, contributed to the resignations of Lord Carrington and his juniors at the FCO, Humphrey Atkins and Richard Luce.¹¹ Thatcher herself perhaps put the situation most clearly: ‘Having seen Monday’s press...he decided that he must go’.¹² Once the Task Force set sail, the FCO was given less attention by the press. However, this did not mean that the FCO did not play a prominent role in media relations during the crisis. In fact, the FCO was attributed the responsibility of dealing with the British and foreign media for the entire first month of the war.

The FCO has failed to attract much attention from historians of the media and war in the Falklands. Perhaps the most thorough coverage of the department and its role regarding the media was presented by the *Official History*.¹³ Mercer et al. did acknowledge that the FCO had a part to play, but that it limited itself to a policy of ‘business as usual’.¹⁴ It is the contention here that the FCO did play a significant role in the handling of the media in 1982. The most important impact it had was that it indulged the MoD and encouraged it to assume that the addressing of media policy was not urgent. A secondary impact was that the efficient running of the FCO News Department in the crisis provided a comparison to the MoD’s handling of public relations which ensured that the MoD was viewed more critically.

¹⁰ Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’, p.39.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.101.

¹¹ M. White, ‘The British Lion is caught with his trousers down’, *The Guardian*, 3 Apr., p.3.; Editorial, ‘Sack the Guilty Men!’, *The Sun*, 3 Apr., p.6.; N.B. Resignation letters were printed in *The Times*, 6 Apr., p.4.; *The Guardian*, 6 Apr., p.2. Other headlines: White, ‘When nobody loves a Lord’, *The Guardian*, 6 Apr., p.17.; ‘MPs Clamour for Carrington and Nott to Quit’, *The Guardian*, 5 Apr., p.3.; Editorial, ‘Might isn’t Right’, *Daily Mirror*, 5 Apr., p.2.; ‘Foreign Office trio quit: “We take the blame for Falklands”’, *The Standard*, 5 Apr., p.1.

¹² Thatcher, p.186.

¹³ Freedman, v.ii, pp.26-28.

¹⁴ Mercer et al., p.22.

On the outbreak of the crisis, the FCO established an Emergency Unit to handle the everyday running of the department concerning matters related to the Falklands.¹⁵ The primary focus of this unit was to produce regular situation reports (Sitreps), and to process the information which the FCO received from abroad.¹⁶ The unit also briefed the OD(SA) on international opinion.¹⁷ Thatcher told Pym when the war was over that the Emergency Unit's 'daily production of briefing for the meetings of OD(SA) was invaluable...'¹⁸ According to Freedman, a Parliamentary and Press Group was responsible for the preparation of Parliamentary statements, and for public relations in general. Mostly, the group was responsible for keeping the FCO up to date on reaction in the Commons and Lords to media stories, or to events.¹⁹ The Parliamentary and Press Group, along with the Emergency Unit, an Information Policy Department and a Strategy Group, reported to a Steering Group (see Figure 1). The membership of this Steering Group included the Private Secretaries of various Ministerial Departments, including the MoD, FCO and Cabinet Office. More significant to media relations, the FCO's regular apparatus for dealing with the media, the FCO News Department, maintained its integral role throughout the entirety of the conflict.

¹⁵ A description of its creation can be found in R. Fearn, Interview, 2002, C.A., DOHP75/1 <www.chu.cam.ac.uk/media/uploads/files/Fearn.pdf>.

¹⁶ Freedman, v.ii, p.26. and Thatcher to Pym, 22 Jun., TNA, PREM19/651 f.27.; N.B. Sitreps distributed by FCO: TNA, PREM19/622 and PREM19/623.

¹⁷ FCO briefing papers for OD(SA): TNA, FCO7/4472.

¹⁸ Thatcher to Pym, 22 Jun., TNA, PREM19/651 f.27.

¹⁹ Communication on Parliamentary reaction: Jopling to Pym, 6 Apr., C.A., THCR1/20/3/5 f.13.; Jopling to Pym, 7 Apr., C.A., THCR1/20/3/5 f.17.; Jopling to Thatcher, 21 Apr., C.A., THCR1/20/3/8 f.6.

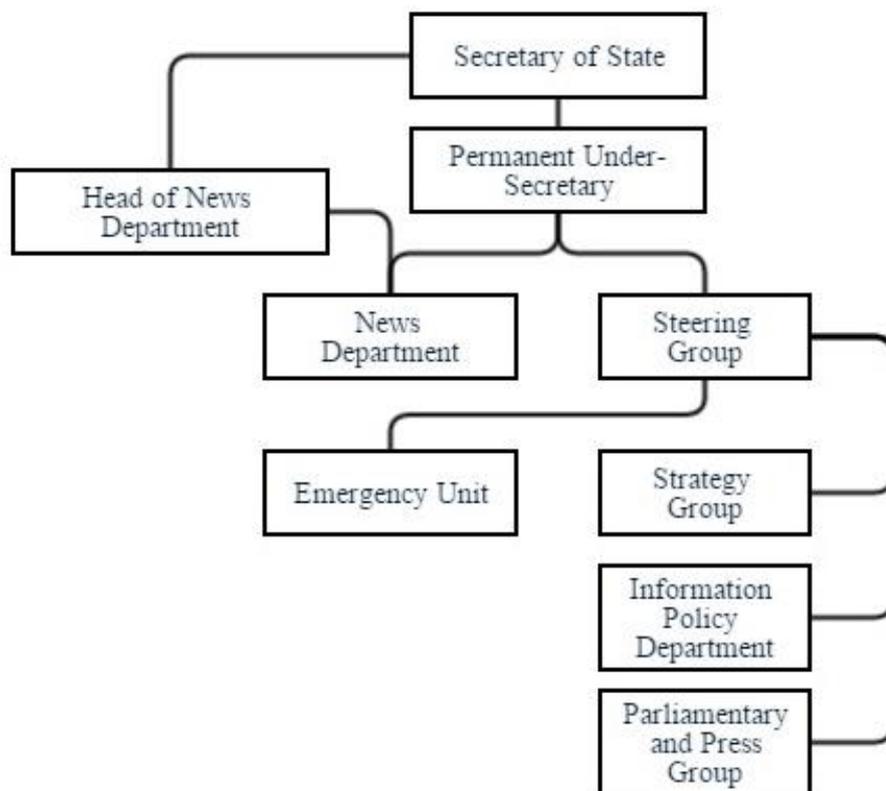


Figure 1: Diagram to show the organisation of the FCO media apparatus, April 1982²⁰

The News Department was established at the Foreign Office in 1916 and was largely responsible for carrying out propaganda work abroad.²¹ When, in 1918, the Ministry of Information (MoI) was disbanded, the News Department absorbed much of its work relating to overseas’ publicity and the dissemination of information. The News Department also played an integral role in the Second World War, having amalgamated into its ranks the Crown Film Unit.²² In 1964 Ministers fended off attacks on the News Department in Parliament after the publication of the Plowden Report. The Plowden Committee, Max Beloff argued, was established for one specific factor – the increasing difficulty felt at distinguishing between the nature of the work of the Foreign Office, and the work of the Commonwealth Relations Office.²³ The Government accepted the findings of the Committee which made the recommendation that overseas’ representation of the two offices should be merged into a single Diplomatic Service. This report prompted MPs to question the role of the News Department in Parliament. George Thomson MP, Minister of

²⁰ Diagram constructed from information in Freedman, v.ii, p.26. and Y. Cohen, ‘News Media and the News Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’, *Review of International Studies*, 14, 2 (Apr. 1988).

²¹ Records of the FCO News Department: TNA, *Foreign Office: Political Departments*, FCO371. For 1916-1939: *Foreign Office: News Department*, FCO395/649.

²² Records of film units: TNA, *Central Office of Information: Crown Film Unit*, INF5 and INF6 and *Central Office of Information: Registered Files*, INF12.

²³ M. Beloff, ‘Another Plowden Report: The Foreign and Commonwealth Services’, *Public Administration*, 42, 4 (Dec. 1964) pp.415-419.

State at the Foreign Office, said there was ‘no change in the machinery in relation to news and public relations in the Foreign Office... There is no change in the responsibility of the News Department for dealing with press inquiries about Her Majesty's Government's foreign policy’.²⁴ The role of the News Department has attracted little attention from scholars. The role of the News Department in the Falklands War has attracted even less consideration. While the flow of information from Whitehall to the media has been examined by various authors, Yoel Cohen pointed out that ‘...the relationship between the News Department and news media has been ignored in the academic literature’.²⁵

FCO's equivalent to MoDPR was its News Department. Its Head in 1982 was Nicholas Fenn - its Deputy, Roger Westbrook. The Head of the News Department served as the official spokesman and Press Secretary to the Secretary of State.²⁶ Lord Carrington resigned as Secretary of State on 5 April after intense criticism following the Argentine invasion of the Falklands. On Monday 5 April, the British media led an attack on Carrington for having neglected the issue of the islands.²⁷ This induced him to offer his resignation to the Prime Minister later that day. Francis Pym became Foreign Secretary on 6 April. Pym took a keen interest in the public presentation of foreign policy and regarded it as vital to its success.²⁸

Fenn and Westbrook worked closely with the Emergency Unit and Parliamentary and Press Group throughout the war. By no means did the News Department – a department of 12 men - have a monopoly over media relations in the FCO - Ministers and senior officials from the office maintained their own contact with the media, deciding when to give interviews or speeches. The head of the News Department, however, also served as the official spokesman of the department and was, more often than not, the host of the 1215 GMT FCO news conferences. In addition to this, Fenn was the Press Secretary to the Secretary of State.²⁹ Francis Pym relieved Lord Carrington of his role of Foreign Secretary on 6 April. Pym took a keen interest in the public presentation of foreign policy and

²⁴ HC Deb., 14 Dec. 1964, v.dcciv, c.21.

²⁵ Cohen, p.118. History of the FCO's media organisation: Taylor, *The Projection of Britain: British Overseas Publicity and Propaganda 1919-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 1981). Work on the flow of information from Whitehall to the media: Cockerell et al.; Cohen, *Media Diplomacy the Foreign Office in the mass communications age* (Frank Cass, 1986); T. Franck and E. Weisband, *Secrecy and Foreign Policy* (Oxford University Press, 1954).

²⁶ N. Fenn, Interview, 2010, C.A., DOHP 126/1 <www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/bdohp/>.

²⁷ ‘No reputation more at stake now than Carrington's’, *Daily Telegraph*, 5 Apr., p.4.; ‘Carrington explains why action was not taken earlier’, *The Times*, 5 Apr., p.6.; ‘Heads on the block’, *The Sun*, 5 Apr., p.4.

²⁸ For examples of how Pym became involved in PR see Appendix 12.

²⁹ Fenn, Interview.

regarded it as ‘critical to its success’.³⁰ In fact, Pym often became involved in high profile media rows during the Falklands War.³¹ Perhaps the most prominent example of this was on 10 May. At a meeting of the Commons’ Foreign Affairs Committee, Pym condemned the BBC for its coverage of the war and urged constituents to write to the BBC to complain. Pym’s remarks were given wide publicity in Britain and provoked headlines such as, ‘PYM ATTACKS BBC’, and ‘ANGRY PYM IN BLAST AT THE BEEB’.³²

The Foreign Office had the dominant relationship with the media throughout April 1982. There were two chief reasons for this: the main focus of the crisis concerned diplomacy and the efforts to secure a negotiated settlement; and the MoD had few facilities in place to host the media throughout the first month of the conflict. The major implication of the FCO’s leading position in April was that the MoD was encouraged to take a back seat in British media relations, preventing it from preparing properly for the eventual conflict and the bombardment of increased press interest which would be attracted after the first signs of action in the South Atlantic. As early as the day of the invasion, Carrington told a meeting of the Cabinet: ‘Officials from both Departments [FCO and MOD] were also considering how to handle relations with the media during a possibly prolonged crisis’.³³ However, there is no evidence that this was genuinely the case within the MoD on 2 April, since attention was firmly focused on accrediting journalists to the Task Force. During the first weeks of the crisis the demand for military news was to be satisfied by the MoD, and the demand for information on diplomatic efforts was to be provided by the FCO.³⁴ It was right that the initiative should lie with the FCO at the beginning of the conflict, since the Task Force was seen as an adjunct to diplomacy. The efficiency of the Foreign Office media machine not only encouraged the MoD to take a secondary role in the first month of the conflict, but it also contrasted with the relative inefficiency of the MoD.

The FCO media apparatus was much better equipped to deal with a crisis than the MoD. The News Department at FCO was run by experienced diplomats, unlike MoDPR, which was run by Information Officers. Members of the FCO were often required to do a tour in the News Department, then would be posted abroad in an embassy, or in another department of the FCO. Members of the News Department were often favoured by

³⁰ Mercer et al., p.22.

³¹ See Chapter Five.

³² M. Dowdney, ‘PYM ATTACKS BBC’, *Daily Mirror*, 11 May, p.1.; J. Hartley, ‘ANGRY PYM IN BLAST AT THE BEEB’, *Daily Star*, 11 May, p.2. Other articles included, ‘Commons attack on BBC’, *The Times*, 11 May, p.6.; C. Brown, ‘BBC Falklands coverage attacked by Tory MPs’, *The Guardian*, 11 May, p.1.

³³ Cabinet, 2 Apr., TNA, CAB128/73 f.1.

³⁴ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.6, q.4.

journalists because they were given access to more information – they were all on the distribution lists for relevant documents - and had a proficient knowledge of the Ministry.³⁵ In addition to this, the FCO had other resources at its disposal. For example, in a meeting of Information Officers on 19 April, the Central Office of Information representative described its main function as to support the FCO in presentation.³⁶ Of course, the FCO did have a larger role to perform than the MoD when it came to public relations. The FCO had to ensure that posts abroad were kept fully briefed on all aspects of both diplomatic efforts and military operations. In this endeavour, the CoI was the Ministry's foremost support. The department was also given additional directives by the Chiefs of Staff - a representative of the Foreign Office often attended the meetings.³⁷ During the course of the crisis there were over 90 guidance telegrams sent to missions abroad. There were also a number of background papers produced on specific, controversial topics.³⁸ Evidence which demonstrated how the FCO kept posts abroad updated, and how it controlled the media line at home, is contained in a telegram of 18 April. The FCO informed the UK Ambassador to the US in Washington, Neville Henderson, that: 'To hold the press tonight we are giving the following off the record guidance: - 'We have just received the proposals which Mr. Haig has brought out of Buenos Aires. They are complex and difficult... We shall be studying them carefully, however, and shall be getting in touch again with Mr. Haig''.³⁹ Really this constituted a 'holding statement' but gave a good indication of how the FCO was at the forefront of media relations in April 1982.

The Foreign Office was fortunate in April 1982 in that it did not have to alter much of its regular procedure for dealing with the Press. As Mercer et al. noted, '...the FCO news department adopted very much a policy of business as usual...'⁴⁰ Unattributable briefings were a staple of the department and were supplied to the media throughout the conflict at FCO (something for which the MoD has been famously criticised for neglecting to do). The regular 1215GMT official briefings – mostly compered by Nicholas Fenn - remained in place and were added to by experts commissioned to assist the FCO's briefing of the British media. Charles Douglas-Home, the Editor of *The Times*, told the HCDC: 'There was no marked change of gear...in what we were being told'.⁴¹ Another way in which the FCO adhered to its normal PR policy, and in which the MoD was shown up, related to

³⁵ Douglas-Home, HCDC, v.ii, p.359, q.1489.

³⁶ Meeting of Information Officers, 19 Apr., TNA, CAB134/4638 f.15.

³⁷ CoS, 30 May, TNA, FCO7/4475 f.105.

³⁸ Freedman, v.ii, p.26.

³⁹ FCO to Washington, 18 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4529/1 f.90.

⁴⁰ Mercer et al., p.22.

⁴¹ Douglas-Home, HCDC, v.ii, p.360, q.1492.

provision for foreign journalists. The FCO had more experience catering for the needs of foreign correspondents in London, and the amenities offered to foreign journalists during the war were extensive. Regular press conferences were available for British and foreign journalists alike. These briefings attracted a much larger attendance by foreign journalists than regular briefings.⁴² In addition, foreign journalist-specific, unattributable briefings were held within the FCO. Finally, the Prime Minister's Press Secretary, Bernard Ingham, with the help of the Foreign Office, gave regular unattributable briefings for members of the Foreign Press Association.⁴³ Although the FCO was accused by the Foreign Press Association of being 'unhelpful' in 'mediating' with the MoD, its own relations with the association remained strong.⁴⁴ So, not only did the FCO approach its public relations' policy in its normal way, but was able itself to boast additional services for both British and foreign correspondents in London.

The organisation of the News Department at the FCO was far superior to its equivalent in the MoD. The FCO even had its own system of circular memos, distributed in-house, on press lines the ministry should take at various stages of the conflict. This system was entirely independent of that established by the Cabinet Office in the form of the South Atlantic Presentation Unit circular system.⁴⁵ For example, the lines proposed on 18 April were: a) the line to be taken if Mr Haig was to come to London b) the line to be taken if Mr Haig was going to Washington, and c) what should be said if asked about possible action at the UN.⁴⁶ In addition to this the department drafted announcements on events, taking into account a range of possible outcomes. For example, there were draft press lines and statements formulated in the case of the Haig proposals' failure at several different junctures throughout April and even into May.⁴⁷

1a. Co-ordination between the FCO and MoD

During the first month of the conflict there was limited co-ordination between the MoD and FCO. Ingham recalled that what he 'wanted the Foreign Office to be aware of was the defence dimension as well as the political dimension... and similarly the MoD'.⁴⁸ However,

⁴² SAPU circular, 20 May, N.A., CAB164/1611 f.25.

⁴³ SAPU circular, 20 May, N.A., CAB124/1211 f.25.

⁴⁴ Foreign Press Association memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.127.

⁴⁵ See Chapter Five.

⁴⁶ Giffard to PS FCO, 18 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4529 f.76.

⁴⁷ Examples: C. Mallaby to FCO PS/PUS, 28 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4496 f.52.; Fenn to POs, 15 May, TNA, FCO7/4497 f.81.; Mallaby to PS/PUS, 18 May, FCO7/4497 f.85.; Memo from P. Marshall to Fenn, 21 May, TNA, FCO7/4497 f.99.

⁴⁸ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.389, q.1676.

in practice, there was little communication on how best to implicate a consistent PR policy, and only public press conferences served as examples of collaboration.⁴⁹

In contrast to the FCO's relationship with the MoD, the ministry did co-ordinate efficiently with other departments, for example, the Cabinet Office, and specifically with No.10. Mercer et al. conceded that despite the FCO's political differences with the Prime Minister, it 'maintained close and effective links between its news department and the Downing Street Press Office'.⁵⁰ Evidence of this was a series of unattributable briefings held by Ingham with the assistance of the FCO, for foreign correspondents. In the observations of the HCDC presented to Parliament, it was affirmed that '...the Prime Minister's Press Office and the News Department of the Foreign Office kept in close touch with each other on an hour to hour basis'.⁵¹ In the HCDC it was accepted that the MoD acted alone.⁵²

Towards the end of April 1982, action in the South Atlantic began in earnest with the recapture of South Georgia. Events such as the Vulcan bombing raid of 1 May, the sinking of the *Belgrano* on 2 May and the sinking of *Sheffield* on 4 May, escalated the crisis into a serious military conflict. As Freedman assessed, 'as the fighting began, the burden for the presentation of military news...fell to the MoD'.⁵³ On 3 May Nott held a press conference at the MoD. In his address to the media he acknowledged that: 'Over the past 4 [sic] weeks since the invasion of the Falkland Islands my colleague the Foreign Secretary has rightly taken the leading role in explaining HMG's policies...'.⁵⁴ Nott also gave his *first* question and answer session of the war on 3 May.⁵⁵ Thus, it was not until the second month of the war that the MoD assumed its public relations role with any seriousness.

One argument which was expressed by Mercer et al. was that the MoD failed to make genuine preparations for handling and briefing the British media in the event of fighting over the islands because it did not expect a war. The authors explained that 'one reason why the ministry was slow to gauge public interest was because it failed to anticipate the

⁴⁹ For example, on 2 April, in response to the invasion, and on 5 April regarding the return of Governor Hunt and the Marines stationed on the Falklands.

⁵⁰ Mercer et al., p.48.; See Chapter Five.

⁵¹ HCDC Observations, *The Handling of Press and Public Information during the Falklands Conflict: Observations presented by Secretary of State for Defence, House of Commons Papers 17-I-II 1982-83* (HMSO, 1983) p.5, q.11.

⁵² HCDC, v.i, p.xviii, q.39.

⁵³ Freedman, v.ii, p.39.

⁵⁴ SAPU circular, 4 May, TNA, *Falklands Presentation Unit*, CAB164/1611 f.17.

⁵⁵ Transcript, 3 May, TNA, CAB/164/1611 f.17.

eventual war'.⁵⁶ Indeed, in Nott's press conference of 3 May he was asked about a potential war. Nott insisted: 'There is still time for a peaceful solution'.⁵⁷ Mercer et al. went on to point out that 'by mid-May any lingering doubts that the Falklands conflict would escalate into an all-out war had all but vanished'.⁵⁸ Thus, in May 1982, the media baton was passed from the FCO to the MoD.

2. MoD Facilities: Briefings

The MoD had a hard act to follow, in early May 1982, when the focus of the war became purely military. This thesis contends that the MoD's provision of media facilities was lacking from the start of the crisis. There are several features of the MoD PR effort which will be examined to better judge the MoD's handling of the media. The briefings offered by the MoD will be considered here, and the conclusion advanced that an effective briefing procedure was put into effect too late. This was largely due to the fact that, in the early stages of the crisis, PR novices controlled policy. In addition to this, the emphasis on diplomacy in the first month of the war had ensured that demand for military information, while significant, was only a proportion of what it would be after initial action. Aside from the briefings supplied by the Ministry, this section will focus on the physical facilities provided by the MoD. The ministry established material amenities for the media on 2 May. This thesis advances the theory that those services were implemented tardily, and that much of what was offered to the media came, not as a result of the initiative of the Ministry, but at the insistence of the British media.

The vast majority of the literature on the media in the war has attributed discussion to the topic of MoD briefings. Briefing is one of the most contentious issues facing study of the subject, and almost certainly *the* most contentious topic when considering the MoD's domestic policy. All works - whether specific texts on the Falklands and the media, or general works on the media at war - have devoted a degree of attention to the MoD's procedure for dispensing information. Perhaps the most comprehensive studies include the efforts of Harris, Mercer at al., and Morrison and Tumber.⁵⁹ Overwhelmingly, the primary criticism which was advanced was that the MoD broke with its accepted style of briefing - unattributable briefing - in favour of on-the-record, daily press conferences. This, it has been argued, promoted an atmosphere of hostility between the MoD and the media and

⁵⁶ Mercer et al., p.38.

⁵⁷ Nott, 4 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.17a.

⁵⁸ Mercer et al., p.42.

⁵⁹ Harris, pp.96-99.; Mercer et al., pp.116-120.; Morrison and Tumber, pp.199-208.

denied the media information. Because the field has been saturated by such studies, comment here is limited.

2a. MoD Briefings

Shortly after the Argentine invasion of the Falklands, McDonald, in his capacity as ACPR, took the decision to halt all unattributable briefings by the MoD and, instead, to supply only on-the-record briefings. Previously accredited defence correspondents were shocked to find the MoD had ceased all accreditation to the Ministry. In the months prior to the conflict, there had been established a series of unattributable briefings, including a monthly ‘deep background’ briefing. This briefing was provided on the condition that all information would be embargoed for three days following the meeting.⁶⁰ These briefings were intended to go some way to healing the previous rifts between the media and MoDPR.⁶¹ There was one principal reason why unattributable briefings were withdrawn: the information provided by the FCO was deemed by the MoD to be ‘enough’ for the media. McDonald said that he cancelled unattributable briefings because ‘...at that time the main initiative was with the Foreign Office and with diplomacy’.⁶² The Task Force was seen as a way of ensuring a diplomatic solution – a threat of force which would persuade the Argentines to withdraw from the islands. McDonald pointed out: ‘The Foreign Office was having its regular briefings, and therefore it seemed to me that the MoD in its role...could restrict itself to the on-the-record briefings’.⁶³ A senior colleague of McDonald said: ‘The Foreign Office were continuing to have at a more feverish pace normal unattributable briefings and the Task Force’s presence was part of that’.⁶⁴

It is important to note that McDonald was not in favour of continuing with only on-the-record briefings for the entirety of the conflict. In May he fought hard to reinstate non-attributable briefings, and to rectify the relationship with the media. For example, on 4 May McDonald emphasised to the CoS how essential it was to retain the goodwill of the press.⁶⁵ On 7 May McDonald went further and it was noted that: ‘...the point was made [by McDonald] that we were in danger of losing the public relations war’.⁶⁶ McDonald suggested that one way in which a more positive relationship might be forged was by ‘the provision of facilities for background briefings’. By May, McDonald had realised the

⁶⁰ Morrison and Tumber, p.199.

⁶¹ See Appendix Five.

⁶² McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.258, q.955.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Cited in Morrison and Tumber, p.199.

⁶⁵ CoS, 4 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.78.

⁶⁶ CoS, 7 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.82.

damage the retraction of unattributable briefings had done to the relationship between the MoD and the media and sought to rectify it. Even so, McDonald insisted that: ‘I would not change my recommendation that for the first period all briefings should be kept on an on the record basis’.⁶⁷

There were two significant consequences of the cessation of unattributable briefings. Firstly, the move seriously affected the relationship between the MoD and the media. Secondly, journalists were deprived of information vital to their reporting of the war, causing much of the media to resort to alternative methods of filling ‘the news’. Other historians have highlighted the fact that the relationship between the MoD and the media was damaged in April 1982. Mercer et al. stated that the lack of non-attributable briefings lost the trust of defence correspondents.⁶⁸ Ingham viewed the decision with pessimism from the start. He ‘certainly took the view that when you are in a crisis of this kind, the last thing you do is withdraw your service to the media’.⁶⁹ Cooper later regretted the decision, claiming that it ‘did not help the relations between the Ministry of Defence and the press’.⁷⁰ Following the report of the HCDC, Nott told the Commons the MoD accepted ‘the Committee’s conclusion that the temporary suspension of off-the-record briefings was detrimental to relations with the media’.⁷¹

Daily on-the-record briefings at the MoD commenced on 9 April (Figure 4.1). The purpose of these briefings, McDonald told the CoS, was to ‘maintain a point of contact with the press’.⁷² The briefing was held at noon and soon became known to the journalists as the ‘12 o’clock follies’. McDonald would attend the daily CoS meeting at which there would be discussion of what information should be released that day. McDonald would clear his press statement with Cooper and Nott before having it typed ahead of midday.⁷³ The daily statement was often vague and did not provide the correspondents with complete information required to compose full stories. *Guardian* journalist, Richard Norton-Taylor, wrote: ‘We reporters back in London had to rely on the MoD’s official spokesman...for thin and heavily vetted daily summaries of the action’.⁷⁴ McDonald allowed a 20-minute

⁶⁷ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.401, q.1793.

⁶⁸ Mercer et al., p.116.

⁶⁹ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.394, q.1729.

⁷⁰ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.33, q.91.

⁷¹ HCDC, Observations, p.5, q.12.

⁷² CoS, 8 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4472 f.13.

⁷³ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.400, q.1784.

⁷⁴ R. Norton-Taylor, ‘Brian Hanrahan’s famous phrase masked a media battle with the MoD’, *The Guardian*, 20 Dec. 2010, <www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/dec/20/brian-hanrahan-media-mod>.

question and answer (Q&A) period after briefings. However, these were often plagued by McDonald's failure to confirm or deny rumour, and unwillingness to make answers on-the-record. Reuters claimed that 'statements by the spokesman often raised more questions than [sic] they answered'.⁷⁵ The briefings also heightened the atmosphere of competition amongst the journalists. Only one version of events was available, dictating that there was always a rush to be 'first with the news' (Figure 4.2). Hudson and Stanier judged that 'it is...off the record briefing that is meat and drink to the press'.⁷⁶ The usual streams of information dried up in the MoD. When MoD PROs were prohibited from communicating directly with the media, defence correspondents were further crippled. As Hooper has judged, this meant 'PROs were unable to ensure that correspondents and reporters fully understood events which they were required to report'.⁷⁷



Figure 4.1: *McDonald at a noon briefing*⁷⁸



Figure 4.2: *The scramble to get news out after a noon briefing*⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Reuters memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.129.

⁷⁶ Hudson and Stanier, p.181.

⁷⁷ Hooper, p.162.

⁷⁸ *News at One*, 21 May.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

2a (i). MoD Briefings: Media Speculation

The dearth of information had a serious impact on the reporting of the campaign. Starved of material, the media increasingly turned to alternative sources, such as Argentine communiqués.⁸⁰ Further, in order to fulfil their daily quota of material on the Falklands, the media resorted to speculation. Adams produced an unrivalled study of this phenomenon.⁸¹ She found that speculation over military topics damaged morale at home more than it impaired the progress of the Task Force. Yet the media was, and has been, heavily criticised for potentially endangering the lives of British servicemen.⁸² In a letter to *The Times* during the war, Nicholas Downie, correspondent for *The New York Times*, concluded that ‘all sections of the media can be fairly criticised for the manner in which they have speculated...’⁸³ Another letter to the newspaper assumed that ‘it seems unlikely that the Intelligence Branch of the Argentinian Ministry of Defence has been unduly overworked at this time of crisis. The British media has kindly provided them with information on a scale which seems little short of hair-raising...’⁸⁴ Worries concerning speculation were raised in Parliament. On 20 May Lord Byers expressed his concern at ‘the plethora of speculation in the press and the rest of the media on military tactics and options available...’⁸⁵

One of the most controversial aspects of speculation in the media was the use of retired military personnel as commentators, particularly on the television and radio, but also in the printed press. Freedman wrote that ‘the public (or at least the media) appetite for news was hardly satisfied by the terse one-liners from official spokesmen and so had to be met by a huge army of unofficial commentators’.⁸⁶ Adams carried out an extensive assessment of the role of these ‘armchair admirals’, as they were colloquially known, preventing the need for further comment here.⁸⁷

The abandonment of unattributable briefings by the MoD had a severe impact on how the campaign was reported in Britain. The scarcity of hard information created by the MoD provoked the media to enter into conjecture, and to often repeat potentially harmful

⁸⁰ See Chapter Six.

⁸¹ Adams. Other works on speculation: Foster, p.156.; Freedman, v.ii, p.38.; Hastings and Jenkins, pp.419-420.; Moore, pp.147-148.; Morrison and Tumber, p.242.; Royle, p.221.; Harris, p.90.

⁸² Adams, p.153.

⁸³ L. Downie, Letter to *The Times*, 11 May, p.13.

⁸⁴ C. Mott-Radclyffe, Letter to *The Times*, 15 May, p.11.

⁸⁵ House of Lords Debate, 20 May, v.cdxxx, c.813.

⁸⁶ Freedman, ‘Bridgehead Revisited’, p.445.

⁸⁷ Adams, pp.164-173.

rumours. Foster concluded that ‘instead of a controlled flow of information in a single direction, McDonald’s policy ensured a flood of speculation, guaranteeing a far freer treatment of potentially sensitive security issues’.⁸⁸ After the war, the HCDC found that ‘the Ministry’s decision to cease off-the-record briefings for most of the conflict was probably the wrong one and the media’s criticism in the instance is substantially vindicated’.⁸⁹

2a (ii). MoD Briefings: the Spokesman

When McDonald initiated the ‘12 o’clock follies’, he also assumed the role of MoD spokesman (Figure 4.3). He told the HCDC that ‘it was policy that there should be one main spokesman because in the on-the-record question and answer sessions it was very important indeed that there was a complete consistency of view’.⁹⁰ McDonald attracted vast amounts of attention in his new-found role. *The Sunday Times* Insight Team felt that ‘it was McDonald who became the most public expression of Cooper’s policy’.⁹¹ His approach to reading the news - careful and sombre - was heavily criticised and even ridiculed during the war.⁹²



Figure 4.3: *McDonald briefing the media*⁹³

McDonald suffered one further criticism. He lacked experience as a spokesman, and experience appearing on television. McDonald told the HCDC, when asked if he had any

⁸⁸ Foster, ‘The Falklands War’, p.156.

⁸⁹ HCDC, v.i, p.ix, q.138.

⁹⁰ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.398, q.1766.

⁹¹ Eds. Eddy et al., p.210.

⁹² See Appendix 13 for an appraisal of the role of McDonald.

⁹³ McDonald, ‘Falklands: MOD Statement’, *News at Ten*, 29 May
<www.jiscmediahub.ac.uk/record/display/039-00010233>.

experience: ‘As a spokesman, no...television camera technique and so forth, no’.⁹⁴

Ingham, in his own account of the war, argued: ‘He should never have been put in this position. In our kind of Democracy the only acceptable spokesmen...is a Minister’.⁹⁵

During the war the MoD observed a policy of only telling the ‘truth’ in its public statements – even if this meant it could report the bare minimum as a result. The MoD submitted to the HCDC that: ‘During the military operations to recover the Falkland Islands, our policy was to tell the truth as quickly and accurately as we could, consistent with the safety and security of our forces’.⁹⁶ McDonald embodied the policy to tell nothing but the truth. Nott later confirmed that ‘it was painfully obvious to the whole world that Ian could only speak the truth’.⁹⁷ However, adherence to this policy meant that, often, McDonald had to resort to the phrase ‘no comment’, when answering questions. The fact that Q&A sessions were also on-the-record meant that McDonald was left unable to counter much rumour or disinformation beyond this expression.⁹⁸

2a (iii). MoD Briefings: Reinstating Unattributable Briefings

The MoD revived the system of unattributable briefings on 11 May with a special briefing provided by Cooper for defence correspondents. The popular conception as to why non-attributable briefings were reinstated has been the increased involvement of Neville Taylor in the MoD’s domestic media policy. Dodds, for example, argued that it was as a direct result of Taylor’s influence that the system was altered.⁹⁹ Others, such as Carruthers, have been bolder in their accusation that unattributable briefings were recovered in order to purposefully communicate misinformation to the media.¹⁰⁰ However, this thesis suggests that there were three alternative reasons why unattributable briefings were restored. The MoD had experienced wide criticism – particularly towards the end of April – for the lack of information it was providing. This criticism induced a reappraisal within the MoD, and led to the restoration of the normal style of official statements, supplemented by non-attributable briefings. In addition, there was heavy pressure placed on the MoD by the editors of national media organisations to better inform the media. Finally, the role the FCO had to play in briefing journalists was diminishing, and the burden had to be shouldered by the relevant ministry. Yet even when non-attributable briefings were

⁹⁴ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii p.398, q.1762.

⁹⁵ Ingham, p.289.

⁹⁶ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.1, q.2.

⁹⁷ Nott, p.263.

⁹⁸ See: Jenkins, ‘When soldiers play journalists and journalists play at soldiers’, *The Times*, 10 May, p.8.

⁹⁹ Dodds, ‘Contesting War’, p.223.

¹⁰⁰ Carruthers, p.129.

reinstated there were substantial difficulties which prevented them from being fully effective. It is argued by the time an effective system of unattributable briefings had been implemented, the damage to the relationship between the media and the MoD had been done. Provisions for both the regional and foreign press were seriously lacking and, significantly, the timing of briefings was erratic and their organisation poor.

Taylor arrived at the MoD on 13 April.¹⁰¹ Taylor was not immediately given responsibility for the running of the entire department. He was in charge of all aspects of MoDPR *except* those relating to the Falklands. The reason this policy existed has been explored by other authors including Ingham, Mercer et al. and Harris.¹⁰² The first direct involvement Taylor had with Falklands' policy was at the end of April. He was assigned the task of making arrangements for the establishment of a Press Centre at the MoD. Taylor slowly reaffirmed his position within the department, finally assuming control of all areas of MoDPR policy on 19 May. Taylor began to lobby Cooper to reinstate unattributable briefings almost as soon as he entered the department. As a seasoned PO, who had previously held roles in the MoD, Taylor realised the implications of withdrawing regular services to the media. However, he was unable to assert any real authority. In fact, it was not until as late as 24 May that Taylor even sat in on a CoS meeting as the MoDPR representative. Mercer et al. pointed out that 'so pre-eminent had Macdonald been that Taylor on occasion had been forced to go down to the press centre to find out what his titular deputy was going to say; not only could he not influence the announcements but he was not even being informed about them'.¹⁰³ Nicholas, Editor of ITN, told the HCDC that he did not attribute the CPR at MoD with 'changing things around'.¹⁰⁴ Taylor most certainly had a positive effect on the organisation of the Ministry's PR machine. Yet there were other significant reasons why unattributable briefings were revived.

Criticism of the MoD was rife in April and early May 1982. The basic theme of this criticism continued for the duration of the conflict. The withdrawal of unattributable briefings in April had driven the media to publicly condemn the actions and policy of the MoD. For example, on 22 April, the *Mirror* printed that '...you may bet your second-best boots that months or even years from now it will be revealed that while all this to-ing and fro-ing was going on, there was a piece of the jigsaw we weren't told about'.¹⁰⁵ A *Sun*

¹⁰¹ See Chapter Two.

¹⁰² Ingham, p.290.; Mercer et al., p.38.; Harris, p.106.

¹⁰³ Mercer et al., p.43.

¹⁰⁴ Nicholas, HCDC, v.ii, p.88, q.297.

¹⁰⁵ Waterhouse, 'Our secret society', *Daily Mirror*, 22 Apr., p.10.

columnist wrote an article, 'WHY THE MYSTERY?', stating: 'I don't know whether the Ministry of Defence is spreading fear and confusion in the enemy's ranks, but it is doing a first class job at home'.¹⁰⁶ On 28 April, the *Telegraph's* Defence Correspondent, Major General Edward Fursdon, criticised the lack of statements from the ministry in a front-page-piece called 'WHITEHALL WAITS IN SILENCE'.¹⁰⁷ One particular incident had a substantial effect on the reputation of the Ministry. When *Sheffield* was attacked on 4 May, the scarcity of news on casualties drove many to publish disapproving articles on the MoD. The *Mirror* was in so much of a frenzy it asked: 'For God's sake, are our men alive or dead?'.¹⁰⁸ *The Sun* similarly questioned, 'DEAD OR ALIVE?' and heavily denounced the lack of information.¹⁰⁹ *The Times* published less overt criticism but clearly emphasised the silence of the MoD.¹¹⁰

Criticism of the MoD was a feature of press coverage throughout the war – not just until unattributable briefings were restored.¹¹¹ In fact, the day before the briefings were reinstated, a meeting of Information Officers discussed the extent of criticism over the integrity of Government presentation of news on the Falklands.¹¹² The barrage of criticism the MoD's handling of PR attracted had a significant impact on the organisation of MoD policy. Increasingly, it was understood within the MoD, that it would need to maintain a more positive relationship with the media. A CoS meeting of 27 April heard that, while embargoes might be 'superficially attractive', they were 'unlikely to be effective and could be counterproductive'.¹¹³ On 7 May the CoS were told the MoD 'were in danger of losing the public relations war'.¹¹⁴ As criticism of the MoD intensified, the MoD increasingly understood the necessity of maintaining relations with the media – a direct factor in the decision to re-establish unattributable briefings.

¹⁰⁶ Akass, 'WHY THE MYSTERY?', *The Sun*, 26 Apr., p.6.

¹⁰⁷ E. Fursdon, 'WHITEHALL WAITS IN SILENCE', *The Daily Telegraph*, 28 Apr., p.1.

¹⁰⁸ A. Gordon and R. Ricketts, *Daily Mirror*, 6 May, p.1.

¹⁰⁹ *The Sun*, 6 May, p.5.

¹¹⁰ H. Noyes and P. Webster, 'Casualties could be as high as 30', *The Times*, 5 May, p.1.; Noyes, 'Nott hints at pause in action', *The Times*, 6 May, p.1.

¹¹¹ For example: A. Wilson, 'How to use the news', *The Observer*, 30 May, p.5.; Editorial, 'First things first', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 6 Jun., p.16.; D. Nicholson-Lord, 'Ministry wakes up to propaganda war', *The Times*, 14 May, p.7.; K. Gosling, 'Ministry accused of serious failure', *The Times*, 27 May, p.3.; E. Plaice, '"We will mislead you when necessary"', *Daily Mirror*, 19 May, p.2.

¹¹² MIO, 10 May, TNA, *Meetings of Chief Information Officers: meetings 1-43*, CAB134/4636 f.17.

¹¹³ CoS, 27 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4473 f.60.

¹¹⁴ CoS, 7 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.82.

Freedman pointed out that, before 11 May, the only non-attributable briefings which had been provided had been given to editors.¹¹⁵ It is the contention here that the events of Editors' Meetings had an impact on the decision to reinstate unattributable briefings at the MoD. At the very start of the conflict, Cooper had established regular meetings with the editors of national media organisations (and two international press agencies). The first meeting was held on 7 April. By the beginning of May, the editors were using these meetings to represent their concerns. One of the major concerns expressed at these meetings was the lack of comprehensive briefing. At a meeting on 20 April, editors instructed Cooper on how the facilities provided for their organisations were working. The general consensus was that the MoD needed to brief.¹¹⁶ At the meeting of 6 May, the editors really drove their point across. Cooper wrote that he had had a 'much rougher ride' than at any other meeting.¹¹⁷ Cooper told the editors that 'since the last meeting the pace of events in the South Atlantic had quickened', and, as they had suggested, the MoD was now preparing for the possibility of 'an additional service to the media' – 'MoD would begin to give specialised background briefings for groups of correspondents'.¹¹⁸ Following the meeting, Cooper detailed a list of practical steps he thought the MoD should now take. The second point on the list demanded that: 'We must give various groups of the press more background briefing. In particular, we must cosset the defence correspondents rather more and go into more technical detail with them using our own experts from throughout the Department'.¹¹⁹ At a meeting on 12 May, the PUS responded to the criticisms made by editors the previous week. He stated that: 'Background briefings were now being provided. There had already been two for Defence Correspondents and these would continue twice weekly'.¹²⁰ It is evident that the grievances and protests of the editors had an impact on Cooper's attitude towards briefing the media unattributably. As a result of the meeting of 6 May, Cooper realised that unattributable briefings were vital to the media, and fundamental in maintaining relations.

The final factor in the adoption of unattributable briefings at the MoD was the diminishing role of the FCO in handling media relations. On 27 April, Haig's final peace package was presented to London. By this time, the shuttle diplomacy between Britain and Argentina had produced few results and the US peace initiative was bankrupt. The US came down

¹¹⁵ Freedman, v.ii, p.409.

¹¹⁶ Note for the record, 21 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.2.

¹¹⁷ Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E6.

¹¹⁸ Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

¹¹⁹ Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E6.

¹²⁰ Note for record, 13 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.4.

firmly on the British side on 30 April. Although subsequent efforts were made to promote peaceful solutions to the crisis (notably the UN and Peruvian initiatives), it was evident that the crisis had deteriorated to the point when war was inevitable. At this point interest shifted from diplomatic endeavours to military ones, and the focus of the media turned fully to the MoD and its military machine. At this point it no longer mattered if the FCO was briefing journalists unattributably - the MoD was now in a position where it only could provide the information the media required.

In the last month of the conflict there were more than a dozen unattributable briefings provided for various groups of correspondents.¹²¹ Which correspondents were to be briefed became a point of contention. On 11 May unattributable briefings began for British defence correspondents. Other correspondents – for example, regional and foreign – were not admitted to these briefings and were not granted their own briefings until more than a week later. However, when defence correspondents were readmitted to the trust of the MoD, the ministry found that their numbers had grown considerably. Publications and broadcasters which had previously lacked a defence correspondent had since nominated personnel to fill the vacancy, or created the position.¹²²

By far the greatest amount of unattributable briefings were given exclusively to defence correspondents.¹²³ *The Sunday People* was told in the first two weeks of May that ‘unless it appointed a defence correspondent it could not be allowed to attend official and off-the-record briefings’.¹²⁴ As a result, the publication appointed a correspondent. Mercer et al. estimated that: ‘Defence correspondents regained their access only to find that it had lost its exclusivity.’¹²⁵ Because of the number of journalists the MoD had to cater for, a two tier system of briefing was devised. Defence correspondents from the national daily newspapers, and from the larger broadcast programmes, were permitted into the first line of briefing. The second line was comprised of a mixture of Sunday and regional newspapers. This system, for many, proved unsatisfactory. Gordon Petrie of the *Glasgow Herald* claimed that: ‘Despite assurances to the contrary, the No.2 list which comprised “regional” press were regularly briefed by lower ranking personnel than those on the No.1 list and at later timings’.¹²⁶ Because the membership of the first line of correspondents was

¹²¹ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.10, q.18.

¹²² Mercer et al., p.117.

¹²³ See Appendix One.

¹²⁴ *The Sunday People* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.94.

¹²⁵ Mercer et al., p.117.

¹²⁶ *Glasgow Herald* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.133.

limited mainly to the most nationally influential organisations, accusations emerged that the system was ‘discriminatory, rather than a method of restricting the size of the group’.¹²⁷ Much of the time, those who were unable to gain entrance to the first line meeting had to seek information from the journalists leaving the consultation in order to be able to access information in a timely manner.¹²⁸ Thus, relations between the ministry and the media soured even after the re-establishment of unattributable briefings.

The most disadvantaged organisations - because of this system of briefing - were the regionals. The MoD had, during the war, already demonstrated how little it grasped the significance of the provincial media.¹²⁹ Briefings for the second line group did not commence until 18 May. These briefings lagged behind and were less frequent and sometimes less informative than the established defence correspondents’ briefings. In every instance, second line briefings took place after the first line - often placing the second line at considerable disadvantage. On one occasion the Newspaper Conference Chairman was contacted at home at 2200GMT on a Saturday night to be informed of a briefing the following day at 1045. The first line journalists had had their briefing at 1300 on the Saturday.¹³⁰ In addition, first line briefings were often hosted by more senior figures like Nott or Cooper, whereas the subsequent second line briefing might be taken by a junior. The *Glasgow Herald*, having sent its specialist, Ian Bruce, to the Falklands, was not permitted any access to the first line briefings. This had serious ramifications. On occasion, information was relayed to the first line which was not to the second. On 14 May the first line defence correspondents were briefed on the fact that an unexploded bomb (UXB) had hit HMS *Glasgow*. The journalists were asked not to publicise the name of the ship for security reasons. The *Herald* had not been privy to that information since her representative was part of the second line briefings. On 15 May the paper ran the story of the UXB, naming the ship.¹³¹ Not only did the system of briefing eventually implemented by the MoD fail to satisfy the media as a whole, but it also, to a certain extent, endangered the Task Force when information was improperly conveyed.

Facilities for the foreign, as well as regional, media in Britain were also lacking. It was not until the end of May that a third set of unattributable briefings was initiated, specific to foreign correspondents. There was, however, one exception. Starting on 14 May, North

¹²⁷ Newspaper Society memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.454, q.2.

¹²⁸ *The Sunday People* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.94.

¹²⁹ See Chapter Two.

¹³⁰ Newspaper Society memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.453, q.2.

¹³¹ *The Scotsman* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.117.

American correspondents were invited into private, unattributable briefings. Cooper himself even briefed this set of journalists ahead of the British regional media.¹³² There were two key reasons why US correspondents received such attention. Firstly, the British were keen to court the Americans, since her support was paramount to maintaining the country's official assistance in the war. Secondly, the British Embassy in America often sent messages of complaint regarding the way US correspondents were being treated in London, or advice on how MoDPR could improve relations. For example, on 11 May, Henderson contacted the MoD to inform it: 'HAVE BEEN WATCHING US TELEVISION COVERAGE OF EVENTS IN FALKLAND ISLANDS AND AM MUCH DISTURBED BY APPARENT INADEQUACY OF PRESS BRIEFING IN LONDON'.¹³³ This relationship between US correspondents and the MoD left the rest of the world at a loss. A representative of the German media even wrote to the MoD to protest at his colleagues' unfair treatment.¹³⁴ The Foreign Press Association complained to the Ministry. Foreign journalists were left to the third line briefings which were few and far between and by no means as thorough or informative as the first, or even second, line briefings.

One final issue plagued the newly established system - briefings were not 'regular'. They were often called with little warning. Petrie informed the HCDC that briefings were often called at 10-15 minutes' notice. He also said that it took two weeks for the MoD staff to institute a system of telephoning correspondents to advise them of briefing times.¹³⁵ Jim Meacham of the *Economist* said that he did not attend all the available briefings: 'I don't think anybody did because we did not always know when they were going to happen'.¹³⁶

However, this argument fails to consider the timings involved in the Falklands. The islands are four hours behind the UK. During the war this had implications for the announcement of news from the region. Most action took place over night, which meant that it occurred during the small hours on the morning in Britain. By the time news was confirmed and the whole picture was understood, announcements were often made in late afternoon.¹³⁷ In addition, when news of events did come during the day - for example the news of the Fitzroy disaster, or the news of the San Carlos landings - announcements were made as

¹³² For example this occurred on 2 June.

¹³³ Henderson to MODUK, 11 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E14.

¹³⁴ McDonald, 28 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E99/1.

¹³⁵ *Glasgow Herald* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.133.

¹³⁶ J. Meacham, HCDC, v.ii, p.234, q.776.

¹³⁷ For example, the announcements on *Sheffield, Coventry*, the Vulcan raids on Stanley Airfield and the helicopter crash in Chile.

soon as possible. It was not practical to delay an announcement for an hour to ensure all media representatives who wished to attend had arrived.

The MoD has been widely criticised for having discontinued unattributable briefings at the start of the war. The implications of this decision were severe – the media was forced to rely on speculation to compensate for the lack of information being provided to it by the MoD in its on-the-record briefings. Further to this, the relationship between the MoD and the media was, in cases, irrevocably harmed. When the briefings were reinstated it was not only as a result of the efforts of the new CPR. This thesis contends that three separate incentives played a part in ensuring the return of the briefings: the FCO was no longer able to sustain its unattributable briefings; the MoD had received increasing criticism from the media for its handling of the conflict and, by May, understood the importance of a positive relationship between the two; finally, pressure was placed on Cooper by editors to supply the media with more information. Yet when non-attributable briefings were re-established, the system actually served to further sour relations with a large percentage of the media. Not only were there different tiers of briefings which alienated much of the regional and Sunday media, but foreign correspondents were woefully neglected.

3. MoD Facilities: Media Provision

On 2 May the MoD opened an Emergency Press Centre. The centre became known as the ‘Concourse’ - based in the MoD’s Concourse Hall - and remained open until 18 June. The centre was available between 1000 and 2200GMT. For a short period in the war it was open for 24 hours a day.¹³⁸ The Concourse attracted large media gatherings and became a hub for many of the correspondents covering the crisis. The Press Centre has been described to some extent in all the media-related texts on the Falklands. What is common is the lack of analysis of facilities offered by the MoD. Harris felt that ‘...reporters had everything they needed except the one thing they wanted most: news’.¹³⁹ The services offered by the MoD to the media in May 1982 were more than adequate in terms of physical resources. The Concourse boasted 24 pay phones (eight with direct lines to major news publications), visual data display screens which showed material on Falklands associated matters, 24 typing positions (with typewriters), a copy and picture collection point for material arriving from the Fleet and a telephone message and paging service (Figure 4.4).¹⁴⁰ The MoD offered studio facilities for both the BBC and Independent Radio News (IRN). For foreign

¹³⁸ CoS, 1 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.72.

¹³⁹ Harris, p.101.

¹⁴⁰ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.9, q.14.

correspondents, direct feeds to outside control rooms were supplied.¹⁴¹ Finally, for television journalists, fixed camera positions were permitted for conferences and announcements, studio interview facilities within the MoD were supplied and space was found for the BBC and ITN to house three portable huts to use as broadcasting studios.¹⁴² The MoD unquestionably catered for basic needs of the media. All amenities required for the media to swiftly distribute news from the MoD were in place.



Figure 4.4: *The Press Concourse*¹⁴³

One criticism was the way in which copy from the South Atlantic was processed. PA was unhappy about the ‘casual’ way the MoD treated dispatches. The agency later submitted: ‘usually all we got was a telephone call telling us that copy from the Task Force was awaiting collection. We were not told whether the stories were from our own man, the content of the pieces, or how many there were. As a result we sometimes found ourselves setting a speed record to collect a worthless story’.¹⁴⁴ Delivery of copy was often late. The MoD acknowledged that stories coming in at midnight (or around midnight) would often not be delivered to the Portakabin where copy was to be collected, until about 7am.¹⁴⁵ The system for retrieving copy had its flaws. Often copy was delayed for more than 24 hours without the publication being notified. However, the physical facilities offered to the media in London, independent of those to retrieve Task Force copy, were more than adequate and allowed the media to function from within the MoD, almost as well as from its offices. The system of news release, briefings and the general policy of the MoD may have been

¹⁴¹ The extent of facilities for the foreign press was outlined to the CoS on 25 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4473 f.57.

¹⁴² MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.9, q.14.

¹⁴³ *News at One*, 21 May.

¹⁴⁴ PA memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.305, q.18.

¹⁴⁵ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.412, q.4.

flawed, but, when instituted, the physical facilities provided for the media within the MoD main building were satisfactory.

The timing of the provision of facilities has not been widely considered. Morrison and Tumber reasoned that as the campaign proceeded, noon briefings became more overcrowded and that, after the retaking of South Georgia, the MoD ‘decided to set up a press centre...’¹⁴⁶ Indeed, the MoD itself admitted the largest gatherings took place during the first few days of the hostilities.¹⁴⁷ After South Georgia, one briefing drew over 260 members of the media. It was not until the MoD was confronted with large numbers of journalists on its doorstep that it prepared the Concourse. When describing the outbreak of hostilities, McDonald recalled: ‘At that point, of course, the whole of the PR changed. We had Concourse Hall open’.¹⁴⁸ There is evidence to suggest that facilities within the MoD had not been considered as late as 21 April. During a meeting with editors, Cooper stated that ‘if operations began, a rapid news release system would be essential’ and ‘there might need to be correspondents permanently based in MoD’.¹⁴⁹ The opening of the Emergency Press Centre at the MoD was not an example of MoD organisation or preparedness. It was, in fact, a further example of how MoD policy was reactionary.

There is evidence to suggest that not only was the MoD tardy in the approach to media facilities, but that those facilities were provided as a direct result of pressure from the media. Petrie told the HCDC that the MoD never made any attempt to *anticipate* the needs of the media.¹⁵⁰ Protheroe confirmed that ‘there did not seem to be an adequate degree of organisation’, and that ‘it was the broadcasters who pressed for the setting up of a press centre’.¹⁵¹ ITN added that the system for broadcasters was adopted because ‘eventually, MoD were persuaded by the broadcasters...’¹⁵² Editors played a part in provoking action over the Press Centre in April. On 20 April the editors instructed Cooper that a media facility at the MoD was essential.¹⁵³ The MoD ‘undertook to look into all these points’.¹⁵⁴ At the next meeting of editors, Cooper told correspondents that ‘as suggested, MOD had opened up a full press facility in the Concourse Hall’.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁶ Morrison and Tumber, p.202.

¹⁴⁷ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.9, q.16.

¹⁴⁸ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.398, q.1766.

¹⁴⁹ Note for the record, 21 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.2.

¹⁵⁰ *Glasgow Herald* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.134.

¹⁵¹ Protheroe, HCDC, v.ii, p.53, q.142.

¹⁵² ITV memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.66, q.b.

¹⁵³ Note for the record, 21 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.2.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

The facilities allocated by the MoD in May were fairly extensive.¹⁵⁶ However, it was fundamental to the effective media presentation of the war that these facilities exist. The MoD should have been aware of what the media needed at an earlier stage. The Emergency Press Centre and unattributable briefings should have been implemented (or in the case of the briefings, maintained) from the start of the conflict. In a crisis which involved diplomacy *and* a Task Force of a magnitude not witnessed since World War Two, the MoD and the FCO should both have offered comprehensive and ample facilities from the time, if not of the Argentine invasion, then of the sailing of the Fleet.

3a. The Military Briefing Group

The media demand for briefings was not limited to unattributable briefings. There was a need, amongst a generation which had grown up without national service, and with very little experience of military campaigns, for in-depth briefing from military experts. The role of military specialists in briefing the media is only touched upon in passing among most histories of the media and the conflict. While it is acknowledged that a group of military authorities were brought in order to enhance the media's understanding of the campaign, the way in which the group was constructed, or the reasons why, have been neglected by the literature.

The isolation of the DPRs from the main thrust of the campaign for much of its duration dictated that they did not have as much access to hard data as desirable.¹⁵⁷ The media, because of the dearth of information provided, and the lack of military expertise supplied, turned to retired servicemen in order to bring clarity to viewers, listeners or readers. The role of 'armchair admirals', 'armchair strategists', or 'armchair analysts', was integral to much of the early coverage of the war. Men who had been in command or members of the Armed Forces mere months beforehand speculated on the possible movements of the British and options open to them.¹⁵⁸ In April, First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Henry Leach, was compelled to speak privately with (mostly) retired naval commanders about 'public comments which might be construed as irresponsible'.¹⁵⁹ Worries were advanced in Parliament. Nott told the House: 'It would be of assistance to us if retired Service officers and others would not speculate so widely...'¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Morrison and Tumber, p.202.

¹⁵⁷ See Chapter Two.

¹⁵⁸ For a list of the main characters involved in commentary see Adams, p.200.

¹⁵⁹ CoS, 17 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4473 f.42.

¹⁶⁰ HC Deb., 4 May, v.xxiii, c.35.

By May the MoD had realised the role that these servicemen were playing in educating the public. McDonald reported to the HCDC that when the campaign became a land operation, the MoD included briefings from military officers.¹⁶¹ Leach suggested to Cooper early in May that ‘we should get the concurrence of a small number of retired naval officers and we should have them making it clear to the media that they were available...’ He suggested that the group themselves should be briefed and ‘would be on their guard accordingly to stop the indiscriminate speculation’.¹⁶² A military group, instructed by the MoD and employed to brief the media would be an effective and more responsible way of coaching the media in military operations. After Leach had advanced the idea with Cooper, the PUS took the idea to editors on 6 May. The editors responded enthusiastically to the idea, leading Cooper to note after the meeting that: ‘We should look at having a rather more select panel of armchair strategists whom we could brief’.¹⁶³ The following day, as part of a list of measures to improve media relations recommended to the CoS, the Military Briefing Group was born. The CoS approved the notion that a ‘panel of experts’, approved by the MoD, would be given ‘background briefings in depth...then be available to make authoritative comment when required’.¹⁶⁴ On 12 May, the meeting of the CoS authorised the Army Department to nominate to the PUS, a small panel of officers who had previously received media training. This panel would be made available to assist MODPR.¹⁶⁵

From conception to start, the Military Briefing Group took a little over three weeks to put into place. On 18 May, Colonel John ‘Martin’ Garrod, Colonel General Staff to the Commandant General Royal Marines, proposed the Naval contingent of the group should be led by Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Donkin RN, and comprised of Major General John Owen RM and Colonel Neil Maude RM. Garrod said the group had specialised and factual knowledge of relevant topics.¹⁶⁶ It is not clear on which precise day the Military Briefing Group gave its first briefing. None of the literature included assessment that thorough, and the archives held both at Kew and the MoD give no indication as to the exact date. What is clear, however, is that the first briefing occurred *after* 21 May. An internal document issued that day listed all briefings which had taken place in the MoD since 11 May (not

¹⁶¹ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.398, q.1766.

¹⁶² H. Leach, HCDC, v.ii, p.398, q.1766.

¹⁶³ Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E6.

¹⁶⁴ CoS, 7 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.82.

¹⁶⁵ CoS, 12 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.88.

¹⁶⁶ M. Garrod to Taylor, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E46/3.

including official announcements).¹⁶⁷ The panel was certainly in action, however, by 30 May, when it joined Cooper in briefing defence correspondents. Both Leach and Lewin were vocal about the effectiveness of the Military Briefing Group. Both felt that it was implemented far too late in the conflict to be of much significance. Leach said that the introduction of the panel ‘was a little late’.¹⁶⁸ Lewin felt that ‘by that time...they [the media] had got their favourites and we were too late’.¹⁶⁹

Foster estimated that some of the media distrusted the group because it felt it was merely an opportunity for the MoD to spread misinformation.¹⁷⁰ Mostly though, the panel restored a degree of trust between the media and the MoD. The BBC judged that: ‘The organisation of bi-weekly briefings by senior officials and servicemen marked the information watershed and seems to have reflected the belated realisation that modern communications and the expectations of the British public made it extremely unlikely Government could operate a coherent and comprehensive disinformation campaign’.¹⁷¹ It is the claim here that the panel was established merely to act as an addition to regular briefings by supplying technical details which representatives of MoDPR could not manage. In this the panel was neither successful nor unsuccessful. It was introduced too late in the campaign to be of significant use to any broadcaster or publication. By the time the Military Briefing Group was presented, it had already, in the two months of war beforehand, located alternative sources of military information. In the same way that unattributable briefings were reinstated, and material facilities at the MoD were instituted too late in the campaign, the Military Briefing Group was tardily implemented. Perhaps this is the greatest error, since throughout April and May of 1982 the policy of the MoD starved journalists of information and denied them a comprehensive military education. Efforts to readdress this were made unpunctually.

4. Editors’ Meetings

One initiative devised within the ministry at the beginning of the conflict was that Cooper should meet regularly with the editors of national media organisations (as well as international agencies like PA and Reuters). The role of the meetings was highly contentious during the war. One of the most discussed issues relating to the MoD’s handling of the media was the accusation that Cooper used a specific meeting of editors to

¹⁶⁷ Memo on Public Presentation, 21 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E58/2.

¹⁶⁸ Leach, HCDC, v.ii, p.349, q.1427.

¹⁶⁹ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.349, q.1427.

¹⁷⁰ Foster, ‘The Falklands War’, p.156.

¹⁷¹ BBC memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.46, q.c.

misinform the media. On 20 May, the day before the San Carlos landings, Cooper told editors that they should not expect a D-Day-style reinvasion of the islands. The next day British forces commenced the biggest landing operation since June 1944.¹⁷² This controversy has led to considerable speculation about the part the meetings played in MoD media policy. However, there was very little detail made available to the HCDC on the content of Editors' Meetings (save a section of transcript from the meeting of 20 April).¹⁷³ And subsequent histories have had to analyse the role of the meetings from little more than some broad accounts of the proceedings. The notes on these meetings have still not been made available to the National Archives, despite the 30-year rule regarding the release of historical documents. The only historian who had access to documents relating to Editors' Meetings was Freedman when he undertook to write the *Official History*. Freedman, in his extensive account of the war, is unable to dedicate much analysis to the function of these meetings and is limited to a brief appraisal.¹⁷⁴ Inevitably then, with access to the MoD archives in Portsmouth, this thesis constitutes the most detailed consideration of the significance of the meetings and appraises the worth, and consequences of, the communication between the media and the MoD the meetings afforded.

Mercer et al. produced the most extensive evaluation of Editors' Meetings. Their evidence is largely derived from interviews conducted with various editors. The authors noted that the meetings were 'called to defuse the tension between Government and media...' and that they were 'widely criticised by civil servants as well as Editors for being too late'.¹⁷⁵ The first official meeting of editors was held on 7 April.¹⁷⁶ Of course, as mentioned earlier, McDonald had met certain editors on 3 April in order to discuss the needs of broadcasters with the Task Force. Mercer et al. wrote that: 'It has not been possible for the ministry to say how many editors attended that meeting [of 7 April] or what was discussed'.¹⁷⁷ They indicated that the first meeting of editors was an 'incomplete gathering' – this was for two reasons: the meeting was held in Cooper's office (whereas the third floor conference room was utilised for the remainder of the conflict); and none of the editors interviewed in the course of their research could 'recall any meeting at the MoD'.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷² See Chapter Six.

¹⁷³ Letter from Liaison Officer, MoD, HCDC, v.ii, p.432.

¹⁷⁴ Freedman, v.ii, p.404.

¹⁷⁵ Mercer et al. p.122.

¹⁷⁶ See Appendix One.

¹⁷⁷ Mercer et al., p.123.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

However, the agenda for the meeting of 7 April suggests the meeting was anything but insignificant. The meeting consisted of three parts: 1) an opening statement by Cooper which would be entirely private 2) a background briefing on the situation in the Falklands which could be used unattributably, and 3) a closing discussion which would, again, be private.¹⁷⁹ What this first meeting represented was the first unattributable briefing given by the MoD. In addition, it also allowed Cooper to set out worries about the coverage of particular areas, including details of operational plans, capability, information about intelligence or communication or information about the locations of units.¹⁸⁰ There was a sincere plea for secrecy made by Cooper. He told editors that ‘it was implicit that the fact the meeting had taken place would not itself be published’. Perhaps editors took this plea too seriously, since a proportion of the editors interviewed for Mercer et al.’s study were actually present at the meeting of 7 April.¹⁸¹ In addition to this, the meeting was by no means small. Recently accessed documents, courtesy of the ministry, indicate that there were 22 editors present at the first meeting. A register of those who were in attendance was kept for each meeting.¹⁸² Although later meetings did boast more editors, the number did not increase by a particularly significant figure – attendance at subsequent meetings ranged from 23 to 28 editors. Precise dates of meetings were unavailable to Mercer et al., but they judged that ‘the late commencement of regular meetings with editors is widely accepted as an error’.¹⁸³ Morrison and Tumber wrote that there were seven meetings between 7 April and 14 June.¹⁸⁴ In actual fact there were only six meetings between those dates. The final, and seventh, meeting was held on 16 June. It is true that meetings were not established on a weekly or fortnightly basis, and therefore were not strictly ‘regular’. However, throughout the campaign the editors met with Cooper roughly every two weeks, with the exception of the first three weeks in May in which Cooper held weekly meetings (6, 12 and 20 May).

There was an additional meeting between Nott and the editors of BBC News, ITN and PA on 11 May.¹⁸⁵ This was the only interaction Nott had with editors – he never attended Editors’ Meetings. In fact, the MoD attendance at these meetings was indicative of the very distinct spheres of influence within the Ministry. The very fact that Cooper chaired

¹⁷⁹ Note for the record, 8 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E1.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ See Appendix 14.

¹⁸² Registers from MoD, DEFE31/221.

¹⁸³ Mercer et al., p.123.

¹⁸⁴ Morrison and Tumber, p.200.

¹⁸⁵ 11 May meeting is not counted as an ‘Editors’ Meeting’ since neither Cooper, nor the majority of editors attended.

meetings instead of McDonald as ACPR, or Taylor as CPR, demonstrated the very significant responsibility assumed by Cooper. Cooper was assisted in these meetings by a succession of military personnel. In the first meeting of 7 April he was joined by the Director of Naval Warfare, the Secretary of the D-Notice Committee and DPR(N).¹⁸⁶ CDS, Lewin, attended the meetings on two occasions. He said this was because he ‘wanted to get across directly to editors’ what his feelings were.¹⁸⁷ Cooper’s deputy in the Editors’ Meetings was the AUS, Stewart.¹⁸⁸ In this respect, the organisation and management of Editors’ Meetings circumvented any MoDPR involvement.

The editors invited to attend all belonged to national or international organisations. There was no representation of the regional press at any meeting. Sunday newspapers, however, were on the register.¹⁸⁹ Of the broadcasting companies, ITN, BBC and IRN were invited to attend. Of the agencies in attendance - Reuters and PA - only Editor-in-Chief of PA, David Chipp, was present at meetings. Editor-in-Chief of Reuters, Michael Reupke, aware that the meetings were for *British* editors, was uncomfortable attending. Reuters’ Chief Correspondent, Graham Stewart, took his place. In addition to the daily national - and Sunday - newspapers, PA and Reuters, and broadcasting companies, newspaper organisations were permitted access to the meetings. The Newspaper Conference, Newspaper Society and Newspaper Proprietors’ Association were all present.¹⁹⁰

Later, Editors’ Meetings were criticised for being too large by the editors interviewed by Mercer et al.¹⁹¹ It could be argued that the sheer number of editors to whom Cooper was communicating, might have deterred him from taking them into his confidence. However, the exercise could not possibly have been run with less organisations present. One of the reasons the meetings were perceived to be worthwhile was that Cooper was able to address all elements of the media: broadcasters, publishers, agencies and conglomerates. If meetings had been conducted for each section privately, this would have caused discrepancies and given rise to potential accusations that more information was being shared with one constituent of the media over the others. The time it would have taken to

¹⁸⁶ Note for the record, 8 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E1.

¹⁸⁷ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.345, q.1405. Lewin attended meetings on 12 May and 9 June.

¹⁸⁸ James Morey Stewart will be referred to as ‘Stewart’, since that is how his name appears on documentation.

¹⁸⁹ See Appendix 14.

¹⁹⁰ The Newspaper Conference was represented by its Chairman and Vice Chairman, Alex McDonald and Mark Barrington-Ward. The Newspaper Society’s Secretary, Gordon Page and the Director of the Newspaper Proprietors’ Association, John Le Page, attended meetings.

¹⁹¹ Mercer et al., p.123.

meet with each of these components of the media would not have been conducive to the efficient running of media policy.

4a. Editors' Meetings and the Task Force Journalists

Editors' Meetings acted as a bridge between those members of the media with the Task Force and editors. The meetings allowed Cooper to explain the policies rolled out to correspondents in the South Atlantic, and allowed editors to voice any concerns. This was true to the extent that editors of organisations without a Task Force delegate often felt the meetings were fruitless. The Editor of *The Observer* said: 'The Permanent Secretary's meetings with Editors were mostly unproductive...Much of the discussion at these meetings...concerned transmission problems that could have been dealt with more effectively by News Editors'.¹⁹² On 27 April the MoD's policy towards the release of copy from Task Force correspondents was outlined in a signal to the Task Force:

MINISTRY POLICY IS TO DEPEND ON EDITORS, WHO HAVE BEEN GIVEN GUIDELINES PERSONALLY BY PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE, TO CONSULT MOD WITH ANY DOUBTS ON MATERIAL RECEIVED FROM THEIR EMBARKED REPRESENTATIVES...¹⁹³

This signal demonstrated the importance of the link between editors and the MoD. The CoS often deflected discussion of issues with the Task Force journalists and suggested they be raised 'with the editors concerned'.¹⁹⁴ The Fleet journalists were discussed at every meeting of editors. Evidence of this was that, ahead of the meeting of 6 May, DPR(N), Sutherland, requested a variety of information on issues which might be brought up with editors. The first two items which should be addressed, according to DPR(N) were: 'Arrangements for sending back material produced by correspondents with the Task Force'; and information concerning places for correspondents on board *QEII* 'and other possible additions to the Task Force'.¹⁹⁵ The information gathered by DPR(N), however, was not particularly helpful. In a letter from Sutherland to Cooper, Sutherland explained that 'Paul Keel' was accompanying the Fleet for *The Guardian* and 'Terry' Snow was for *The Sun*. Ken 'Sobido', and the merging of minders to become 'Robin Hammond' (Graeme Hammond and Robin Barratt), only served to confuse the situation further.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² *The Observer* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.102.

¹⁹³ CINCFLEET to CTG, *Hermes, Invincible, Fearless, Canberra, Fort Austin*, 27 Apr., HCDC, v.ii, p.474.

¹⁹⁴ CoS, 8 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.84.

¹⁹⁵ Request for information, 5 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E2.

¹⁹⁶ DPR(N) to PS/PUS, 6 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E5.

An example of the effect editors could have on PR policy in the South Atlantic occurred at the end of May concerning the distribution of the ‘*Invincible Five*’.¹⁹⁷ On 6 May editors complained to Cooper that organisations with correspondents ‘with forward elements of the Task Force near the Falklands had good access to news, while others had correspondents only in Canberra [sic] off Ascension who were producing very little’.¹⁹⁸ On 20 May, following the recommendations regarding the allocation of journalists to units, Cooper explained that ‘with the amalgamation of the various elements of the Task Force, some redistribution of correspondents between ships was taking place...’ and that ‘priority would be given to those who had had less good access to material on the voyage south, eg those in Canberra’.¹⁹⁹ The day before the landing the five journalists on board *Invincible* signalled their offices in London to complain that they were not being given the same access on the Falklands that *Canberra* journalists were being afforded: ‘INFORMATIVELY FACILITIES LANDINGWISE OFFERED EMBARKED PRESS CANBERRA BEING DENIED REPEAT DENIED US...RECOMMEND SOONEST AND URGENTEST REPRESENTATIONS YOUR END OUR NEEDS’.²⁰⁰ On 28 May a further communication was sent complaining that the five had been removed from the islands:

OUR REPRESENTATIONS TO BE TREATED THE SAME WERE REFUSED... WE ARE NOW ON A SUPPLY SHIP IN THE TOTAL EXCLUSION ZONE, DEVOID OF COMMUNICATIONS AND HAVE RECEIVED THROUGH THE CAPTAIN A SIGNAL FROM MOD SAYING WE MUST TRANSFER TO SHIPS THAT ARE NO LONGER IN THE AREA...OUR RECOMMENDATION IS THAT ALL PRESSURE SHOULD BE APPLIED FOR EQUAL TREATMENT YOUR CORRESPONDENTS...²⁰¹

On 31 May the editors of the five newspapers - *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Sun* and the *Daily Star* - received copies of this signal. They were invited to meet with Cooper privately that evening. Cooper assured the editors that ‘he would do everything possible’.²⁰² The next day, no arrangements had yet been made which provoked the Editor of the *Daily Star* to write to Cooper:

The level of thoughtlessness by your embarked Press Officers reaches a fresh senith [sic] daily. I am sure that you also are worried by this appalling lack of understanding and professionalism... At the present, however, we are left with having been ordered off the Falklands with, I understand, no

¹⁹⁷ The *Invincible Five* are discussed in Chapter Three.

¹⁹⁸ Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

¹⁹⁹ Note for the record, 21 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.5.

²⁰⁰ *Invincible* to MODUK, CTG 317, CTG 317.0, CTG 317.8, 20 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E55/2.

²⁰¹ *Invincible* to MODUK, 28 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.9.

²⁰² *Daily Star* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.114.

chance of returning for the next 10 days. We have one man with the Task Force. Some broadcasters have three. We are not asking for much. Only for fair treatment for our man.²⁰³

Later that evening, at 1800GMT, Cooper admitted the editors once more to his office in order to discuss the situation further. Cooper told editors at this meeting, according to Hitchen:

...that he would do everything possible to make sure that our people were put back ashore, and he promised that not only would signals be sent immediately to the embarked MoD Press Officers and the Commander of the Land Forces, but that our correspondents would also be told of the arrangements to take them ashore.²⁰⁴

The *Invincible* Five were moved from the carrier to RFA *Stromness* the very next day. On 3 June all five landed safely on the islands. It will never be known with 100% accuracy whether the *Invincible* journalists, without the interjection of the editors, would have made it ashore the Falklands. However, the evidence suggests that, as a direct consequence of editors' protests on 31 May and 1 June, action was swiftly taken to rectify the situation.

4b. Editors' Meetings and MoD Policy

Problems with MoD policy were often ironed out in Editors' Meetings. It was not just the media which benefitted from the meetings. Feedback supplied by editors at meetings was key to MoD's running of media policy in Britain. As mentioned earlier, the response of editors to the withdrawal of unattributable briefing played a significant role in their restoration on 11 May. Contribution from editors also had an impact on the extent of physical facilities offered at the MoD. The true extent of ill-will between the media and the MoD, for example, was highlighted to Cooper in the meeting of 6 May. In a memo after the meeting, Cooper wrote: '...I think we are losing ground. We need to regain it and be more positive and respond more quickly'.²⁰⁵ At the meeting editors informed Cooper: '...there was a risk of the UK starting to lose public and international sympathy through appearing to be holding back on news when the Argentines had no hesitation about deluging the media with misleading and inaccurate information'.²⁰⁶ As a result of the consultation of 6 May, a list of measures was outlined which should be adopted in order to promote better relations with the media.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ B. Hitchen to Cooper, 1 Jun., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.8.

²⁰⁴ *Daily Star* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.115.

²⁰⁵ Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E6.

²⁰⁶ Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

²⁰⁷ Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E6.

The following week, on 12 May, Cooper responded to the criticism levelled at the MoD the week before. He was able to tell editors that he had solved a number of issues about which they had complained. For example, Cooper said new instructions had been sent to the Task Force urging a more rapid release of operational news, background briefings were now being provided, and that ‘every avenue had been explored to try to arrange for transmission of cine-film...’²⁰⁸ In a later meeting, on 20 May, Cooper further delighted in instructing editors that more ‘progress had been made in several areas previously discussed...’²⁰⁹ Area of progress included the clarification of the system for releasing copy from ships, photographs of servicemen (specifically those who were casualties) would be provided to the media and problems with Customs’ clearance of film footage from the South Atlantic had now been fully resolved.²¹⁰

Editors’ Meetings proved to be a hub of information for the PUS to tap into. Cooper was able to gauge media feeling and to act – in most cases, swiftly – when protests were made. Perhaps the most significant aspect of Editors’ Meetings was that they allowed the MoD to implement guidelines and to lead editors on MoD policy independent of usual Government machinery. Cooper used meetings with editors to recommend to editors what type of information might, and might not be, published. The meetings also acted as a link between the CoS and the media in that Cooper would address any concerns of the committee with editors directly. In this respect, these meetings allowed the MoD a way to evade, not only MoDPR - ensuring his authority over all aspects of public relations - but also the system of Defence Notices (D-Notices) in Britain.

The D-Notice system had been effective in Britain for 60 years. It was a system involving a voluntary code between the Government and the media. It was designed to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of information which might compromise British security. In the case of a particularly sensitive subject, the D-Notice Committee would issue a D-Notice. This notice would detail the risks of running stories on the subject in question. In essence the system amounted to a form of voluntary censorship. The system was not invoked at any time during the war.²¹¹ ITV declared that ‘instead the *ad hoc* system of censorship...grew up under the umbrella of the MoD’.²¹² There were occasions when Admiral Ash, the secretary of the committee, informally spoke with media organisations, either answering

²⁰⁸ Note for the record, 13 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.4.

²⁰⁹ Note for the record, 21 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.5.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ See Harris, p.108.; Carruthers, p.124.; Humphries, p.58.

²¹² ITV memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.71, q.d.

questions, or giving gentle guidance on various topics.²¹³ In the place of D-Notices, the Editors' Meetings acted as a forum for guidance on what should or should not be publicised. As early as 17 April the CoS depended on Cooper to address issues with the media. It was agreed he should discuss with editors 'the desirability of avoiding the publication of reports which might be construed as irresponsible...'²¹⁴ On 10 May the OD(SA) discussed the problem of speculation in the Press. The committee felt that '...problems should be urgently addressed by the Permanent Under Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, at one of his regular meetings with Editors...'²¹⁵ It is clear that guidance issued to editors was seen to negate the use of D-Notices from a meeting of the IG on 3 May. The meeting observed that 'guidance had been given to editors four weeks beforehand'. It was noted that it was still possible to employ D-Notices. However, up until that point the guidance to editors had sufficed.²¹⁶ According to a *Guardian* correspondent, even when Admiral Ash spoke to journalists he referred them to guidance issued in Editors' Meetings.²¹⁷

Cooper discussed initial guidelines with editors on 7 April. In that meeting it was suggested that, as a general criterion, 'they imagined what they would want to see broadcast or in print if they had a son aboard the Task Force'.²¹⁸ On 20 April the PUS 'requested caution over the publication of information to do with operational plans...' and requested restraint in three key areas: assistance provided to UK Forces by foreign countries; Argentine disinformation; and impending operations.²¹⁹ Cooper implored editors to avoid particular mention of Chilean support.²²⁰ Whilst Chile publicly adopted a neutral stance during the conflict, her own dispute with Argentina over the Beagle Islands persuaded her to lend covert assistance to the UK by supplying intelligence on Argentine military movements and capacity.

There were two occasions when the editors of media organisations were directly asked not to expose information of which they were aware. The first instance was concerning UXBs. The MoD was keen to preserve the information that Argentine bombs were failing to

²¹³ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.33, q.89.

²¹⁴ CoS, 17 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4473 f.42.

²¹⁵ OD(SA), 10 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.99.

²¹⁶ IG, 3 May, TNA, *Anglo-Argentine dispute over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands: meetings of Information Group*, CAB164/1622 f.15.

²¹⁷ *The Guardian* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.199.

²¹⁸ Note for the record, 8 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E1.

²¹⁹ Note for the record, 21 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.2.

²²⁰ Head DIS to PS/PUS, 6 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E5.; Cooper, 5 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E2.

explode. Defence correspondents were also entreated not to refer to UXBs in stories. The second instance was when editors were beseeched not to announce that landings at Bluff Cove would be taking place. On both these occasions, D-Notices could have been engaged, yet guidance issued to editors was seen as being adequate to prevent the publication or broadcast of sensitive details.

Editors' Meetings not only bypassed the D-Notice system, but also usurped the role of the defence correspondent. Mercer et al. made a study of the position of the defence correspondent and found that their role was 'weakened by the manner in which the meetings with editors developed'.²²¹ During the first month of the conflict only editors received a form of unattributable briefing. The majority of editors did not have training in defence affairs. One civil servant told Mercer et al. that: 'The defence correspondents disliked the whole thing because they thought their editors might know more than they did', but in fact they often forgot what Cooper said: 'They couldn't remember whether it was a brigade or a platoon or whatever'.²²²

The extent to which the media co-operated with MoD-issued guidance has constituted a provocative subject. Taylor related to the HCDC that he found editors were 'exceptionally co-operative'.²²³ Lewin said he found them 'extremely understanding'.²²⁴ And there is evidence that the editors were grateful for the service afforded them. On 7 April the editors were said to be positive and 'appreciative that the meeting had taken place'.²²⁵ The editors later told Cooper that they 'found meetings to be very useful...'.²²⁶ As previously noted, the main focus of the literature's attention of Editors' Meetings has been concerning the extent to which editors were misinformed by the MoD. The main example used related to the landings at San Carlos. There were, however, other examples where either misinformation was offered to editors, or significant information was omitted from the meeting altogether. Hitchen said that: 'Editors' briefings were often quite farcical in that information was deliberately withheld'.²²⁷ He gave the example of 6 May in which editors attending a meeting were totally ignorant of the fact that two Harriers had gone missing, despite the fact a press conference was occurring on the subject downstairs. In an interview with

²²¹ Mercer et al., p.117. See also p.123.

²²² Cited in Mercer et al., p.118.

²²³ Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.301, q.1215.

²²⁴ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.345, q.1405.

²²⁵ Note for the record, 8 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E1.

²²⁶ Note for the record, 21 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.2.

²²⁷ *Daily Star* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.111.

Mercer et al. one editor said that the episode ‘made us feel absolute fools’.²²⁸ The meeting of 20 May, in which the landings were discussed, left editors so sour that two – Donald Treford (*The Observer*) and Frank Giles (*The Sunday Times*) refused to return for subsequent meetings. Both Knightley, and Greenberg and Smith, have written on the extent to which the media was complacent in being controlled by the MoD.²²⁹ Knightley, in an article written just after the war, wrote that ‘the MoD could not have achieved what it did without some compliance from the British media; if it was rape, then it was rape with contributory negligence’.²³⁰

4c. Editors’ Meetings: Ministry-Media Relations

Before the records of the meetings were accessed, the only real evidence one could obtain relating to Editors’ Meetings was editors’ own statements. Treford told Mercer et al. that ‘there was never any chance of a serious discussion because the meetings constantly became slanging matches...’²³¹ The major drawback of Cooper’s meetings with editors was that, particularly in the latter half of the crisis, they were increasingly confrontational and less advantageous. What was apparent was that the meetings progressively became fora at which editors could make known their grievances. Cooper said that the basic aim of the meetings was ‘to sort out what you might call large problems’.²³² The first meeting at which irritations came to the surface was that of 6 May. The note on the meeting recorded that ‘while exchanges...were good-natured, there was clearly a good deal of disquiet on the part of Editors and criticism of the speed and quality of news provided by MoD’.²³³ It was at this time, in early May, that various members of the Government, including the Prime Minister, began to publicly condemn areas of the media for their coverage of the crisis.²³⁴ However, there is a direct correlation between Government criticism of the media, and the increase in the adversarial nature of Editors’ Meetings. On 6 May ‘there was clear feeling that the press was being criticised by Government but inadequately provided with information’.²³⁵

²²⁸ Cited in Mercer et al., p.124.

²²⁹ Knightley, pp.434-438.; Greenberg and Smith, p.24.

²³⁰ Knightley, ‘The Falklands: How Britannia ruled the news’, *Columbia Journalism Review*, 21, 3 (Sep., 1982) p.52.

²³¹ Mercer et al., pp.124-125.

²³² Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.32, q.87.

²³³ Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

²³⁴ See Chapter Five.

²³⁵ Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

Although tensions between the media and the MoD had been high before the start of May, relations with other ministries or departments had been fairly equivocal. A series of events served to change the status quo and pit the media against the Government over its coverage of the conflict. On 2 May the BBC's programme, *Newsnight*, aired an episode which saw its presenter, Peter Snow, refer to 'the British'. That evening the Argentines had claimed that *Hermes* had been disabled. The British had publicly denied this claim. Snow declared on air:

Now, there was already deep scepticism, to put it mildly, about the Argentine claim to have downed eleven aircraft. They have produced no further evidence to refute British denials on this... So, again, an Argentine claim that appears to have no foundation. Until the British are demonstrated either to be deceiving us or to be concealing losses, we can only tend to give a lot more credence to the British version of events.²³⁶

John Page, Conservative MP for Harrow West, complained about the content of the programme, maintaining that Snow's comments verged on treason.²³⁷ Five days later an editorial in *The Sun* asked: 'What is it but treason to talk on TV... questioning whether the Government's version of the sea battles was to be believed?'²³⁸ Harris wrote that up until this point in the conflict the BBC had been *reporting* the war – 'from this point on it was part of it'.²³⁹ Snow replied to criticism by writing to *The Times*:

Our job is to report events, and constantly to examine the accuracy of accounts we are given of them. Our job also is constantly to question those who have the power to direct events, and to question the assumptions and assessments on which they make their decisions.²⁴⁰

This incident was swiftly followed by controversy over *The Sun*'s headline following the sinking of the *Belgrano*. *The Sun* published a front page proclaiming victoriously, 'Gotcha' (Figure 4.5).²⁴¹ Harris gives the most detailed description of how the headline came to be.²⁴² Although only around 100,000 copies of newspapers carrying the headline were distributed to Scotland and the north of England, (the subsequent headline read, 'DID 1,200 ARGIES DROWN?'), controversy surrounding the headline was rife.²⁴³ The latest biography of Thatcher, written by Charles Moore, judged that '...although this [the headline] was later used as an example of callousness and jingoism, it did reflect

²³⁶ P. Snow, *Newsnight*, BBC Television, 2 May.

²³⁷ Morrison and Tumber, p.228.

²³⁸ Editorial, 'Dare call it treason', *The Sun*, 7 May, p.6.

²³⁹ Harris, p.72.

²⁴⁰ P. Snow, Letter to *The Times*, 8 May, p.9.

²⁴¹ 'Gotcha', *The Sun*, 3 May, p.1.

²⁴² Harris, pp.13-14.

²⁴³ 'DID 1,200 ARGIES DROWN?', *The Sun*, 3 May, p.1.

widespread popular reaction'.²⁴⁴ Jenkins wrote at the time: 'Editorial staff in many newspapers and broadcasting organisations are deeply divided; and are thus unsure what balance to strike between blind patriotism and constructive criticism'.²⁴⁵



Figure 4.5: 'The Sun', 3 May 1982

On 4 May Nott rose in the Commons to criticise the media further, stating that it would be of use if the media would not 'speculate so widely' and if the BBC and other media could have 'fewer programmes of this kind'.²⁴⁶ Winston Churchill MP, in an interview on ITN's *News at Ten*, professed himself 'disgusted' with the conduct of the media.²⁴⁷ By the time the editors met on 6 May, criticism of the media had reached a high point thus far. The increasingly fractitious relationship between the Government and the media served to heighten animosity experienced in Cooper's meetings.

Cooper expressed to the HCDC that 'as the meetings went along I got a great deal of stick from the editors about what we were doing and what we were not doing...'²⁴⁸ After 6 May Cooper wrote that he 'had a much rougher ride'.²⁴⁹ The meeting of 9 June saw many more complaints surface. A comment on the meeting noted that 'the Editors were in a niggling mood (though few of them seemed to share the same niggle)'.²⁵⁰ It was not until the very last meeting of editors, on 16 June, that they became truly confrontational. With the end of the war, and the end of many of the media arrangements drawing to a close, neither the MoD, nor the media, were so reliant on the other side. In the meeting Cooper criticised the actions of the media over the last couple of months. This led to 'some forthright

²⁴⁴ C. Moore, *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography*, p.714.

²⁴⁵ Jenkins, 'When soldiers play journalists and journalists play at soldiers', *The Times*, 10 May, p.8.

²⁴⁶ HC Deb., 4 May, v.xxiii, c.35.

²⁴⁷ W. Churchill, 'Falklands: Argentine TV', *News at Ten*, 6 May <www.itnsource.com/en/shotlist/ITN/1982/05/06/AS060582014/?s=Falklands>. This interview attracted comment in *The Times* on 11 May, p.13.

²⁴⁸ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.32, q.87.

²⁴⁹ Cooper, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/220 f.E6.

²⁵⁰ Note for the record, 10 Jun., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.6.

exchanges'.²⁵¹ Protheroe announced that the 'last place' he thought he would be accused of 'a lack of patriotism' was in the MoD.²⁵² Peter Woon, Editor of BBC Television News, alleged that the MoD had diverted film taken by the BBC cameraman in the Falklands.²⁵³ According to DPR(A), who attended the meeting, Derek Jameson, Editor of the *News of the World*, told Cooper he could not make up his mind whether the actions were 'conspiracy or a cock-up'. To which Woon suggested 'both'.²⁵⁴

Editors' Meetings carried with them benefits for both the media and the MoD. The media saw certain issues solved, about which they made representations to Cooper. Examples included the reinstatement of unattributable briefings by the MoD, an increase in physical facilities at the Ministry, and the solution to issues arising with the Task Force. The MoD was able to gain valuable feedback on their policy, both in the South Atlantic and in Britain. The ministry was able to bypass the regular machinery of the Government and the media – circumventing the D-Notice system, and depreciating the role of defence correspondents. In addition, meetings enabled the MoD to give thorough guidance on what it did, or did not, want published. The most significant way in which the meetings detracted from their aim of promoting accordance between the ministry and media was the confrontational atmosphere created after the first week of May.

5. The News Release Group

It has been established that, in May, the MoD progressively realised the importance of media-relations. On 12 May Lewin met the editors, along with Cooper, for the first time. Editors complained about the embarrassment caused the previous week over the Harrier crash on which Cooper had neglected to brief them. Notes on the meeting recorded that 'PUS rebutted this, referring to the need to inform next of kin...'²⁵⁵ A comment on the mood of the editors:

Although the Editors seemed appreciative of the efforts being made to improve the provision of information by MOD, there was still a good deal of simmering discontent and suspicion that the Government was trying to control the flow of information...²⁵⁶

²⁵¹ Note for the record, 17 Jun., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.7.

²⁵² Cited in Hudson and Stanier, pp.181-2.

²⁵³ Note for the record, 17 Jun., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.7.

²⁵⁴ D. Ramsbotham in Hudson and Stanier p.182.

²⁵⁵ Note for record, 13 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.4.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

Having witnessed, first hand, the disquiet of editors, Lewin addressed the issue of media-relations directly. On 17 April the CoS meeting documented that Lewin ‘said he would discuss with the Permanent Under Secretary the establishment within the Ministry of Defence of an operations cell to handle public relations matters...’²⁵⁷ The MoD submitted to the HCDC that from 18 May ‘a News Release Group was established under the chairmanship of the Assistant Under Secretary of State for the Defence Staff...’²⁵⁸ The NRG came into effect the day after Lewin contacted Cooper.

The literature on the media and the Falklands is extremely light on the topic of the News Release Group. There were no documents made available on the group to the HCDC. The membership of the group consisted of internal staff from the MoD, so interviews on the subject were not readily obtainable. While most studies mention the group’s existence, there are three works which reflect on the group a little further. Freedman, with access to the archives, noted the creation of the group and its effect within the MoD, which he judged to be limited.²⁵⁹ Mercer et al. acknowledged the group and assessed its implementation and general function, but analysis was restricted.²⁶⁰ Finally, Morrison and Tumber gathered some information on the group from anonymous interviews with MoD officials. They argued that the NRG was established to tighten up the process of collating statements.²⁶¹ Morrison and Tumber went on to suggest that the NRG might have been limited in effect because immediate information often eluded the group. Copy was, in fact, referred to others - for example to Brigadier Ramsbotham - because they had better access to the hierarchy of Northwood.²⁶² Having benefited from privileged access to the Ministry’s records, this section is the most complete appraisal offered of the role of the NRG in the war.

The NRG was created in an attempt to help speed the process of releasing news. Mercer et al. thought that the group was established ‘partly to mollify the media which had been complaining about the lack of information, but primarily to appease the military who had been protesting that too much information had been given away’.²⁶³ However, the chief reason the group was formed was to achieve a sense of order over the release of

²⁵⁷ CoS, 17 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.92.

²⁵⁸ MoD memorandum, HCDC v.ii, p.2, q.6.

²⁵⁹ Freedman, v.ii, p.410.

²⁶⁰ Mercer et al., pp.180-181., and p.55.

²⁶¹ Morrison and Tumber, p.197.

²⁶² Ibid. p.198.

²⁶³ Mercer et al., p.55.

information. The participation in the group of *both* military and civilian personnel was intended to ensure that decisions over the release of information could be informed by knowledge of risks involved - both political *and* military. A memo on incident reporting announced the formation of the NRG. It introduced the group as being established ‘to decide how to present information on a particular incident and the timing of its release to the press’.²⁶⁴ The date on which the NRG was created dictated that much of the documentation it produced, concerned casualty figures during the war. The group’s principal role was the creation of briefings, statements and announcements about events in the South Atlantic. To a certain extent, the NRG was a successful enterprise. In its short life it had a relatively significant impact on the internal organisation of PR in the MoD. However, there were two major factors which limited the NRG’s influence: much of the work the group produced could only be released when checked by senior figures within the ministry or the military; and a substantial amount of dominant figures – particularly military personnel - had no clue the NRG even existed.

Cooper stated that ‘when the action began to warm up’ the MoD established the NRG as the responsibility of the Under Secretary’.²⁶⁵ The group, he told the committee, ‘included PR people and the various operational people...’ Morrison and Tumber said there were three members; the Under Secretary, Taylor and Rear-Admiral Anthony Whetstone, ACDS.²⁶⁶ In fact, the group, under the leadership of Stewart, comprised the CPR, ACDS, Christopher Jennings and, on occasion, McDonald and each of the DPRs. Cooper instructed Stewart: ‘The role of the Group will be to decide what current operational information should be made available to the press and to FCO posts for dissemination overseas, and the timing of release’.²⁶⁷ Thus, in May 1982, apparatus was installed to facilitate the prompt and efficient release of information – a significant internal move to adapt usual MoD policy.

5a. The NRG: Casualty Reporting

Because of the timing of the establishment of the NRG - just before the commencement of the land campaign - one of the most crucial roles the group performed in the later weeks of the crisis was linked to casualty reporting. Increasingly, documentation produced by the group, and circulated within the Ministry, concerned casualty numbers to be released. On

²⁶⁴ Stewart, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E48/2.

²⁶⁵ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.30, para78.

²⁶⁶ Morrison and Tumber, p.198.

²⁶⁷ Cooper to Stewart, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E40.

18 May Whetstone wrote that casualties should be expected and: ‘Some early reports of the progress of events will probably be later proved inaccurate. However we cannot delay press announcements until we are sure of all the facts nor until accurate casualty figures are known, let alone that next of kin have been informed’.²⁶⁸ By the end of May, the MoD realised that its reporting of casualty figures and losses had not tallied up with the truth. On 26 May Stewart was informed that ‘as a general rule, we are announcing our losses...more or less as they occur’.²⁶⁹ There was concern that helicopter losses from 25 May had not been announced. It was felt the MoD ‘should not start to hoard unannounced losses which at some stage will be known...’ The NRG had ‘looked at this matter and considered how best to get the news out, given that there were no overriding operational reasons for withholding it’.²⁷⁰ The following day it was established that ‘the totals [of casualties and losses] given in internal briefings are different from the summation of what we have announced’.²⁷¹ Cooper asked the information staff to provide the NRG with a ‘summary of what we have already announced’ on both the Argentine and British sides. The group would then deal with the situation.

The NRG produced a series of notes based on tables of casualties which it constructed from information provided.²⁷² Late on 28 May Stewart was able to circulate a revised list of losses and casualties including tables on personnel, losses on both sides and losses of ships and fixed wing aircraft. Finally, on 28 May, the NRG had received all the relevant statistics from which to judge what policy should be pursued relating to the inconsistent data.²⁷³ Stewart recommended that:

- a) ...we should not release this information as a block of tables but rather put out various parts of it when...it would be helpful to do so
- b) ...we should avoid getting ourselves hooked on some kind of regular presentation of these figures...
- c) CPR did not believe that there was particular pressure for us to put anything out at this moment, but that circumstances over the next few days might make it more appropriate to do so

Stewart proposed that the NRG should keep the information updated and that ‘we should decide when and what to release as we judge the need arises’.²⁷⁴ Thus, in May 1982 the

²⁶⁸ Whetstone, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E49.

²⁶⁹ Bowen to Stewart, McDonald, Whetstone and Taylor, 26 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E82.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ S. Webb to Head of DS11, 26 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E82/1.

²⁷² C. Jennings to Stewart, 27 May, TNA, *Falkland Islands conflict: UK Task Force, military options*, FCO7/4610 f.47.

²⁷³ Stewart to Cooper, 28 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E99.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

NRG adopted the role of policy adviser. In the second week of its existence (and, as will be demonstrated, the last), the NRG was acutely concerned with the release of casualty figures.

On 8 June Argentine Skyhawks attacked British vessels at Fitzroy Bay.²⁷⁵ HMS *Plymouth* and RFA *Sir Tristram* were struck by UXBs. RFA *Sir Galahad* was bombed and abandoned whilst on fire. Until this point, policy on how to release casualty figures had, as was the case with other areas of policy, evolved on an *ad hoc* basis. On 5 May it was noted in a meeting of the IG, that: ‘Subsequently they [MoD] would need to decide in what way to release information about casualties’.²⁷⁶ After the discrepancies in casualty numbers was noted on 26 May, the IG suggested that: ‘On the question of the method of announcing casualties and losses, we should say that we are reviewing the position’.²⁷⁷ The meeting heard from the MoD representative that it expected to make ‘some progress towards a new policy in the course of the day...’²⁷⁸ Later that day, Cooper informed Nott that there was to be a ‘renewal of policy on releasing information about damage to ships and other losses’.²⁷⁹ Cooper outlined three main considerations involved in this policy: operational, family and presentational factors. The new guidelines would work on the basis that the principle remained that an announcement would not be made until the NoK had been informed. This, however, would not be possible ‘in certain circumstances when there are overriding requirements for an announcement to be made’. There was no explanation of what these requirements might involve. Yet the document did go on to outline how any future announcement should be made. The formulation of the announcement should be:

Following [incident]/HMS[]/SS[]/MV[] has been damaged/lost. No additional information is yet available either in Whitehall or in the Service Information Centres [or, in the case of merchant ships, the appropriate authority]. Please do not ring them. As soon as we have any information, a further announcement will be made.²⁸⁰

On 8 June, however, the announcement of casualties did not follow this format. McDonald made the announcement:

The frigate, HMS *Plymouth*, suffered some damage, initial reports are that five casualties from HMS *Plymouth* have been removed to another ship and are receiving treatment. The logistic

²⁷⁵ In much of the literature this attack is referred to as an attack at ‘Bluff Cove’. Although near Bluff Cove, the actual attack took place off Fitzroy.

²⁷⁶ IG, 5 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.20.

²⁷⁷ IG, 27 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.52.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Cooper to Nott, 27 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E85.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

landing ships, *Sir Tristram* and *Sir Galahad*, while unloading stores were also attacked and suffered some damage.²⁸¹

On 10 June an MoD statement confirmed that there were no deaths on *Plymouth*, but it was feared that casualties from the attacks on *Sir Tristram* and *Sir Galahad* ‘were much heavier’ - early reports indicated ‘a number of killed and injured’.²⁸² The public had, however, been informed by the media that casualties were heavy on the landing ships since the previous day. Nicholson reported on 9 June:

...as the ships were hit, many men aboard didn’t even have time to pull on their anti-burn masks and gloves to save them from the heat flash...I saw hundreds of men rush forward, along the decks, across the hold, pulling on their life jackets...²⁸³

Newspaper reports on the morning of 10 June further suggested that casualties on the Royal Auxiliary ships were heavy.²⁸⁴ On 9 June the NRG had been appointed by CoS to prepare ‘for issue as soon as possible, a statement on the casualties in HMS PLYMOUTH’.²⁸⁵ The group had *not* been appointed to issue any statement on the losses incurred on the landing ships. Thus the effectiveness of the NRG, in this instance, was limited by the remit assigned to it by the CoS. Further to this, on 10 June, the CoS heard that the NRG was ‘reviewing the principle that should be followed in announcing casualties resulting from major incidents, in the light of criticisms of the way in which the news about the attack on Bluff Cove had been handled’.²⁸⁶ However, the NRG was unable to formulate an official policy, since military considerations out-ranked PR considerations.²⁸⁷ After the disaster on 8 June, Moore signalled Northwood in the hope that it might withhold the details of the casualties sustained in order to encourage the Argentines to believe that the British had suffered a major setback which might prevent them from attacking Port Stanley in the near future.²⁸⁸ Nott told journalists: ‘You can speculate as you wish’, when questioned about casualties.²⁸⁹ The NRG was prevented from

²⁸¹ McDonald, ‘Ian McDonald on air-sea clashes in Falklands’, *IRN*, 8 Jun. <www.bufovc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0107a00011011>.

²⁸² McDonald press statement, 10 Jun., C.A., *Papers on the Falklands collected by Margaret Thatcher, 2-13 June 1982*, THCR1/20/3/18 f.13.

²⁸³ Nicholson, ‘Falklands: Air Attack’, *News at Ten*, 9 Jun. <www.jisc.mediahub.ac.uk/record/display/039-00010251>.

²⁸⁴ See: H. Elliott, ‘DISASTER AT BLUFF COVE’, *Daily Mail*, 10 Jun., p.1.; M. Evans, ‘TRAGEDY OF SIR GALAHAD’, *Daily Express*, 10 Jun., p.1.

²⁸⁵ CoS, 9 Jun., TNA, *Falkland Islands Conflict: minutes of Chiefs of Staff meetings*, FCO7/4475 f.116.

²⁸⁶ CoS, 10 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.117.

²⁸⁷ Discussion on the release of casualty figures: Dodds, ‘Contesting War’, pp.225-226.; Freedman, v.ii, p.613.; Moore ‘The Falklands War’, p.150.; Hudson and Stanier, p.177.; Moore, p.747.; Mercer et al., p.192.; Adams, pp.130-131.; Harris, p.61.

²⁸⁸ Moore, ‘The Falklands War’, p.50; Freedman, v.ii, p.613.

²⁸⁹ Mercer et al., p.209.

forming any real policy concerning the incident by the overriding military consideration. Lewin told the HCDC that ‘very often a piece of information was so important it was taken out of their [the NRG’s] hands, and the Secretary of State and I would meet together and discuss something that had just happened, some news flash that had come in’.²⁹⁰ In the event, the Government only released the accurate Fitzroy figures on 13 June, after heavy media criticism and information released potentially by No.10 implied accurate figures.²⁹¹

During its existence, the NRG was intrinsically involved in how casualties in the South Atlantic were to be reported. On two major occasions the group was asked to address policy: after 26 May and the realisation that public announcements of casualties did not represent the reality of the situation; and after the Argentine attack at Fitzroy. However, in the second instance, the power of the NRG was curbed by military considerations. Yet the role of the group and its significance is quite clear. If the conflict had been prolonged, the work of the NRG in forming policy on casualty reporting may have been more vital to the information war. As it was, the group had a more significant and immediate task – the preparation of more general statements and announcements at the MoD.

5b. The NRG: MoD Statements and Briefings

The chief, and most important, role the NRG had during the Falklands crisis was the organisation and planning of briefings, statements and announcements. The group had delegated authority from both Cooper and Lewin as CDS. It took the majority of its instruction on what information to handle from the CoS. Orders for the NRG from the CoS meetings were given to McDonald, who attended daily, and relayed to the group. It was available 24 hours a day. Taylor remembered: ‘Some of us were available literally night and day, by sleeping in the office...’²⁹² McDonald told the HCDC that the group met on an impromptu basis, but sometimes ‘once, twice or three times a day to put together the draft press releases...’²⁹³ The NRG was often asked to prepare specific briefings - even hosting some. Stewart and Taylor, for example, briefed non-NATO, international Defence Attachés on the Falklands on 25 May.²⁹⁴ On 26 May the NRG was asked to prepare an in-depth briefing for defence correspondents on the overall success of naval operations to date.²⁹⁵ Later, it was instructed to prepare briefing on land operations.²⁹⁶ In June, the group

²⁹⁰ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.344, q.1400.

²⁹¹ See Chapter Five.

²⁹² Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.356, q.1474.

²⁹³ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.401, q.1784.

²⁹⁴ Minute, 24 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E65.

²⁹⁵ CoS, 26 May, TNA, FCO7/4475 f.102.

²⁹⁶ CoS, 28 May, TNA, FCO7/4475 f.103.

prepared briefings on the non-repatriation of prisoners of war, the return of Lieutenant Commander Astiz to Argentina, on the successful deployment of 5 Infantry Brigade and the work of the field hospital at San Carlos.²⁹⁷ On 9 June the group was asked, in conjunction with the Army Department and Fieldhouse, to prepare a presentation on the landing by 5 Infantry Brigade (this was not delivered due to the conflict over the announcement of casualty figures at Fitzroy).²⁹⁸

As well as preparing briefings and briefing correspondents, the NRG assumed the responsibility of preparing statements and announcements. Again, orders to prepare information for release came primarily from the CoS. The CoS made 16 directives to the NRG between 26 May and 14 June.²⁹⁹ On 29 May the NRG prepared a statement on a reported clash between British ground forces on the islands.³⁰⁰ The NRG prepared statements on the Argentine bombing attack on MV *British Wye* and the reported leaflet raid over Port Stanley.³⁰¹ The announcement of an attack by C130 aircraft on a US-owned Liberian-registered tanker from 8 June was prepared by the NRG. One of the last NRG-prepared statements of the war was one that the MoD could neither confirm nor deny - Argentine reports of civilian casualties in Port Stanley.³⁰² The work of the NRG was directed, primarily, by internal orders from Cooper, and commands originating from the CoS. The necessity of keeping the group on constant alert demonstrated its significance within the MoD. Essentially, the group assumed responsibility for task which had hitherto been completed in an improvised manner by MoDPR and the PUS. The formation of the group marked a period of more concentrated PR effort on the part of the MoD, as well as a period of more organised and focused policy.

The NRG had an integral role in the reporting chain from the Task Force. On 19 May a communication was sent to information staff. It clarified the anticipated procedure for an announcement in the case of a full-scale amphibious landing on the Falklands. Once military considerations had been taken into account, an announcement could be made by the MoD. Copy from Task Force journalists would automatically have a 'hold' placed on it. The 'hold' would 'only be lifted on instructions from the "News Release Group" ...'³⁰³

²⁹⁷ CoS, 6 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.114.; CoS, 7 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.115.

²⁹⁸ CoS, 9 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.116.

²⁹⁹ See CoS meetings 26 May-14 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4474-FCO7/4475.

³⁰⁰ CoS, 29 May, TNA, FCO7/7745 f.104.

³⁰¹ CoS, 2 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.110.

³⁰² CoS, 14 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.119.

³⁰³ Minute, 19 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E52.

Thus, the NRG constituted an additional layer to the reporting procedure outlined in Chapter Three. Instead of the ACPR or CPR agreeing on the appropriate press line, checking it with No.10 and FCO and then checking it with Nott, the NRG assumed responsibility for creating the appropriate press line. Stewart wrote that the Duty Officer had to inform him of *any* incident report ‘so that the News Release Group can be convened’.³⁰⁴ The NRG then checked the line with Nott and, finally, transmitted to the FCO and No.10 that the decision had been taken to release certain news.³⁰⁵ In an interview, Whetstone recalled:

One of our main functions was to try, without releasing militarily sensitive material, to hammer out a policy for the release of news from Whitehall consistent with the reports of the correspondents with the Task Force. We had first to decide what could or could not be released; then to consider when and how it might be announced.³⁰⁶

Once an announcement had been made in London, relevant information could then be released, and reports from the Task Force, once they had been double-vetted, could begin to be relayed to the relevant media. The influence of the NRG on the news reporting system was twofold: not only did it prepare much of the material to be released, but it also came to dictate when material could be distributed in Britain. These two areas of authority, second only to overriding military considerations, ensured the influence of the group.

5c. The NRG: Restrictions

There were two issues which restricted the authority and function of the NRG during the crisis. Firstly, all decisions made by the group, despite delegated authority from Cooper and Lewin, had to be double-checked and approved by Nott. Secondly, few military personnel knew of the group’s existence. Stewart was aware that the NRG answered to Nott: ‘The Group will have full delegated authority from CDS and PUS to authorise the release of information, subject, of course, to the wishes of the Secretary of State’.³⁰⁷ Nott recalled that ‘they [the group] presented a draft to me, and I was the person who normally approved it’.³⁰⁸ McDonald described how the NRG had delegated powers, ‘subject to the releases being shown to the Secretary of State’.³⁰⁹ It was necessary for Nott to endorse a statement before it could be released. However, since Nott was at the meetings of CoS directly before the MoD’s noon statement (usually from 1000-1100GMT), the CoS played a

³⁰⁴ Stewart, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/4.

³⁰⁵ Ridley to Stewart, 19 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E24/4.

³⁰⁶ Mercer et al., p.181.

³⁰⁷ Stewart, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/4.

³⁰⁸ Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.435, q.1836.

³⁰⁹ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.401, q.1785.

part in approving information too. Lewin reiterated that the CoS ‘were giving advice to the Morey Stewart Committee, or indeed taking decisions for them. We [the CoS] were the superior committee to that committee as far as the noon statement was concerned because we had either the Secretary of State or his Private Secretary present’, but ‘the decision on release was, of course, that of Nott’.³¹⁰ The authority of the NRG was thus restricted by the necessity of having every decision it made signed off by Nott, and often, also the CoS.

One aspect which called into question the influence of the NRG was the fact that many prominent figures, particularly military personnel, were unaware that the group existed. At the HCDC neither Nott, nor Lewin, who had been inherently involved in the action of the group, could completely recall the name of the group. Lewin referred to the group as the ‘Morey Stewart Committee’, and Nott claimed: ‘I worked through the News Release Group (I think we called it)’.³¹¹ Freedman noted that CINCFLEET ‘was not even told that a news release group existed in MoD until well after it had been established’.³¹² Mercer et al. pointed out the group was not well known.³¹³ In an interview, Woodward said:

If I were assured...that Tony Whetstone...would have been sitting round the table...that he would have his due say and been allowed to put the military requirement either to hide it or release it...then I would have been happy. But I didn’t know that was happening.³¹⁴

Lewin said: ‘I would not like to suggest Moray Stewart’s [sic] news release committee was a formal body: they met in corridors and rooms...’³¹⁵ Thus, whilst the group worked tirelessly behind the scenes, its presence at MoD was largely unnoticed by those military men who did not attend CoS meetings.

The NRG was a significant part of MoDPR organisation towards the end of the war. The fact that its formation was only considered during the last month of the war dictated that it had limited time in which to truly affect MoD policy. During its tenure its chief purpose was to prepare appropriate statements and briefings for the media. This it did with efficiency. In addition, the group was closely involved in the construction of casualty reporting policy. However, the group suffered from a number of limiting factors such as the requirement to have all work approved by Nott. It also received much of its direction

³¹⁰ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.343, q.1390.; p.344, q.1397.

³¹¹ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.323, q.139.; Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.435, q.1836.

³¹² Freedman, v.ii, p.410.

³¹³ Mercer et al., p181.

³¹⁴ Cited in Mercer et al., p.181.

³¹⁵ Lewin, HCDC, v.ii, p.344, q.1400.

from the CoS and its work was restricted, rightly, by military considerations – particularly in the case of the Fitzroy disaster. The fact that much of the military outside the CoS meetings was unaware of the group’s existence did not necessarily limit its influence on the process of releasing news, but it gave an indication of the nature of the group’s presence within the overall chain of command. Mercer et al. highlighted that the decision to reinstate such an organisation should any future crisis occur, demonstrated that the group was clearly regarded as a success.³¹⁶ However, it could be argued that the late formation of the group prohibited it from becoming the successful organisation it had the potential to become.

6. Conclusion

Badsey judged that the difficulties in providing hard news from the Falklands gave greater prominence to the story from London.³¹⁷ Examination of four national newspapers during the Falklands revealed that an average of 76% of articles published during the conflict originated from Britain.³¹⁸ Thus, crucial to any study of the role of the media is consideration of domestic PR policy adopted by the British Government. A common theme presented in this chapter is that the MoD acted too late, in many instances, to form a coherent response to the media demands for information and for facilities.

There was a distinct lack of provision made for the media by the MoD throughout the first month of the crisis. The most distressing and significant consequence of this was the decline in the relationship between the media and MoD. PA felt that ‘the mutual trust, confidence and sense of credibility that existed formerly between the MoD and the media has been damaged, possibly irrevocably’.³¹⁹ The abandonment of the accepted system of unattributable briefings left the media starved of information. The role of the FCO played a significant part in persuading the MoD that immediate action over public relations was not necessary. It also provided a comparison to which the MoD’s treatment of the media could be made. The MoD seemed content to leave PR up to the FCO, leaving itself in the unenviable situation, in May, of having to scramble to adapt to the altered political and military situation. Much of the services the MoD eventually offered were implemented too late to be of sufficient effect. Whilst the physical facilities within the MoD met the needs of the majority of the media after 2 May, what the media really craved was information.

³¹⁶ Mercer et al., p.181.

³¹⁷ Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’, p.47.

³¹⁸ This figure is a result of the content analysis carried out for this thesis - Chapter Six.

³¹⁹ PA memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.303, q.4.

Until unattributable briefings were reinstated on 11 May - and in the case of unattributable briefings for regional and foreign correspondents, much later, the media suffered from a data deficiency.

The NRG may have been the MoD's most successful initiative. However, by the time it was brought in, on 18 May - under the initiative, not of the PR Department, but of Lewin - the group had little over a month in which to prove its worth. The effectiveness of the group was further limited by the restriction that it had to clear all decisions with the Secretary of State, and fact that it operated outside of the military system. Even though the group boasted among its membership the ACDS, much of the military were oblivious to the group's existence. The MoD's additional information initiative, the Military Briefing Group, was equally tardily implemented. By the time the panel was in place, as with unattributable briefings, many journalists had found alternative means of gathering military information.

Another theme this chapter makes apparent is that the media itself played a significant part in affecting change. The MoD became increasingly aware, at the beginning of May, of the importance of positive relations with the media. A barrage of media criticism helped to provoke major change in the form of the restoration of unattributable briefings. The pressure exerted in Cooper's meetings with editors had noteworthy effect. Not only did such meetings influence the re-establishment of non-attributable briefings, but issues relating to correspondents in the South Atlantic were rectified. This was most notably the case concerning the '*Invincible Five*'. The disquiet of editors on 12 May also helped affect change in that it made clear to Lewin the gravity of the situation concerning the MoD and the media, resulting in the creation of the NRG. However, instead of the relationship between the two organisations easing, the Editors' Meetings served to demonstrate the increasing hostility between the two. Conflict between the MoD and the media escalated at the start of May, principally due to mounting criticism of aspects of the media by the Government. There is, for example, a direct correlation between increased criticism of the media, and a rise in confrontation within meetings between Cooper and the editors.

In many ways, the MoD response to the PR crisis bypassed the regular MODPR machinery. The actions of the NRG circumvented the reporting system previously implemented. It also bypassed MoDPR, instead, isolating both Taylor and McDonald in its membership. Cooper's Editors' Meetings not only made MoDPR redundant, in that the

PUS assumed total responsibility, but it circumvented the D-Notice system of voluntary censorship. Instead, the meetings acted as fora at which Cooper could disseminate guidelines to editors. Editors' Meetings, to a certain extent, also threatened to make the role of defence correspondents superfluous. Editors were the only media representatives who received unattributable briefings throughout the *duration* of the crisis. Often, information was lost in transmission between editors at the briefings, and the defence correspondents writing stories.

MoD domestic PR policy might have become more successful if the conflict had been prolonged. Towards the end of the war, the ministry had in place facilities and services for the media which might have given greater assistance to the reporting of the war had they been in place earlier. The Ministry, in June 1982, ironically, had all the pieces in place to run an efficient and effective PR policy: unattributable briefings, physical amenities in the MoD, a service to educate the media on military aspects of the campaign, a procedure for clearing copy and a vehicle to circulate imposed guidelines. By the 14 June the British Armed Forces in the South Atlantic had secured a victory. The MoD in Britain lagged behind when it came to the information war.

CHAPTER FIVE

Government Organisation and Co-ordination

On 6 April the regular apparatus of Government reorganised itself in preparation for a conflict with Argentina. The ‘War Cabinet’, a sub-committee of the Oversea Defence Committee was established.¹ This chapter addresses the co-ordination and organisation of the Government in its effort to address the demand for information, and the desire for positive publicity. Inevitably, one of the central features is an appraisal of the organisations established solely to trade in media-related work: the Information Group, the South Atlantic Presentation Unit and the Parkinson Presentation Group. Whilst these groups’ existence has attracted recognition among central works, they have not been given detailed analysis. This thesis utilises the minutes of the IG, SAPU communication and circulars and the records concerning the PPG, as well as testimony from Parkinson himself, to examine the groups. It constitutes the first comprehensive study of the groups’ worth during the war. It also examines the *established* groups, departments and persons which affected the Government’s media campaign such as Thatcher’s Chief Press Secretary and the Meetings of Information Officers.

There has been a consensus among those academics concentrating on the Government’s information policy during the war that the Government suffered from two fundamental hindrances: there was no co-ordination between departments; and there was no overall control over media policy. Mercer et al. wrote that ‘...if there is one point upon which people are agreed, it is that Britain did not have an information policy...’² Freedman judged there was a lack of co-ordination, claiming that ‘there were a number of information policies in circulation at the same time’.³ Finally, Morrison and Tumber asserted that: ‘There was simply no policy; that is the key. There was no centralized system of control, no coordination between departments’.⁴ This thesis submits that there were efforts advanced to ensure a co-ordinated system, for example, through the implementation of certain groups. However, these groups transpired to be of limited effect.

¹ See Freedman, v.ii, p.21.; Hennessy, ‘‘War Cabinetry’’: The Political Direction of the Falklands Conflict’, in Eds. Havers and Grove, pp.135-136.

² Mercer et al., p.19.

³ Freedman, v.ii, p.34.

⁴ Morrison and Tumber, p.190.

During the HCDC inquiry the MoD submitted to the committee that: ‘During the Falklands crisis, the information effort was co-ordinated on a daily basis by the No 10 Press Office...’⁵ Yet journalists felt that there was no coherent policy towards the media. David Chipp, when asked who was running policy, claimed: ‘Frankly, I do not know...there was no control over the information side’.⁶ Peter Preston, Editor of *The Guardian*, even suggested it was ‘helpful’ that Government Departments were unco-ordinated because ‘you could compare sources’.⁷ Because of this contradictory view, the role of No.10 has been speculated upon, but not confirmed. In addition to the evidence of the HCDC, the fact that Nott and Ingham both published autobiographical accounts which touched on their departments’ role (which presented conflicting assessments of co-ordination), has determined that conjecture over No.10’s role has endured.

1. Number 10

Historically, in peacetime, each department in Government was responsible for its own publicity and for keeping the public both informed of policy and up to date on relevant events. The Prime Minister’s Office can broadly be divided into five departments: The Prime Minister’s Private Office; The Prime Minister’s Political Office; The Press Office; The Prime Minister’s Policy Unit (PMPU); A department of a number of free-standing advisers.⁸ The representation of the Government as a whole was supervised by Thatcher’s Press Office at No.10.

The Press Office in Downing Street dates back to 1931 - to the appointment of George Steward (formerly of the FCO’s News Department) to the role of ‘Chief Press Liaison Officer of His Majesty’s Government’.⁹ During the 1930s, Steward assisted the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, in publicising the policy of appeasement.¹⁰ Initially, Winston Churchill dispensed with the press function at No.10. However, he was later driven to appoint Thomas Fife Clark to a similar position (‘Adviser on Public Relations to the Prime Minister and the Government’), which would be outside the remit of No.10. In 1945 Clement Attlee reintroduced the position of Press Secretary to No.10. Martin Burch

⁵ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.6.; N.B. Representatives of the MoD, Nott and Cooper, would later deny that No.10 sustained a significant co-ordinating role.

⁶ Chipp, HCDC, v.ii, p.319, q.1237.

⁷ P. Preston in Mercer et al., p.47.

⁸ Burch and Holliday, p.27.

⁹ Price, p.xlix.

¹⁰ For the creation of the Press Office see: Taylor, *The Projection of Britain: British Overseas Publicity and Propaganda 1919-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 1981) pp.26-28.; Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, pp.73-75.

and Ian Holliday judged that ‘ever since Attlee’s time, with the sole exception of Churchill’s premiership, the task of presenting the government’s public position had been increasingly drawn into the cabinet system, and centred on the Prime Minister’s Office’.¹¹ Increasingly, No.10’s Press Office assumed a co-ordinating role. Harris wrote that the enablement of No.10 to impose its interpretation of events on the press marked the centralization of power in Downing Street. This, he claimed, was a ‘significant blow to the independence of the Cabinet’.¹²

The extent of the Press Office’s power was dependent, throughout the 20th Century, on the personality of the Chief Press Secretary and his relationship with the Prime Minister.¹³ Colin Seymour-Ure argued in his 2003 study on Prime Ministers and the media that the importance of the Press Secretary had not necessarily grown in proportion to the size of the Press Office. ‘The Press Secretaryship itself has fluctuated in the importance prime ministers have attached to it.’¹⁴ The role, it has been argued by academics such as Burch and Holliday and Seymour-Ure, involved four main roles: spokesman, adviser, intermediary and co-ordinator of the Government’s information services.¹⁵

Perhaps the most famous of all Press Secretaries was Thatcher’s Chief, Sir Bernard Ingham. Ingham was the first CPS who himself attracted significant attention from the media. A fiery Yorkshireman, he had once been an industrial correspondent for *The Guardian*. He also served stints at both the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Yorkshire Evening Post*. Ingham is widely held to have been the anonymous, anti-Conservative columnist, ‘Albion’, for the *Leeds Weekly Citizen* between 1964 and 1967.¹⁶ He was a familiar face, always publicly at the side of Thatcher, who enticed comment in press columns and constituted a ‘target for snipers in parliamentary questions’.¹⁷ When Ingham resigned in 1990 (from Head of Government Information Services), he was the only CPS ever to receive serious attention. Interest was so great that Robert Harris was moved to write his own biography of the CPS, *Good and Faithful Servant*, in 1990. The following year, Ingham successfully published his autobiography.¹⁸

¹¹ Burch and Holliday, p.22.

¹² Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.74.

¹³ For a list of men to hold the position of Press Secretary, see Seymour-Ure, p.138.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.124.

¹⁵ Burch and Holliday, p.28.; Seymour-Ure, p.125.

¹⁶ M. Cockerell, *Live from Number 10: The Inside Story of Prime Ministers and Television* (Faber & Faber Ltd, 1988) p.256.

¹⁷ Seymour-Ure, p.123.

¹⁸ Ingham, and Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*.

At the helm of the Press Office in 1982 was the CPS, Ingham, supported by his Deputy CPS, Brian Mower (Figure 5.1). As part of the effort to co-ordinate Government information, the CPS hosted a weekly meeting of Chief Information Officers from Government departments. Ingham later reflected that the regular function of the Office was to ‘co-ordinate the presentation of government policy at official level’.¹⁹

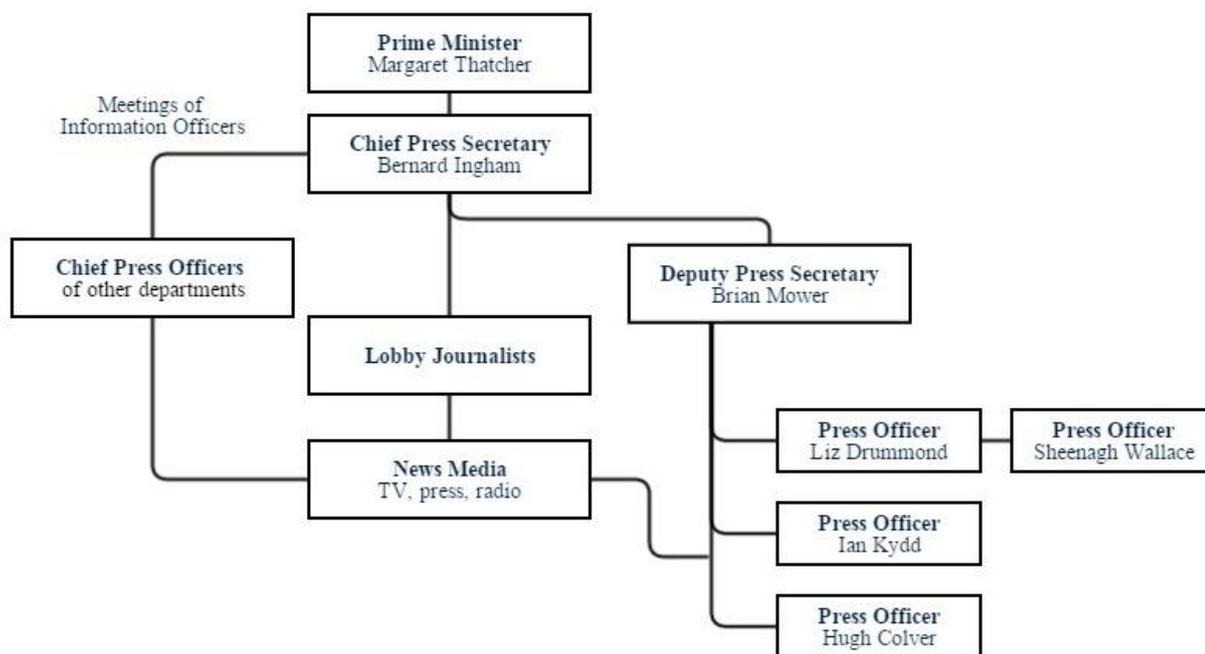


Figure 5.1: Organisation of No.10 Press Office and its interaction with other groups²⁰

At the second meeting of the OD(SA) it was decided that the CPS should oversee ‘the establishment of machinery for the ‘central control of public information...’²¹ It was understood that responsibility for any endeavour concerning Government information was the remit of the CPS. Thus, Ingham’s position was solidified.²² Later, Ingham would recall that, ‘in the early part of the exercise clearly the Prime Minister...led with myself operating on her behalf’.²³

¹⁹ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.387, q.1666.

²⁰ Diagram was constructed from information obtained from various files in the National Archives.

²¹ OD(SA), 7 Apr., TNA, *Defence and Oversea Policy (Official) Committee*, CAB148/218 f.4.

²² For an assessment of Ingham’s role: Price, pp.255-259.

²³ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.387, q.1667.

1a. The Power of Number 10

There were three reasons why the Press Office at No.10 was, typically, more influential than any other press or public relations department. Firstly, the unique role of the CPS ensured that the Premier's daily information, on matters relating to the media, came almost exclusively from her own Press Office. Secondly, the Lobby system in place in Britain warranted an unprecedented relationship between correspondents and the CPS. Finally, since its appointment in 1931, the No.10 Press Office had routinely been the co-ordinating force of the Government's publicity effort. Throughout the war, Ingham exerted his authority over various aspects involving the media: from attempting to secure more journalist places with the Fleet, to controlling when information was released. However, the influence which he was accustomed to exercising over other PR departments was challenged by the MoD, which was in command of the main thrust of Government PR. No longer was Ingham the outright leader of the information effort.

1a (i). Institutionalised Power and Access to the Prime Minister

The CPS enjoyed benefits which the Chiefs of other departments did not.²⁴ Ingham wrote that a CPS 'can religiously read Cabinet papers and minutes, the main policy and action telegrams sent out and received by the FCO, the Prime Minister's correspondence, internal Number 10 briefing papers, and bury himself deep in his Prime Minister's mind by attending lots of her meetings'.²⁵ More important than having increased access to information from *all* areas of Government, Ingham had the ear of the Prime Minister. Thatcher and Ingham had a productive and close relationship. Thatcher recognised that the pair were similar in attitude. She once remarked: 'The thing about us, Bernard, is that neither of us are smooth people'.²⁶ Ingham utilised his position. Harris's biography of Ingham highlighted, '...in any dispute he always has at his disposal the ultimate deterrent: the Prime Minister'.²⁷

As a matter of routine, Ingham provided for Thatcher a daily press digest. Every morning, before Ingham's 1100GMT appointment to brief Lobby correspondents, Ingham would scour the newspapers and produce a summary for use by the Prime Minister. This procedure was maintained during the War and was heavily weighted towards consideration of the crisis. The day after the recapture of South Georgia, Ingham reassured Thatcher that:

²⁴ Ingham outlined functions of a CPS: Ingham, p.164.

²⁵ Ibid., p.192.

²⁶ Eds. I. Dale, and G. Tucker, *The Margaret Thatcher Book of Quotations* (Biteback, 2012).

²⁷ Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant: The Unauthorized Biography of Bernard Ingham* (Faber & Faber, 1990) p.97.

‘Treatment is almost entirely triumphant with the Mirror, Guardian and and [sic] FT least euphoric, to varying degrees’.²⁸ The digests also informed Thatcher what rumours were circulating and of the general mood. On 15 April Ingham wrote to Thatcher to inform her of the ‘near unanimity’ of Parliament the papers were reporting.²⁹ On 13 May he cautioned Thatcher that some members of the media - particularly the ‘populars’ - felt there was ‘a smell of Munich in the air’.³⁰

In addition to this, Ingham also took the lead in briefing Thatcher for some of her most famous interviews. For example, her interview with Glynn Mathias of ITN on 5 April and with Robert Kee for *Panorama* on 26 April.³¹ Further to Ingham’s direct briefings, other areas of No.10 also deferred to Ingham. On the day of the *Panorama* interview the head of the Prime Minister’s Policy Unit (PMPU), John Hoskyns, wrote to Ingham in order to convey the line which should be adopted during the interview.³² Ingham was also personally briefed by other departments. On 27 April, the FCO sent a briefing to Ingham on what information Anthony Parsons, British Ambassador to the UN, would like to be made available to the media.³³ Other departments clearly acknowledged the authority of the Press Office: on 30 April a memo was sent to MoD staff outlining that No.10’s press department should be informed of any event as a matter of priority.³⁴

During the first weekend of the crisis, the power of Ingham was first exerted on the MoD. Nott wrote that the Friday witnessed the first ‘spat’ between MoD and No.10.³⁵ After the announcement of the Task Force, the MoD was beseeched with requests. When it became clear that only a very small number of journalists would be accepted aboard, media organisations set about the petitioning of a higher authority - Downing Street. ITV stated that:

²⁸ Press digest, 26 Apr., C.A., *Press Digests, March-June 1982*, THCR3/5/14 f.139.

²⁹ Press digest, 15 Apr., C.A., *Papers on the Falklands Collected by Margaret Thatcher, 13-17 April*, THCR 1/20/3/7 f.18.

³⁰ Press digest, 13 May, C.A., THCR3/5/14 f.174.

³¹ Ingham to Thatcher, 4 Apr., C.A., *Papers Relating to Margaret Thatcher's Television and Radio Interviews on the Occasion of the Resignation of 6th Lord (Peter) Carrington as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 5 April 1982*, THCR5/2/83 f.21.; Ingham to Thatcher, 21 Apr., C.A., *Papers Relating to Margaret Thatcher's Interview with Robert Kee and Richard Lindley for BBC Television's "Panorama", 26 April 1982*, THCR5/2/84 f.43.; 22 Apr. 1982, THCR5/2/84 f.34.

³² J. Hoskyns to Ingham, 26 Apr., C.A., *Papers Relating to Press, Publicity and Broadcasting (3), May 1981-May 1983*, THCR2/6/2/135 f.42.

³³ J. Coles to Ingham, 27 Apr., C.A., *Papers on the Falklands Collected by Margaret Thatcher, 26-27 April 1982*, THCR1/20/3/9 f.4.

³⁴ MoD memo, 30 Apr., MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E1/5.

³⁵ Nott, p.262.

...contact was made on Saturday with the Prime Minister's Press Office, who quickly grasped the significance of an absence of television news coverage from the fleet. It was certainly ITN's impression that events moved very quickly after that.³⁶

Hitchen was provoked to write directly to the Prime Minister, after representatives of MoDPR failed to assist him. He wrote:

I believe that you will be horrified to learn that the Daily Star and three other British national daily newspapers...have been excluded from sailing with the naval Task Force on the ludicrous grounds that there is not enough room aboard the ships.³⁷

He went on: 'Please help us to be there when Britain's pride is restored by the armed might which you promised the nation. Only you can give the order...'³⁸ Hitchen later claimed: 'Had it not been for the direct intervention of the Prime Minister...half the British Press would have been waving the Task Force goodbye from the quay-side'.³⁹

Ingham spent most of the weekend fielding calls, but by Sunday, the whole weight of press disappointment fell on Downing Street.⁴⁰ As a result, Ingham, without first consulting Mrs Thatcher, took it upon himself to contact the MoD directly. Ingham commented:

I made it clear to the Ministry of Defence that we must have journalists on board. Having got the principle accepted, I then negotiated up the numbers, recognizing that there would be hell to pay if one newspaper group was put at a disadvantage...⁴¹

The MoD later denied Ingham's influence in securing places for journalists. Cooper said: 'When the nominations looked to us rather odd, it was we who increased them, not under pressure from number 10...and we then went up to the figure of 29...'⁴² Nott said that 'editors made their protests to Bernard Ingham...who sounded off loudly at such a paltry number'.⁴³ He went on: 'I had a disagreement with the Navy, but I called rank and insisted that the key television channels and newspapers were included'.⁴⁴

Mercer et al. brought some clarity to the dispute which emerged over whether Nott or Ingham had given the order to increase numbers: 'Nott had already issued the same order,

³⁶ ITV memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.64, q.A.

³⁷ Hitchen to Thatcher, 4 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.10.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Hitchen memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.109.

⁴⁰ Harris, p.19.

⁴¹ Ingham, p.286.

⁴² Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.18, q.2.

⁴³ Nott, p.262.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

but Downing Street's support overcame the last rumblings of resistance'.⁴⁵ Most commentators have subscribed to the view that Ingham was behind the increase in journalists.⁴⁶ Yet, this example was to mark merely the start of a succession of incidents in which Ingham flexed his muscles.

Ingham prevailed upon the MoD to, firstly, speed the departure of Taylor from the Department of Health when the crisis broke, and secondly, to install Taylor with full responsibility for Falklands-related policy. Ingham had helped Taylor secure the role of CPR the previous year. It was recorded that: 'Mr Ingham thinks that Mr Taylor would be an excellent candidate on level transfer for the post of Chief of Public Relations in Ministry of Defence which will be vacant at the end of the year...'⁴⁷

When the crisis broke on 2 April, Ingham compelled the Department of Health *and* the MoD to facilitate the transfer of Taylor. On 13 April, Taylor was inducted into his new role. Ingham recollected: 'I prevailed upon the system to move Neville to the MoD...only to find that...a letter awaited him saying that he was in charge of everything but the Falklands'.⁴⁸ When Ingham was asked whether he had played a significant role in pressing MoD to award Taylor charge of Falklands PR, he confirmed he had.⁴⁹ Taylor was given authority over Falklands PR on 18 May. The relationship between Ingham and Taylor benefited both. When the first pictures of the recapture of South Georgia were received at the MoD, Taylor sent them direct to No.10 with a handwritten note.⁵⁰

Ingham was forced to field media complaints against the MoD during the Falklands. He also found that he 'was getting an enormous amount of flak' which ought to be directed at MoDPR.⁵¹ He often had to relate to the IG what media complaints were being made at any time.⁵² One of the principal complaints concerned the MoD's abandonment of non-attributable briefing.⁵³ Harris claimed Cooper had aimed to 'neutralize Ingham'.⁵⁴ However, Ingham continued to give off-the-record briefings to journalists 'because he

⁴⁵ Mercer et al., p.22.

⁴⁶ See: Carruthers, p.122.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.417.; Harris, pp.19-20.

⁴⁷ J. Tobias, 11 Dec. 1981, TNA, BA19/672 f.2.

⁴⁸ Ingham, p.289.

⁴⁹ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.393, q.1715.

⁵⁰ Taylor to Ingham, between 26 Apr. and 12 May, C.A., *Miscellaneous photographs relating to the Falklands War and subsequent campaign dinner in October 1982*, THCR1/20/3/52 f.15.

⁵¹ Morrison and Tumber, p.194.

⁵² See minutes of IG: TNA, CAB164/1622.; The IG is discussed later in this Chapter.

⁵³ Morrison and Tumber, p.194.; See Chapter Three.

⁵⁴ Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.94.

thought it was the best way to influence what they wrote'.⁵⁵ Ingham later remarked: 'If Sir Frank's objective had been to neutralize me, this move served only to increase my importance to journalists since I was at least functioning'.⁵⁶ Some have argued that Ingham was responsible for the commencement of MoD's unattributable briefings in May. Hastings and Jenkins maintained briefings were 'resumed under pressure from the Downing Street press officer...'⁵⁷ Cockerell et al. judged that Ingham's influence had secured the return of non-attributable briefing, stating that, 'Number Ten succeeded in reversing Mr MacDonald's [sic] decision'.⁵⁸ The HCDC sat firmly on the fence when ascertaining Ingham's effect:

It is less clear whether Mr. Ingham influenced the decision to resume off the record briefings although he clearly took the view that not to have held then was a mistake insofar as when there is a crisis, the last thing to do was to withdraw service from the media.⁵⁹

The power of Ingham is perhaps best observed in the creation of the PPG during the war. Frustration with the increased hostility between the MoD and No.10 Press Office provoked Ingham to address the issue of Government presentation directly with Thatcher. Parkinson himself felt that the group had been established to ease the rift between departments, and claimed it was established at the bequest of Ingham, who was 'the father of the idea' (the PPG is discussed later in this chapter).⁶⁰

1a (ii). The Lobby System: the 'Ingham Hallelujah Chorus'

It was not only over the MoD that Ingham had the opportunity to exert authority. The accepted process of parliamentary briefing also served to allow the CPS a degree of control over the news generated by the conflict. The main channel through which the CPS and his equivalent numbers in other departments released information was through the Parliamentary Lobby.⁶¹

The Lobby system is peculiar to Britain. In 1828 Parliament was opened to the reporting of the press. In 1886 the Lobby was formed.⁶² In the 1930s the first Press Secretary, George Steward, started a series of unattributable press Lobbies 'which with off-the-record

⁵⁵ Price, pp.256-257.

⁵⁶ Ingham, p.290.

⁵⁷ Hastings and Jenkins, p.417.

⁵⁸ Cockerell et al., p.148.

⁵⁹ HCDC, v.i, p.xxx, q.68.

⁶⁰ Parkinson, Interview, 1 Dec. 2014.

⁶¹ M. Burch and I. Holliday, *The British Cabinet System* (Prentice Hall, 1996) p.100.

⁶² For a history of the Lobby system see: Cockerell et al., pp.31-47.

briefings could be used to create a string of news management in favour of appeasement'.⁶³ The Lobby system has developed as a way for Government to disseminate information it wants to be publicised. It is, in short, an instrument for the political control of the news agenda. It has been heavily criticised for its secretive nature and for increasing the danger of collusion between Government and journalists.⁶⁴ The rules from which Lobby journalists operated were established after the Second World War.⁶⁵ In 1982, the foundations developed by Steward in the '30s had been built upon to form a system by which Lobby correspondents were almost dependent on the daily 11am briefing by the CPS at Downing Street and 4pm briefing at the House of Commons.⁶⁶ Cockerell et al. argued that the Lobby system was the Prime Minister's 'most useful tool for the political management of the news'.⁶⁷ The political commentator, Andrew Marr, declared that 'a single private daily channel of communication between the most powerful figure in the country and every significant media outlet is an extraordinarily powerful weapon'.⁶⁸

During the war, the Lobby system served to ensure Ingham retained superiority over MoDPR. The morning Lobby briefing by the CPS took place at Downing Street. In the Falklands this had a direct impact on the amount of journalists who attended MoD briefings. There was rarely time for correspondents to attend Ingham's briefing at 1100GMT, and then hot-foot it to the MoD for the '12 o'clock folly'. Since Ingham continued to brief unattributably, the benefits of attending his briefing often outweighed attending that of the MoD.⁶⁹ A considerable drawback of the Lobby was that foreign journalists were inadequately catered for. *Washington Post* journalist, Leonard Downie, called the Lobby system 'insidious', and used his experience during the Falklands crisis to demonstrate how the system 'enables the British government to manage much of what is reported by the national newspapers and television and radio networks'.⁷⁰ During the Falklands crisis, the Lobby often worked in reverse and served to confirm rumour. One example of this was on 29 March. After journalists witnessed the departure of *Superb* from Gibraltar, colleagues in the Lobby were told that submarines were being dispatched

⁶³ J. Pile, *Churchill's Secret Enemy: MI5 and the Plot to Stop Winston Churchill* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012).

⁶⁴ See GUMG, p.1.

⁶⁵ These rules are outlined in A. Marr, *My Trade: A Short History of British Journalism* (Pan Books, 2005) pp.165-167.

⁶⁶ For details of how the Press Office at No.10 disseminated information see: Seymour-Ure, pp.123-142.

⁶⁷ Cockerell et al., p.33.

⁶⁸ Marr, p.167.

⁶⁹ Hutchinson, HCDC, v.ii, p.317, q.1230.

⁷⁰ Downie, 'How Britain Managed the News' *Washington Post*, 20 Aug., p.6.

south.⁷¹ This confirmation resulted in the inaccurate reporting that *Superb* was headed for South Georgia.⁷²

The Lobby system allowed Ingham to control information disseminated to the media. It pitted the Press Office of No.10 directly against its equivalent at MoD. There were instances when Ingham's briefing of the Lobby appeared to relate information not yet imparted from MoD. On 16 April the CoS heard that, while the MoD had tried to minimise the 'crisis atmosphere', No.10 had 'played up' some action.⁷³ Many correspondents, after the war, identified that they were either better supported by Downing Street, or gained more information from it. Hastings claimed: 'Downing Street press officers were giving better guidance to parliamentary correspondents than the Ministry of Defence was giving to defence correspondents'.⁷⁴ The Defence Correspondent of *The Sunday Times* recalled that his two main sources were No.10 and the House.⁷⁵ Further, the *Daily Express* felt '...similar briefings being held at Number 10 were producing information which the Ministry of Defence would not confirm or deny'.⁷⁶

Mercer et al. claimed there were two examples of when No.10 publicised information ahead of MoD.⁷⁷ The HCDC found: 'In two particular instances, there have been specific allegations that the Press Office at No.10 was giving a different version of events from that put out by the Ministry of Defence'.⁷⁸ Other historians and commentators such as Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, and Hudson and Stanier have reinforced this approach.⁷⁹ The first example related to No.10's briefing of journalists on 24 May about the speed with which the initial landings were to be followed. What was inferred by Ingham's critics was No.10 'wanted the news spread that the attack was imminent, whereas the Ministry of Defence wanted to give the impression that there was a difficult build-up to be achieved before that advance could go forward...'⁸⁰ Ingham is accused of telling journalists on 24 May that British troops might be in Stanley 'within a few days'.⁸¹ This contrasted with the official MoD line. Nott told the Commons on 24 May that

⁷¹ See Chapter Four.

⁷² Freedman, and Gamba-Stonehouse, p.77. and Mercer et al., p.199.

⁷³ Wright to R. Fearn, 16 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4473 f.41.

⁷⁴ Hastings, HCDC, v.ii, p.218, q.670. The *Standard* also supported this: HCDC, v.ii, p.101.

⁷⁵ J. Connell, HCDC, v.ii, p.242, q.850.

⁷⁶ *Daily Express* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.99.

⁷⁷ Mercer et al., p.50.

⁷⁸ HCDC, v.i, p.xxxi, q.69.

⁷⁹ Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, pp.365-366. and Hudson and Stanier, p.177.

⁸⁰ M. Mates, HCDC, v.ii, p.390, q.1685.

⁸¹ Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, p.365.

‘...there can be no question of pressing the force commander to move forward prematurely...’⁸² Remarks on 24 May caused speculation over Goose Green as a possible battle site, since it was the closest strategic target to the landing site at San Carlos.

This thesis dispels some of the confusion surrounding this event in order to suggest that No.10 was innocent of providing contradictory information to that which MoD had released. Ingham’s initial briefing was actually held on 23 May.⁸³ Earlier that day newspapers carried headlines publicising the speed at which British troops were moving.⁸⁴ The information gleaned for these stories came from two sources – neither of which were based at No.10. On 22 May Lewin gave a briefing to defence correspondents. He told them: ‘We are going to move – and move fast’.⁸⁵ *The Observer* reported Lewin’s comment, but also pointed out that Nott, at an MoD Briefing the previous day had ‘said that his assessment was that Port Stanley could hold out for more than a few days’.⁸⁶

As a result of the ministry briefing held on 22 May, the major Sunday newspapers carried reports of troops on the islands. The *Sunday Express* reported troops were staging a ‘determined follow-up to a landing already seen as a shattering tactical victory...’⁸⁷ At the briefing Nott informed journalists: ‘You can expect us to be very active in the next few days’.⁸⁸ Thus, on 22 May, before Ingham had actually briefed Lobby correspondents on the British intention to move swiftly, the MoD itself had made clear that action would be prompt.

The second accusation levelled at No.10 was that casualty figures relating to the tragedy at Fitzroy were released, against the wishes of the MoD. Nott reflected that ‘we had a constant problem trying to prevent Ingham... from adding his largely uninformed opinion to the No.10 spin’.⁸⁹ Mercer et al. judged that the attack on *Sir Galahad* and *Sir Tristram* ‘sparked the clearest failure of PR co-ordination within the government...’⁹⁰ As discussed in Chapter Four, the MoD sought to defer the release of figures in order to persuade the

⁸² Nott, HC Deb., 24 May, v.xxiv, c.649.

⁸³ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.390, q.1685.

⁸⁴ ‘We’re moving fast’, *The Sunday Times*, 23 May, p.1.; ‘Our troops go sweeping on’, *Sunday Express*, 23 May, p.1.; ‘Troops set for a quick victory’, *News of the World*, 23 May, p.1.; ‘Assault troops press on and ‘are there to stay’’, *The Observer*, 23 May, p.1.

⁸⁵ Connell, ‘Fifteen missiles sink the frigate Ardent – twenty feared dead’, *The Sunday Times*, 23 May, p.1.

⁸⁶ ‘Assault troops press on and ‘are there to stay’’, *The Observer*, 23 May, p.1.

⁸⁷ M. Toner and G. Kemp, ‘Our troops go sweeping on’, *Sunday Express*, 23 May, p.1.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Nott, *Haven’t we Been Here Before? Afghanistan to the Falklands: A Personal Connection* (Discovered Authors Diamonds, 2007) p.40.

⁹⁰ Mercer et al., p.54.

Argentines the British had sustained heavier losses, encouraging them to relax defences. Hudson and Stanier claimed that Ingham publicised the figures in defiance of MoD.⁹¹ Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse judged that Ingham announced an ‘almost correct figure’ in order to preserve British morale, which was beginning to be affected by speculation.⁹² Adams also felt that Ingham’s announcement was driven by political motives.⁹³ The MoD later claimed No.10’s premature disclosure of casualty data demonstrated its ignorance of military considerations.⁹⁴ The attack on the landing vessels took place on 8 June.⁹⁵ Despite reports in British newspapers and from Reuters suggesting a death-toll of between 500 and 900, Nott refused to announce accurate information. He told the Commons on 10 June: ‘I am not prepared at this stage to give the total numbers of our casualties, and to do so could be of assistance to the enemy and put our men at greater risk’.⁹⁶

The MoD received precise casualty information on 9 June. The Prime Minister was notified - her Press Secretary was not. Ingham suggested that had he been kept up-to-date with the requirements of MoD, he ‘might not have discussed numbers of casualties with journalists’.⁹⁷ One MoD Official said: ‘We had not alerted Bernard... There was just a failure, a huge failure of communications’.⁹⁸ On 11 June Ingham met with Lobby correspondents. Top of the agenda for correspondents was to unearth information on casualty figures. That morning *The Sun* had published a lead article entitled: ‘70 DEAD’.⁹⁹ Ingham told correspondents he ‘hoped that figure would prove to be exaggerated’.¹⁰⁰ He later considered: ‘This was the one occasion that I can recall when I did not get the message early enough’.¹⁰¹ Taylor told the HCDC: ‘Bluff Cove became the subject of pretty heated discussion between Bernard Ingham and myself... and it became obvious in talking to Bernard Ingham that he had not given the figures...’¹⁰² Some actually suggested the MoD, rather than No.10, was responsible for leaking the figures.¹⁰³ Newspapers also

⁹¹ Hudson and Stanier, p.177.

⁹² Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, p.389.

⁹³ Adams, p.131.

⁹⁴ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, pp.1-3.

⁹⁵ For a timeline of media events surrounding Fitzroy: Morrison and Tumber, pp.202-203.

⁹⁶ Nott, HC Deb., 10 Jun., v.xxv, c.399.

⁹⁷ Ingham, p.295.

⁹⁸ MoD official in Morrison and Tumber, p.205.

⁹⁹ ‘70 DEAD’, *The Sun*, 11 Jun., p.1.

¹⁰⁰ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.391, q.1687.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.401, q.1787.

¹⁰³ *Daily Mail* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.123.; Meacham, HCDC, v.ii, p.228, q.732.

reported the rift between the two departments.¹⁰⁴ Instead of proving that No.10 played fast and loose with information pertaining to casualties, what analysis of the event highlighted was the remarkable lack of co-ordination between No.10 and the MoD.

1a (iii). The Co-ordinating Role of No.10's Press Office

The Press Office at No.10 performed the regular responsibility of co-ordinating the Government's information effort. As part of the job description of CPS, Ingham said he was responsible for co-ordination of the 'presentation of Government policy and measures'.¹⁰⁵ There were two ways in which No.10 maintained its authority and oversaw the co-ordination and smooth running of Government information policy: the personal position of Ingham lent the position of CPS more authority which he was able to exercise over other Government Departments and their representatives; and the Meetings of Information Officers allowed the CPS and his office to fully co-ordinate the key Government departments' information efforts.¹⁰⁶

The chief vehicle by which the Press Secretary would drive this direction of central policy was the MIOs.¹⁰⁷ Burch and Holliday judged that the central function of these meetings was to 'coordinate the management of government presentation'.¹⁰⁸ The group typically met every Monday. Its principal membership was made up of the Chief of each Government Ministry's press department.¹⁰⁹ Ingham, as CPS, would chair the meetings, set the agenda and ensure decisions were followed through. The MIOs were operational *before* Ingham assumed his position as CPS. Ingham utilised the existing format and structure of meetings to develop the MIOs into 'a clearing-house controlling and co-ordinating all information flowing from government to the outside world'.¹¹⁰ The control which accumulated in the hands of Ingham at No.10 saw MIOs move from a somewhat farcical obligation, to what some have termed a 'below-stairs Cabinet'.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ G. Greig, 'Maggie and generals split over Bluff Cove', *Daily Mail*, 12 Jun., p.2.; Editorial, 'Nothing but the TRUTH', *Daily Mirror*, 11 Jun., p.2.

¹⁰⁵ Ingham memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.385.

¹⁰⁶ MIOs are referred to in Government documents both as 'Meetings of Information Officers' and 'Meetings of Chief Information Officers'. Although the terms are used interchangeably, here MIOs are referred to as 'Meetings of Information Officers'.

¹⁰⁷ For more on MIOs: Cockerell et al., pp.49-57.

¹⁰⁸ Burch and Holliday, p.100.

¹⁰⁹ See Appendix 17 for a register of MIOs during the war.

¹¹⁰ B. Axford and R. Huggins, *New Media and Politics* (Sage Publications, 2001) p.153.

¹¹¹ Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.110.

1b. The Co-ordinating Role of Number 10 during the Falklands

The role of No.10's Press Office and the individual role of Ingham attracted attention, particularly at the inquiry of the HCDC. One of the main reasons attention was so rife was due to the conflicting evidence of the MoD and No.10. Cockerell et al. considered that this conflict 'mirrored the contradictory stories that were put out by the two sides...' ¹¹² The subject of No.10's involvement in overall PR policy has enticed comment from most authors, but no comprehensive study of its co-ordinating function has been offered. ¹¹³ The focus of this examination is centred on the MIOs and the newly formed Information Group, as well as the relationship between MoDPR and No.10.

1b (i). Meetings of Information Officers

During the war, MIOs were of limited significance to the presentation of the war effort for two reasons: the IG was established by Ingham at the start of the war which assumed much of the co-ordinating tasks from MIOs; and the meetings' attendance was erratic and loyalties divided.

The IG was formed in response to direction from the OD(SA). It was suggested that the CPS might form a sub-committee of the MIO. ¹¹⁴ The first IG was held on 8 April. Its membership was formed from six departments of Government: No.10, COI, FCO, the Cabinet Office, MOD and Chancellor of the Duchy's Office. ¹¹⁵ The SAPU was also represented at the IG (the SAPU is discussed later in this chapter). The most important impact the group had on the MIOs was that it removed the key players and isolated the topic of the Falklands. This is not to suggest that the MIOs were devoid of Falklands-related debate. Indeed, the Falklands appeared on the agenda of every MIO during the war. It did not, however, always appear at the top of the agenda. ¹¹⁶ Other issues demanded the attention of the MIOs such as the Middle East, the European Community, the Northern Ireland Bill, Parliament and the economy. Yet despite the MIOs' distance from the co-ordination of the presentation of the Falklands, there was evidence to demonstrate its usual co-ordinating role on 19 April. Ingham led a call for the handling of the media in the crisis to be examined. The MoD was invited to produce, for discussion at a special meeting of

¹¹² Cockerell et al., p.165.

¹¹³ Comment is included in: Harris, Hastings and Jenkins; Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse; Mercer et al.; Morrison and Tumber; Freedman, v.ii; Cockerell et al. and No.10's role is reflected on in Ingham; Nott, *Here Today, Gone Tomorrow*.

¹¹⁴ OD(SA), 7 Apr., TNA, CAB148/218 f.4.

¹¹⁵ See Appendix 18.; N.B. Representatives from the Chancellor of the Duchy's Office started to attend the group on 18 May.

¹¹⁶ The Falklands was not top of the agenda on 26 Apr. and 10 May.

the MIO after the crisis, a paper which would outline emergency procedures for handling the media in a future military situation.¹¹⁷

Another limiting factor which obstructed the efficiency of the MIO during the conflict was attendance. Ingham viewed his position as CPS, in relation to the department heads of information, as mirroring the position of the Prime Minister to his or her ministers.¹¹⁸ However, Cockerell et al. pointed out that MIOs were often disunited; that loyalties tended to go individual ministers or departments.¹¹⁹ This was certainly the case for specific departments. Of those six departments represented at the IG, only No.10, the FCO, the MoD and the COI's representatives were regular attendees of the MIO.¹²⁰ The FCO, MoD and Central Office of Information (CoI) maintained a presence at the MIO to varying degrees. The Director General of the COI, John Groves, attended both MIO and IG meetings. Head of the FCO News Department, Fenn, did not attend any MIOs. Instead, Deputy Head, Westbrook, was present at four of eight meetings convened during the war. Taylor, as CPR, attended three of eight meetings - two of those took place when he was *not* responsible for Falklands presentation. For half the MIOs, there was no representative at all from the MoD. On two occasions, the absence of the MoD was specifically commented upon. Ingham, on 17 May, 'expressed the hope that they [MoD] would make every effort to be represented at the highest possible level in future'.¹²¹ The next week it was noted that 'the meeting would have welcomed an opportunity to be brought up-to-date on the military situation in the Falklands'.¹²²

The regular machinery for co-ordinating Government information was surpassed by the creation of a Falklands-specific sub-committee – the IG. The benefits of Falklands-related discussion being largely removed from MIOs implied attendees of the meetings would be free to concentrate on other pressing issues. The lack of representation by senior figures from key departments during the war confirmed the meetings as a peripheral to the information effort in the war. However, the lack of attendance by MoD representatives marked more than just a belief that MIOs were superfluous - it also exemplified a rift between the Chair, Ingham, and the upper echelons of the MoD.

¹¹⁷ MIO, 19 Apr., TNA, CAB134/4636 f.15.

¹¹⁸ Ingham, p.167.

¹¹⁹ Cockerell et al., p.50.

¹²⁰ See Appendix 17.

¹²¹ MIO, 17 May, TNA, CAB 134/4636 f.17a.

¹²² MIO, 24 May, TNA, CAB 134/4636 f.19.

Ib (ii). Co-ordination between No.10 and the MoD

The HCDC claimed that a ‘substantial’ source of concern was the ‘state of coordination between the Ministry of Defence and No.10...’¹²³ Nott later said the MoD entirely concurred with the Committee’s advice ‘that No.10 and the Ministry of Defence should operate “in the closest conjunction”...’¹²⁴ During the HCDC autopsy of the MoD’s handling of the media, representatives of the MoD denied that No.10 had a significant co-ordinating role. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that Nott and Cooper purposefully rejected any organisation which would involve Ingham. Nott wrote: ‘Frank and I were determined to keep the press...as far as possible, away from No.10, with its obsession for background briefing and for spin’.¹²⁵ Cooper reflected:

I am sure that Number 10 has got to have a general co-ordinating function but it is a light one. It is not, in my view, a heavy one, because there is no way, when you are dealing with military matters, that whoever is in Number 10, however good he is, can ask the right questions.¹²⁶

The key issue which prevented No.10 from assuming its regular occupation was that most news, certainly after 30 April, was dealt with *solely* by MoD. Nott maintained: ‘Number 10 could not have taken charge of this thing and run the thing’ - ‘Number 10 did not co-ordinate’.¹²⁷ However, Ingham, told the HCDC No.10 had performed a co-ordinating role ‘at official level’, and argued the IG was pivotal.¹²⁸ Matters were exasperated by Ingham’s suggestion that Cooper had not been properly briefed about the situation.¹²⁹ Cooper responded: ‘I have not been briefed...because I do not require briefing on a subject of this kind – certainly not from within my own Department or, indeed, from any other Department’.¹³⁰

There was speculation, during and after the war, that one reason Taylor was not immediately appointed charge of Falklands-related PR was because Cooper wanted to curb Ingham’s potential influence.¹³¹ As previously discussed, Ingham played a prominent role in having Taylor appointed to the MoD. Cooper had been wary of Ingham before the war. Ingham felt this was due to ‘an unhealthy respect for my alleged capabilities...’¹³² Both

¹²³ HCDC, v.i, p.xiv, para.104.

¹²⁴ HCDC, *Observations*, p.5, para.11.

¹²⁵ Nott, p.263.

¹²⁶ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.436, q.1842.

¹²⁷ Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.436, q.1842.; p.442, q.1866.

¹²⁸ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.392, q.1706.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* p.391, q.1693.

¹³⁰ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.442, q.1864.

¹³¹ Mercer et al., p.39.; Ingham, p.289.

¹³² Ingham, p.289.

Cooper and Ingham maintained close and separate relationships with Thatcher. There is the distinct possibility the pair's dislike for one another may have stemmed from a misguided sense of competition in this respect.¹³³ Certainly Ingham felt that Cooper viewed him as his 'competitor'.¹³⁴ The most significant way in which Cooper affected No.10's co-ordination of Government information was to deny McDonald from attending meetings of the IG. This dictated that the group was starved of MoD contribution.

There was undoubtedly a degree of rivalry between the two departments – personal and professional. Professionally, the MoD, arguably, resented the perceived need to have the information effort – which was principally concerning information emanating from that ministry – co-ordinated by an external department. Beyond that, those in the higher strata of the MoD – the Secretary of the State and the PUS – had a personal, and reciprocal, hostility towards the CPS.

1c. The Information Group

The Information Group, as mentioned, was established on 8 April.¹³⁵ The group met sporadically throughout the conflict. Ingham told the HCDC that the group met 53 times between 8 April and 25 June.¹³⁶ The minutes of the group recorded meetings until 22 June.¹³⁷ A total of 49 meetings were documented. There is no documentary evidence available to suggest the figure of 53 meetings was accurate. Forty three of the 49 meetings took place *during* the war. Initially, the group was to meet weekly, but it was agreed tri-weekly meetings would be more effective.¹³⁸ Later, Ingham convened meetings depending on events. For four weeks during the crisis the group met daily.¹³⁹ In the first month of the crisis, the group met 12 times.¹⁴⁰ Meetings of the IG were held in Ingham's office at 1000GMT.

The role of the group has been cautiously explored by a minority of works. Documentation pertaining to the group was never submitted to the HCDC. The IG was a sub-committee

¹³³ The relationship between Cooper and Ingham: Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, pp.94-96.; Cockerell et al., pp.163-166.

¹³⁴ Ingham, p.295.

¹³⁵ OD(SA), 7 Apr., TNA, CAB148/218 f.4.

¹³⁶ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.387, q.1665.

N.B. Freedman also used this figure: v.ii, p.39.

¹³⁷ Minutes from meetings between 8-22 Apr. are held in the National Archives, CAB164/1611, minutes from 23 Apr. – 22 Jun. are held in CAB164/1622.

¹³⁸ IG, 8 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.1.

¹³⁹ IG met daily throughout the *working* week of those beginning 26 April, 3, 17 and 24 May.

¹⁴⁰ See Appendix One.

under the jurisdiction of the Cabinet Office and under the leadership of Ingham. Perhaps the most obvious candidates to have explored the group in their work have done so. The *Official History* included a summary of the group's responsibilities, but offered no analysis as to its significance or productivity.¹⁴¹ Harris included a paragraph on Ingham's chairmanship in his biography on Ingham. He suggested the construction of the group was a 'ploy' to 'run the entire information effort from Number 10'.¹⁴² Mercer et al. argued that attendance of the MoD was directly linked to the Ministry's attempts to demonstrate its independence from No.10.¹⁴³

Attendance was undoubtedly a significant issue, and one which will be explored further. However, other issues also affected the group's capabilities. Cooper described the group as a 'touching hands exercise'. It was exactly that. The IG acted as an information exchange between the departments most involved with the Falklands crisis. What increased the group's importance was the fact that it was the 'main instrument of co-ordination'.¹⁴⁴ There were, however, additional drawbacks to the group – it was mostly reactive in nature and some of its responsibilities clashed with those of the SAPU. This thesis examines the significance of the group, in terms of how effectively it co-ordinated information, and its shortcomings. It offers the only comprehensive scrutiny of the group's importance to the Government PR effort.

1c (i). Attendance

The subject which has invited the most comment in the literature is the group's attendance. Firstly, because the meetings started at 1000GMT, Ingham was unable to observe the OD(SA). It also meant that there was no ministerial involvement in the group, since the relevant ministers belonged to the War Cabinet.¹⁴⁵ Representatives from the COI, FCO, No.10, MoD and Cabinet Office were required to attend. From 16 April, members of the SAPU were included in meetings. After 18 May, so too were representatives of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office – a move which denoted Cecil Parkinson's perceived role in Government PR.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Freedman, v.ii, p.39.

¹⁴² Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.96. Harris also referred to the group in *Gotcha*, p.101.

¹⁴³ Mercer et al., p.50.

¹⁴⁴ Ingham memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.385.

¹⁴⁵ Freedman, v.ii, p.39.

¹⁴⁶ See Appendix 17.

Harris claimed Cooper instructed McDonald - the only IO who attended CoS meetings - not to attend the IG. Consequentially, 'Ingham's "co-ordinating committee" was left with little to co-ordinate'.¹⁴⁷ Things were not so simple. Ingham had his own access to information from the War Cabinet through Robert Armstrong (its Secretary) and Thatcher herself. Ingham claimed that the representatives the MoD sent to IG 'had been denied briefing'.¹⁴⁸ The issue was not that information from the CoS was denied to the group - rather, that any member of the MoD with an up-to-date knowledge of MoD PR strategy was denied to the group. Conversely, Cooper told the HCDC: 'We normally sent the Chief Press Officer, sometimes the CPR, occasionally acting CPR...'¹⁴⁹ In fact, Taylor only attended the IG once. McDonald stopped participation altogether after 11 May. However, before then, he had attended eight of 20 possible assemblies. There is little evidence why McDonald ceased attending. One could speculate that it might concern the pressure Ingham placed on the MoD to re-instate unattributable briefing.¹⁵⁰ However, if the absence of McDonald from this point on was protest, then it is curious that Taylor should make his only appearance on 16 May.¹⁵¹

Unquestionably, from 11 May onwards, the MoD sent increasingly junior representatives to the IG.¹⁵² Of all departments represented, MoD had the greatest variation of personnel in attendance - there was simply no consistency. Representatives of the MoD included Jack Gee (Chief Press Officer) and junior Press Officers.¹⁵³ The major problem was that POs were poorly briefed. As discussed in Chapter Two, the role of MoDPR POs was limited by a lack of information. MoD representation compared poorly with that of other departments. Chiefly, Fenn, attended the IG. Westbrook was also a regular. On two occasions alternative FCO staff attended.¹⁵⁴ The most frequent representation of the COI was provided by Groves.¹⁵⁵ Thus, excluding the MoD, the backbone of the group - the COI, FCO and Cabinet Office - all sent predominantly high-ranking personnel.

¹⁴⁷ Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.96.

¹⁴⁸ Ingham, p.290.

¹⁴⁹ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.24, q.48.

¹⁵⁰ See Chapter Four.

¹⁵¹ IG, 16 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.37.

¹⁵² On 14 April, 26 April and 2 May, no MoD representative was present.

¹⁵³ See Appendix Two.

¹⁵⁴ 2 May and 14 June.

¹⁵⁵ Other representatives included Brazier and Kelly.

1c (ii). Singing from the Same Hymn Sheet

The decreasing attendance of senior MoD delegates at the meetings of the IG dictated the effectiveness of the group diminished. The principal role of the group was to act as a conference at which all information which might affect Government image could be discussed. The basic theory was sound. Ingham later said the purpose of the meetings was to:

...take stock of developments and their implications for the public; to bring the Departments and Offices up-to-date with events; to anticipate...events over the next 24 hours; and to agree on or make recommendations about the action required.¹⁵⁶

No.10 performed its co-ordinating function by using the meetings of the IG to make sure that each of the most significant departments to the crisis were 'singing from the same song sheet'.¹⁵⁷ On 8 April, at the first meeting of the group, both MoD and FCO agreed to pass 'all relevant written briefs' to No.10 and the group. No.10 would reciprocate with regular 'lobby de-briefing'.¹⁵⁸ If a department could not provide the information required, they would send it to No.10 later that day.¹⁵⁹ McDonald said that, during the meetings:

...we decided on the apparatus to ensure that whatever was announced at the press meetings was handed to Number 10. The wording of the press statements were also told to Number 10...There was certainly a large degree of co-ordination in that context and there was certainly the opportunity to exchange views usefully.¹⁶⁰

The IG provided a forum at which department representatives could identify the key lines each department would adopt on a specific event. The greatest contribution on this front came from the MoD and the FCO. Both departments endeavoured to make the group, aware of upcoming announcements. The MoD did this until 12 May, when information provided by the ministry became scarce. It warned the group of announcements on Argentine prisoners, the departure of the *QEII*, *Sheffield's* sinking and when statements would be made in the House.¹⁶¹ Not all announcements could be logged with the IG before they were made, but the group was made aware of *planned* announcements.

Ingham also used meetings to make clear what the Government line should be on a specific day. For instance, on 21 April he identified the growing pressure to take the issue of the

¹⁵⁶ Ingham memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.385.

¹⁵⁷ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.391, q.1692.

¹⁵⁸ IG, 8 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.1.

¹⁵⁹ For example, IG meeting, 29 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.9.

¹⁶⁰ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.400, q.1780.

¹⁶¹ IG, 30 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.11.; 4 May, f.18.; 5 May, f.20.; 7 May, f.24.; 12 May, f.31.

Falklands back to the UN – the group agreed to attempt to counter pressure.¹⁶² On 28 April it was recorded that ‘...the line to be deployed by press officers would be: “The American Government put their formal proposals to the Argentine Government yesterday. They have now given us the text. The proposals are under consideration”’.¹⁶³ On 2 May Ingham declared: ‘We should continue to pursue the line that Soviets and Argentines were strange bed-fellows’.¹⁶⁴ On 24 May the group heard: ‘Our line must continue to be that the best way to stabilise the position is to get the Argentines off the Islands as quickly as possible’.¹⁶⁵

As well as outlining the overall presentational line the departments, collectively, should take, Ingham identified what information he would make available in Lobby briefings. On 6 May Ingham told the group he would indicate casualty details from the attack on *Sheffield* and the *Belgrano* at his 1100GMT briefing.¹⁶⁶ On 7 June, Ingham made clear that he would raise the question of Ireland’s voting with Russia at the UN.¹⁶⁷ He also informed the group of the contents of previous Lobby discussions. For example, on 29 April Ingham confirmed that he had implied the reason for the 48-hour-delay in announcing the TEZ was designed so the Task Force could be in a position to enforce it.¹⁶⁸ On 26 May Ingham defended himself against rumours that he had told Lobby correspondents the names of ships involved in activity the previous day.¹⁶⁹ This accusation came after Nott refused to identify a ‘badly damaged’ ship on the evening 25 May. Nott identified the ship as HMS *Coventry* the following day.¹⁷⁰ The IG was comprehensively briefed on the contents of Lobby briefings. Despite the fact the Lobby briefings would often develop and depart from the intended line, the IG was given frequent summaries.¹⁷¹

The group performed another co-ordinating function in that it allowed departments to share interview schedules for ministers. The IG regularly heard when high-profile interviews were scheduled, and discussed the benefits of certain ministers or officials appearing on specific programmes. On 8 April McDonald told the group that Nott would appear on *ABC Breakfast*. The FCO told the same meeting that Pym was considering appearing on ‘Bill’

¹⁶² IG, 21 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.8.

¹⁶³ IG, 28 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.7.

¹⁶⁴ IG, 2 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.13.

¹⁶⁵ IG, 24 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.46.

¹⁶⁶ IG, 6 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.22.

¹⁶⁷ IG, 7 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.67.

¹⁶⁸ IG, 29 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.9.

¹⁶⁹ IG, 26 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.50.

¹⁷⁰ Nott, HC Deb., 26 May, v.xxiv, c.921.

¹⁷¹ See IG minutes: 5 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.20.; 6 May, f.22.; 28 May, f.54.; 21 May, f.43.

[David] Brinkley's show.¹⁷² Interviews accepted by the Prime Minister were often discussed.¹⁷³ And recommendations for possible future interviews were made. For example, it was proposed that Nott should accept an interview with *Panorama* – which he did on 24 May.¹⁷⁴ On 21 May the group suggested that Parkinson should accept invitations from Australian and Canadian broadcasting companies, as well as from IRN.¹⁷⁵

Perhaps one of the most significant ways in which the group provided for the co-ordination of Government was it permitted the applicable departments to share PR policies. The most crucial policy was that of the MoD. All information on events in the South Atlantic were relayed direct to Northwood, and from there to the Ministry. Up until 11 May, and the cessation of McDonald's involvement, the IG was kept informed of MoD policy.¹⁷⁶ At the very first meeting of the group, the MoD notified the group that Woodward had been given permission to exercise censorship, and defined facilities available on Ascension.¹⁷⁷ On 22 April the MoD relayed plans for the reporting of military events and 'assured the Chairman that No.10 would be informed rapidly', should any action occur.¹⁷⁸ The next day MoD reassured departments that all information divisions would be told immediately of any military engagement.¹⁷⁹ On 3 May the MoD informed the IG that policy had been adopted whereby control of reports from Task Force journalists was exercised on the spot.¹⁸⁰ A further update on this arrangement was supplied when McDonald, at his last meeting of the group, said that there was agreement on a new plan to ensure flash messages on incidents which the MoD could use immediately – ensuring Task Force reporters' accounts did not appear before the Government had announced an event.¹⁸¹ However, after 11 May the policy of the MoD was barely discussed. This was an indication of how the withdrawal of a senior MoD figure from the meetings impacted them. For example, the groups were not informed of any casualty reporting policy developed by the NRG.

It was not necessarily that the IG suffered from a lack of information on the overall picture, as some academics have implied.¹⁸² More, the lack of prominent MoD figures at meetings

¹⁷² IG, 8 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.1.

¹⁷³ For example, IG minutes: 16 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.6.; 17 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.35.; 21 May, f.43.; 27 May, f.52.; 1 Jun., f.56.

¹⁷⁴ IG, 17 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.35.

¹⁷⁵ IG, 21 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.43.

¹⁷⁶ See Chapter Three.

¹⁷⁷ IG, 8 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.1.

¹⁷⁸ IG, 22 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.9.; See Chapter Three

¹⁷⁹ IG, 23 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.3.

¹⁸⁰ IG, 3 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.15.

¹⁸¹ IG, 11 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.29.

¹⁸² See: Harris, p.96.; Mercer et al., p.50.

dictated that the group was unaware of the PR strategy being adopted by the MoD. There were two implications for PR: departments were increasingly unaware of MoDPR policy – how information was reported from the Fleet, policy concerning Task Force journalists and when pictures should be expected; and departments were unable to synchronise their information efforts with those of the MoD – the result of which was a series of increasingly disjointed announcements, primarily from No.10.

When McDonald attended meetings, the MoD contributed enormously to discussion. When more junior delegates attended, there was a huge discrepancy in how information was now communicated to the group. Often, the MoD representative was not in possession of required knowledge. On 28 May it was noted that the MoD ‘had no information about the material possibly to be salvaged from the Atlantic Conveyor’ – when, in fact, it was known on 25 May that 80% of Britain’s helicopter capacity had been lost.¹⁸³ On 1 June the MoD was ‘not clear regarding the white flag incident’ at Goose Green. MoD added that ‘it was not possible to say precisely where our troops were...’¹⁸⁴ The MoD was unable to confirm the presence of napalm at Goose Green, despite Nicholson having reported on it with the approval of Moore.¹⁸⁵ This trend continued. On 8 June the MoD could not confirm reports of Moore’s statement asking the Argentine Garrison to surrender, nor could it settle stories of 60 Argentines killed in recent days.¹⁸⁶ Finally, on the day of the Argentine surrender, the MoD representative told the group that he was unsure about the provision of a ship for transporting journalists to the Falklands after the war, despite it being a subject for discussion at CoS meetings on 3 and 5 June.¹⁸⁷

Following 11 May, there was a series of controversial clashes between what information No.10 publicised and what information the MoD released. Earlier in this chapter, two significant accusations made against No.10 were outlined. On 23 May, before Ingham met with the Lobby, it was made clear that ‘the decision how fast to press ahead was one for the Commanders’.¹⁸⁸ This supports Ingham’s own contention that he had no agenda to emphasise the speed at which forces were likely to be moving on the islands.¹⁸⁹ The

¹⁸³ IG, 28 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.54.

¹⁸⁴ IG, 1 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.56.

¹⁸⁵ IG, 2 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.59.

¹⁸⁶ IG, 8 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.65.

¹⁸⁷ IG, 14 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.73.; CoS, 3 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.111.; CoS, 5 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.114.

¹⁸⁸ IG, 23 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.45.

¹⁸⁹ Ingham, HCDC, v.ii, p.390, q.1685.

following day, the group stressed that: ‘It was too early to offer judgements about how long it might take to complete the operation’.¹⁹⁰

In the meetings of the IG - the group through which release of information should have been co-ordinated - there was no mention of the MoD’s decision not to release casualty data concerning the Fitzroy tragedy. There was no mention of MoD’s policy on the issue whatsoever, nor, at any time, did MoD request speculation on relevant numbers be encouraged. Indeed, on 9 June the MoD delegate reported to the IG that ‘they [the MoD] would be filling in some of the details about casualties in the course of the day’.¹⁹¹ Thus, on the same day the MoD policy not to release casualty figures emerged, the IG, and Ingham personally, was unaware of it. The following day the MoD representative proposed the IG should ‘knock down any suggestion that the incident had been a setback for our military preparations’.¹⁹² Thus the IG did not receive an accurate account of MoD casualty reporting policy.

Instead of MoD policy being relayed to the IG, a direct communication was sent to Thatcher on 10 June from her Private Secretary. The communication outlined that C-in-C ‘would like to leave open the idea that the casualty figures were considerably higher. He believes that this would help to confuse the Argentines who claim much higher casualties’.¹⁹³ The desire to withhold figures was discussed by the OD(SA) on 11 June, by which time Ingham had already prepared to brief Lobby correspondents. If the IG had been informed of the policy, Ingham might have withstood the pressure of the Lobby and offered no thoughts on accurate figures. Cooper later reflected that the IG underlined the basic problem:

...those talking to the press were not always au fait with the thinking at the highest levels of government, while the highest level did not always appreciate the presentational issues and possibilities raised by the items they were addressing.¹⁹⁴

The IG was designed to ensure that those levels of Government would always be up-to-date with the rest of Government presentation. Considering how policy was

¹⁹⁰ IG, 24 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.46.

¹⁹¹ IG, 9 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.69.

¹⁹² IG, 10 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.71.

¹⁹³ Pattison to Thatcher, 10 Jun., TNA, *Argentina. The Falklands Crisis: further diplomatic activity*, PREM19/634 f.61.

¹⁹⁴ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.24, q.48.

communicated between 9 and 11 June, it is apparent that the MoD neglected to utilise this organisation.

Ic (iii). Further Limitations

The effectiveness of the IG was further affected by two issues: the nature of the group was *reactive*; and, it could be argued, the authority of the group often overlapped with a separate presentational initiative – the SAPU. Often, the group was left to respond to diplomatic or military events, without having first planned a relevant press line or strategy. Nott said the IG was of little consequence because: ‘you cannot co-ordinate events in a war by having a committee do it... You have got to deal with things which come in night and day...’¹⁹⁵ A lot of the time the content of meetings was limited to hearing a summary, from each department present, of what had happened since the last meeting. The only way in which the group could be proactive was in the establishment of communal lines. These lines largely concerned overarching themes like the preference that Government presentation should refer to the *restoration* of British administration or how *self-determination* and *British administration* should be defined.¹⁹⁶ Planned lines persisted until after the close of hostilities on the islands.¹⁹⁷

Strictly speaking, an additional hindrance to the IG – particularly its ability to construct PR lines – could have been the existence of the SAPU. The SAPU distributed the lines ministers should take on the Falklands. There was conflict in as much as there were two areas from which PR lines were emanating. A comparison of information related by the SAPU indicates the extent to which authority between the two overlapped. SAPU lines were developed to inform ministers after an event. The IG heard what events had taken place and developed a *wider* media line. On 26 April the SAPU issued a circular. On the same day the IG met. The SAPU circular covered events which had led to the landing on South Georgia, Britain’s legal position and covered the subject of the British Antarctic Survey Team which had been stranded on South Georgia.¹⁹⁸ The IG of the same day heard from the MoD on the events of 25 April and discussed the need for publicity concerning British use of the UN Security Council to help resolve the situation in order to counter the image that the landing on South Georgia was aggressive.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.442, q.1868.

¹⁹⁶ IG, 14 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.4.; 21 Apr., f.9.

¹⁹⁷ IG, 26 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.5.; 4 May, f.18.; 26 May, f.50.; 16 Jun., f.77.

¹⁹⁸ SAPU circular, 26 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.17.

¹⁹⁹ IG, 16 Apr., TNA, CAB164.1622 f.5.

The SAPU was principally an organisation to ensure informed Government. The IG was intended to co-ordinate press lines which resulted from the information later distributed by the SAPU. There was a stark contrast between the approaches of each organisation. The SAPU circulars were often distributed after the IG had discussed similar topics. For example, after the sinking of the *Belgrano*, the SAPU and IG handled the lines very differently. The IG met on 2 and 3 May to discuss how best to handle the presentation of the *Belgrano*.²⁰⁰ On 3 May the group emphasised that whether or not the vessel was inside or outside the TEZ, the ‘defence zone’ substantiated the action.²⁰¹ On 3 May the SAPU issued a document which - among subjects like the movement of 5 Infantry Brigade, false Argentine claims and Pym’s visit to Washington - covered ‘Military Action from 1 May’.²⁰² The *Belgrano* was discussed in a short paragraph covering events on the afternoon of 2 May. The main thrust of the paragraph was reinforcement of the idea that the vessels involved ‘posed a significant threat to our ships’.²⁰³ However, it was not until 5 May that the actual sinking of the ship was explained in detail.²⁰⁴ The difference in approach to the sinking of the *Belgrano* is evidence of the lag in time before the SAPU issued lines for ministers to take. The IG outlined lines for relevant departments as early as two days beforehand.

The Information Group was a channel through which the most significant departments to the crisis could synchronise their PR efforts. The principle was an intelligent one. The IG represented an endeavour to centrally organise Government policy. However, the IG’s effectiveness has been questioned, primarily due to the MoD’s fluctuant attendance. Commentators like Mercer et al. and Harris have suggested that the impact of the group was limited because the MoD purposefully restrained its power by sending low-ranking representatives.²⁰⁵ This thesis contends that there was a watershed in the group’s life. On 11 May ACPR stopped attending meetings. It was from this point onwards that the effectiveness of the IG was questionable.

2. The South Atlantic Presentation Unit

The most prominent academic accounts of the organisation of Government information policy during the war have paid less attention to the SAPU than any other group

²⁰⁰ On 30 April the next scheduled meeting was 4 May. IG, 30 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.11.

²⁰¹ IG, 3 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.15.

²⁰² SAPU circular, 3 May, TNA, PREM19/624 f.249.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ SAPU circular, 5 May, TNA, PREM19/624 f.86.

²⁰⁵ Mercer et al., p.50.; Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.96.

constructed to deal with the issue. The chief reason for this neglect was that it fell under the purview of the Cabinet Office, rather than the MoD. The only discussion on the topic was supplied by Freedman in the *Official History*. Analysis is limited to one page and deals primarily with the unit's creation.²⁰⁶ Freedman's account was based on material from the Cabinet Office. Other studies, which have utilised, in the main, MoD source material, have thus failed to appreciate the unit to any significant extent. Mercer et al. made no reference whatsoever to the employment of the SAPU in co-ordinating public lines for ministers.²⁰⁷ Equally, in the chapters offered by Morrison and Tumber on censorship and information policy there was no mention of the SAPU.²⁰⁸ As a result of this neglect, this thesis provides the most comprehensive analysis of the unit to date.

Many historians and academics have considered the role the Cabinet played in the crisis. The creation and business of the War Cabinet, for example, has drawn attention from different types of literature: memoirs and political, military and cultural histories.²⁰⁹ However, the Cabinet Office's role in handling the media has been overlooked. There was speculation during the war that the Cabinet itself was running all Government PR policy. Defence Correspondent, Jon Connell, claimed requests for information from the MoD 'were met with the response that the Cabinet was dictating policy...'²¹⁰ The Cabinet Office had certain influence when it came to Government information policy, but it by no means *ran* its own, or that of the Government. A member of the Cabinet Office sat in on all meetings of the IG from 14 April - mostly, the Secretary to the Cabinet, David Colvin. Cabinet Office representatives were also present at the meetings of both the Cabinet and the OD(SA). In this respect, the office was in an ideal position to co-ordinate policy. However, the extent of the Cabinet Office's involvement in policy was limited, throughout the Falklands, to a small unit - the SAPU.

2a. Creation

On 6 April a meeting of Cabinet heard that Thatcher would arrange, not only a sub-committee of the OD, the OD(SA), but also a 'presentation unit'.²¹¹ The following day the

²⁰⁶ Freedman, v.ii, p.38.

²⁰⁷ Mercer et al.

²⁰⁸ Morrison and Tumber.

²⁰⁹ For example: Hennessy, "War Cabinetry"; Hennessy, *The Prime Minister: The Office and its Holders Since 1945* (Allen Lane, 2000) pp.138-142.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.103.; Freedman, v.ii, pp.18-24.; Nott, *Haven't We Been Here Before?* pp.66-67.; Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, p.125.; Thatcher, pp.188-9.; Middlebrook, p.92.

²¹⁰ *The Sunday Times* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.460, q.1.

²¹¹ Cabinet, 6 Apr., TNA, *Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings 1-30*, CAB128/73 f.145.

first meeting of the newly-formed OD(SA) heard that it had been decided to establish a unit ‘...comprising one official at First Secretary/Principal level from each of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence, located in the Cabinet Office’.²¹²

The creation of the unit was intended to ease the Government’s PR burden - principally, at the beginning of April 1982, the unit was established to counter negative rumour. The OD(SA) was led to understand that the unit was put in place because ‘potentially damaging rumours had been circulating in Parliament and in the Press and media... The purpose of the unit would be to establish what rumours were circulating and as far as possible to counter them’.²¹³ The main way in which the unit attempted to achieve its aim was by the collation of information to disprove injurious rumour. This information would be disseminated amongst the Government and used in interaction with the media. David Wright, the Secretary to the Secretary of Cabinet, stated on 8 April: ‘The unit is to provide to Ministers, and to the Press Officers of Departments concerned, material for public use to counter errors or inaccurate rumours concerning the Falkland Islands issue...’²¹⁴

On the same day Colvin summarised the role of the unit as ‘...meeting unhelpful rumour with a line for counter briefing; providing briefing lines for Ministers and Officials; and developing speaking notes as required’.²¹⁵ At the beginning of April there were several ideas as to how the unit might act to counter speculation. The main instrument through which the unit would work would be a series of documents sent to the private secretaries to Cabinet ministers and relevant PR departments. From there, it was the responsibility of private secretaries to distribute documents further – dispersing the relevant information throughout Government.²¹⁶

2b. Membership

The machinery used to identify rumour was established on 7 April. At a meeting between Colvin and Arthur ‘John’ Coles, Principle Private Secretary to Thatcher, on the evening of 7 April, Coles suggested that a four-man ‘intelligence gathering net’ might be established in order to ‘to catch rumours, falsehoods and other damaging canards and feed them into

²¹² OD(SA), 7 Apr., TNA, CAB 148/211 f.10.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ D. Wright to Private Secretaries, 8 Apr., TNA, *Falkland Islands crisis: Ministerial statements to the press and Parliament*, FCO7/4494 f.25.

²¹⁵ Meeting between No.10 and SAPU, 8 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.2.

²¹⁶ Outlined in SAPU circular, 11 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.2.

SAPU'.²¹⁷ This 'net', it was proposed, should consist of Ian Gow, the Prime Minister's Parliamentary Private Secretary, the Parliamentary Private Secretaries of both Nott and Pym, and Michael Jopling, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and Conservative Chief Whip.²¹⁸ The composition of the unit itself was established, when the OD(SA) meeting agreed to its creation.²¹⁹ At the head of the unit was Robert Wade-Gery, Deputy Secretary of the Cabinet and, during the war, Co-Secretary to the War Cabinet. He, and the unit, answered directly to the Cabinet Secretary, Armstrong.²²⁰ The staff of the unit consisted of one MoD representative, Robert Hatfield, and one FCO representative, Simon Fuller. In addition, two Cabinet Office personnel joined the unit: Colvin and Wright. Wright also acted as Secretary to the unit. Colvin took a more prominent role - he became the driving force: the unit's de factor leader.

2c. The Role of Ingham

The realm in which the SAPU was to act ensured that the unit was destined to cross borders of authority. When the OD(SA) considered the establishment of the unit, the point was made in discussion that 'further thought would need to be given...to the relationship between the Presentation Unit and the Meeting of Chief Information Offices [sic]...' ²²¹ The remit of the SAPU posed a threat to existing PR equipment of Government. The sub-committee heard that '...the relationship of any machinery established to the Presentation Unit would need to be taken up with the Chief Press Secretary to the Prime Minister'. ²²² In order for the unit to avoid competing with any other bodies, namely MIOs, the unit was deferred to Ingham. The position of Ingham within the existing PR framework of Government was demonstrated by the proviso that the unit's place be 'taken up with' him directly. On the day the SAPU was officially formed, Ingham and Mower met with representatives of the SAPU – Colvin, Fuller and Hatfield. ²²³ The purpose of the meeting was to co-ordinate the PR efforts of the two groups: the IG and SAPU. Ingham highlighted the need to liaise and that it was important that the departments 'eliminated duplication and quickened the speed of response'. ²²⁴ A number of agreements were made in order to better synchronize the groups. No.10 conceded to supply Colvin with Thatcher's daily 'Press Digest' and those parts of Lobby notes referring to the Falklands. It was also settled that

²¹⁷ D. Colvin to R. Wade-Gery, 8 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.2M.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ OD(SA), 7 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.10.

²²⁰ Information contained in Wright to Private Secretaries 8 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4494 f.25.

²²¹ OD(SA), 7 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.10.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Meeting between No.10 and SAPU, 8 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.2.

²²⁴ Ibid.

Colvin, Hatfield and Fuller should attend meetings of the IG. Colvin attended the IG meetings until the end of the war. Across all 42 possible meetings Colvin might have attended, he was absent for only two. Fuller and Hatfield attended meetings from 16 April.²²⁵

The membership of the SAPU made up a considerable bulk of the membership of the IG. Although the SAPU was part of the Cabinet Office, not the No.10 Press Office, the IG should be viewed as the ‘father’ group of the SAPU. It was within meetings of the IG that lines were often developed which would later be distributed to Government. For example, on 22 April, the IG noted: ‘In connection with the Foreign Secretary’s visit we should maintain that he has left to take new proposals to Mr Haig and has no intention of talking directly or “in proximity” to Mr Costa Mendez’.²²⁶ The SAPU circular of the following day suggested the line that: ‘Mr Pym is on a short working visit... He has no plans to meet the Argentine Foreign Minister who is also in Washington...’²²⁷ Similarly, at the same meeting of the IG it was concluded that: ‘We should not support the view attributed to the C in C Task Force that Britain would have to wait for the Argentinians to strike first in any military encounter’.²²⁸ In the SAPU document it was claimed: ‘All our actions... have been in exercise of our right of self-defence. We have the capability to enforce the zone and... we are prepared to fire first in order to do so’.²²⁹ On 5 May the IG felt it should ‘continue to express confidence in international opinion staying with us’ – in particular it should highlight the Economic Community’s support.²³⁰ The SAPU lines of 6 May stated that: ‘It is quite clear that there remains very considerable support for Britain on the fundamental issues’. The line went on to give examples of EC, Commonwealth and US support.²³¹ Further, on 27 May the IG observed that it should emphasise the importance of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 502, but that Argentine withdrawal was essential to a ceasefire. The group felt Britain’s position had been ‘stated by Parsons’ at the UN.²³² That evening a SAPU-issued paper informed ministers: ‘Britain welcomes SCR 505...’ It went on to quote Parsons’ UN speech: ‘the only acceptable condition for a ceasefire is that it should be unequivocally linked with an immediate commencement of Argentine

²²⁵ See Appendix 18.

²²⁶ IG, 22 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.9.

²²⁷ SAPU circular, 23 Apr., TNA, CAB 164/1611 f.10.

²²⁸ IG, 22 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.9.

²²⁹ SAPU circular, 23 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.10.

²³⁰ IG, 5 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.20.

²³¹ SAPU circular, 6 May, TNA, CAB 164/1611 f.19.

²³² IG, 27 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.52.

withdrawal'.²³³ Thus, IG meetings acted almost as staging discussions for lines which would later appear in SAPU documentation. The SAPU was dependent on the existing structure of Government PR to function properly.

2d. Procedural Problems

The development of the SAPU was struck by several complications over the first week and a half of its occupation. The first lines for ministers were published and distributed on 11 April. There were two documents sent on that day – one in the morning and one at 2100GMT. The problem experienced by the unit the day before was that communication had to be approved by the FCO and MoD at official level, then referred to Thatcher for further clearance.²³⁴ Thatcher accepted the circulars on the evening of 10 April.²³⁵ Between 11 and 15 April, the date the next circular was released, the staff of the SAPU had identified the impossibility of gaining proper approval of all SAPU documents. Wade-Gery outlined the main issue:

If the material they put out to Ministers is to have any real value, it had to be put out quickly. While the themes with which it deals are still fresh. On the other hand they have natural inhibitions as officials about laying down the line which Ministers are to take without first securing some degree of Ministerial approval.

Wade-Gery outlined a number of alternatives to gaining Prime Ministerial approval:

- a) Carry on as now, accepting that delay will often result
- b) Agree that clearance for the Unit's circulars to Ministers can be give [sic] at official level...
- c) Arrange for each circular to be cleared either by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary or the Defence Secretary...accepting that this might sometimes involve undesirable delay
- d) Have another try at press-ganging Mr Parkinson²³⁶

The reference to Parkinson in this document is particularly interesting. Freedman claimed the SAPU was initially responsible to Parkinson, but Michael Palliser soon 'took it over'.²³⁷ Palliser had been PUS at the Foreign Office until earlier that year. During the war he became a special 'adviser'. From 15 April Palliser attended meetings of the OD(SA). Hastings and Jenkins believed it was Palliser who headed up what they termed a 'communications group' within the Cabinet Office...²³⁸ There is little evidence to document Palliser's role in the SAPU. The only reference was given by Wade-Gery on 13

²³³ SAPU circular, 27 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.27.

²³⁴ Wade-Gery to Armstrong, 13 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.3.

²³⁵ Pattison to Thatcher, 10 Apr., TNA, PREM19/616 f.82. and J. Groves to Fuller, 11 Apr., f.64.

²³⁶ Wade-Gery to Armstrong, 13 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.3.

²³⁷ Freedman, v.ii, p.38.

²³⁸ Hastings and Jenkins, p.103.

April when he suggested to Armstrong that the issue of SAPU procedure might be discussed with Palliser the following day.²³⁹ Indeed, during Palliser's extensive interviews for Churchill Archives' BDOHP, he, himself, did not mention any role in the Falklands relating to public presentation.²⁴⁰ Procedural difficulties in the SAPU were not addressed until 25 April. Between 11 and 25 April the SAPU issued five circular papers. On 25 April the War Cabinet invited Parkinson 'to undertake Ministerial supervision' of the SAPU.²⁴¹ This invitation was extended because the committee felt 'a special political effort would need to be made to ensure that the necessity and justifiability of British actions were fully understood by public opinion'.²⁴²

Upon the escalation of hostilities, the SAPU found it was of increased importance. There was amplified attention focused on it, since ministers' statements became more crucial. At the IG on 26 April there was discussion about 'the presentational difficulty, given varying ministerial statements on our negotiating position. Mr Nott had said that if the Argentines would withdraw, the situation would be transformed...'²⁴³ After the reinvasion of South Georgia the stakes had changed, thus the SAPU was more critical to the presentation of the campaign. On 10 May, for example, the Prime Minister told the OD(SA) that '...relations with the media were giving rise to concern'.²⁴⁴ The next day Thatcher repeated this sentiment: 'consideration would need to be given to the way in which the Government's policy objectives were publicly presented'.²⁴⁵ The OD(SA) requested that Parkinson, in consultation with 'Willie' Whitelaw, Home Secretary, Pym and Nott, 'make proposals on the public presentation of Government policy'.²⁴⁶ On 12 May a meeting was held between Parkinson and members of his office, the SAPU and Mower. The meeting was held 'in pursuance of a remit from OD(SA)' and the subject was 'to consider how the public presentation of the Government's position in the Falklands crisis might be improved'.²⁴⁷ The timing of the meeting was significant in itself. Presentation was prioritised after a series of actions in the South Atlantic drew criticism in the media.²⁴⁸ By mid-May, the SAPU was deemed to be of limited effectiveness. In an attempt to address the efficiency of

²³⁹ Wade-Gery to Armstrong, 13 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.3.

²⁴⁰ Palliser, Interview, C.A., 1999, DOHP 37/1.

²⁴¹ OD(SA), 25 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.54.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ IG, 26 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.50.

²⁴⁴ OD(SA), 10 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.99.

²⁴⁵ OD(SA), 11 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.103.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Note on meeting hosted by Parkinson, 14 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.22M.

²⁴⁸ Events included the Black Buck raids and the sinking of the *Belgrano*, *Sheffield*, and *Narwhal*.

the unit, Thatcher appointed Parkinson its head. In the case of the SAPU, the reign of Parkinson over the unit was not of significant effect.

2e. Evaluating Effectiveness

Before Parkinson assumed responsibility for the SAPU on 12 May, there had been 19 circulars over the course of 30 days. Between 12 May and the end of the conflict, on 14 June, there were only 13 SAPU circulars. In the period before 12 May three of those circulars were limited, not to suggested lines, but to the dissemination of transcripts of interviews given by ministers. Conversely, seven of 13 papers after Parkinson's tenure were devoted to such transcripts. The effectiveness of the SAPU cannot be easily measured. Certainly, when it was established, its import was emphasised among Government departments. In a letter to private secretaries Wright claimed: it was 'important for the unit's effective operation that Departments give a high priority to answering queries from the unit'.²⁴⁹ During April, the SAPU worked productively. In theory it should have been a central hub of information, receiving reports Government-wide. There was a modest string of successful lines. For example, on 18 April, the MoD ceased the full payment of overseas' allowance to members of the Task Force. There was extensive criticism from the media between 18 and 20 April.²⁵⁰ On 20 April an SAPU paper, responding to such articles, outlined the precise situation for ministers: 'LOA is not pay...As most ships will not call at any port they would not be entitled to LOA in any case...the Government has decided instead to pay everyone in the Task Force £1.00 per day'.²⁵¹ An example of when the SAPU managed to get ahead of the news was concerning the death of an Argentine prisoner on South Georgia. On the morning of 28 April, the SAPU issued the following advice on lines to take:

Incident took place on 26 April on South Georgia. Brazilian government already been asked to inform the Argentines. Few details available. Board of inquiry, required by Geneva Convention, has been set up already.²⁵²

Later, a MoD announcement was made – it had '...notified the Brazilian government so that they can inform the Argentine authorities of a serious incident which took place on

²⁴⁹ Wright to Private Secretaries, 8 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4494 f.25.

²⁵⁰ Witherow, 'Cut in allowance leaves sour taste among seamen', *The Times*, 19 Apr., p.4.; 'INVINCIBLE PAY CUT 'ATTACKED'', *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 Apr., p.4.; 'Navy pay cut row hot up', *Daily Mirror*, 20 Apr., p.2.

²⁵¹ SAPU circular, 20 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.6M.

²⁵² SAPU circular, 28 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.12.

April 26 in South Georgia, and which involved the death of an Argentine prisoner'.²⁵³ The consequent newspaper articles towed the official line.²⁵⁴

The success, or relative effectiveness, of the SAPU throughout the first month of the crisis did not continue for the duration of the crisis. There were three issues which affected the SAPU's effectiveness in the second half of the conflict: rivalries among departments hindered its successful operation; the SAPU was subservient to a number of different groups - all of which had a vested interest in the running of the group; and the unit could not keep up with the speed of events.

2e (i). Department Rivalries

The effectiveness of the SAPU was limited, particularly as the campaign wore on, by rivalries between the various departments. Although measures were put in place to ensure the unit was given priority, often ministers felt more loyalty to their department 'line' than to that of the Government. Each department also had its own internal procedure for ensuring members spoke coherently to the press. For example, the FCO often produced its own line on certain issues. On 18 April a document was circulated noting lines proposed for that day and taking into account Haig's possible visit to London that day.²⁵⁵ On 28 April the PUS was sent internal lines to take if, for example, Argentina failed to accept the latest proposals put to her by Haig.²⁵⁶ The Emergency Unit of the FCO often distributed 'Notes to Press Officers', i.e. 'the notes from which the News Department would speak...'²⁵⁷ The FCO also had its own system of circulating transcripts of interviews by ministers – internally and to its ambassadors abroad.²⁵⁸ Thus, the SAPU was challenged by departments' internal efforts to co-ordinate.

2e (ii). Authority Issues

Earlier in this chapter the conclusion was advanced that the SAPU worked as a subsidiary unit of the IG. However, it was not merely the IG which influenced or encroached on the authority of the unit. As well as taking directives from the IG, the SAPU also took direct

²⁵³ MoD statement in I. Black, 'Inquiry into Argentine's death', *The Guardian*, 29 Apr., p.26.

²⁵⁴ 'PRISONER DIES IN 'INCIDENT'', *The Daily Telegraph*, 29 Apr., p.1.; 'Argentine prisoner dies in 'incident'', *The Times*, 29 Apr., p.1.; Black, 'Inquiry into Argentine's death', *The Guardian*, 29 Apr., p.26.

²⁵⁵ Giffard to PS FCO, 18 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4529 f.76.

²⁵⁶ Mallaby to A. Acland, 28 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4496 f.52.

²⁵⁷ Fenn to C. Onslow, 15 May, TNA, FCO7/4497 f.81.

²⁵⁸ See: Transcript of Pym on *Weekend World*, 11 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4644 f.16.; Summerscale to Ure, 12 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4494 f.26.; FCO to Ambassadors, 4 May, TNA, FCO7/4496 f.62.; FCO to Paris, 11 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4644 f.27.; Transcript of Whitelaw on *World this Weekend*, 13 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4644 f.30.

orders from the OD(SA). Both Parkinson and Palliser joined meetings of OD(SA). Wade-Gery attended meetings as part of the secretariat. All three took commands to the unit. The OD(SA) often authorised an approach the Government should take and related it to the SAPU. On 19 April, for instance, the OD(SA) heard that ‘press guidance’ should be issued by ministers in London in certain terms – terms which amounted to the expression that the ‘wishes’ of the Islanders were paramount to negotiations.²⁵⁹ On 28 April Thatcher told her War Cabinet she would arrange for the press to be told that the Government had been informed of US peace proposals and that ministers should take the line that the proposals were being ‘carefully considered’.²⁶⁰

The SAPU was further muddled by the Parkinson Presentation Group. When the group was established, after the meeting of 12 May, it was decided that the group ‘might be serviced’ by the SAPU.²⁶¹ For the already stretched staff of five, the SAPU now had to provide for a group which had a far larger remit than it was used to. The PPG was implemented to carry out decisions by the OD(SA), make contingency plans for PR, act as mediator between departments on presentational issues and to arrange the co-ordination of spokesmen and of ministerial activities.²⁶² Increasingly, the SAPU became strained by the demands of so many different bodies - all of which (the IG, OD(SA) and PPG) were temporary bodies, convened specifically to deal with issues arising from the conflict.

2e (iii). Lagging Behind

The SAPU was effective in the first month of the crisis, but increasingly struggled as the pace of the conflict developed. After the *Belgrano* was sunk, the SAPU did not release a document on lines to take until 5 May, despite the incident causing much controversy in the media on 3 and 4 May.²⁶³ There were no lines disseminated on the British landing on the Falklands on 21 May. On 22 May the only document produced dealt with the statements made in the UN Security Council on 21 May.²⁶⁴ On top of this, following the disastrous events of 25 May – which saw the sinking of both *Coventry* and *Atlantic Conveyor* – there were no suggested lines communicated to ministers at all. Indeed, the subsequent circular, issued on 27 May, only dealt with SCR505 and the World Cup.²⁶⁵ Additionally, there were no lines distributed which dealt directly with the battle of Goose

²⁵⁹ OD(SA), 19 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.37.

²⁶⁰ OD(SA), 28 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.66.

²⁶¹ Note on meeting hosted by Parkinson, 14 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.22M.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ SAPU circular, 5 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.18.

²⁶⁴ SAPU circular, 22 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.25a.

²⁶⁵ SAPU circular, 27 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.27.

Green. The only lines transmitted which concerned the tragedy at Fitzroy were concerning the delay in announcing casualties and was issued on the last day of the war.²⁶⁶ The commencement of hostilities in the South Atlantic marked a point at which the SAPU ceased to provide a coherent line on the major issues.

The SAPU contrasted with other bodies constructed for the purpose of dealing with presentation of the war directly - such as the News Release Group, PPG and the Military Briefing Group - because the need for such an organisation was identified at the start of the crisis. Although this was the case, the SAPU suffered from a number of limiting factors which affected its efficiency. The SAPU was deferential to Ingham's IG, and later to the PPG. Procedural problems plagued the unit during its early days – issues which demonstrated the wider problems of co-ordination between groups and ministers. The effectiveness of the group diminished throughout the war and, in this respect, the unit marked a stark difference from those groups established later, but whose productivity increased towards the end of the war.

3. The Role of Cecil Parkinson in Co-ordinating Government Information Policy

At the HCDC hearing Christopher Patten, Conservative MP for Bath, asked Cooper whether there was a minister to co-ordinate Government information during the Falklands. Cooper replied: 'Oh, yes, he [Parkinson] was aware of what was going on because he was briefed daily...'²⁶⁷ However, as late as 16 May *The Sunday Telegraph* reported that there was 'still no direct ministerial responsibility' over the information war.²⁶⁸ Even after the war there was a lack of consensus over the role Parkinson played. Mercer et al. argued that Parkinson was de facto 'Minister for Information' during the Falklands.²⁶⁹ Later, Seymour-Ure argued that Thatcher had to pay the price for not having a minister appointed in charge of media-relations during the war.²⁷⁰ This thesis aims to contribute significantly to the literature by assessing the role Parkinson was assigned to ascertain whether he affected the co-ordination of Government PR policy. It will consider when, and why, Parkinson became involved in PR policy. The argument will be advanced that there were two reasons for Parkinson's participation: the deepening rivalry between No.10 and MoD - and complaints on this matter raised by Ingham; and the escalation of military conflict. Finally, this chapter will evaluate the effectiveness of Parkinson's PR role, and will conclude that

²⁶⁶ SAPU circular, 14 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1611 f.32.

²⁶⁷ Cooper, HCDC v.ii, p.24, q.51.

²⁶⁸ I. Waller, 'The day that the BBC came under fire', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 16 May, p.4.

²⁶⁹ Mercer et al., p.50.

²⁷⁰ Seymoure-Ure, p.162.

Parkinson prompted little significant change in the way information policy was co-ordinated.

3a. Presentation of the Government or Government presentation?

When the OD(SA) was established, it included Whitelaw, Nott and Pym. After deliberation, Thatcher asked Cecil Parkinson, who had no ministerial responsibilities, to become the fifth member. Thatcher later reasoned that Parkinson ‘not only shared my political instincts but was brilliantly effective in dealing with public relations’.²⁷¹ There has been wide accord amongst historians of the Falklands over why Parkinson was appointed to the OD(SA). Parkinson’s political sympathies levelled the playing field – Whitelaw and Pym were politically aligned, Parkinson would join Nott’s ranks to even up the numbers.²⁷² Indeed, first-hand accounts testified to this.²⁷³

Parkinson, far from being appointed, in effect, ‘Minister of Information’, was actually appointed with a separate media role in mind. Parkinson was retained in the War Cabinet because he was best able to act as the OD(SA) spokesperson - to promote Government’s policy by appearing in the media. Parkinson himself recalled that Thatcher told him he ‘could deal with the media and put the government’s case over on radio and television and to the party’.²⁷⁴ Nott confirmed that Parkinson ‘was not appointed...to co-ordinate as a Minister the flow of information...’, but he ‘played a very valuable and important role in presenting the Government’s case...’²⁷⁵ It was because Parkinson had no departmental role that he was ‘available’ to do more media work.²⁷⁶ Parkinson recollected that he did ‘a mass of broadcasting...When my more important colleagues were trying to get some sleep...I would be appearing on ABC on their 10 o’clock news’.²⁷⁷ Indeed, Parkinson appeared on a score of British and American television programmes. One of the most controversial programmes on which he appeared was the *Panorama* episode, ‘Can We Avoid War’, broadcast on 10 May. It was controversial because it featured interviews with anti-war MPs. Interviews were tempered by Parkinson’s studio interview presenting the official Conservative line.²⁷⁸ On 26 May Parkinson praised the reporting of the correspondents

²⁷¹ Thatcher, pp.188-189.

²⁷² Freedman and Gamba-Stonehouse, p.126.; Hennessy, ‘‘War Cabinetry’’, p.138.; Freedman, v.ii, p.18.; Hennessy, *Cabinet* (Basil Blackwell, 1986) p.119.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.103.

²⁷³ Parkinson, p.192.; Nott, *Haven’t we Been Here Before?* p.67.

²⁷⁴ Parkinson, p.192.

²⁷⁵ Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.443, q.1874.

²⁷⁶ Freedman, v.ii, p.22.

²⁷⁷ Parkinson in ‘The Falklands War’, Seminar for the Centre for Contemporary British History, Jun. 2002, <www.icbh.ac.uk/witness/falklands/>; Reiterated in Parkinson, Interview.

²⁷⁸ ‘Can We Avoid War’, *Panorama*, 10 May.

with the Task Force for their bravery in a televised speech.²⁷⁹ Parkinson appeared on the radio almost daily throughout the conflict and became, according to Harris, ‘the Government’s chief ministerial spokesman’.²⁸⁰ Even the HCDC found that Parkinson’s task was ‘...quite distinct from the overall coordination of government information policy...’²⁸¹

3b. Ministerial Input

Parkinson, as previously discussed, was directed to ‘undertake Ministerial supervision’ of the SAPU.²⁸² However, it was not until the OD(SA) directive of 11 May, requiring Parkinson to ‘make proposals on the public presentation of Government policy’, that he assumed any significant role in the co-ordination of overall Government PR policy.²⁸³ In fact, it was not until the meeting of 12 May, between Parkinson, the SAPU, No.10 and the Cabinet Office, that Parkinson actually formally met with members of the SAPU and No.10’s Press Office. According to Ingham, it was not until the ‘initial diplomatic phase’ of the crisis was over that Parkinson was appointed to oversee any presentation. This, he claimed, ‘was a substantial step forward’.²⁸⁴

The escalation in military action over the first ten days of May presented a threat to both Government support and Britons’ determination that force was the appropriate way to settle the dispute. On 5 May the Conservatives had dropped 6% in popularity from 30 April.²⁸⁵ The Government’s presentation of the conflict, therefore, became all the more crucial to the war effort. On 11 May the OD(SA), with the knowledge that British reinforcements were boarding the *QEII*, which was due to sail the next day, made a commitment to improving PR by appointing an OD(SA) member to the situation.

²⁷⁹ Reported in ‘Tribute to press’, *The Times*, 27 May, p.3.

For other examples of Parkinson’s appearances on TV, radio and in print see: ‘Falklands: Pym: Cabinet’, ITN, 24 Apr., f.AS240482009.,

<www.itnsource.com/en/shotlist/ITN/1982/04/24/AS240482009/?s=parkinson> [Accessed 3 Jun. 2014],

Parkinson, ‘Conservative Party Political Broadcast’ BBC TV, *Conservative Party Political Broadcast*

<www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziFIGc9_DXM> [Accessed 24 Oct. 2014], Parkinson, ‘Cecil Parkinson on Margaret Thatcher – Falklands crisis’, LBC/IRN, 16 Jun.

<www.bufvc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0011700016012> [Accessed 24 Oct. 2013], Parkinson, ‘Cecil Parkinson on Falklands peace talks’ LBC/IRN, 18 May

<www.bufvc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0009700108001> [Accessed 24 Oct. 2013] and

Parkinson, *World This Weekend*, BBC Radio, 9 May, TNA, *Falkland Islands crisis: Ministerial statements to the press and Parliament*, FCO 7/4487 f.88.

²⁸⁰ Harris, p.101.

²⁸¹ HCDC, v.i, p.xivi, para.105.

²⁸² OD(SA), 25 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.54.

²⁸³ OD(SA), 11 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.103.

²⁸⁴ Ingham, p.290.

²⁸⁵ MORI <ukpollingreport.co.uk/voting-intention-1979-1983>.

The War Cabinet decision to employ Parkinson in this way was not provoked by purely military events. The first two weeks of May also marked a period of increased hostility between the Government and British media. On 2 May *Newsnight*'s Peter Snow had questioned the authenticity of British accounts.²⁸⁶ Criticism from such MPs as John Page incited articles like that which maintained: 'BBC 'NEAR TO TREASON' SAYS MP'.²⁸⁷ On 6 May Page asked Thatcher in the Commons whether she felt the British case was being presented in an appropriate manner.²⁸⁸ Thatcher replied that she understood Argentina was being treated, in the British media, with the same credibility as the British, which she demanded would give 'offence'.²⁸⁹ That evening George Howard, Chairman of the BBC, gave a speech in which he claimed that the BBC was not, and could not be 'neutral'.²⁹⁰ The Commons debate incited yet more coverage of the split between the Government and the media, particularly the BBC.²⁹¹ On 8 May Snow wrote to *The Times*:

Our job is to report events, and constantly to examine the accuracy of accounts we are given of them. Our job also is constantly to question those who have the power to direct events, and to question the assumptions and assessments on which they make their decisions.²⁹²

The following day Robert Adley, Conservative MP, lodged a formal protest over the BBC's coverage of the Falklands.²⁹³ On 10 May the War Cabinet noted that 'relations with the media were giving rise to concern'.²⁹⁴ That night the controversial *Panorama* programme, 'Can We Avoid War', was aired on BBC TV.²⁹⁵ Reaction to the programme was extreme and almost immediate. John Page wrote to *The Times* on 11 May.²⁹⁶ That day the Commons heard the MP, Sally Oppenheim call *Panorama* 'an odious, subversive, travesty'.²⁹⁷ Thatcher shared Oppenheim's 'deep concern' and said that many felt the case

²⁸⁶ P. Snow, *Newsnight*, 2 May.

See Chapter Three.

²⁸⁷ K. Nurse, 'BBC 'NEAR TO TREASON' SAYS MP', *Daily Telegraph*, 4 May, p.1.

Other examples include: 'Treason! MP lashes TV man', *The Sun*, 4 May, p.14.

²⁸⁸ J. Page, HC Deb., 6 May, v.xxiii, c.279.

²⁸⁹ Thatcher, HC Deb., 6 May, v.xxiii, c.279.

²⁹⁰ Quoted in D. Wilby, 'The Falklands Conflict', *History of the BBC*

<www.bbc.co.uk/historyofthebbc/resources/bbcandgov/pdf/falklands.pdf> [Accessed 20 Oct. 2014].

²⁹¹ For example: A. Taylor, 'Maggie hits at BBC's crisis coverage', *Daily Express*, 7 May, p.3.; S. Day-Lewis, 'Thatcher critic of TV and radio coverage', *The Daily Telegraph*, 7 May, p.4.; Evans, 'TV MEN 'TREATING ARGIES AS EQUALS'', *The Sun*, 7 May, p.4.

²⁹² P. Snow, *The Times*, 7 May, p.9.

²⁹³ 'BBC ACCUSED: 'Fifth column'', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 May, p.4.

²⁹⁴ OD(SA), 10 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.99.

²⁹⁵ For further accounts of the row between the BBC and the Government over *Panorama* see: T. Dalyell, *One Man's Falklands...* (Cecil Woolf, 1982) pp.92-93.; Harris, p.79.; Mercer et al., p.133.; Boyce, p.161.

²⁹⁶ Page, *The Times*, 11 May, p.13.

²⁹⁷ S. Oppenheim, HC Deb., 11 May, v.xxiii, c.598.

for Britain was not being delivered ‘with sufficient vigour’.²⁹⁸ Parliament’s criticism of the BBC gave rise to yet more articles on the increasing divide between the BBC and the Government.²⁹⁹

On 12 May the Conservative Party Media Committee met and hosted Howard and the Director-General Elect of the BBC, Alasdair Milne. The pair were subjected to a torrent of abuse in what one participant termed ‘the most extraordinary meeting ever held by the party’s media committee’.³⁰⁰ Later, in an interview with ITN, Milne explained: ‘I don’t feel that the kind of virulence of the criticism this afternoon was justified...’³⁰¹ With the huge amount of attention the media and its handling of the conflict was receiving, by 11 May, the situation was something of a domestic crisis. Over the following week Government PR policy would be tested to its limit when the vast majority of the media came to back the BBC.³⁰² Indeed, on 12 May the OD(SA) noted that ‘much of the press now appeared to be ready to defend the Corporation against the Government...’³⁰³ Of the printed media, *The Guardian*, *Financial Times*, *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, and the *Daily Mirror* led the way in defending the BBC. All five publications printed lead articles condemning Government treatment of the BBC. The subject was also popular in the ‘letters’ columns.³⁰⁴ The increasingly hostile climate fostered between the BBC (and the wider media) and the Government made crucial that Government PR policy was re-evaluated. Thus, when Parkinson was asked to carry out such a task, it was not just the escalation in military events which affected the move, but also events which saw the British media and the British Government pitted against each other.

²⁹⁸ Thatcher, HC Deb., 11 May, v.xxiii, c.598.

²⁹⁹ For example, ‘Thatcher slams BBC’ *Daily Mirror*, 12 May, p.3.; W. Terry, ‘FOOT BLASTS THE SUN’, *The Sun*, 12 May, p.2.; ‘THATCHER JOINS BBC CRITICS’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 12 May, p.5.; Knightley, ‘BBC – war and truth’, *The Sunday Times*, 16 May, p.16.

³⁰⁰ J. Langdon, ‘Tory war anger finds a target’, *The Guardian*, 13 May, p.4. Other works which explore the subject: Morrison and Tumber, p.237.; Harris, p.83 and p.85.; Foster, ‘The Falklands War’, p.163. Newspapers on the meeting: A. Bevens, ‘BBC men grilled by Tory MPs’, *The Times*, 13 May, p.1.; Dowdney, ‘BBC Chief faces MP’s blast’, *Daily Mirror*, 13 May, p.2.; BBC CHIEF TO FACE TORY MPs’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 12 May, p.1.; N. Comfort, ‘Tory anger at BBC’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 May, p.1.

³⁰¹ A. Milne, ‘Falklands: Milne’, *News at Ten*, 12 May <www.jiscmediahub.ac.uk/record/display/039-00010216>.

³⁰² Articles which defended the BBC: R. Butt, ‘Peacemongers at any price’, *The Times*, 13 May, p.12.; Editorial, ‘PANORAMA’S BLIND SPOT’, *The Times*, 15 May, p.11.; Editorial, ‘The right to report’, *Daily Mirror*, 12 May, p.2.; Waterhouse, ‘Kicking the Messenger’, *Daily Mirror*, 13 May, p.10.; Gosling, ‘BBC replies to its critics’, *The Times*, 14 May, p.7.; S. Freeman and Knightley, ‘Majority back the BBC line’, *The Sunday Times*, 16 May, p.1.; Editorial, ‘A DUTY TO INFORM’, *The Times*, 13 May, p.13.; ‘Stop knocking the BBC’, *The Sunday Times*, 6 May, p.16.; W. Bond, ‘We don’t beat jingo drum’, *Daily Mail*, 12 May, p.4.; ‘Chairman George defies BBC critics’, *Daily Mirror*, 14 May, p.13.

³⁰³ OD(SA), 12 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.107.

³⁰⁴ Supportive letters: Downie, *The Times*, 11 May, p.13.; Jenkins, *The Times*, 15 May, p.11.; Greenhill, *The Times*, 14 May, p.11.; E. Timms, *The Times*, 14 May, p.11.

The second reason why Parkinson was drawn into Government PR was a direct result of Ingham. As discussed earlier in this chapter, throughout the war the MoD sent increasingly junior representatives to the IG meetings – partly as a result of the deepening rivalry between Cooper and Ingham. Mercer et al. considered that Ingham grew angry with the ‘dismissive’ attitude of the MoD and asked Thatcher ‘to lend Ministerial weight to his efforts’.³⁰⁵ In his biography of Ingham, Harris held that Ingham complained to Thatcher and she was ‘sympathetic’, instructing Parkinson to ‘help him out’.³⁰⁶ Parkinson said that, because of his involvement, the MoD ‘would have to explain to a member of the Cabinet why a junior representative had been sent to the key co-ordinating meetings’.³⁰⁷ It was clear that Ingham was becoming frustrated with the lack of ministerial involvement in PR policy and that he approached both the Prime Minister and Parkinson about this. On 7 May, the IG noted the PR effort was ‘suffering from a lack of Ministerial involvement in presentation, particularly in OD(SA)’.³⁰⁸ Ingham told the group that he intended ‘to minute the Prime Minister about all of this’.³⁰⁹ It was also evident that Ingham contacted Parkinson in order to voice concern. Indeed, on 10 May, Ingham told the IG that he was ‘writing to the Chancellor of the Duchy about presentation in general and MOD difficulties in particular’.³¹⁰ On 10 May Ingham did write to Parkinson. He complained that the MoD had not given presentation a high enough priority and its procedures were too cumbersome.³¹¹ Later, after meeting with Parkinson on 12 May, Ingham referred to the Chancellor of the Duchy again, telling the group that their discussions had been ‘useful’.³¹² There was a direct correlation between Ingham’s complaints to Thatcher and Parkinson, and the appointment of Parkinson to oversee presentation. The communication and co-operation between members of the IG - most notably the MoD and No.10 - was the primary cause for concern within the group. The need for a ministerial role increased as the hostility between the two departments intensified. Parkinson defined his function as ‘banging heads together’.³¹³

³⁰⁵ Mercer et al., p.50.

³⁰⁶ Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.96.

³⁰⁷ Parkinson in Mercer et al., p.50.

³⁰⁸ IG, 7 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.24.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ IG, 10 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.28.

³¹¹ Freedman, v.ii, p.409.

³¹² IG, 13 May, TNA, CAB164/1622 f.33.

³¹³ Parkinson in Mercer et al., p.50.

3c. The Parkinson Presentation Group

On 25 April Parkinson was appointed as supervisor of the SAPU. There is evidence to suggest that Parkinson had resisted this responsibility earlier in the month, suggesting he did not perceive his role in the OD(SA) to be other than ‘War Cabinet spokesperson’. In fact, Parkinson did not remember being approached in the first three weeks of April about this matter.³¹⁴ On 13 April, when the SAPU reviewed its procedural problems concerning ministerial approval of circular lines, Wade-Gery submitted to Armstrong a number of alternatives to clearing lines with Thatcher. One alternative was to ‘have another try at press-ganging Mr Parkinson’.³¹⁵ On 12 April Parkinson is purported to have spoken with Armstrong about the possibility of acting as a clearing minister for SAPU distributions.³¹⁶ It was not until after 25 April that Parkinson did assume the role about which he was approached on 12 April.³¹⁷ On 11 May, Parkinson received instruction to review the public presentation of policy.³¹⁸ The following day Parkinson convened a meeting between his own office, the Cabinet Office and No.10’s Press Office. The assembly met specifically ‘to consider how the public presentation of the Government’s position in the Falklands crisis might be improved’.³¹⁹ At this meeting a new group was established – the PPG. The group would be a ‘mechanism to take an overall view of the public presentation of the Government’s position’.³²⁰ The group would consist of a mixed ministerial/official contingent and would be chaired by Parkinson himself. The purpose of the group was threefold: to follow up and implement decisions taken in the OD(SA); to make medium-term contingency plans for the presentation of likely events; and to seek to resolve ‘differences of view’ between departments on presentational matters.³²¹ In reality there was only one chief concern: the improvement of relations between No.10 and the MoD – more specifically Ingham and Cooper. The group re-established the authority of Ingham over Government presentation. As Parkinson recalled: ‘Ingham was the spokesperson for *the* War Cabinet, and he really brought everything together...so he had to have more authority than originally they [the MoD] were prepared to concede him’.³²²

³¹⁴ Parkinson, Interview.

³¹⁵ Wade-Gery to Armstrong, 13 Apr., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.3.

³¹⁶ Whilst there was no official documentation of this meeting, subsequent documentary evidence strongly attests its happening.

³¹⁷ OD(SA), 25 Apr., TNA, CAB148/211 f.54.

³¹⁸ OD(SA), 11 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.103.

³¹⁹ Note of meeting hosted by Parkinson, 14 May, TNA, CAB164/1611 f.22M.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Parkinson, Interview.

In a small percentage of the literature there has been speculation as to the exact role Parkinson played in PR. Mercer et al. claimed Parkinson's role ensured a better MoD turn-out at IG meetings.³²³ Harris, in *Gotcha!*, pointed to his role as spokesperson, but neglected to mention any other part he may have played.³²⁴ In his biography of Ingham, Harris later paid a cursory mention to Parkinson, suggesting that his involvement in the crisis eased Ingham's struggle with the MoD.³²⁵ The final academic to have considered Parkinson's role was Freedman. Freedman dedicated limited discussion to the Chancellor of the Duchy's position, but made it clear that Parkinson was later 'credited with clearing the air and improving co-ordination'.³²⁶ The role of the PPG was not the subject of any extensive comment in the first-hand-accounts of those associated with the group. Thatcher did not mention Parkinson's participation in Government PR past remarking that she made Parkinson an addition to the OD(SA), in part because he was media-savvy.³²⁷ In fact, Thatcher neglected Ingham altogether in her recollections on the Falklands.³²⁸ In Ingham's memoirs Parkinson's part in the crisis was reduced to but a paragraph.³²⁹ Most tellingly though, Parkinson, in his autobiographical account of the Falklands, failed to make any reference at all to the group he established on 12 May.³³⁰

One of the main drawbacks of analysing the meetings of the PPG is that there exist no minutes. A number of notes on the meetings which were circulated subsequent to consultations exist, but no official record. This did not surprise Parkinson, who conceded that he did not think it was an accident that no minutes were taken: '...if there was a dispute we would have it out. But nobody wanted to write minutes saying there had been a row between this person or that'.³³¹

3c (i). Attendance

Despite claims to the contrary during the hearings of the HCDC, the PPG was not formed to carry out an overall co-ordinating role, nor did it, in practice, perform one. Its one function was to ease relations between MoD and No.10. Previously, the SAPU's progress under Parkinson was examined. It was contended that neither the effectiveness, nor the

³²³ Mercer et al., p.50.

³²⁴ Harris, p.101.

³²⁵ Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, pp.96-97.

³²⁶ Freedman, v.ii, p.409.

³²⁷ Thatcher, pp.188-189.

³²⁸ Thatcher, pp.173-236.

³²⁹ Ingham, p.29.

³³⁰ Parkinson, pp.189-213.

³³¹ Parkinson, Interview.

productivity of the unit, were affected to any extent whilst Parkinson was overseeing its productivity. The establishment of the PPG on 12 May had an equally limited effect on Government presentation policy. The most significant way in which the group was judged to have impacted the presentation of the Falklands crisis was concerning attendance at meetings of the IG. Parkinson confirmed that the main aim of the group was to ‘jack up representation’.³³² Harris argued that as a result of the PPG: ‘Cooper took the hint and McDonald duly started attending the Downing Street committee’.³³³ Mercer et al. maintained the same argument: ‘Parkinson’s committee did indeed ensure a better turn-out from the MoD at Ingham’s meetings...’³³⁴ Parkinson also felt that the group had the desired effect and that ‘once everybody knew it was formed with the Prime Minister’s authority – people pretty much fell into line’.³³⁵ However, this was not the case. It is true that there were only MoD absences before the establishment of the PPG. However, the quality of representation did *not* improve.³³⁶

Between the first meeting of the IG, on 8 April, and 12 May, there were three MoD absences.³³⁷ There were no recorded absences thereafter. However, McDonald attended eight meetings, all of which fell before 12 May. After 12 May the CPR, Taylor, only attended once, on 16 May. After 16 May there was no MoD representation higher than the level of Chief Press Officer. There is evidence to suggest that Taylor’s attendance on 16 May was a direct result of Parkinson’s intervention. On 16 May Parkinson held a special meeting with Nott and Cooper on presentation of the conflict. The only day on which the CPR attended the IG coincided with the first ministerial meeting with the MoD concerning PR. Despite Taylor’s one appearance at the IG, after 12 May the PPG did not influence attendance to any great extent. In fact, after the PPG was established, a greater variety of MoD officials attended IG meetings. Before the end of April only three different people has acted as representatives of the MoD: McDonald, Gee and, on one occasion, a PO. Yet during the meetings proceeding 12 May six different MoD delegates joined meetings sporadically.³³⁸

Parkinson was not made aware of the fact that representation did not improve at the IG after the construction of the PPG. He felt that ‘the mandate became clear: keep in touch

³³² Parkinson, Interview.

³³³ Harris, *Good and Faithful Servant*, p.97.

³³⁴ Mercer et al., p.50.

³³⁵ Parkinson, Interview.

³³⁶ See Appendix 18.

³³⁷ The MoD was marked as absent from the IG on 14 April, 26 April and 2 May.

³³⁸ See Appendix 18.

with each other'.³³⁹ When asked whether alternative channels of communication opened up between Cooper and Ingham he thought it possible – yet no evidence obtained from archives, nor the testimony submitted to the HCDC substantiated this. The contention that the PPG benefited PR organisation because it exerted pressure on the MoD to 'improve representation' at IG meetings is unsubstantiated. The recorded turn-out of each meeting proved that attendance after the creation of the PPG was made up of less senior figures, and by a vaster array of representatives.

The role of the PPG was further limited by the fact that it was introduced relatively late in the conflict. It only met three times. Freedman wrote that the group met four times.³⁴⁰ However, that figure included the meeting of 12 May which did not involve all members of the PPG – the MoD was not represented. Meetings were held on 19 May, 2 June and 14 June. The relevance of the meeting held on 14 June could be disputed since the result of the meeting had no effect on Government PR policy *during* the conflict. There was supposed to be a meeting of the PPG on 8 June. However, a meeting of the IG was told the day before that Parkinson 'thought it unnecessary to hold a meeting today...'³⁴¹ On 8 June the IG agreed with Parkinson that 'it was not necessary to hold a further meeting...until next Monday'.³⁴² The most problematic element in judging the effect of the meetings of the PPG is that there is no documentary evidence available. Yet with only three meetings held, the scope for efficiency was considerably decreased. Indeed, Parkinson later confirmed the group's role was limited.³⁴³ He also stated that the need for the group diminished as the war went on, claiming that 'it gradually withered on the vine as people realized it was in everyone's interests to co-ordinate the presentation of policy; otherwise the danger was that the government would sound discordant and conflicting notes'.³⁴⁴

3c (ii). A Co-ordinating Body?

If the aim of the PPG was co-ordination of Government PR policy, the group was not successful. There were several differing points of view expressed during the HCDC inquiry. Cooper told the committee that he did not think there was even a need for a major co-ordinating role.³⁴⁵ Cooper said Parkinson's role was 'a relatively limited one'.³⁴⁶ Nott

³³⁹ Parkinson, Interview.

³⁴⁰ Freedman, v.ii, p.409.

³⁴¹ IG, 7 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.67.

³⁴² IG, 8 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.65.

³⁴³ Parkinson, Interview.

³⁴⁴ Parkinson in Mercer et al., p.50.

³⁴⁵ Cooper, HCDC v.ii, p.14, q.49.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., p.38, q.124.

felt there *was* a minister in charge of Government information policy, but that he was not involved in the Falklands.³⁴⁷ He protested: ‘To put a Minister who is a non-Ministry of Defence Minister...in charge of coordinating the issue of releases which are concerned about matters of operations, would be an absurdity’.³⁴⁸ The committee reflected on the subject in its conclusions: ‘In this context, the somewhat mysterious role played by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster...during the crisis is worth examining, if only because our witnesses showed themselves to be confused about it’.³⁴⁹ Parkinson agreed with Ingham’s evaluation that his role was ‘limited’ – he was there merely ‘as a court of appeal if anything went wrong, or one group was dissatisfied with the other...’³⁵⁰

To some extent, overall co-ordination was absent from the start of the PPG. The meeting hosted by Parkinson on 12 May did not include the MoD. In fact, Parkinson did not meet with members of the MoD until 16 May. Parkinson met with Cooper and Nott to discuss ‘how the public presentation of the Government’s position in the Falklands crisis might be improved’.³⁵¹ This meeting was an extension of that which took place on 12 May. The MoD agreed to the same principles No.10, the Cabinet Office and SAPU had: ‘They agreed that a group should be set up under Mr Parkinson’s chairmanship to coordinate presentation to the public...The intention is that the group should meet once per week’.³⁵²

The first meeting was scheduled for 19 May. On 17 May Parkinson held a drinks reception for a number of PUSs, including Cooper. Parkinson later recalled that at this event he made it clear that the MoD ‘would have to explain’ why junior representatives had been sent to the ‘key co-ordinating meetings’.³⁵³ Parkinson’s actions between 12 and 19 May authenticate claims the primary reason for the group’s creation was to ease relations between No.10 and MoD. Parkinson saw each department separately, gauging responses ahead of the first meeting of his group. In this respect, the co-ordination supplied by the PPG was limited to inter-departmental co-ordination. While Haig had performed his shuttle diplomacy across continents, Parkinson performed his behind Whitehall’s closed doors.

³⁴⁷ Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.443, q.1869.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., q.1871.

³⁴⁹ HCDC, v.i, p.xivi, para.105.

³⁵⁰ Parkinson, Interview.

³⁵¹ Mills to Wade-Gery, 18 Apr. TNA, CAB164/1611 f.23.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Parkinson in Mercer et al., p.50.

Parkinson remembered that Ingham ‘got a bit fed up with prima donnas from other departments’.³⁵⁴ Indeed, Parkinson sympathised with Ingham’s position, emphasising that Ingham, after all, was the spokesman for the OD(SA). The increased relationship between the IG and Parkinson was recorded in its minutes. After the PPG was established, some issues were reserved until they might be resolved at PPG, purely because the quality of the MoD representation at the IG had declined. For example, on 2 June the IG discussed the treatment of demands from foreign press for access to the Falklands after hostilities ceased.³⁵⁵ The MoD representative, who had never before attended a meeting, was unable to outline MoD plans on this subject. It was concluded that the matter would have to be raised again that evening at the PPG.

Parkinson, in the first instance, was not appointed to be the effective ‘Minister of Information’, as some have argued. His principal role was as spokesman of the War Cabinet – certainly that is what Thatcher intended when she invited him to join the OD(SA).³⁵⁶ Parkinson’s role in Government presentation increased throughout May, in conjunction with action on the Falklands. By 11 May, the military and political situation, with the Government increasingly lining itself against the media, dictated that presentation of the Government was given more serious attention. The PPG’s primary goal was to ‘bang heads together’, and to facilitate co-operation between the increasingly hostile MoD and No.10. The HCDC found that there had been a ‘failure of communications between No.10 and the Ministry of Defence...’³⁵⁷ Yet the committee judged that ‘the role envisaged for Mr. Parkinson was probably not a very substantial one...’³⁵⁸ The PPG did not contribute to overall policy co-ordination to any great extent. The PPG added an extra layer of bureaucracy to what was, by May, already chaotic organisation. Hastings told the HCDC that what was wrong with the way the media was handled was that ‘there were far too many people fishing in very murky waters and there was intense suspicion and ill-feeling between various elements’.³⁵⁹ Parkinson’s chief aim was to ease inter-departmental tension. This goal may have been achieved in May. In June, however, the role of the PPG had declined so significantly that enmities between the MoD and No.10 resumed, particularly over the events of 8 June.

³⁵⁴ Parkinson, Interview.

³⁵⁵ IG, 2 Jun., TNA, CAB164/1622 f.59.

³⁵⁶ Thatcher, pp.188-189.

³⁵⁷ HCDC, v.i, p.xivi, para.105.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Hastings, HCDC, v.ii, p.217, q.663.

4. Conclusion

When the HCDC was commissioned to consider the way in which the media was handled during the Falklands, it focused on one ministry – the MoD. *The Sunday Times* Insight Team remarked, ‘the press collectively felt that the ministry of defence [sic] had had a terrible war...’³⁶⁰ However, the MoD was not the only Ministry, or department, which played an integral role in overall PR policy. The role of the FCO, for example, was considered in Chapter Four. This chapter examined the role of No.10’s Press Office - as well as its Chief - and the usual structures of Government which had to adapt to the crisis. Most importantly, the chapter assessed and appraised the groups which were created to deal directly with the PR impact of the Falklands: the IG, SAPU and PPG.

Woodward told MPs that ‘out of organisation there would come better relations’.³⁶¹ At the outbreak of the crisis, the Government was not well organised to deal with the media aspect of any remote conflict. Mercer et al. claimed that ‘if there is one point upon which people are agreed, it is that Britain did not have an information policy as such during the Falklands War’.³⁶² The chief reason there was no coherent PR policy to which every department should abide, was because each of the key departments involved in the crisis – the MoD, FCO, Cabinet Office, SAPU and No.10 – failed to work cordially with each other in pursuit of a shared publicity goal. Principally, the MoD and No.10 failed to assist the other – instead, submitting to representation in a series of interdepartmental committees. The tensions between No.10 and the MoD were commented on by journalists after the war, narrated by the media at the time, and had a considerable impact on the way in which the war would be remembered. Strangely, the HCDC found that:

Throughout the Falklands Operations, the senior Public Relations staff at the MoD, the Prime Minister’s Press Office and the News Department of the Foreign Office kept in close touch with each other on an hour to hour basis.³⁶³

Yet, as demonstrated here, the evidence suggests that daily contact did not constitute any great collaboration or telemutual assistance. There were, however, significant attempts made in order to better centralise and co-ordinate the Government’s information effort. On 8 April the SAPU was created, under the Cabinet Office, with the sole purpose of keeping ministers informed of events, and the lines they should take on those events. The same day

³⁶⁰ Eds. Eddy et al., p.215.

³⁶¹ Woodward, HCDC, v.ii, p.292, q.1172.

³⁶² Mercer et al. p19.

³⁶³ HCDC, *Observations*, p.5, para.11.

the IG was formed as an extension of the regular MIOs. At the outset of the crisis two central bodies which would co-ordinate what information was to be released from the Government - how and when - were established on an inter-departmental basis. Both organisations, in theory, should have aided the efficient running of the Government information machine. The SAPU would ensure a coherent Government response to proceedings in the South Atlantic. The IG could act as a forum for the main departments, which were distributing information and dealing with journalists, to come together and plan proactively when news should be released, how, via what medium and who should be the one to announce it. In this respect, the groups established by the wider Government contrasted to those which were set-up exclusively in the MoD. External MoD groups were established at the start of the war, only to have their power dwindle and diminish. MoD-centred groups, like the NRG and the Military Briefing Group, although formed late into the conflict, were, by the end of the war, beginning to flourish.

The Information Group had the potential to ensure a co-ordinated, central PR policy in 1982. However, it was never permitted to become such an entity, since the conflict between the MoD and No.10 (and between Cooper and Nott, and Ingham) dominated so much of the agenda. Increasingly, the representation of the MoD crippled the effectiveness of the IG, and prevented it from fulfilling any goal to unite the PR factions of the Government. The SAPU could have been an effective way to communicate happenings to ministers, and to ensure that any Government agent who spoke to the media would be towing the line. However, the efficiency of the SAPU dwindled as the conflict progressed. Circular documents decreased in volume and frequency and were hugely limited by procedural arrangements for their dissemination and by delays in accurate information. The role of Cecil Parkinson was not to act as manager of information policy, as has been commonly assumed, but to address the issues brought up, or highlighted by, the Information Group and to address the friction between the MoDPR and the No.10 Press Office.

There were three distinct phases to the conflict in terms of the Government's attitude towards the importance of the media. The first phase lasted the entire month of April and was comprised of a very broad effort by the Government to ensure all its representatives 'sang from the same song sheet'. The first phase also demonstrated a lack of concerted effort to address future arrangements and co-operation past the establishment of the SAPU and IG. The second phase, the first two and a half weeks of May, saw the Government

assume an adversarial stance, pitting itself against the media in general, and the BBC in particular. This increase in hostility between the media and the Government correlated with an increase in the more material hostilities in the South Atlantic. The way in which prominent action from the Falklands was reported gave rise to a revision of PR policy across Government. In the MoD this revision saw amendments to many aspects of policy. Policy was also revised centrally. The introduction of Cecil Parkinson as a mediator marked a distinct shift in the Government's approach to the media. The final phase observed a more conciliatory approach to Government-media relations. It was a phase distinguished by efforts to solve problems which were predictable and which had been largely neglected until the end of May 1982.

CHAPTER SIX

Content Analysis

The principle method by which historians can gauge the way the media reported a certain topic is through the employment of content analysis. This tool has been relatively under-employed in historical assessments of the media and its role.¹ In the case of the Falklands, the conduct of the media has been written on extensively, yet a comprehensive analysis of the three major media of the time - radio, television and print media - is absent. There have been works which tackled some form of content analysis, and which have contributed immeasurably to the understanding of the conflict as a media war - principally as a televisual war. There were four key studies, conducted throughout the 1980s, which utilised content analysis – three focused primarily on television coverage of the war, the other on tabloid presentation of women during the conflict. In 1985 the GUMG published *War and Peace News* as a result of a content analysis which considered both the BBC's and ITN's nightly news.² In 1986, Valerie Adams engaged in a type of content analysis when dealing with the speculation of 'armchair strategists'.³ Whilst Adams did not produce charts and graphs (nor did she use precise figures), she did assess strategists' television appearances on programmes which included, but were not limited to, daily news bulletins. In 1988, Morrison and Tumber contributed to the literary field by conducting an extensive analysis of, again, the BBC and ITN nightly news.⁴ Finally, in 2011, Zoe Anderson published an article which examined the presentation of women by the media throughout the duration of the Falklands crisis.⁵

Before April 1982, the GUMG had prepared for video recording of all BBC news and ITN programmes to start on 1 May.⁶ The group was to embark on research on how the presentation of the UN Second Special Session (June – July 1982) compared to the presentation of the First Session (1978). However, the researchers became immersed in the unfurling conflict between Britain and Argentina in April. Consequentially, it made coverage of the Falklands central to a new study into how the war was reported on

¹ See Chapter One.

² GUMG, *War and Peace News*.

³ Adams.

⁴ Morrison and Tumber.

⁵ Anderson, 'Empire's Fetish'.

⁶ GUMG, p.iii. For more on the GUMG: A. Quinn, *30 Years of Bad News: The Glasgow University Media Group and the Intellectual History of Media and Cultural Studies*, (University of Glasgow, 2010); N.B. Today, the group is known simply as the 'Glasgow Media Group'.

television.⁷ GUMG outlined three dimensions to its project: it wished to identify key explanatory themes; it would quantitatively assess the appearance of each explanation; and it would consider how each theme developed.⁸

There were a number of drawbacks to the GUMG's analysis. Firstly, and most importantly, analysis was limited to the period between 1 May and 14 June. Essentially, 28 days of the conflict were neglected – almost the entire first month. Although this might not have had much impact on the group's assessment of how hostilities were reported, it made for an incomplete study. This is particularly the case since one of the aims of the study was to examine the 'balance' between military *and* diplomatic coverage of the conflict on television news.⁹ An additional complication was that there was no overarching analysis presented to mark the progression of themes, with no indication of the different phases of the war.

Adams, without consciously embarking on the process of forming a content analysis, offered her own variety of analysis by looking closely at the media's commentary of the Falklands. Adams examined news broadcasts and current affairs programmes where 'expert' testimony was featured. Adams concluded from scrutinising primarily television, but also print material, that the 'layman' who followed as much print and broadcast material as possible 'should have had a rough idea of the size of the naval and land forces involved, and a clear idea of the number of Harriers'.¹⁰ Adams' work was littered with evidence from both TV and newspapers. One significant limitation was that it almost entirely overlooked the role of radio. Because Adams did not produce quantitative analysis of the information she considered, it suffered from generalisations. For example, when assessing the press coverage of the first week of the war Adams declared that 'something like half the newspaper articles commenting on the operation [to launch the Task Force] dealt with the force levels of both sides'.¹¹ Although, in the strictest sense, Adams' work did not offer a reliable, systematic form of content analysis, what it did present was the most comprehensive *overall* analysis of the way television *and* the printed press presented British speculation.

⁷ GUMG, p.iv.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Aims of the study: GUMG, p.v.

¹⁰ Adams, p.143.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.66.; N.B. Content analysis conducted for this thesis revealed that comment on British equipment, or preparation for a military conflict, ranked the fourth highest theme across both newspapers.

The third, and arguably most significant use of content analysis, was in Morrison and Tumber's work.¹² The authors conducted a thorough assessment of the themes covered by news bulletins on ITV and BBC.¹³ The way in which casualties were reported on national news was also one of the subjects of the study.¹⁴ Further, the pair isolated the location of reports, measuring the origin of stories.¹⁵ The extent of the analysis was by far the greatest and most comprehensive offered. It included analysis of the length of time attributed to the Falklands, the language used to describe both British and Argentine equipment and the types of interviewees most frequently featured. What Morrison and Tumber contributed was a precise account of what was reported, by whom and using what language on popular television news. However, what would have made the research definitive would have been, as with the GUMG's work, an additional assessment of the wealth of current affairs programmes which dealt directly with the topic of the war.¹⁶ The analysis presented by this thesis utilised the work of Morrison and Tumber as a foundation for analysis of the printed press.

The last of the key studies was that of Zoe Anderson.¹⁷ Anderson carried out an analysis of tabloid newspapers during the war. The aim of the article was to examine how women were represented by the press, and how that representation was indicative of a type of British nationalism.¹⁸ Four newspapers were treated as primary sources and subject to sampling: the *Daily Star*, *Daily Mirror*, *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail*. Anderson concluded that there were three main representations which women occupied in the tabloid media: as a national boundary marker – where the 'rape' of the islands amplified the link between defence of 'nation' and defence of 'women'; as good wives, girlfriends or mothers – the reinforcement of roles of 'nationalised' gender; and as participants in the war effort

¹² Morrison and Tumber

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.274-278.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.281.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.261-262.

¹⁶ For example: *Panorama*, *Newsnight*, *Weekend World*, *World in Action* and *Question Time*.

¹⁷ Anderson, 'Empire's Fetish', pp.189-204.

N.B. A study which dealt with a similar issue to that of Anderson was Lucy Noakes' 1996 thesis: L.Noakes, *Gender and British National Identity in Wartime: A Study of the Links between Gender and National Identity in Britain in the Second World War, The Falklands War, and the Gulf War*, PhD thesis, University of Sussex (1996).

¹⁸ N.B. Anderson's work was influenced by sociologist, Jon Garland, who considered tabloid representation of 'Englishness' in football, and Martin Conboy, who wrote on the language of British tabloids: Garland, 'The Same Old Story? Englishness, the tabloid press, and the 2002 World Cup', *Leisure Studies*, 23, 1 (2004) pp.79-92.; Conboy, *Tabloid Britain: Constructing a community through language* (Routledge, 2006).

through sexualised patriotism – women facilitated sexual objectification as a form of ‘national service’.¹⁹

There were a number of practical limitations to Anderson’s analysis. For instance, the process by which newspapers were sampled is not explicit. Although all papers tested were ‘tabloids’, and there were defining features which each shared (format, content and audience), Anderson pointed out that statistics on the titles themselves were ‘scarce’.²⁰ For example, Anderson was unable to locate circulation figures for each of the papers tested during the period of the Falklands War. Instead, she used figures from 1983 and 1986.²¹ In addition, the four papers analysed were not representative of the most successful tabloid newspapers. Anderson did not assess the *Daily Express*. The *Express* had a greater circulation than either the *Daily Star* or *Daily Mail*.²² In addition, none of the Sunday tabloids were considered which, particularly when dealing with only a small sample, might have offered more comprehensive results.

The two most prominent works, *Journalists at War* and *War and Peace News*, both concentrated attention exclusively on analysis of television news. Only Morrison and Tumber’s work was comprehensive in its analysis of content – including assessment of by far the most variables. However, these news analyses had limitations – for example, both analyses considered only *evening* news broadcasts.²³ This chapter presents a thorough, thematic and rigorous analysis of the subject matter of a medium throughout the duration of the conflict. This thesis focuses on analysis of the content of the printed press from 2 April to 14 June. The consequential results represent the most thorough and methodical evaluation of the themes and topics covered - and the format of - newspapers during the war. In addition, this analysis considers for the first time the origin of reports on the Falklands, the sources used and people who wrote them, as well as the more general features of coverage such as the length of a newspaper and the proportion of Falklands-related news compared to alternative news. What makes the analysis more effective is the fact that it is possible to compare the results of *both* television and newspaper analysis. This thesis seeks not only to contribute further to the literature by extending analysis to the

¹⁹ Arguments concerning national boundaries: Anderson, p.197.; arguments relating to sexualised patriotism: pp.199-200.

²⁰ Anderson, p.193.

²¹ Average circulation figures during 1982: *Daily Star*: 1,339,216, *Daily Mail*: 1,877,192, *Daily Mirror*: 3,309,271 and *The Sun*: 4,125,269.

²² The average circulation of the *Daily Express* in 1982 was 2,007,514, far more than the *Daily Star*’s average circulation of 1,339,216, and the *Daily Mail*’s 1,877,192.

²³ Other bulletins: BBC – *One O’Clock News* and ITN – *News at One* and *News at 5.45*.

printed press, but to supersede existing studies by contrasting media, thus challenging accepted theories.

1. Content Analysis: The Falklands Media

Television news' coverage was, and is, regarded as the public's most significant source of information. Nicholas, Editor of ITN, estimated that during the Falklands between 15 and 16 million people saw one or other ITN programme in a day.²⁴ Protheroe approximated that 10 to 12 million people watched the BBC's nightly news.²⁵ There had been, before 1982, a serious expansion of the number of British households which owned a TV licence. For example, in 1956, at the time of the Suez crisis, there were less than six million licence holders. In 1983 the figure had more than tripled to 18 million.²⁶

However, despite the increasing popularity of TV news, the Falklands undermined normal reporting procedure. The lack of moving images from the Falklands was a well-documented phenomenon.²⁷ Due to the lack of equipment to transmit film via satellite, by the time of the British victory, only three batches of film had reached Britain.²⁸ It wasn't until as late as 8 June that footage of the British landing on the islands arrived in Britain.²⁹ The credibility of TV in Britain was weakened by the fact that the predominantly visual medium was almost reduced to a radio role – TV had been regarded as the most honest account of events exactly because of its visual element.³⁰ The BBC and ITN purchased film from the Government, filmed before the conflict, in order to fill empty screens. Footage included the islands' coastlines, wildlife and historic images relating to British settlement.³¹ The lack of television material has resulted in the Falklands conflict commonly being referred to as a 'Radio War'.

The role of the radio in disseminating news had been dwindling. The radio had experienced a brief period of triumph following the Second World War, when it emerged as an essential method of communicating news. However, the popularity of the medium increasingly diminished as television became more accessible. Christopher Sterling, Professor of Media and Public Affairs, argued that the Falklands marked a highlight in the

²⁴ Nicholas, HCDC, v.ii, p.80, p.228.

²⁵ Protheroe, HCDC, v.ii, p.52, q.140.

²⁶ Harris, p.55.

²⁷ See: Freedman, v.ii, p.37.; Carruthers, pp.126-7.; Royle, p.219.; Hooper, p.163; Badsey, 'The Falklands Conflict as a Media War', p.47.; Harris, p.60.

²⁸ Dodds, 'Contesting War', p.218.

²⁹ 'First footage of landing shown', *The Times*, 9 Jun., p.6.

³⁰ Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.268, q.1031.

³¹ CoI invoice, 13 May, TNA, Pym Interview, INF6/2158 f.1.

development of British radio journalism.³² Much of the most significant news from the Falklands was actually broadcast first on radio – be it on the overseas service or on domestic services. Radio stations were able to interrupt regular features in order to provide on-the-spot coverage of major breaking news.³³ Valerie Geller, a broadcasting consultant, asserted that the most powerful tools of radio were ‘immediacy and imagery’ – both tools which were exploited during the Falklands with sound bites such as ‘I counted them all out, and I counted them all back’.³⁴ The most respected account of the ‘radio war’ was Alasdair Pinkerton’s ‘Strangers in the Night’.³⁵ Radio was a key factor in the dissemination of news during the Falklands. However, it has been relatively overlooked in much of the literature. It was the intention to include an analysis of the content of radio news bulletins in this work; however, timing parameters determined this would be impossible. For a truly inclusive assessment of the media in the Falklands, analysis of radio would be compared to that presented here, and to that presented by Morrison and Tumber.

In 1982 it was estimated that over 31.3 million people read a national newspaper daily.³⁶ Whilst one can look to circulation figures for an indication of how popular the press, and particular publications were, we can never know how many people read a newspaper. Whilst *The Sun*, for example, may have had a circulation of 4 million readers, it is likely that copies were passed between friends and amongst family. The actual figure might be four times the circulation, for instance.

Newspaper coverage of the Falklands becomes more significant when one considers that scrutiny of the press was - and is - rife amongst those scholars who have written on the media and the Falklands. *The Sunday Times* Insight Team, not surprisingly, was preoccupied with the press. Harris devoted a sizeable proportion of his work to Fleet Street. This has also been the case with those works which use the war as a case study.³⁷ In addition to this, detailed study of newspaper coverage is essential because living memory still associates the media in the Falklands War with prominent headlines, editorials and articles. Headlines like *The Sun*’s ‘GOTCHA’ and ‘STICK IT UP YOUR JUNTA’, along

³² C. Sterling, *Encyclopaedia of Radio* (Routledge, 2004) p.384.

³³ A. Boyd, P. Stewart and R. Alexander, *Broadcast Journalism: Techniques of Radio and Television News* (Taylor & Francis, 2012) p.240.

³⁴ V. Geller, *Creating Powerful Radio: Getting, Keeping and Growing Audiences; News, Talk, Information and Personality Broadcast* (Taylor & Francis, 2009).

³⁵ Pinkerton, “‘Strangers in the Night’”, pp.344-375.

³⁶ Harris, p.40.

³⁷ See Knightley, pp.432-438.; Carruthers, pp.120-131.; Royle, pp.217-225.

with *The Times* editorials: ‘WE ARE ALL FALKLANDERS NOW’ and ‘NAKED AGGRESSION’, have gone down in history as representative of the crisis.³⁸

2. The Construction of Content Analysis

The collection and presentation of data analysed in this thesis took place over the course of a year. It benefits from a number of advantages which make it reliable. The formulation of the processes involved was considered carefully and a robust methodology is outlined in the following section. Being explicit about the collection of data is essential to the dependability of the results. Political scientist, Ole Holsti, wrote that the development of content analysis involves four main stages: 1) Formulating a *problem* or question 2) Deciding on the range and size of a *sample* 3) *Counting* within that sample and *coding* the data and 4) *Interpreting* (and writing up) the data.³⁹ If we assume this, then each stage must be briefly explained in order to validate the results.

2a. Formulating a Problem or Question

This analysis was formed with certain questions in mind. The aim was to produce results comparable to those of television coverage.⁴⁰ The research was to ascertain the origin of reports, the priority of Falklands-related news and to look at what type of coverage was offered. In order for this study to be evaluated with that of Morrison and Tumber, the themes allocated to each story were built from the authors’ original list of 169 themes. Additional themes were included to cover as many outcomes as possible - the new figure totalling 214 options.⁴¹ These themes have been further explained for the results to be easily replicated – central to the reliability of content analysis.⁴² Like the analysis featured in *Journalists at War*, one article or story may be attributed more than one theme. Morrison and Tumber divided the 75 days’ worth of coverage into five time periods. Newspaper content was analysed along the same time frame to make the results directly applicable.⁴³

³⁸ ‘GOTCHA’, *The Sun*, 4 May, p.1.; ‘STICK IT UP YOUR JUNTA’, *The Sun*, 20 Apr., p.1.; ‘WE ARE ALL FALKLANDERS NOW’, *The Times*, 5 Apr., p.9.; ‘NAKED AGGRESSION’, *The Times*, 3 Apr., p.7.

³⁹ O. Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (London, 1969) p.142.

⁴⁰ Results presented by Morrison and Tumber.

⁴¹ See Appendix 19.

⁴² See Appendix 23.

⁴³ N.B. The date 15 June was not analysed in this research. 14 June marked the surrender of the Argentines, thus news the following day, it is believed, was not indicative of how the *conflict* was reported.

2b. Deciding on the Range and Size of a Sample

Most content analyses use a method of sampling information to produce results indicative of an entire time period. However, since the Falklands was only 74 days long, and experienced fluctuations in events, military incidents and press activity, it is arguable that a sample would not be representative of the conflict. As such, this analysis takes into account every day between 2 April and 14 June. The results of each day's analysis were stored in a database, from which formulae were linked to calculate the total figures needed to assess a publication's overall coverage. Each day's database entry was based on a simple template.⁴⁴

It would have proved impossible to read and record every national publication printed during the period of the war. As such, the two tabloids and two broadsheets with the highest circulation were selected for analysis: *The Sun* and *The Daily Mirror*, *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*.⁴⁵ Analysis was carried out on issues printed between Monday and Saturday. Sunday newspapers were excluded from these results for three reasons: firstly, Sunday newspapers tend to summarise reports already issued earlier in the week; secondly, some Sunday newspapers had higher circulation figures than the sister publications of titles used in this analysis - thus their inclusion in this analysis would have jeopardised the consistency of the results; and finally, Sunday newspapers are inclined to be substantive and lengthy - time constraints prohibited their inclusion. Circulation figures for each of the four newspapers included in the study can be found in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Circulation figures of Britain's four leading national newspapers in 1982 and during the months of the Falklands War

	<i>Daily Mirror</i>	<i>The Sun</i>	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	<i>The Times</i>
Average circulation throughout 1982	3,309,271	4,125,269	1,303,961	303,590
Average circulation in April 1982	3,388,527	4,121,584	1,306,384	304,662
Average circulation in May 1982	3,414,148	4,137,416	1,331,662	314,272
Average circulation in June 1982	3,409,681	4,060,963	1,319,306	306,142

⁴⁴ See Appendix 20.

⁴⁵ N.B. *The Evening Standard* actually had an average circulation which was higher than that of *The Times* in 1982 (546,493). It was discounted from this research since it was classified as a regional newspaper.

In order to make the sample included in this analysis comparable with that of analysis of television news, the same method concerning dates was followed. In *Journalists at War* the duration of the conflict was divided into five distinct time periods. These date brackets are observed in this content analysis. Each period covers various events which occurred in the campaign, making thematic analysis more effective.⁴⁶

Traditionally, a story is identified in a newspaper when a headline is present, or the space the story takes up is more than two column inches.⁴⁷ In much of Falklands-related material, however, there were stories which measured less than two inches, but which had headlines. As a consequence, stories are included purely by the gauge of headline. Other specifications were that it must be written in complete sentences, it must not be part of an advertisement and it must be a whole story - in other words it must not promote a story featured elsewhere in the newspaper. This meant that lead stories on page one of a publication were counted *only* on Page One, and not attributed to the page on which they were continued. Stories or features which were not counted as general articles were either editorials or public opinion pieces (either letters or public opinion columns). These articles were counted and recorded separately. Editorials are important tools to ascertain a publication's official line. Additionally, public opinion features are crucial in assessing the readership's outlook.

Other text omitted from the database was related to sports. All four newspapers carried designated sports pages. These pages, for the purpose of this study, were not classified as 'news'. Three other major features were excluded from examination for the reason that they did not constitute 'national news'. The first was the 'announcement page' (present in all four publications). Secondly, the 'Entertainment Guide' in *The Times* and Television Guides in *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror*, and *The Daily Telegraph's* equivalent page which carried a TV Guide and a section entitled 'Theatres, Cinemas, Art Galleries', was discounted. Finally, stock exchange prices featured in *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* were not recorded. All other pages were analysed including the business sections, women's columns, arts' pages, all regular columnists' pieces and, most crucially, all featured news. The following is a summary of all aspects of reporting recorded:

⁴⁶ See Appendix 21.

⁴⁷ S. Lynch and L. Peer, 'Analyzing Newspaper Content: A How-to Guide', *Readership Institute Paper from the Media Management Centre at Northwestern University* (Readership Institute, 2002) p.7.

General Notes:

- Articles per page and how many articles were Falklands-related
- Adverts per page
- Double page spreads
- Cartoons and how many cartoons were Falklands-related
- Editorials and how many editorials were Falklands-related
- Letters to the Editor or public opinion pieces and how many of both were Falklands-related

Notes on Falklands-Related Articles:

- The title
- The origin of the story (from which country or city the report was written)
- Whether the report originated from journalists with the Task Force and if so, which journalist
- Whether the article was based on an Argentine source or a source from the Armed Forces
- What themes were allocated to each particular story or article
- Additional notes on quotes, sources or images

2c. Counting Within that Sample and Coding the Data

The actual process involved in ‘coding’ data, or categorising data in order to facilitate further investigation, was simple. One of the main requirements of a reliable and objective content analysis is that all results should be able to be reproduced under the same conditions.⁴⁸ The explanation of themes, as well as the research design concerned with this project, should allow other scholars to replicate these results – even potentially to enhance them by adding analysis of other publications. What sets this investigation aside from others like it is that it has been carried out, from start to finish, by only *one* person. Typically, content analysis is undertaken by a group of ‘coders’ who are given training on how coding should be completed for that particular project. This often leads to anomalies and does not account for differences in opinion, when even the slightest irregularity or variance can have a huge effect on results. Inter-coder agreement is critical in the conduct of content analysis. The fact that one person has carried out this research, a person who has applied the same attitude, assessments and judgements throughout, makes it an especially consistent piece of work.

The content analysis presented in this thesis is the first of its kind. It allows for a wider, more detailed and more reliable indication of the news coverage of the war. There are, however, a number of ways in which it is flawed – or at least it could be improved. These issues are highlighted here for the purpose of full disclosure, and to better equip future research which might use this thesis as a starting point. The analysis of the two most popular tabloid newspapers and two most popular broadsheets is extensive for a thesis of this size, but is by no means conclusive. What it offers is an *insight* into the best-selling

⁴⁸ Holsti, p.4.

news publications' coverage - it is not indicative of all national newspapers. *The Guardian*, for example, took a completely different line to most other national dailies. Far from being just 'neutral', *The Guardian's* coverage of the war has been accused of being close to treason.⁴⁹ There were nine *national* daily newspapers in 1982 – they are listed in Table 6.2. In this study therefore, only just under 50% of possible test subjects have been examined. There is certainly scope for extending this research to give a complete view of newspaper coverage. Yet that should not detract from the results presented here. Of all national dailies, the four selected newspapers reached the highest proportion of the British public. The media in the Falklands should be assessed by those media which had the widest base.

Table 6.2: *National daily newspapers in 1982*

Daily Express
Daily Mail
Daily Mirror
Daily Star
Financial Times
The Daily Telegraph
The Guardian
The Sun
The Times

In addition to the fact that not every national daily was able to be examined, it would have been more effective had it been possible for this research to also take into account column inches. The inclusion of this factor would have enabled a more accurate analysis of the percentage of news space dominated by Falklands' coverage. As it was, much of this research had to be conducted using the internet, microfilm, photocopies and, in the case of *The Daily Telegraph*, original documents. The variety of resources used to access the information meant that reliable measurements could not be taken. Instead, the percentage of Falklands-related news was calculated according to the number of articles associated with the subject, in comparison to non-Falklands-related articles. Although not completely inclusive, it is, nevertheless, the most reliable and comprehensive study of newspaper coverage undertaken thus far.

2d. Interpreting (and Writing Up) Data

Understanding and translating unprocessed data is the final stage of content analysis. Through the use of Excel spreadsheets and a database created from the raw information collected, the results were collated and will be presented here. Interpreting data is a long

⁴⁹ Harris, p.50.

and arduous process. What this thesis seeks to achieve is a summary of the key findings. Necessarily, and due to restraints on length, the full extent of analysis cannot be included here.

3. Content Analysis Results

The results of the content analysis conducted for this thesis are extensive and varied. In order to better judge the ‘main’ findings of the research, this chapter assesses three significant areas: the amount of Falklands-related coverage, the origins and location of news coverage and the main themes attributed to Falklands-related copy.

3a. Total Amount of Falklands Coverage

Morrison and Tumber found that, on average, the Falklands conflict accounted for 68.83% of all BBC and ITN nightly news coverage during the war (Table 6.3). Adams judged that *News at Ten* tended to carry a ‘greater number of items in correspondingly less depth than the BBC’s *Nine O’Clock News*’.⁵⁰ The BBC devoted almost 8% more time to the Falklands in its news bulletins than ITN.⁵¹ What Morrison and Tumber showed was that the crisis was covered *extensively* by television news, despite the lack of images from the frontline.

Table 6.3: Percentage of Falklands-related material in news broadcasts during the Falklands conflict ⁵²

	BBC (%)	ITN (%)	Total BBC and ITN (%)
2 April - 4 April	78	73.58	75.23
5 April - 24 April	73.5	70.67	71.96
25 April - 30 April	83.19	70.95	75.78
1 May - 20 May	79.74	70.29	74.19
21 May - 15 June	66.42	56.14	60.98
Average total:			
2 April - 14 June	73.1	65.45	68.83

The volume of newspaper coverage of the War was noticeably different from that of television news. Whereas the BBC and ITN devoted over two thirds of the prescribed time slot to discussion on the Falklands, newspaper coverage across all four newspapers was significantly lower. Table 6.4 shows how many articles were published in each newspaper during the five distinct phases of the war (noted in analysis graphs and tables as ‘Possible Articles’). From there it tells us how many of those articles were based on the Falklands

⁵⁰ Adams, p.147.

⁵¹ The BBC devoted 7.65 % more time to the Falklands in its broadcasts than ITN.

⁵² Data taken from Morrison and Tumber, p.267.

(‘Falklands-Related Articles’). Finally, it demonstrates what percentage of a newspaper’s overall subject matter pertained to the Falklands (‘% relating to Falklands’). What we can tell from this information is that the broadsheets contained a lower percentage of Falklands-related news than the tabloids. This might be explained by the argument that the tabloids focused on the war in the belief that it would aid circulation figures. Harris commented on the fact the tabloids had been locked in a vicious battle for readership before 1982. He highlighted the ongoing ploys to lure readers like bingo features and decreased prices.⁵³ There was, however, a greater discrepancy concerning the percentage of coverage assigned to the conflict between *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* than there was between the *Telegraph* and *The Sun*. *The Times* devoted the least amount of analysis, as a percentage of overall coverage, to the Falklands. There are two possible explanations for this. Firstly, this might be explained by the publication’s desire to fully cover all aspects of news – not just the Falklands – in a bid to preserve its international reputation as Britain’s pre-eminent national newspaper. Secondly, the percentage of coverage devoted to the Falklands in *The Times* could have been low because the paper tended to print longer articles than other newspapers. Most simply, broadsheet stories tend to be longer because the papers are physically bigger (typically 11-12 inches wide and 20 or more long). Tabloids (typically 11 by 17 inches) tend to feature shorter stories and often make use of a greater amount of images. Shelley McLachlan and Peter Golding carried out a content analysis, the aim of which was to assess whether the British press had been ‘tabloid-ised’ between 1952 and 1997. Research showed that the length of a story in *The Times* (measured by the amount of words) had fluctuated over a 45-year period from an average low of 150 words per story in 1952, to an average high of 400 words per story in 1982.⁵⁴ In 1982, the *Daily Mirror*, by contrast, only reached an average of 330 words per story.⁵⁵ The Editor of *The Times* told the HCDC that he estimated the paper was including up to 10,000 words of material each day on the Falklands, whereas the tabloids might have only included 500 to 600 words.⁵⁶

⁵³ Harris, pp.40-43.

⁵⁴ S. McLachlan and P. Golding, ‘Tabloidization in the British Press: A Quantitative Investigation into Changes in British Newspapers, 1952 – 1997’, in Eds. C. Sparks and J. Tulloch, *Tabloid Tales: Global Debates over Media Standards* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000) p.81.

⁵⁵ McLachlan and Golding, ‘Tabloidization in the British Press’, pp.82-83.

⁵⁶ Douglas-Home, HCDC, v.ii, p.368, q.1534.

Period	<i>Daily Mirror</i>			<i>The Sun</i>			<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>			<i>The Times</i>			Average Total Across Newspapers Tested		
	Possible Articles	Falklands-Related Articles	% Relating to Falklands	Possible Articles	Falklands-Related Articles	% Relating to Falklands	Possible Articles	Falklands-Related Articles	% Relating to Falklands	Possible Articles	Falklands-Related Articles	% Relating to Falklands	Average Possible Articles	Average No. Falklands-Related Articles	Average % of Falklands Coverage
2 April - 4 April	76	5	6.58	99	16	16.16	360	35	9.72	264	15	5.68	199.75	17.75	8.89
5 April - 24 April	734	168	22.89	895	151	16.87	2739	518	18.91	2543	382	15.02	1727.75	304.75	17.64
25 April - 30 April	251	60	23.90	275	54	19.64	845	157	18.58	904	126	13.94	568.75	99.25	17.45
1 May - 20 May	768	190	24.74	915	203	22.19	2794	619	22.15	2838	461	16.24	1828.75	368.25	20.14
21 May - 14 June	898	221	24.61	1075	291	27.07	3227	672	20.82	3432	491	14.31	2158	418.75	19.4
Totals and average %	2727	644	24.35	3259	715	21.94	9965	2001	20.08	9981	1475	14.78	6483	1208.75	18.64
2 April - 14 June															

Table 6.4: Total newspaper coverage of the Falklands War

Table 6.5 compares the figures relating to the total percentage of coverage from both television news and newspapers. One can see, after the initial stage, when the Argentines invaded the islands, newspaper coverage increased over the duration of the war (despite two small drops in the percentage during the third and fifth periods). Overall, Falklands' coverage sat at an average of almost 19% of all print news. TV coverage, on the other hand, tended to fluctuate – neither increasing, nor decreasing in volume over the course of the war. The most significant observation is that TV coverage actually dropped over 13% in the final stage of the war. Newspaper coverage, however, dropped less than 1% over the same time-frame. This information exhibits the difference between the agendas of two diverse media. During the final stage of the war (21 May – 15 June) less time was spent reporting the Falklands on television. This was most likely due to the fact that, on 6 June, Israel invaded southern Lebanon, marking the start of the Lebanon War. For example, on seven occasions in the last period of the Falklands, the Lebanon story surpassed the Falklands' primary news status on TV (three times on BBC and four on ITN).⁵⁷ The war in Lebanon provided television news with something it had been lacking: live images of conflict. Because the length of a television news bulletin is fixed, Lebanon forced down the percentage of Falklands' coverage. By contrast, in newspapers, the Lebanon War may have featured on page one, but there was not one day on which the Falklands did not feature on the front page (even alongside Lebanon). Newspapers had the ability to cover both the Lebanon and Falklands story at least equally; TV did not share this luxury. As Adams pointed out, '...detailed assessments [of the news]...have little place in television news programmes'.⁵⁸

Table 6.5: *Comparison between total percentage of news coverage relating to the Falklands crisis on television and in print*⁵⁹

	Total BBC/ITN Coverage (%)	Total Newspaper Coverage (%)
2 April - 4 April	75.23	8.89
5 April - 24 April	71.96	17.64
25 April - 30 April	75.78	17.45
1 May - 20 May	74.19	20.14
21 May - 14 June	60.98	19.4
Average total		
2 April - 14 June	68.83	18.64

⁵⁷ Morrison and Tumber, p.266.

⁵⁸ Adams, p.74.

⁵⁹ Figures pertaining to television are from Morrison and Tumber p.267.

The most striking difference was that the percentage of coverage devoted to the Falklands by television was significantly higher than that of newspapers – as much as seven times higher in some cases. It is clear that television devoted more of its overall reporting to the Falklands. One reason for the major disparity between percentages is that television news was limited in length. Hooper considered that there were two major limiting factors to television news: time and structure.⁶⁰ Newspapers, however, could accommodate more news. At times throughout the conflict both BBC and ITN extended their news programmes – but not by a significant extent.⁶¹ Newspapers, on the other hand, could vary in length according to the volume of news. Throughout the conflict the average length of the four newspapers was 28 pages. From Figure 6.1 one can see that, mostly, the length of each newspaper remained fairly constant. However, there were peaks and troughs which represented an increase, or decrease, in the number of pages each newspaper carried. Peaks often coincided with Falklands-related events. This suggests that coverage of the Falklands was directly linked to the length of a newspaper. The period between 25 and 30 April, for example, witnessed a peak in all four newspapers' lengths. This stage of the war saw the first real military activity of the conflict (since the Argentine invasion), and also the culmination of diplomatic efforts to avoid war: the recapture of South Georgia on 25 April, Thatcher's call on 26 April for the media to 'rejoice' at the news of the Argentine surrender at Leith, the arrival of Haig's 'final package' in London on 27 April, the fourth House of Commons debate on the crisis on 29 April and the official US declaration of support for Britain on 30 April.⁶²

⁶⁰ Hooper, p.18.

⁶¹ Morrison and Tumber, p.266.

⁶² See Appendix One.

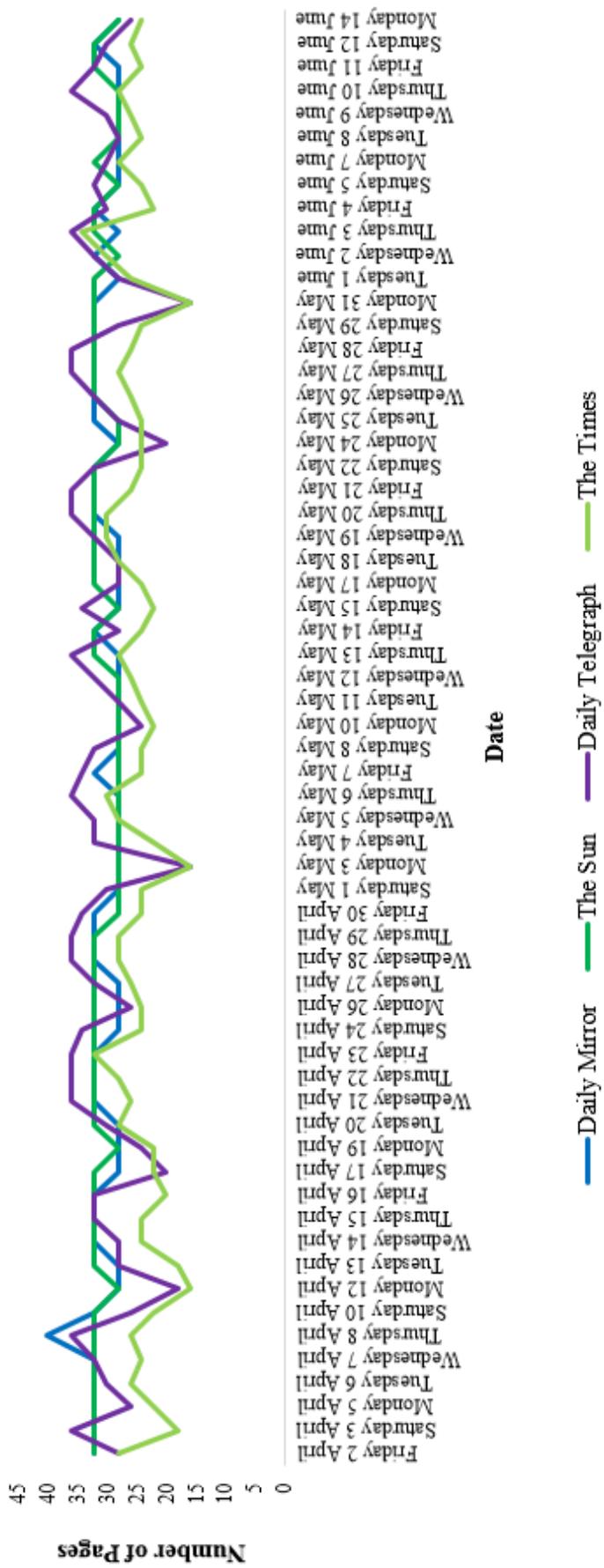


Figure 6.1: Length of Newspapers throughout the Falklands War

During the war, across the four newspapers tested, there were nearly 26,000 articles, 19% of which were written on the Falklands.⁶³ Perhaps what was most illuminating about content, however, was the subject matter of editorials during the conflict. An editorial is commonly understood as ‘a newspaper article expressing the editor’s opinion on a topical issue’.⁶⁴ More than just the editor’s opinion, an editorial will typically signify the attitude and view to which the newspaper officially subscribes. Tabloid editorials had titles which reflected this: ‘Mirror Comment’, and ‘The Sun Says’. Mostly, the content of an editorial will focus on what is considered to be most ‘newsworthy’.⁶⁵ Given the length of a paper was variable and inconsistent, one can, arguably, gain more from analysis of a constant: the editorial – which only ever consisted of one page (or less). The Editorial was also particularly attractive during the war because the ‘restrictions on hard news...inevitably gave a greater importance to editorialising and commentary...’⁶⁶

Table 6.6 displays the total amount of editorials published throughout the conflict and the number and percentage of those which related to the war. The amount of editorial space allocated to the Falklands in the case of the *Daily Mirror* is significantly higher than in any other newspaper, at virtually 80%. This figure presented an anomaly. The *Daily Mirror*, during the Falklands, usually limited its ‘comment’ to one piece of news. It was the case in all three other papers that, over 72% of the time, editorial articles considered two, or more, issues.⁶⁷ On average, across all four newspapers, the Falklands was considered the subject of nearly 50% of all editorial observation. This figure is substantial and gives an indication of to what extent the Falklands dominated the news agenda of the press. Although the proportion of all articles relating to the Falklands was as low as 19% in the context of an entire publication – the newspapers’ own programme was dictated by the Falklands. Figure 6.2 illustrates the divergence between the amount of articles based on the Falklands and the number of editorials dedicated to the subject.

⁶³ There were 25,949 articles included in all four publications between 2 April and 14 June.

⁶⁴ Oxford Dictionaries <www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/editorial> [Accessed 18 Nov. 2014].

⁶⁵ I. Westin, *Language Change in English Newspaper Editorials* (Rodopi B. V., 2002) p.7.

⁶⁶ Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’, p.48.

⁶⁷ N.B. The Falklands often attracted comment in more than one editorial commentary: at times there were, for example, three issues considered in editorial columns – and two related to the Falklands.

Table 6.6: *Percentage of editorials published throughout the conflict and what percentage related to the Falklands*

	Total Editorials	Editorials on the Falklands	Percentage of Editorial Coverage
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	49	39	79.59
<i>The Sun</i>	122	54	44.26
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	165	76	46.06
<i>The Times</i>	149	55	36.91
Total Newspapers	485	224	46.19

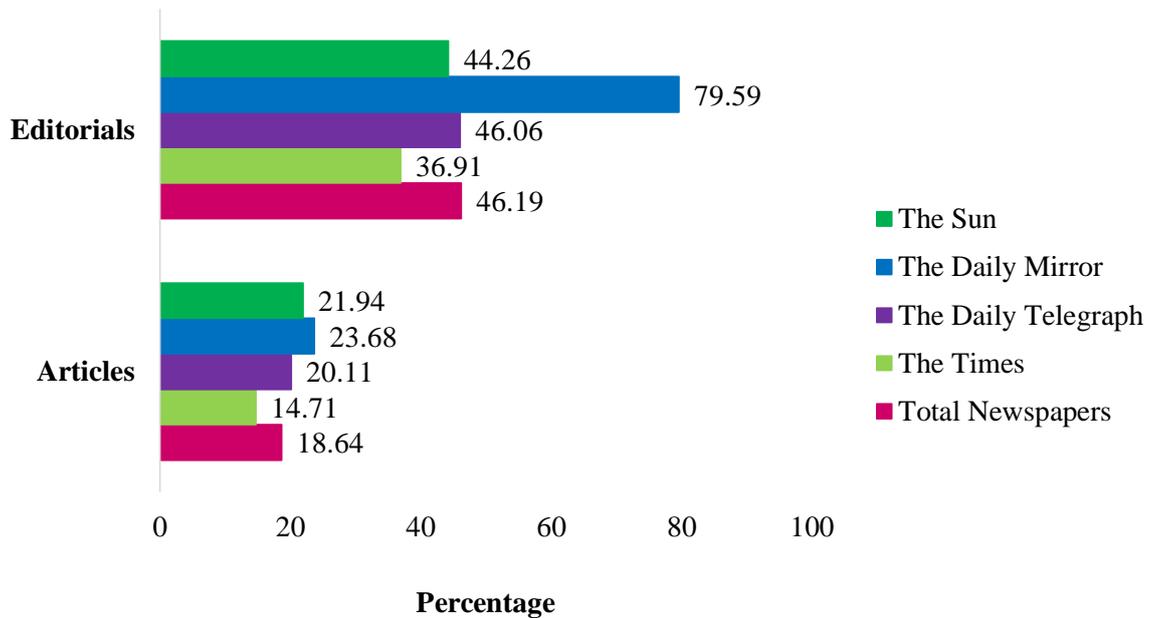


Figure 6.2: *Percentage of Falklands-related articles and editorials*

During the war there was considerable comment about the way in which the issue was dominating the media. On the week ending 2 May, *The Sunday Times* judged: ‘This was the week when the word “Falklands” actually began to replace the word “News”’.⁶⁸ What is clear from this study is that newspapers were afforded the luxury of both comprehensively covering the crisis, and of offering thorough analysis on events outside that area. Certainly, during the months between April and July, one would have gained a greater range of information on non-Falklands-related material from the print media than from television. Academics and authors on the Falklands have agreed that it was not a televisual war.⁶⁹ The dearth of images from the South Atlantic dictated the medium was limited to other visual aids like three-dimensional models, computer graphics and plotted

⁶⁸ R. Davies, ‘Identity crisis’, *The Sunday Times*, 2 May, p.3.

⁶⁹ See: Dodds, ‘Contesting War’, p.219.; Hart-Dyke, p.228.; Mercer et al., p.130.

maps.⁷⁰ The GUMG commented that television news seemed rarely to extend beyond statements from the MoD.⁷¹ On the contrary, for newspapers, the war was very much ‘business as usual’ - the format was preserved and the impact of those limitations imposed on the media by poor communications with the Task Force was felt less severely by the print media than by TV news.

3b. The Origins and Location of News Coverage

The British media was heavily criticised during, and following, the war for relying too heavily on the use of Argentine information. A common theme throughout the literature is that the scarcity of information within Britain, and originating from the MoD, drove the media to seek alternative intelligence.⁷² Indeed, *The Sunday Times* Insight Team argued that, in the case of casualty information, the British media turned to Argentine sources because the MoD refused to give any indication of accurate figures.⁷³ Knightley wrote that with a lack of news from the front, only two other sources of information remained: Argentina and MoD briefings.⁷⁴ The credibility of the British was tested throughout the war.⁷⁵ From the day of the Argentine invasion, the rapid nature of Argentine reporting threatened the credibility of British official sources. On 2 April the British Ambassador to Argentina, Anthony Williams, reported that: ‘Today’s local press and media broadcasts virtually all triumphantly report Argentine military action against the Falkland Islands, treating this as a *fait accompli*’.⁷⁶ It was argued that Britain used Argentine information to report the invasion of Port Stanley. The common presentation of the event was of ‘non-reaction and surrender’.⁷⁷ It was only when the Marines who defended the capital were repatriated, that stories of resistance came to the public’s attention. This theme continued, since communications from the Task Force were poor, the British were rarely informed of events in the South Atlantic by one of their own. Even the Argentine surrender was reported first by Argentina. Kim Sabido with the Task Force noted:

It's sad that petty restrictions imposed by the Ministry of Defence - and one can only assume given placid backing by the politicians in London - prevented the British people knowing of these tragedies from their own reporters.⁷⁸

⁷⁰ Mercer et al., p.130.

⁷¹ GUMG, p.90.

⁷² For example: P. Taylor, p.117.; Harris, p.71.

⁷³ Eds. Eddy et al, p.211.

⁷⁴ Knightley, p.435.

⁷⁵ See Chapters Two and Three.

⁷⁶ A. Williams, 2 Apr., TNA, *Argentine Invasion of the Falkland Islands*, FCO7/4490 f.1.

⁷⁷ Royle, p.222.

⁷⁸ Sabido, ‘Falklands War – Sabido Reflections’, *IRN Radio*, 23 Jun.

<www.bufvc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0012900032015>.

Much of the reports which gained currency in Argentina, and were subsequently reported by British media, transpired to be fabrications. On 2 May the SAPU reflected that: ‘The Argentines have been quick to put out false reports of various military encounters, greatly exaggerating the performance of their forces’.⁷⁹ Ian Mather, a journalist for *The Observer* who was imprisoned in Argentina during the war, recalled that: ‘For most of the conflict the bulletins were pure fantasy. If one added up the number of Sea Harriers they claimed to have shot down they exceeded by several times the total possessed by the RAF’.⁸⁰ Nick Barker, Captain of HMS *Endurance*, who was listening to Argentine radio, wrote that ‘of course...our ships were sinking all over the place’.⁸¹ The British media reported Argentine news at home. Captain Hugh Balfour of HMS *Exeter* remembered that his ship appeared in the British press on three occasions indicating that she had been sunk.⁸²

Despite criticism that the British media relied on Argentine sources, this thesis suggests that it was more responsible than has been imagined. There is evidence that the British media treated Argentine information responsibly and with scepticism. Douglas van Belle judged that ‘the infrequent times when Argentine sources were used, they were treated as unreliable, interpreted with speculation concerning the true intent of the statement, or verified factually with other sources’.⁸³ On ITV’s late evening news on 6 June, the presenter spoke over Argentine film footage:

These pictures are claimed by the Argentines to be the latest of their troops on the Falklands. Though, with British forces poised for a final assault, it’s unlikely that these soldiers, or the islanders themselves, are as relaxed as this film suggests.⁸⁴

George Howard admitted ‘...hard editorial decisions had to be made about reporting Argentine views’.⁸⁵ On 2 May guidelines were sent to all ITV employees:

We are now facing the serious risk of disinformation emanating from Argentina about military operations in the South Atlantic...On no account are such stories to be transmitted *before* the ITN Newsdesk or specialist correspondents have checked with the Ministry of Defence or other appropriate authorities. An inaccurate report would cause huge distress among relatives. Better to delay than be wrong.⁸⁶

⁷⁹ SAPU Circular, 2 May, TNA, FCO7/4496 f.58.

⁸⁰ I. Mather, ‘I went as a Reporter but ended up a Prisoner of War’, *The Observer*, 1 Apr. 2007, <www.theguardian.com/media/2007/apr/01/pressandpublishing.business> [Accessed 12 Dec. 2011].

⁸¹ N. Barker, *Beyond Endurance*.

⁸² H. Balfour, Interview, IWM, 5 Oct. 1994, f.14596.

⁸³ van Belle, p.411.

⁸⁴ N. Reece, *Late Evening News*, 6 Jun.

⁸⁵ Gosling, ‘BBC Chief joins debate on coverage’, *The Times*, 8 May, p.5.

⁸⁶ ITV memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.77, q.h.

This chapter demonstrates that the amount of copy based on Argentine sources in newspapers was less than commonly assumed. Morrison and Tumber included in their study analysis on the distribution of reports according to their location. The raw data from their study was considered and has been calculated for purposes of comparison (Table 6.7).⁸⁷ The overwhelming majority of reports on television originated from Britain, not Buenos Aires. The authors ascertained that there were three types of Argentine film which appeared on television during the conflict: Argentine film from the Falklands, British film shot in Argentina and American network film from Argentina.⁸⁸ Instead of finding any information to support the commonly held assumption that the British relied on Argentine sources for the content of the news, Morrison and Tumber found that television news was based on only 9% of reports from Argentina (but from British correspondents). As little as just over 2% of the coverage of the Falklands was based on an Argentine source. Analysis of newspapers has shown that the results are similar (Table 6.8).

Table 6.7: *Percentage distribution of items by locations of report (television)* ⁸⁹

	BBC (%)	ITN (%)	Total (%)
Argentina	11.81	6.28	9.05
Argentine Source	3.12	1.78	2.45
Britain	70.72	74.91	72.82
Other	0.56	0.96	0.76
South America	2.93	2.75	2.84
Task Force	11.35	12.85	12.1

Less than 6% of copy on the Falklands, across all four newspapers, originated from Argentina. The vast majority of that same copy was penned by *British* journalists in Argentina.⁹⁰ Nearly every publication had a staff journalist stationed in Argentina, if not at the start of the war, then certainly by its completion. Despite the presence of the paper's 'man in Argentina', David Graves, the newspaper which relied the least on material from Argentina was *The Sun* (2%). *The Sun* was notorious for its nationalistic tendencies and actively promoted the war. That *The Sun* should avoid repeating the claims of the opposing side should not surprise. Foster claimed that the paper helped promote a 'climate of hysteria which was instrumental in shaping and charging an atmosphere hostile to dissent'.⁹¹ The tabloid newspapers featured Argentine material less than broadsheets. The

⁸⁷ See Appendix 22.

⁸⁸ Morrison and Tumber, p.240.

⁸⁹ Ibid. pp.261-263.

⁹⁰ See Appendix Two for a list of correspondents stationed in Argentina.

⁹¹ Foster, 'The Falklands War' p.164.

figures relating to *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* sit comfortably within the same percentile (between 7 and 8%). Broadsheet newspapers were more likely to use a range of sources and more likely to dissent from the accepted line – putting the principle of ‘freedom of the press’ before an obligation to support Government. Badsey outlined that *The Times* in particular had a long history of distinguishing between its ‘task...to sustain the morale of the nation’ and ‘fair criticism of the government of the day’.⁹²

A smaller percentage of articles than those written in Argentina actually made use of an Argentine source.⁹³ Thus the results of this content analysis confirm that newspapers, like television, did not rely on the use of Argentine sources to any great extent.⁹⁴ Again, the tabloid newspapers made significantly less use of Argentine source material than the broadsheets. The fact that all four newspapers tested used Argentine source material in less than 8% of articles indicates that the criticism the media attracted for the supposed extensive use of Argentine sources was unfounded.⁹⁵

In both the case of television news and newspapers, the majority of Falklands-related coverage originated from Britain. Seventy-seven percent of newspaper copy stemmed from journalists based in Britain (Table 6.8). Television reports originated from Britain 75% of the time. The marginal difference between the two media is not considered important. Tabloid newspapers depended on their British contingent far more than the broadsheets. *The Sun* newspaper during the war was made up almost entirely from journalists writing in Britain (90% of articles originated from Britain). Eighty-five percent of articles offered by the *Daily Mirror* were from Britain. The amount of copy originating from Britain was less in the broadsheets (in *The Times*, 68% and *The Daily Telegraph*, 64%). The broadsheets made greater use of international reporters than the tabloids did. *The Times* regularly featured stories from its correspondents abroad.⁹⁶ *The Daily Telegraph* had an equally widespread staff-base, with six reporters in Argentina at one time or another throughout the war. What one can conclude from the overall results is that the primary place of origin of the majority of material which was Falklands-related was Britain.

⁹² Badsey, ‘The Falklands Conflict as a Media War’, p.44.

⁹³ N.B. It is only possible to include an article as having used an Argentine source if it is openly declared, or it is explicit within the body of the text. In order to test the authenticity of this system a number of random articles deemed to use an Argentine Source were cross checked against the timing of reports emerging from Argentina, other articles and research into the origin of particular stories during the war. In almost 80% of tested articles, the theory that the source originated from Argentina was correct.

⁹⁴ With the exception of the retrieval of casualty figures from Argentine sources.

⁹⁵ N.B. It should be remembered that even when an article made use of an Argentine source, it might have been discounted as accurate intelligence, compared with British sources, or reported objectively in the same article.

⁹⁶ See Appendix Two.

	<i>Daily Mirror</i>		<i>The Sun</i>		<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>		<i>The Times</i>		<i>All four newspapers</i>	
	No. of articles	% of all articles	No. of articles	% of all articles	No. of articles	% of all articles	No. of articles	% of all articles	Average No. of articles	Average % of all articles
Argentina	41	5.59	16	2.09	167	7.61	124	7.96	348	5.81
Argentine Source	10	1.36	29	3.79	136	6.2	122	7.84	297	5.7
Britain	621	84.6	691	90.21	1403	63.92	1054	67.69	3769	76.61
Task Force	18	2.45	23	3	115	5.24	69	4.43	225	3.78
Pooled Despatches	5	0.68	2	0.26	36	1.64	17	1.09	60	0.92

Table 6.8: *Number and percentage of articles attributed to a location or source*
 * Note that percentages are calculated from total locations possible, not total articles possible

Work which has centred on the media and the Falklands has typically highlighted the role of Task Force journalists.⁹⁷ Almost all those works which include sections on the media in the conflict have paid attention to the plight of those correspondents.⁹⁸ Task Force reporting of the conflict was plagued by a plethora of difficulties: delays in transmission, strict (and sometimes unnecessary) censorship and a lack of source material and information.⁹⁹ Despite these obstacles, the reporting of the Task Force journalists has, since the war, dominated evaluation of the larger media's role. The experiences of the Task Force journalists are hugely important to the literature – especially considering their role as the first journalists to be embedded with a British force from the outset. It is the contention of this thesis, however, that the amount of physical copy sent back is disproportionate to the amount of analysis they have received.

Just over 12% of television's Falklands' coverage was transmitted from the South Atlantic (Table 6.7). This was quite a feat considering the first images from the Task Force were not shown until 13 May.¹⁰⁰ The first combat pictures were not shown on British television until 29 May.¹⁰¹ Although images from the Task Force made up over 12% of TV material, the figure was as low as just under 4% in newspapers (Table 6.8). Whereas television and, to a lesser extent, radio relied on images and/or audio clips, newspapers could adapt if there was no word from their representative in the South Atlantic. Newspapers had to fill empty column inches, television had to fill dead air time – one was easier than the other.

The tabloids featured a smaller proportion of Task Force copy than broadsheets. In the case of the *Daily Mirror*, as little as 2.5% of all printed articles on the Falklands originated from the Task Force. In the case of the broadsheets the average percentage of copy devoted to that from the Task Force was 5%. The situation, however, was altered after 21 May. It was Government policy that all reports from the Task Force should be pooled after the British landings.¹⁰² Thus, consistently, more copy began to appear in newspapers after 21 May because each publication had access to more stories (Figure 6.3).¹⁰³ Figure 6.4 gives an indication of how many of those reports shown in Figure 6.3 were actually pooled.

⁹⁷ For example: Morrison and Tumber; Harris; Eds. Eddy et al.; Dodds, 'Contesting War'.

⁹⁸ For example: Carruthers; Knightley; Royle; Badsey, 'The Falklands Conflict as a Media War'; Dodds, 'Contesting War'.

⁹⁹ See Chapters Two and Three.

¹⁰⁰ Day-Lewis, 'PICTURES WILL BE SPEEDED', *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 May, p.4.

¹⁰¹ ITV, *News at Ten*, 29 May.

¹⁰² *Canberra* to MoDUK and CTG317.0, 18 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E48.

¹⁰³ For works which explain the process of pooling copy see: Eds. Eddy et al., p.213.; Carruthers, p.130.; Freedman, v.ii, p.411.

Gareth Parry, of *The Guardian*, told the HCDC: ‘Our copy flow seemed to be quite consistent’.¹⁰⁴ Of the 4% of newspaper coverage which originated from the Task Force, the amount of copy which appeared in the press fluctuated considerably over the course of the war. Figure 6.3 represents the frequency at which Task Force journalists’ copy was printed across the four newspapers. On average, there would be a peak in the amount of copy featured in newspapers two days after a significant event took place in the Falklands: on 24 May - after the San Carlos landings of 21 May; on 31 May – after the Argentine surrender of Goose Green; on 10 June – after the Argentine attack at Fitzroy. Some reporting trends were closer to events, for example, 26 April saw a high amount of copy following the recapture of South Georgia on 25 April, and 3 May saw an influx of copy after the sinking of the *Belgrano*. It should be considered as no coincidence that these two events were anomalies – the MoD gained a reputation, during the war, of expediting positive news, and delaying what might be considered ‘bad news’.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ G. Parry, HCDC, v.ii, p.206, q.581.

¹⁰⁵ More on the delay of ‘bad news’: Freedman, v.ii, p.36., Mercer et al., p.149., Dodds, ‘Contesting War’, p.225., Bishop and Witherow, p.151. and Carruthers, p.124.

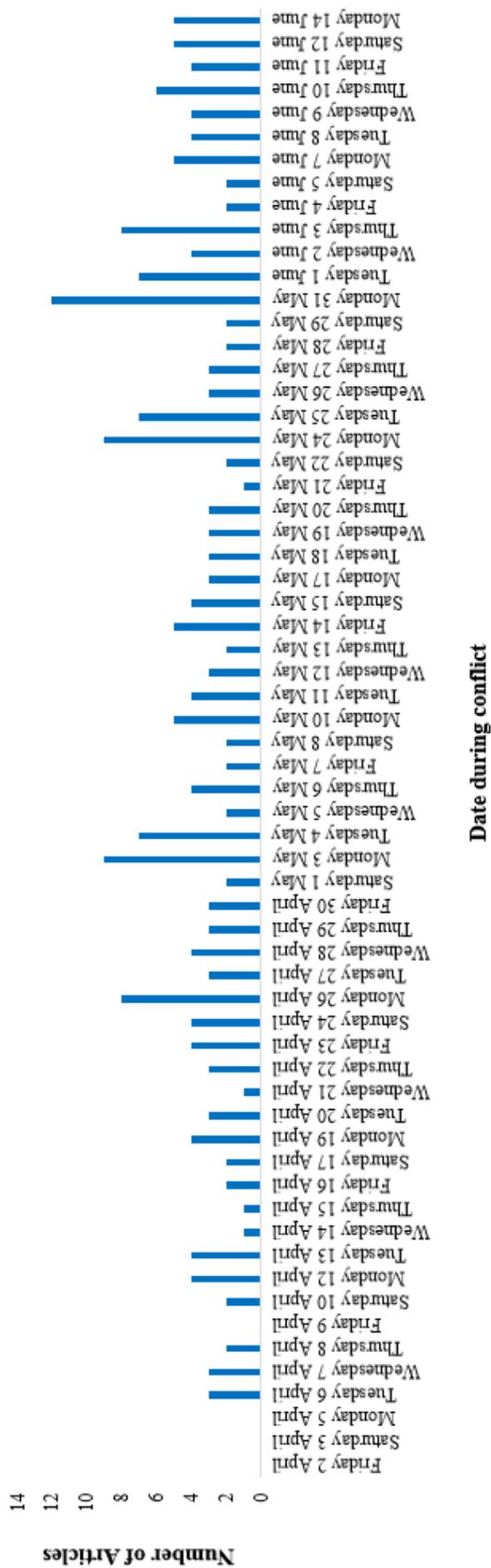


Figure 6.3: Frequency of copy originating from the Task Force throughout the Falklands conflict (all four newspapers)

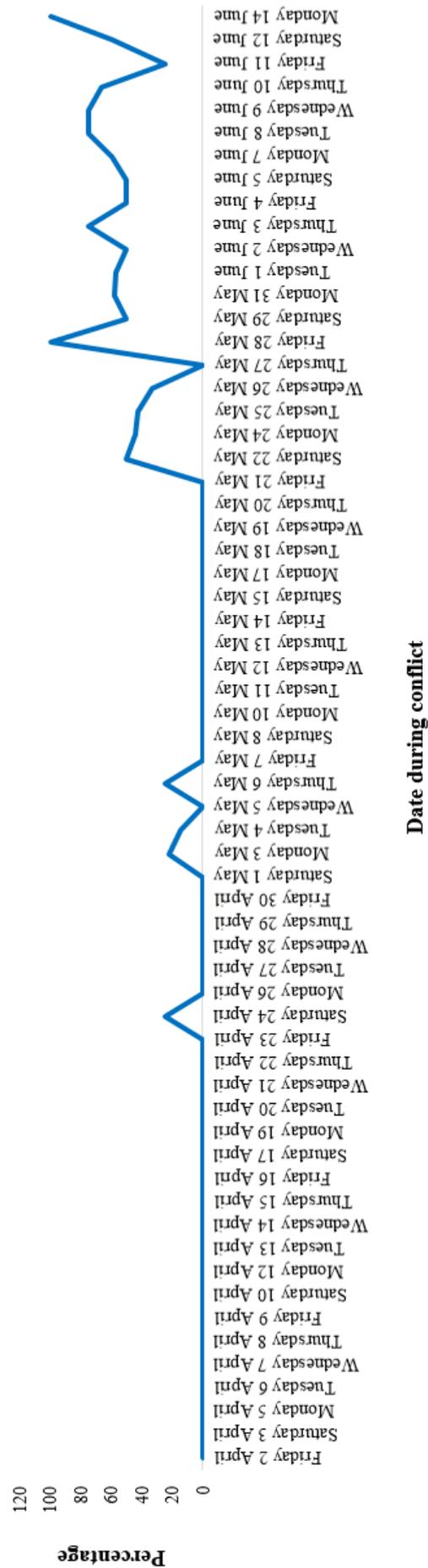


Figure 6.4: Percentage of reports originating from the Task Force to be pooled

3c. Main Themes Attributed to Falklands-Related Coverage

The most extensive breakdown of television news coverage provided by *Journalists at War* was a thematic dissection of news bulletins. Morrison and Tumber constructed 169 themes to which stories on the Falklands could be allocated. When ascertaining the themes which attained the highest frequency scores the pair found that those themes which one might expect to have featured highly in coverage - reports on armed conflict, jingoism or patriotism - were not the themes overwhelmingly covered. Instead, the results showed that the primary themes discussed were diplomacy, the possibility of armed conflict and British military capacity and hardware (Table 6.9).¹⁰⁶ Despite television in particular having been accused of failing to allocate adequate attention to the movement for peace, the primary theme of reporting was ‘diplomacy as a way of solving the crisis’, with just over 65% of the frequency score.¹⁰⁷

Table 6.9: *Main themes in order of relative frequency (television - BBC and ITN)* ¹⁰⁸

Ranking	Theme	No. of Falklands-Related Bulletins	% of all Falklands-Related Bulletins
1	Diplomacy as a way of solving problem	95	65.07
	Military equipment - capacity, ships, planes		
2	(British)	92	63.01
2	Possibility of fighting	92	63.01
4	Task Force preparations, training, equipment	82	56.16
4	Conditions of conflict - weather, terrain	82	56.16
6	Details of operations, battles	77	52.74
7	Sovereignty – Argentinian	70	47.95
8	Tactical discussions - military, battle plans	62	42.47
9	Sovereignty – British	61	41.78
	Diplomacy - as a way of not solving		
10	problem	55	37.67
	Military equipment - capacity, ships, planes		
11	(Argentina)	54	36.99
	Support for British position - UN, EEC,		
12	world (except USA)	53	36.3
12	Peace plans - UN - likelihood of failure	53	36.3
14	US support for British position	49	33.56
	State of British armed forces - ready –		
15	positive	49	33.56

¹⁰⁶ Morrison and Tumber, p.278.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Raw data taken from Morrison and Tumber, pp.274-278.

Most interestingly, the major theme covered by newspapers was one contributed by this thesis to Morrison and Tumber's original list of themes. 'Parliamentary events' was introduced as a category to cover those articles which referred to proceedings associated with the Falklands in Parliament or within the Government or Cabinet.¹⁰⁹ These events were not covered by an existing category, as supplied in the original research. By far, the theme most regularly attributed to newspaper copy was that of Parliamentary events (Table 6.10). The reason newspapers carried more Parliament-related comment was principally due to two factors: in the regular format of most newspapers there was a feature page (at least) devoted to proceedings in Parliament. The fact the Commons sat on 42 days throughout the war – all of which involved discussion of the Falklands (whether in a specific debate or not) – determined that regular features on Parliament were overrun by Falklands-related discussion. Newspapers also had more scope to indulge in commentary of Parliament than television, which was forced to focus on more popular issues like preparation of the Task Force, military equipment, tactical discussion and details of operations.

Table 6.10: *Main themes in order of relative frequency (newspapers - all four tested)*

Ranking	Theme	No. of Falklands- Related Articles	% of all Falklands- Related Articles
1	Parliamentary events	577	11.93
2	Military equipment – British	461	9.53
3	Diplomacy - the way of solving the crisis	365	7.55
4	Reports on armed conflict	355	7.34
5	Economic implications of crisis	313	6.47
6	Possibility of armed conflict or war	277	5.73
7	Patriotism	268	5.54
8	Speculation - British action	243	5.03
9	Education on war	240	4.96
10	Support for Britain - UN, EEC, world	204	4.22
11	Reporting on UN events	199	4.12
12	Effect in Britain - N*	195	4.03
13	Lack of support for Britain - UN, EEC, world	183	3.78
14	Bravery – British	172	3.56
15	Conditions of conflict	171	3.54

*Negative

The top two themes in newspapers (other than 'Parliamentary events') were the same as those of television bulletins: discussion on military equipment belonging to the British and

¹⁰⁹ See Appendix 23 for a list of themes used for this research and their descriptions.

diplomacy as a way of solving the crisis. In some respects then, coverage of the war by television and newspapers was similar – but it was by no means identical in its composition. Apart from the top three themes in each study, the preceding themes mark a stark difference in the frequency of themes given attention on TV and themes included in newspaper coverage. Of 15 top themes outlined for both TV and newspapers (Tables 6.9 and 6.10), only four were common to both media. There were far more military-related themes connected with television than with newspapers. Of the 20 most common themes attributed to television news coverage, 11 focused on military aspects of the war.¹¹⁰

By contrast, newspaper discussion tended to be based more on three different elements: diplomacy, support for Britain and scepticism about the implications of the war. Diplomacy as a way of solving the crisis was in the top three themes of each medium. Other themes accompanied this in newspapers. For example, the 15 themes with the highest frequencies in newspapers also included reports on action and events in and surrounding the UN. Two of the top themes also involved discussion on Britain's international support. Support for the British case was also a central subject to newspaper copy – high-scoring themes like patriotism and support for Britain with the UN, European Economic Community (EEC) and among the rest of the world attested to this. Finally, there were more subjects which indicated a sceptical tone covered by newspapers. There was, in general, more discussion in newspapers of the implications of the war in Britain. For example, two themes which featured in the top 15 of all newspaper coverage were the economic implications of the crisis and the negative effect it might have on Britain. Of the 20 most common themes associated with newspaper coverage, six tended more toward the long-term consequences of the war.¹¹¹

The differences in the reporting of the conflict were indicative of the different challenges and aims of each type of medium. Television news was designed, not only to inform its audience, but to entertain it. Newspapers, in a sense, were under less pressure to keep their readers' attention. A television news report had a limited time in which it could be viewed - a newspaper could be read at any time and as little or as much attention or focus could be placed on a story as required. This is arguably why television centred on prevalent themes

¹¹⁰ Themes: military equipment (Argentine, British or specialist), the possibility of fighting, preparations for the Task Force, conditions of the conflict, details of operations, tactical discussion, the skill of British troops, the state of the armed forces and the use of aggression as a solution.

¹¹¹ Themes: the negative effect the war might have in Britain or the economic implications - or on the personal elements of the conflict: stories on the families of members of the Task Force, non-battle-related stories from the Task Force and education on war in general.

– attracting large percentages of overall reporting. The most prevalent television themes featured percentages of around 50 to 60 percent. By contrast, newspapers’ prevalent themes attracted only between five and 11 percent. Overall, in newspapers, subjects were discussed in greater detail, a wider range of themes were involved and issues were treated more comprehensively. In addition, content analysis of newspaper coverage in the war, like analysis of television coverage, has shown that, contrary to popular arguments that the media reporting of the war was centred on stories relating to patriotism or jingoism, or centred too heavily on pro-Argentine material, the coverage of the Falklands highlighted the diplomatic effort to reach a peaceful settlement.

3c (i). The Frequency of Themes in the Broadsheets and the Tabloids

Of course it was not just between television and newspaper coverage that differences in thematic approaches existed. Each individual publication’s treatment of the war was distinct. In this section the two broadsheets and two tabloids analysed are compared. It is by no means suggested that ‘the tabloids’, in this case, are representative of the entire tabloid market during the war, nor should ‘the broadsheets’ be considered to represent that style of paper. What this section provides is an initial examination of the thematic difference between the newspapers tested in this study.

The broadsheets reported the Falklands fairly similarly in terms of themes. As one can observe from Figure 6.5 the top four themes featured in both *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* were the same. The other themes which made up the top 20 were similar, but appeared with different frequencies. For example, 27 of the 40 highest frequency themes across both papers were the same. It could, however, be argued that *The Daily Telegraph* reported more fully, carrying, on average, more articles per subject than *The Times*. Yet confirmation of this could not be positive unless one managed to ascertain the column inches attributed to each of the stories featuring a certain theme.

Figure 6.5: Highest ranking themes in the tested broadsheets



Having established that both broadsheet newspapers analysed explored similar themes, the type of themes most subscribed to require further attention. As with the results from all four newspapers, the theme both papers concentrated on the most was ‘Parliamentary events’. The other top three themes were the same as those observed across all papers (Table 6.10). Discussion on British military equipment, capacity and the Task Force’s strength, and articles which considered the use of diplomacy as a way of settling the dispute were the most frequent themes respectively. There were four broad subjects associated with the themes scoring the highest frequencies for the broadsheets: the diplomatic efforts to end the war, support for the British cause, narrative of conflict and speculation on the long-term connotations of the war.

The diplomatic effort was perhaps the most well-covered theme across both broadsheets. Parliamentary events was the most mentioned theme in both newspapers: in *The Times* 16%, and in the *Telegraph* 11.24%. Comments on diplomacy which urged that it was a suitable way in which to end the crisis was the second highest ranking theme in *The Times* and third highest in *The Daily Telegraph*. In addition, reports on action in the UN - one of

the key organisations involved in the diplomatic effort during the war - featured strongly: 10th in *The Times* and ninth in the *Telegraph*.

There was certainly an element of support for the British cause in the broadsheets' coverage of the conflict. It was said that the *Telegraph* 'achieved a feeling of quiet, reasoned, seamless support of government policies...'¹¹² This was indicated in these results. There was, for example, contemplation of, and dialogue on, the support Britain attracted from around the world – principally from the UN and EEC.¹¹³ The need to combat aggression – a theme which was largely aimed at the British need to make a stand against the Argentine occupation of the islands – was a common theme in both newspapers, figuring eighth in *The Times*' top 20, and 18th in *The Daily Telegraph*'s.

The military aspect of the conflict was a consistent focus in both broadsheets. Considerable attention was paid to the study of British military equipment. The subject ranked second and third in *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Times* respectively. Reports on armed conflict were also represented solidly. Articles on battles or military encounters were the fifth and sixth highest frequency themes in the *Telegraph* and *The Times*. Further, the possibility of conflict ranked seventh in *The Times* and eighth in the *Telegraph* and featured most strongly in the period between 4 and 24 April.

Finally, the broadsheets were more speculative in their treatment of the implications of the war, and the enduring consequences for Britain.¹¹⁴ In both broadsheets analysed the theme of economic implications involved in the war was prevalent. It featured fourth in both publications' results – *The Times* saw 8.06% of its Falklands' commentary devoted to the theme, *The Daily Telegraph*, 6.69%. There were two periods in which economic implications were featured most: in the period from 5-24 April, and from 1-20 May. This is not surprising when one considers that the first period related to when the Task Force was prepared and sailed - ships were taken up from trade and a large number of the British Force was mustered. Speculation over the cost of the operation was bound to appear repeatedly. The second period saw the first tangible British losses - *Sheffield*, a series of British aircraft losses which resulted in the deaths of 21 Britons, and HMS *Glasgow*. It was also the phase of the war which saw the reinforcement of the British in the South Atlantic with the sailing of the *QEII*.¹¹⁵ The effect the war might have in Britain constituted two

¹¹² Greenberg and Smith, p.27.

¹¹³ In *The Times* the theme was the 5th highest frequency - in *The Daily Telegraph*, the 13th.

¹¹⁴ This is not to be confused with 'speculation' over military options open to the British or Argentines.

¹¹⁵ See Appendix One.

different themes – it could be reported in either a negative or positive way. On average, the broadsheets highlighted the negative impact the war might have in Britain. In *The Times* the theme was included in 4.4% of possible material and ranked 17th in the top 20 themes featured throughout the war. In *The Daily Telegraph*, the theme ranked higher, at 14th, and demanded 3.44% of Falklands' presentation. The long-term aspects of the conflict were further emphasised by both dailies when they considered the long-term, political repercussions for the Falkland Islands themselves (the theme ranked 15th for *The Times* and 18th for the *Telegraph*). Thus, overall, there was a considerable similarity of the thematic approaches adopted by both broadsheets analysed. Broadly, the newspapers followed comparable, and at some points, parallel themes.

One could consider the arrangement of the two tabloids might be without correlation. The *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* took very different stances on the Falklands – they had diverse attitudes from the beginning. Whilst the *Daily Mirror* did not oppose the sending of the Task Force, it did consistently question the need for violence and was sceptical about whether, especially following the attack on HMS *Sheffield*, the cost of the war was justified. *The Sun*, on the other hand, saw the conflict in terms which were very much black and white: it was the Argentines or the British.

The situation between the two papers was further complicated by a public row. After the publication of a *Daily Mirror* editorial on 6 May, which was provoked by the loss of the *Belgrano* and *Sheffield* and entitled, 'The killing has to stop', *The Sun* embarked on a mission to identify the *Mirror* as a traitor.¹¹⁶ *The Sun* editorial the following day claimed 'there are traitors in our midst'.¹¹⁷ In reply to this accusation the *Mirror* printed a piece which was titled, and in which it depicted *The Sun* as, 'THE HARLOT OF FLEET ST.'.¹¹⁸ The disagreement between the two publications as to how best to cover the war, and in what way reporting should be conducted, dictated that one might suppose there should not be as many similarities between the themes of coverage.¹¹⁹ However, this was not the case. The reporting of the war was not completely divergent. There were a number of ways in which the thematic content of *The Sun* and the *Mirror* were similar. Most obviously, and as Figure 6.6 demonstrates, three of the four highest frequency themes were the same in both publications: reports on armed conflict, the use of British military equipment and

¹¹⁶ 'The killing has to stop', *Daily Mirror*, 6 May, p.3.

¹¹⁷ 'Dare call it treason', *The Sun*, 7 May, p.6.

¹¹⁸ 'THE HARLOT OF FLEET ST.', *Daily Mirror*, 8 May, p.2.

¹¹⁹ For more on the disagreements between newspapers and the row over perceived support see Harris, pp.38-55.

Parliamentary events. These ‘top themes’ are comparable with those of the broadsheets. There were also a number of themes which, broadly speaking, fitted into two wide categories and which both tabloid newspapers followed: themes which related to the military aspects of the war; and those themes which supported the British – particularly the men of the Task Force.

The tabloid newspapers dedicated more discussion to the military aspects of the British campaign than the broadsheets. ‘Armed conflict’ was the highest frequency theme throughout the *Mirror*’s coverage of the war, and the third most examined theme in *The Sun*. This result is not to say that the way in which these reports were presented was the same. The *Daily Mirror* was more critical of the war and tended to emphasise British losses. For example, of the top 20 themes for the *Mirror*, British casualties - light and heavy - both made up around 3.1% of Falklands coverage.¹²⁰ *The Sun* also showcased a significant number of articles on heavy British casualties - the theme ranking 20th in the papers most frequently used themes. In the broadsheets, the subject received nowhere near the amount of attention it was offered by the tabloids (1.49% and 1.96% of the *Telegraph* and *The Times*’ coverage respectively). One reason for this was because the broadsheets tended to place one article listing losses, usually on the front page of any particular edition. The tabloids, on the other hand, tended to speculate more wildly about British fatalities or the number of wounded. They also tended to repeat the same news more often – this was the case with subjects which might be considered more ‘sensational’, which readers would be most interested in. As with the broadsheets, the tabloids concentrated attention on British military equipment. The theme was the second highest frequency theme adopted by *The Sun* and *The Mirror*. In *The Sun* the percentage of total coverage was as high as 11.6% (6.52% in *The Mirror*).

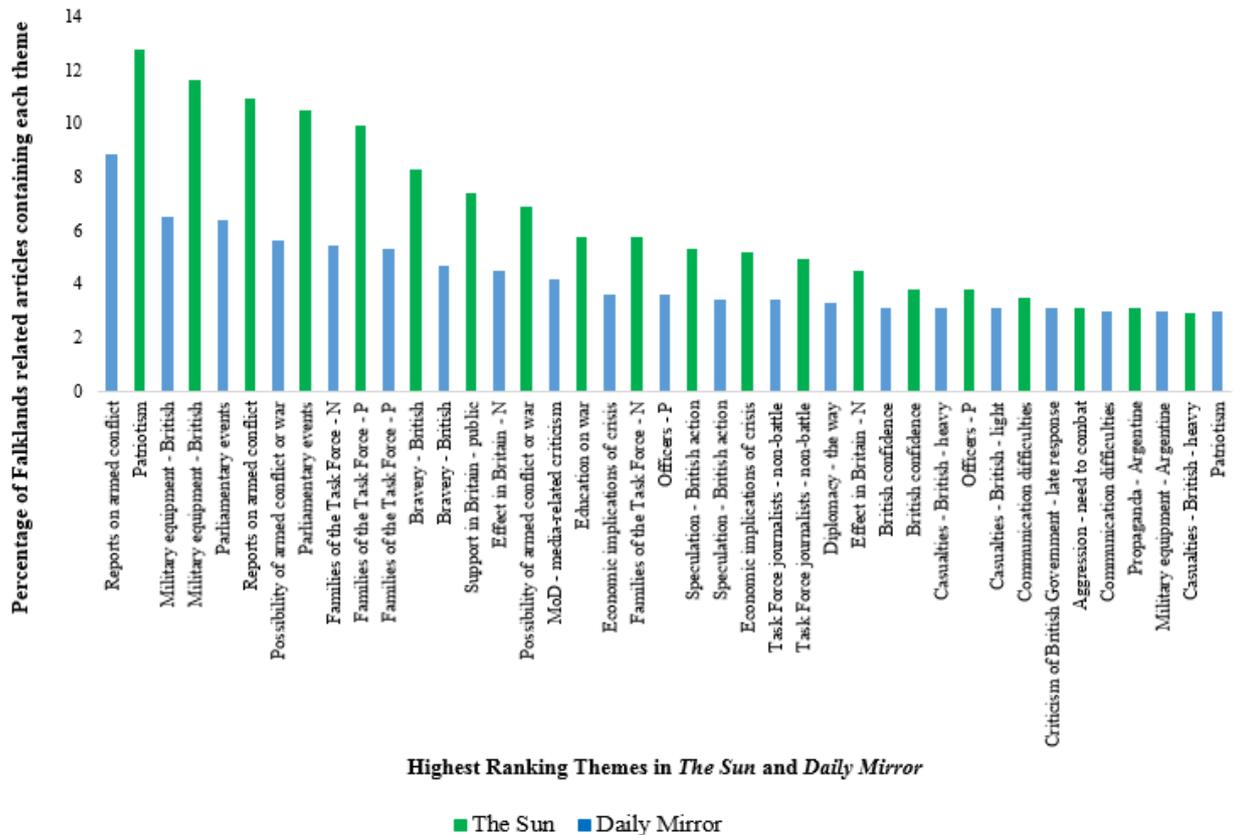
One of the most controversial aspects of the war, and the chief subject matter of Adams’ work, was the speculation of the media concerning military movements.¹²¹ Neither broadsheets’ 20 highest frequency themes included speculation on the British or Argentine position. In the tabloids, however, speculation on British military action figured highly, ranking 11th in *The Sun* and 12th in the *Telegraph*. In *The Sun* as much as 5.31% of all Falklands-related copy included speculation over some aspect of the British campaign. In *The Daily Mirror* 3.41% of material made use of speculation. This evidence indicates that,

¹²⁰ ‘Casualties – British – light’ ranked 17th in the *Daily Mirror*’s top 20. ‘Casualties – British – heavy’ ranked 16th.

¹²¹ Adams.

contrary to conclusions adopted by some authors as to the speculative nature of the entire press, the tabloid newspapers engaged in the act to a far greater extent than broadsheets.¹²² This, of course, is not to say that *The Times* and the *Telegraph* did not engage in speculation, but the extent to which speculation appeared was considerably less.

Figure 6.6: Highest ranking themes in the tested tabloids



Both tested tabloids were supportive of the British cause to some extent - they did not necessarily endorse the action of the Government, but were fully invested in British Servicemen. A considerable amount of human interest material was published in reference to the Task Force. Tabloid newspapers have a history of utilising ‘human interest’ stories. A human interest story is one which appeals to the reader by describing the experiences, or emotions of, an individual to which they can relate.¹²³

During the war, stories relating to the families of Task Force personnel had a prominent position in both tabloids. These stories often centred on the wives and girlfriends of the Task Force. This analysis allowed for features on families to have been presented in either

¹²² Works which accuse the wider press of speculation: Hastings and Jenkins, p.419.; Morrison and Tumber, p.241.; Hudson and Stanier, pp.174-5.; Adams, p.149.

¹²³ Oxford Dictionaries <www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/human-interest?q=human+interest&searchDictCode=all> [Accessed 21 Nov. 2014].

a positive or negative way (either, for example, emphasising their resilience or their loss). In *The Sun*, 9.93% of Falklands' articles contained a theme relating to the positive representation of Task Force families (fifth highest frequency). In the *Mirror*, the theme was the sixth highest frequency, totalling 5.27% of all Falklands coverage. The positive theme of family did not feature at all in the top 20 of either broadsheet. It should be noted that, as well as reporting on families in a positive way, the tabloid publications also reported negatively. The *Mirror* reported negative aspects relating to families to a greater extent than those which were positive (4.5% of coverage and ranked fifth). In *The Sun*, quite predictably, the figure was not so high – negative reporting of Task Force families was the 10th most frequently discussed theme.

Positive characteristics of the Task Force were also emphasised by the tabloids. The bravery of Servicemen was highlighted by both papers. The theme occurred sixth and seventh in the frequency analysis of themes for *The Sun* and the *Mirror*. In broadsheets, bravery of British troops, although not neglected, was a less featured theme – ranked 16th in the *Telegraph*, and did not feature in *The Times*' top 20. The positive portrayal of officers with the Task Force was also a prevalent theme in both *The Sun* and *Daily Mirror*. Results allowed for, again, the positive or negative portrayal of officers. Both papers carried a considerable amount of articles presenting officers in a positive light – the 15th highest recurring theme in *The Sun* and 10th in the *Mirror*. The final theme which the tabloid papers pursued which showed, to some extent, their loyalty to the Task Force was 'British confidence'. Stories carrying this theme alluded to either the nation's confidence in a British victory, the Task Force's confidence in an Argentine defeat, or the paper's own confidence in the success of a British campaign. In both papers the theme was the 15th highest ranking theme (3.77% of coverage in *The Sun* and 3.1% in the *Mirror*). Of course, it is crucial to bear in mind that the *Mirror* was less likely to bestow its own confidence in the British military effort than it was to report the confidence of the nation or those with the Task Force.

Despite the obvious differences in moral views over the use of violence, the content analysis of *The Sun* and *Daily Mirror* reveals that there were a number of significant convergences between the two tabloids' reporting of the Falklands. Similar has been proven for *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*. Naturally, when covering a conflict, there are a number of themes which are bound to recur more frequently than others: reports on armed conflict, discussion of military capabilities or equipment, debate over the use of aggression. However, most surprisingly, the theme of Parliamentary events by far

superseded any other theme in terms of its regularity. Emphasis on democracy and Britain's democratic process was abundant – and contrasted well with the depiction of the Argentine junta as a tyrannical, fascist dictatorship. Fairly obviously, the tabloid newspapers identified more with the members of the Task Force, and used more 'human interest' pieces to entertain their readership. The fact that the top three themes for both the tabloids and broadsheets were the same as those abundant in themes attributed to television news was indicative, not of a particular stance adopted by an organisation but, simply, that each was reporting a war.

3c (ii). Prevalent Themes in Different Periods of the War

A thematic approach to the assessment of news coverage of the Falklands conflict is essential to a thorough understanding of the role of the media. It is useful, then, to consider which themes were the most regularly employed during different *stages* of the war. Table 6.11 gives, as an average of all four newspapers, the three themes scoring the highest frequencies during the five periods of the war considered.

Table 6.11: *Highest ranking three themes across each time period (all four tested newspapers)*

Period	Rank	Theme	No. of articles	Percentage of Falklands-related articles
2 April - 4 April	1	Diplomacy - the way	2.25	3.17
	1	History of Falklands	2.25	3.17
	1	Parliamentary events	2.25	3.17
	1	Reports on armed conflict	2.25	3.17
5 April - 24 April	1	Parliamentary events	39.25	3.22
	2	Military equipment – British	31.5	2.58
	3	Possibility of armed conflict or war	29.75	2.44
25 April - 30 April	1	Parliamentary events	30.75	30.98
	2	Diplomacy - the way	22.75	22.92
	3	Support for Britain - UN, EEC, World	14.75	14.86
1 May - 20 May	1	Parliamentary events	69.5	18.87
	2	Military equipment – British	49.75	13.5
	3	Economic implications of crisis	39.5	10.72
21 May - 14 June	1	Parliamentary events	86.75	20.71
	2	Reports on armed conflict	59	14.08
	3	Military equipment – British	56.5	13.49

The most prominent aspect of Table 6.11 is that, in all five separate periods of the war, the comment on events in and around Parliament was featured most frequently. Since the Conservative victory in the 1983 general election, many academics have attributed success

to a phenomenon called the ‘Falklands Factor’.¹²⁴ It has been supposed that triumph in the Falklands, and the euphoria which ensued, had a direct impact on the electoral fortunes of the Tories. During the crisis itself, a series of by-elections led to speculation over how the war might affect the standing of the Government. Rivalries between the two leading parties were also a source of interest. Demands within the Commons for a peaceful solution to the crisis were the subjects of many articles. There were also editorials featured specifically on the role of Parliament in times of war. The *Telegraph* carried the editorial, ‘PARLIAMENT AND WAR’, and *The Times* featured a piece entitled, ‘PARLIAMENT’S RESPONSIBILITY’.¹²⁵ The existing literature has failed to address the media’s preoccupation during the Falklands crisis with the effects of the war on domestic life. This, coupled with the information that an overwhelming percentage of news reports originated from Britain, suggests that the British media’s reporting of the Falklands tended to focus mainly on events related to the war, but *in* Britain.

British military equipment was most frequently referred to throughout the periods between 5 and 24 April, 1 and 20 May, and 21 May and 14 June. The primary reason for this was that, in the first period, the Task Force sailed – leaving the media to hypothesize over, and report on, British military capacity. In the second (1-20 May), the first major British losses of the war occurred – inviting the media to comment on the equipment available to fight a campaign. The final of the three periods was the last of the war – when some of the most crucial British (and Argentine) losses occurred: HMS *Antrim*, *Antelope*, *Coventry*, *Broadsword*, *Plymouth*, *Glamorgan*, *SS Atlantic Conveyor* and RFA *Sir Galahad* and *Sir Tristram* - which attracted copious commentary on British equipment.¹²⁶

It is interesting that diplomacy as a way of solving the crisis only featured in the top themes in the periods 2-4 April and 25-30 April. Not only were these two periods the shortest offered in the investigation, but they both occurred immediately following significant action in the South Atlantic. The first, 2-4 April, saw the press speculate on the future of the islands, the rights and wrongs of British sovereignty and as to the causes of the Argentine invasion. It was swiftly announced that Britain would send a Force to the Falklands, and most publications urged caution. The second period was dominated by the

¹²⁴ H. Clarke, W. Mishler, and P. Whiteley, ‘Recapturing the Falklands: Models of Conservative Popularity, 1979-83’, *British Journal of Political Science*, 20, 1 (Jan. 1990).

¹²⁵ ‘PARLIAMENT AND WAR’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 May, p.16.; ‘PARLIAMENT’S RESPONSIBILITY’, *The Times*, 30 Apr., p.11.

¹²⁶ See Appendix One.

first significant British action of the war – the recapture of South Georgia. This act of force from the British provoked heightened demands that a diplomatic resolution be found.

It seems incredible that, when analysing coverage of a war, reports on armed conflict only entered the top ranking themes during two periods: at the beginning and end of the crisis (2-4 April and 21 May – 14 June). This evidence lends weight to the earlier conclusion that the majority of British press coverage of the conflict was centred on non-combat-related commentary – instead it was focused on Parliamentary events in Britain and on diplomatic efforts.

3c (iii). Press Coverage and Peace Initiatives

The art of diplomacy as a way to rectify the situation in the Falklands was a dominant theme in both television and newspaper coverage. What is particularly notable, however, is the importance attached to the various peace initiatives. In this study themes were allocated to the various peace plans: those attributed to Haig, the UN and Peru.¹²⁷ From there, the categories were divided into whether they were portrayed as a possible success or failure. An extra theme was added to account for neutral reporting of the Haig peace plan, since it was the most extensively covered of the plans. Mostly, the coverage of the peace initiatives is unsurprising: the Haig and UN schemes gained more currency than that of Peru; television devoted more time to the discussion of each of the initiatives than newspapers; and the potential (or real) failure of various proposals were given more attention than their possible success. What was unanticipated was the uniformity of the treatment of each of the peace initiatives between the tabloids and broadsheets.

¹²⁷ For information on the various proposals offered: Parsons, 'The Falklands Crisis in the United Nations', pp.169-178.; Freedman, v.ii, pp.101-162.; Hastings and Jenkins, pp.170-180. And pp.206-221.; Thatcher, pp.181-235.

Table 6.12: *Peace initiative themes ranked in order of frequency for television and the print media* ¹²⁸

Newspaper themes	Ranking	Percentage of articles with theme	Television themes	Ranking	Percentage of bulletins with theme
Peace Plan - Haig - Failure	33	2.23	Peace Plan - UN - Failure	13	36.30
Peace Plan - UN - Failure	38	1.99	Peace Plan - Haig - Failure	17	32.88
Peace Plan - UN - Success	84	0.91	Peace Plan - Haig - Success	42	16.44
Peace Plan - Peru - Failure	99	0.72	Peace Plan - UN - Success	44	15.75
Peace Plan - Haig - Success	116	0.6	Peace Plan - Peru - Failure	97	7.53
Peace Plan - Haig - Neutral	122	0.56	Peace Plan - Peru - Success	132	3.42
Peace Plan - Peru - Success	195	0.08			

Table 6.12 demonstrates the frequency of themes related to the various peace initiatives offered over the course of the war. Overall, it is clear that the failure of peace plans attracted the most attention from both newspapers and television. This is not exceptional, since each of the peace proposals failed to avert armed conflict. It is interesting, though, that the possible success of the UN peace proposal was discussed more thoroughly in print than the failure of the Peruvian plan. Although there was a large margin between the amount of content on the failure of the UN and Haig plans, and the potential success of the UN programme, the amount of debate surrounding the theme suggests that the UN plan was presented in the press as perhaps the most viable option.

Television's coverage of the peace plans was certainly more focused than newspaper attention. Both television and newspaper reporting converged on the potential failure of both the Haig and UN plan. However, the frequencies at which the plans were discussed varied greatly. Table 6.12 shows how diverse the rankings were. What is clear is that a far greater percentage of all Falklands coverage was devoted to the peace initiatives on television – 36.30% of coverage carried the theme. Although, as has been established, newspapers were able to cover a greater range of themes, the discrepancies in both percentages and rankings proves that the peace initiatives were attributed far less attention in print than on the small screen.

¹²⁸ Raw data from Morrison and Tumber, pp.274-178.

Table 6.13: Frequency of articles relating to peace initiatives in the Falklands War

<i>Daily Mirror</i>		<i>The Sun</i>	
Theme	Percentage of coverage	Theme	Percentage of coverage
Peace Plan - UN – Failure	2.02	Peace Plan - UN - Failure	2.10
Peace Plan - Haig - Failure	1.40	Peace Plan - Haig - Failure	2.10
Peace Plan - UN - Success	0.62	Peace Plan - Haig - Success	0.42
Peace Plan - Peru - Failure	0.62	Peace Plan - Haig - Neutral	0.28
Peace Plan - Haig - Neutral	0.62	Peace Plan - Peru - Failure	0.14
Peace Plan - Haig - Success	0.31	Peace Plan - UN - Success	0.00
Peace Plan - Peru - Success	0.16	Peace Plan - Peru - Success	0.00
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>		<i>The Times</i>	
Theme	Percentage of coverage	Theme	Percentage of coverage
Peace Plan - UN – Failure	1.75	Peace Plan - UN - Failure	3.32
Peace Plan - Haig - Failure	1.55	Peace Plan - Haig - Failure	3.05
Peace Plan - UN - Success	0.75	Peace Plan - UN - Success	1.69
Peace Plan - Haig - Success	0.75	Peace Plan - Peru - Failure	1.08
Peace Plan - Peru - Failure	0.70	Peace Plan - Haig - Success	0.61
Peace Plan - Haig - Neutral	0.70	Peace Plan - Haig - Neutral	0.47
Peace Plan - Peru - Success	0.10	Peace Plan - Peru - Success	0.07

What was more surprising than any other finding on the attention paid to the peace initiatives was how standardised the results for both the tabloids and broadsheets were. Table 6.13 details the thematic results for each of the four papers tested. Across all four the top two themes were consistent: the failure of both the UN and Haig peace plans. Across *The Times*, the *Telegraph* and *The Mirror*, the third highest frequency peace-related theme was also the same – speculation on the success of the UN initiative. *The Sun* on the other hand, persistently considered the Haig proposals to a greater extent than other newspapers and marks the most divergence from the uniform picture produced by the other papers. A possible explanation for this could have been the fact that, after the Americans openly sided with the British on 30 April, *The Sun*, paid decreasing attention to any efforts to secure a diplomatic solution, and turned to discussion of the military alternatives. The greatest concentration of articles on peace initiatives appeared in *The Sun*, for example, during the period from 5 -24 April. Despite *The Sun*'s deviation from the more consistent results in the analysis, the paper still presented four themes of the seven in the same position as another publication. Across the board, the least handled theme was the prospective success of the Peruvian peace plan. The Peruvian plan appeared as the plan least discussed in all newspapers and on television. The Peruvian plan was in play for less time, for example, than the Haig plan, and also was the final peace effort of the war, finally

collapsing *after* the sinking of the *Belgrano* and the *Sheffield*. Thus, all four newspapers presented the peace initiatives, with the exception of *The Sun* after 30 April, with a rare degree of consistency.

3c (iv). Patriotism and Jingoism

The theory that the British press was jingoistic in its treatment of the Falklands, has been prevalent in literature of the conflict.¹²⁹ Memories coloured by individual publications' exploits have tarred coverage of the whole campaign. *The Sun*, in particular, has been criticised for its behaviour during the war. A string of inappropriate headlines were published – headlines which, to this day, remain representative of press conduct in the crisis – such as, 'STICK IT UP YOUR JUNTA' and 'GOTCHA'.¹³⁰ *The Sun* also initiated a number of campaigns or features based on the war. The most notable was the campaign to 'sponsor a sidewinder'. *The Sun* offered the public the chance to write slogans on missiles. The first sidewinder was sponsored by the paper and read 'up yours Galtieri'. Snow, aboard *Invincible*, wrote a story on the missile bringing down an Argentine bomber.¹³¹ The publication also initiated a regular series of 'Argy Bargie' jokes. Readers were invited to send in xenophobic jokes for a reward of £5 if they were used. It is the contention of this thesis that such campaigns and instances have dominated analysis of coverage – and unjustly.

Broadcast media specifically was criticised for being too neutral in its treatment of the war.¹³² Morrison and Tumber found that the language of television reports based in Britain was mostly neutral.¹³³ No such analysis of newspapers could be feasibly conducted here – largely because the amount of text which would have to be analysed and its neutrality examined. However, if one considers the treatment of the theme of 'patriotism' by both television and publications, one can lend a degree of weight to the argument that television took a relatively neutral stance in comparison with newspapers. The theme of patriotism covered stories relating to feelings of patriotism within Britain, internationally and within the Task Force, as well as specifically describing patriotic deeds at home.¹³⁴ As a theme, patriotism featured as low as 27th in the frequency ratings for television. In comparison, patriotism was a consistently high-scoring theme across all four papers. As one might

¹²⁹ Criticism of newspapers' jingoistic approach is featured in many works: Harris, p.40. and p.54.; Dalyell, p.93.; Boyce, p.166.; Greenberg and Smith, p.31.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.171.

¹³⁰ 'STICK IT UP YOUR JUNTA', *The Sun*, 20 Apr., p.1.; 'GOTCHA', *The Sun*, 4 May, p.1.

¹³¹ T. Snow, 'THE SUN'S SIDEWINDER DOWNS BOMBER', *The Sun*, 4 May, p.4.

¹³² See Chapter Five.

¹³³ Morrison and Tumber, p.270.

¹³⁴ See Appendix 23.

expect, the top theme commented on, or portrayed, in *The Sun* was patriotism. As much as 12.72% of the paper's total coverage made use of the theme (Figure 6.7). No other newspaper featured the theme as much. Patriotism was the 11th and 12th highest frequency themes in *The Times* and the *Telegraph* respectively.¹³⁵ For *The Mirror*, only referring to the theme in 2.95% of coverage, the theme ranked 20th. The results of analysis in this case, may be particularly misleading – suggesting that it was only *The Sun* which indulged in a heightened sense of patriotism. The *Daily Star* and the *Daily Mail* have, too, been condemned for their overly patriotic approach to the conflict. Having evaluated the highest circulation tabloids, this analysis does not analyse the amount of patriotic fervour expressed by alternative tabloids. The *Mirror*, particularly in this instance, is not necessarily indicative of the tabloid press. As Harris surmised: 'The *Mirror* found itself caught between its dislike for Mrs Thatcher and its detestation of General Galtieri'.¹³⁶

Figure 6.7: Frequency of patriotism as a theme in newspapers

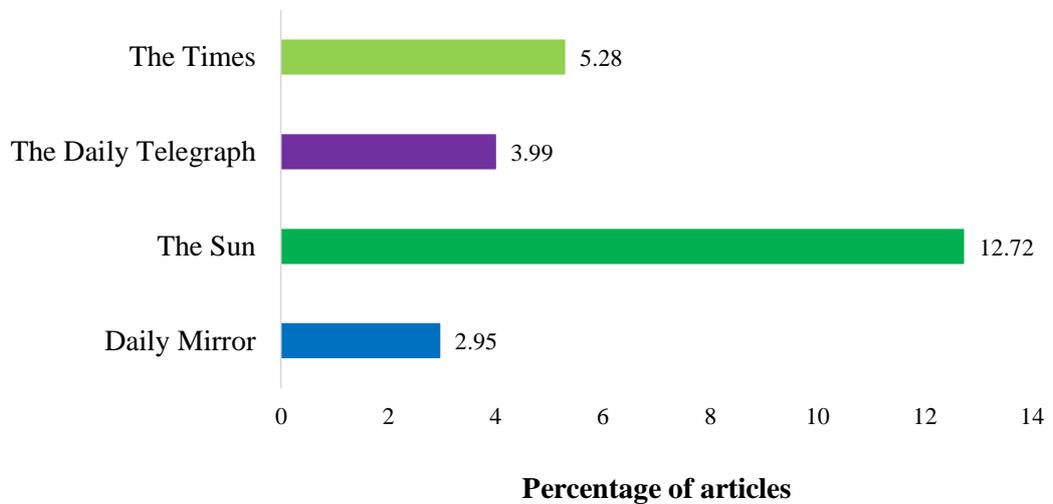
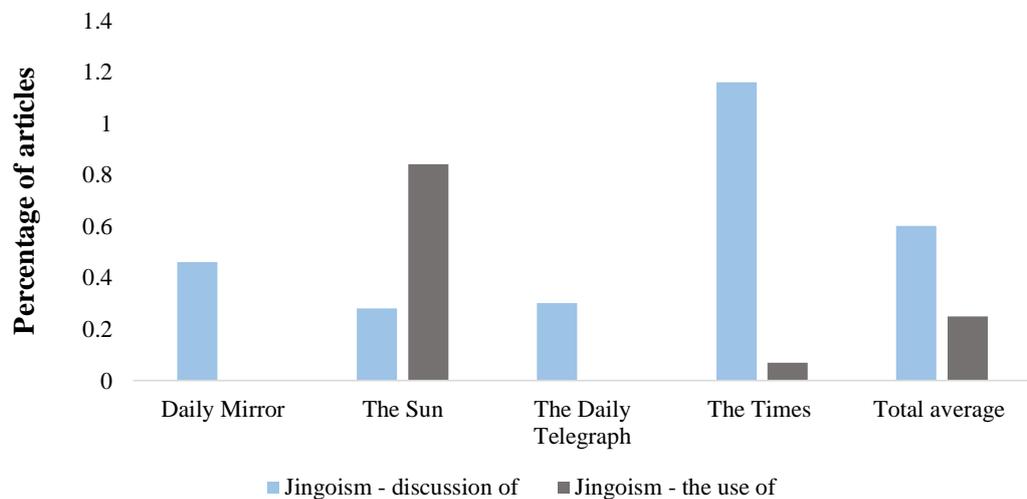


Figure 6.8: The use or discussion of jingoism in newspapers



¹³⁵ *The Times* used the theme in 5.28% of coverage, *The Daily Telegraph* in 3.99%.

¹³⁶ Harris, p.43.

A common complaint of critics of the press during the Falklands was that it was too 'jingoistic'. Richard Keeble wrote that there was journalistic 'hyper-jingoism' during the war, and 'crude "enemy" baiting of the pops [popular press]'.¹³⁷ Greenberg and Smith felt that, with the exception of the *Daily Mirror*: 'Fleet Street's "popular" tabloid newspapers went in search of something better than bingo to boost their circulations: They found it: jingo'.¹³⁸ Jingoism can be defined as the display of 'extreme patriotism'.¹³⁹ Certainly, *The Sun* contained the most amount of jingoistic dialogue (Figure 6.8). There were two themes allotted to jingoism in this research: either a story could be jingoistic in character, or it could include discussion of jingoism. Both themes made up a very small percentage of the total possible. An article was jingoistic in less than 0.15% of all Falklands' coverage. Discussion of the subject featured slightly higher at 0.58%. Figure 6.8 determines how discussion of jingoism, rather than the use of jingoistic tone, dominated coverage related to the subject, particularly in *The Times*. Jingoism was seen, and is seen, as a central feature of Falklands' news reporting – yet other themes attracted far more attention in the printed press and have failed to be adequately contemplated.

3c (v). The Media on the Media

It was not only the public, Government and academics who drew attention to the media's reporting of the Falklands at the time. The media also evaluated its own role. Of particular note is the fact that Morrison and Tumber, whilst including categories on communication difficulties and censorship neglected to consider the media's comment on its own role. Indeed, much of the literature pertaining to the media neglects the way in which the media reported its own news, other than the row between the BBC and the Government, or the row between *The Sun*, *The Guardian* and the *Mirror*.¹⁴⁰

For the purpose of this research, new categories were created to monitor press comment on the media: criticism and praise of journalism in Britain, criticism and praise of reporting from the Task Force journalists and criticism or praise of the way in which the MoD was handling the media. The greatest attention, in newspapers, was paid to matters relating to the criticism of British journalism (Table 6.14). Government criticism of the media demanded its own category, since reporting of the conflict between the MoD and the

¹³⁷ R. Keeble, 'Reflect! Reflect! The Importance of the Falklands/Malvinas Precedent', *Media Lens*, Mar. 2012 <www.medialens.org/forum/viewtopic.php?=11595> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2013].

¹³⁸ Greenberg and Smith, p.29.

¹³⁹ Oxford Dictionaries <www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/jingoism?searchDictCode=all> [Accessed 11 Nov. 2014].

¹⁴⁰ See Chapter Five.

media, and the Government and broadcasters, demanded considerable thought. The issue of the role of the media during the war was clearly important at the time. Of all 213 themes on Falklands-related news, criticism of British journalism was the 22nd highest frequency theme. Considering the damning review of MoD competency most journalists gave the HCDC, the number of articles which included criticism of the MoD were not as high as one might have expected. Certainly the fact that there were only four of 4835 Falklands-connected stories which included any positive media-related appraisal of the MoD is not astounding.

Table 6.14: *Frequency of media-related articles in Falklands' coverage*

Theme	Number of Falklands-Related Articles	Percentage of all Falklands-Related Articles	Average Theme Ranking across Newspapers
Media - criticism of British journalism	144	2.98	22
MoD - media-related criticism	96	1.99	37
Media - praise of British journalism	66	1.37	66
Importance of the media	65	1.34	67
Government criticism of the media	58	1.2	72
Media - praise of journalism from Task Force	15	0.31	147
MoD - media-related praise	11	0.23	165
Media - criticism of journalism from Task Force	4	0.08	193

4. Conclusion

What the application of content analysis can add to research on the media during the Falklands is a strong set of quantitative data which can support, or contest, analyses which might otherwise have been classed as 'subjective'. This research specifically adds a new dimension to study of the topic by contributing data which is easily comparable to that on television.

Most broadly, the results outlined in this chapter have demonstrated that television devoted a higher percentage of its content to the Falklands, but newspapers covered the conflict more fully.¹⁴¹ The length of a newspaper on any given day was directly relative to events in the South Atlantic. Newspapers allocated more space per issue to the Falklands than any other story. Thus both media were dominated by the issue of the Falklands throughout the entirety of the war.

¹⁴¹ Conclusions on individual issues are presented throughout this chapter.

Analysis of the origins of reports featured in newspapers exposes the literature as having focused mistakenly on a number of issues. Contrary to the assertions of previous studies, reports on the Falklands originated overwhelmingly from Britain. In addition, they centred on domestic concerns relating to the war. The source from which information was gathered has traditionally been a point of contention. The media received criticism for relying too heavily on Argentine sources, yet this study finds that the printed press did not use an abnormal amount of sources originating from Argentina. In fact, use of material from Argentina was considerably less frequent than one might expect. The frequency of reports from the Task Force also suggests, in spite of conflicting claims, that there was steady representation of the work of those journalists with the Task Force in British newspapers.

In addition to examining the structure of the news, this analysis addresses the composition of reports by considering each story thematically. This thesis maintains that the prevalent themes associated with news coverage of the Falklands were primarily ones which affected Britain's domestic situation: Parliamentary events, the economic implications of the war, the effect the war might have on Britain and the efforts to secure a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Although, generally, the printed press demonstrated its commitment to the use of diplomacy to resolve the dispute between 2 April and 30 April, what this study establishes is that the press largely abandoned its allegiance to democratic methods of resolution when the United States sided firmly with Britain. Analysis of the various peace initiatives (the Haig shuttle, the UN's plan and the Peruvian plan) has indicated the vast difference in the way each plan was presented to the public.

Analysis of the various stages of the war produced findings which, in many ways, were to be expected or could have been predicted. For example, Britain's use of military equipment as a theme featured in the top three topics in the period in which the Task Force was sailing to the South Atlantic and after 1 May, when the conflict escalated and both Britain and Argentina began to experience military losses. Speculation as to the possibility of armed conflict or a war was similarly predictable in its rankings. Although much time was devoted to ponderings as to whether or not there would be engagement (ranked 6th in the frequency of themes as a whole), the only period in which it actually featured in the top three themes was when diplomacy was at its peak, with the shuttle diplomacy of Haig, between 5 and 24 April. Additionally, reports on armed conflict figured most prominently in the final stage of the war.

Students of the Falklands War and the media have been fortunate to benefit from a number of significant studies which utilised the technique of content analysis. Each had merits, yet none provided a significant appraisal of the content of the printed press. The thematic, formulaic and stylistic breakdown of a selection of newspapers during the war has challenged a number of commonly-held assumptions about the printed reporting of the war.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

1. Addressing the Research Questions

This study aimed to address a number of key research areas: the development of Government media policy throughout the Falklands conflict; the information and presentation policy to which wider Government – not just the Ministry of Defence – subscribed during the crisis; the series of organisations, or groups, established to deal directly with media-related issues; and finally, it has striven to address the existing assumptions about the content and tone of the printed press through the use of content analysis.

There were two distinct spheres directly affected by the media policy adopted by the MoD during the Falklands War: policy relating to the journalists who accompanied the Task Force to the South Atlantic – a policy which took immediate priority and dominated the attention of MoDPR, certainly until May 1982; and policy concerning media reporting on the crisis from Britain.

This thesis broadly argues that the MoD's media policy became more considered, and reflective of the nature of a limited campaign, from the middle of May onwards. The length of the war prohibited the measures, put in place by the MoD in mid to late May, from having a significant impact, or from being as successful as it might have been, had the conflict been prolonged. At the beginning of the crisis, the MoD was prevented from creating any form of coherent and effective policy. This had the most drastic repercussions on the way in which policy regarding the Task Force journalists would develop. At the beginning of April 1982, MoDPR did not have an articulate or rational media plan in place which could be engaged in response to the instigation of a limited conflict. In addition, the department responsible for establishing such a plan found itself without a permanent chief at its helm, without suitable media expertise and taken over by civil servants, desperate to contribute to the crisis, but whose regular functions had been seized by the war machinery of the MoD – the Chiefs of Staff. These disadvantages manifested themselves and became evident through the lack of a considered media policy over the first weekend of the crisis. For example: the MoD's failure to consult any media organisations (other than the BBC

and ITN) over the week following the Argentine invasion; its failure to organise a fair and transparent accreditation system; and the fact that only two policy dimensions were considered in any depth - communications and censorship.

The MoD's Task Force policy throughout April was plagued by a number of difficulties. Communication between the Fleet and MoD was poor. This was one element which would remain unresolved throughout the entirety of the conflict, but which presented some of the most contentious aspects of policy throughout the first month of the crisis, when successive attempts to address issues of transmission failed. Censorship also posed a significant challenge to MoDPR. No coherent, or central, policy was developed in response to the question of censorship. The policy created over the first weekend of the crisis would lead to inconsistencies, errors and inaccuracies throughout the conflict.

This thesis contributes a detailed assessment of the development of the Ministry's Task Force policy. It was often argued by journalists who covered the war from the South Atlantic that the civilian public relations team which accompanied them was an extension of the MoD and guilty of running 'London policy'. This thesis contends that there was no such thing as the 'London policy'. In fact, policy from London was in short supply, and the MoD actually allowed those members of the Task Force dealing with PR an impressive amount of authority over, for example, the movements of journalists, the allocation of journalists to units and across ships and, most crucially, over censorship policy. Essentially, it is proposed that there were two central lines of policy – that relating to incident reporting policy, and that related to the censorship of the Task Force journalists.¹

This work charts arrangements for censorship and concludes that policy towards censor restrictions became more effective and productive as the conflict progressed – particularly when the land campaign commenced on the islands. This, it is argued, was not due to the achievements of any MoDPR directives, but rather as a direct result of a devolvement of power over provisions for censorship to the men on the ground in the South Atlantic – the 'military minds'.² The policy constructed by PROs on the Falklands on 12 May, and imposed from 21 May onwards, had the potential to foster a censorship system which was, at least, productive in ensuring the regular transmission of Task Force copy. However, the censorship process was unnecessarily complicated by the addition of a supplementary layer

¹ See Chapter Three.

² See Chapter Three.

of censorship in London from 21 May. This additional tier of suppression led to a complete lack of policy consistency.

Policy concerning Task Force journalists was more consistent, if not from 12 May - when Captain Nicholls and three 'minders' constructed the policy guidelines which would remain to the end of the war - then certainly from the time of the San Carlos landings. The Task Force journalists' experiences may not have been uniform, but policy was clearer, widely recognised and more applicable to the situation.

Incident reporting - what this thesis judges to be a preoccupation of the MoD when constructing Task Force media policy - certainly underwent serious review and became more efficient following a series of events at the beginning of May 1982. Task Force policy was the only area of overall MoD media policy in which changes in procedure began as early as the end of April. However, change was preceded by a series of policy reviews – official policy was not altered until mid-May, spurred by the impending landings. Amendments to policy were implemented to incident reporting first, it is argued, because it was the issue which bore the greatest impact on the credibility and public image of the MoD. A review of incident reporting was established as early as 7 May, subsequent to the sinking of both the ARA *General Belgrano* and HMS *Sheffield*. The sinking of the Argentine fishing vessel, the *Narwhal*, added impetus to the MoD's position that the way in which incidents in the warzone were to be reported needed to be swiftly addressed.

The major shortcoming of MoD policy was that it was *reactive*. However, once sufficient time had passed, and the Ministry had acclimatised to the situation, one can see that a 'proper' procedure – one in which a sense of efficiency and clarity emerged – actually materialised. The reactive element of policy development was present not only in policy relating to the Task Force journalists, but also to that pertaining to the media in Britain. This thesis argues that the MoD's lack of provision for media facilities throughout the first month of the crisis was demonstrative of the lack of consideration awarded to the media – never mind the *British* media - in the initial phase of the conflict. This thesis asserts that this was made clear through a variety of actions: the cessation of unattributable briefings at the MoD, the lack of information – or corroborative information – permitted to journalists and the poor allowance made for regional and foreign media organisations, for example.³

³ See Chapter Four.

Throughout May 1982 a number of events in the South Atlantic - or measures taken by the MoD - served to alleviate the considerable strain under which MoDPR was placed and to create a more efficient system of public relations. However, even these exploits did little to repair the relationship between the media and MoD which had, by then, soured to an extent that, for at least the duration of the remainder of the conflict, relations were hostile.

Perhaps the most significant achievement of the MoD was the reinstatement of unattributable briefings from 11 May. The introduction of a Military Briefing Group in the third week of May, and a News Release Group on 18 May, both marked advances in MoD policy which witnessed a departure from an apathetic approach to media management in April, to a new and valuable attitude of attentiveness and assistance.⁴

It is the contention of this thesis that the improved attitude of the MoD towards the media during May 1982 was not necessarily a result of the acumen of MoDPR, but rather because of a number of external factors. An example of such factors includes the role of Neville Taylor, as Chief of Public Relations at the MoD, after he became chief of all matters directly relating to Falklands PR. In addition, the swelling criticism levelled at the MoD in the media during the first weeks of May – and more directly articulated by Editors at their meetings with Sir Frank Cooper – served to add impetus to the changes which the MoD would adopt later that month. Whatever the motivation, this thesis maintains that the middle of May (11-20 May) marked a significant advance of the MoD's policy in catering for media in Britain.

Despite improvements in the MoD's policy decisions, the success of the initiatives embarked upon in mid-May was mixed. The Military Briefing Group was provided to the media too late in the campaign to be of much effect. By that time, much of the media had located alternative sources of military intelligence. Further to this, by the last week in May most journalists knew what to expect from the conflict on the Falklands – the war was going one way; towards Stanley, and towards victory. If the war had been extended – if the war for the mountains had been more ferocious, or had the British faced more determined or heavier resistance at Goose Green or Teal Inlet - the need for a specialist group of military experts to brief the media may have been greater. The News Release Group, on the other hand, had a more tangible impact – especially in the area of casualty reporting. The group also adopted a more integral role within the MoDPR structure, producing increasing numbers of official briefings, statements and announcements to the media. In

⁴ See Chapter Four.

fact, in many ways, the MoD's response to the PR crisis during the Falklands actually bypassed the Ministry's regular public relations' machinery. By the end of the conflict a succession of improvised measures had been introduced to combat the 'media war': the Military Briefing Group, NRG, Cooper's meetings with Editors and a tiered, unattributable briefing system.

This thesis proposes that, conversely to the experience of the MoD, the initiatives to aid Government-media relations which had their roots in wider Government - the Cabinet Office's South Atlantic Presentation Unit, No.10's offshoot of the Meetings of Information Officers, the Information Group and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office's Parkinson Presentation Group – all fell short of the mark fairly early in their existence.⁵

The SAPU was established as early as 6 April with the intention of promoting positive Government presentation by countering rumour and disseminating lines for ministers to take. However, by 12 May it had already significantly depreciated in worth – a fact marked by the OD(SA)'s insistence that Cecil Parkinson take responsibility for the output of the group from that date. The SAPU was also afflicted by administrative difficulties – difficulties apparent from the time it issued its first circular on 11 April.

The Information Group, established as a result of an OD(SA) meeting of 7 April and intended to be a forum at which the central departments involved in the conflict might strategise a united, Government media policy, equally declined in effectiveness. The principal issues which affected the efficiency and productivity of the IG were related to the membership and authority of the group. The fact that the MoD sent increasingly junior representatives and limited representation at the highest levels on only a handful of occasions at the beginning of the crisis meant the rest of Government was largely unaware of the MoD's PR approach. The IG was also limited by the fact that it overlapped with other groups like the SAPU and was unable to adequately plan ahead.

The Parkinson Presentation Group was perhaps the shortest-lived of all bodies set up outside the remit of the Ministry of Defence. It was created in direct response to the flagging efforts of the Information Group and the internal squabbles between, principally, No.10 and Bernard Ingham, and the MoD and Frank Cooper. It lasted long enough to convene a total of three meetings, only to 'wither away' in the face of what Lord Parkinson

⁵ See Chapter Five.

terms ‘increased co-operation’.⁶ However, this thesis illustrates that the problems inherent in the IG did not recede as a result of the ‘banging together of heads’ supplied by the PPG, but preserved until the close of the conflict. Not only, then, was the PPG limited in scope and duration, but also in effect.

One important tenet of this thesis is discussion on the way in which Government policy was hindered by the lack of central organisation and co-operation between departments. This situation was not only secured by the failure of central co-ordinating machinery in the shape of groups like the Information Group and the SAPU, but also by the organisational background and ability of the public relations’ sections of those departments integrally involved in forming the presentational policy of the British Government. In April 1982 MoDPR was unsuitable to lead Government media policy in response to the Falklands crisis. Its poor-footing at the start of the conflict had lasting ramifications on the development of Ministry policy. The FCO News Department was far better placed, in 1982, to cope with the media requirements presented by a crisis of the magnitude of the Falklands (Appendix 12). The key impediment to the successful formulation of a united information policy was the divisional and adversarial nature of the relationship between MoDPR – led by Cooper and Nott – and its equivalent parties in other departments. The MoD failed to co-ordinate properly with the FCO throughout the first month of the crisis, leaving the presentation burden of the Falklands to the News Department. The MoD also failed to use this time adequately to prepare for when this burden would, inevitably, be shifted – when the fighting started. The issue which, above all others, had the greatest impact on the co-ordination of the Government information effort was that the MoD – principally Cooper – was indifferent (and at times openly hostile) to the efforts of No.10’s Press Office to initiate an amalgamated Government approach to the media – specifically Ingham’s efforts. The lack of open dialogue, consultation and collaboration dictated that media policy throughout the Falklands was never that of a united Government. It was always fractured along department lines – and even, on occasion, along personal lines. While most of the Conservative Party agreed on the need to oust the Argentines from the Falklands, there was barely any agreement between departments on a central media policy which might be observed during the operation to regain the islands.

This thesis maintains that Ingham’s role was pivotal to wider Government efforts to centralise policy efforts. He did not, as much of the literature has indicated, merely flex his

⁶ Parkinson, Interview.

muscles at the beginning of the crisis, in a bid to secure journalist places with the Task Force, and at the end - when he 'defied' the MoD to announce the Fitzroy casualty figures.⁷ It is contended here that Ingham had, before 1982, consolidated power throughout his time as Chief Press Secretary (from 1979). The Falklands provided an arena in which one could witness the true remit of his authority. This was seen principally through his entrenched position as chair of the MIOs – and in the Falklands its adjunct, the Information Group. But it was also made clear by Ingham's dominance over the SAPU and his personal influence on Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher was moved not only to appoint Ingham initially in charge of the machinery for the 'central control of public information', but also to order the creation of the Parkinson Presentation Group in order to satisfy Ingham's grievances.⁸

One of the central research goals of this thesis was to appraise the content of the printed press during the conflict to compare those results with ones collated as an outcome of examination of television news broadcasts.⁹ This thesis provides evidence which contributes to a re-evaluation of much of the assumptions regarding the press advanced over the last three decades. There are four key areas in which the content analysis contained in this thesis has yielded particularly major results. Firstly, it was discovered that, although television news dedicated a higher percentage of its overall coverage to the topic of the Falklands on average, newspapers reported the war more fully – covering a greater range of themes and compensating for the amount of Falklands-related news on any given day by extending its length. A more constant source of measurement – newspaper editorials – indicated that as much as 50% of core attention was directed at any one time during the crisis, on the battle to reclaim the Falklands. Secondly, whereas it was commonly presumed that the British press relied on Argentine information because of the dearth of news emanating from the MoD in London, this analysis demonstrates that the British press actually only used Argentine information for less than 6% of all Falklands stories. In addition, this thesis presents the argument that when British newspapers and TV did make use of Argentine material, they handled it responsibly.

The third result which deserves specific attention was that the press used a far lower percentage of Task Force material in its discussion of the war than did television news. This result would possibly have been even more disparate if in the research of this thesis,

⁷ See Chapter Five.

⁸ OD(SA), 7 Apr., TNA, CAB148/218 f.4.; OD(SA), 11 May, TNA, CAB148/211 f.103.

⁹ Primarily results obtained by Morrison and Tumber – see Chapter Six.

column inches could have been measured. Copy from the Task Force was, generally, shorter than that scripted elsewhere. One of the most significant advancements made by this study concerns its findings on the themes the printed press most - or least - reported. For example, contrary to popular conjecture relating to the press, there was not an abundance of jingoistic material. An article was jingoistic in tone in less than 0.15% of print material on the Falklands. There was also an overwhelming preoccupation amongst the press with subjects which reflected the long-term implications of the conflict, or the domestic repercussions a war might have on Britain. In addition, the study is the only existing, quantitative assessment of the way in which the press reported the 'media war' during the Falklands. Of all commentary on the media during the conflict, the press concentrated on how British journalism was criticised – either by the Government or the public. The press also, however, included a fairly substantial percentage of focus on media-related issues highlighting criticism of the way in which the MoD handled the media.

2. Possible Advancements and Areas for Future Study

There are a number of areas in which this research could be significantly improved – or ways it could be extended. There are two main foci of concern. Firstly, the length of a PhD thesis prohibits further discussion of crucial elements to this research. For example, more extensive and detailed discussion of the role of the Foreign Office and Northwood in PR policy, as well as other elements relating to Number 10, would have benefited this thesis further. Comprehensive notes on such topics, along with other information can be located in the Appendices of this thesis (see Appendices Five, Seven, 12, 15, 16). The second area in which significant developments might be made is in the content analysis. Although much of this was pointed out in the relevant chapter, a more comprehensive study would have been one which could have measured the percentage of Falklands-related material by column inches, and not just by the presence of an article. A more punctilious study would make use of a larger sample of daily newspapers and contribute results in column inches.

This research provides a solid basis for further works on the subject. Although, at first glance, the subject field appears saturated with evaluations of the media and the Falklands, there are a number of studies yet to be considered, and for which this thesis might act as a foundation. The work of the FCO News Department throughout the crisis, for example, warrants further attention (see Appendix 12 of this work for a preliminary account). In addition, assessment of the roles of individual civil servants who worked on media policy

would be educative – Robert Wade-Grey, David Colvin and Robert Armstrong’s roles, for example.

Perhaps what students of the media in the Falklands crave is information on, and the truth about, the more controversial episodes during the war – the BBC World Service and MoD roles in the premature announcement of the capture of Goose Green, for example, or the MoD’s ‘manipulation’ of the media over the San Carlos landings. These incidents, although memorable and, of course, of considerable import, should not be allowed to dominate investigation (especially since there is little documentation or evidence of substance to be offered that has not yet been analysed in depth). Other areas concerning the media during the campaign in need of further contemplation include: the role of the media in advancing or diminishing the suggestion of Chile’s assistance in the campaign (with the case study of the crashed British helicopter found in Chile featuring prominently); the function of British psychological operations during the Falklands (specifically a detailed analysis of the workings and success of Radio Atlantico del Sur); the early warning of the Argentine invasion provided by both the British and Argentine press; an evaluation of the BBC’s external services during the campaign; a comparative work of the media of Argentina and Britain during the war is also desirable. Indeed, one element which this thesis has only been able to touch upon is the way in which the British media reported from Argentina. A thorough analysis of the way in which the Argentine media presented the crisis, as well as the manner in which British journalists reported from Argentina, would be advantageous.

In terms of content analysis, not only would a complete assessment of the printed press (as outlined above) be an ideal addition to the wider literature, but an analysis of the subject matter of radio news bulletins would provide an optimal basis from which to compare media and from which one could offer more extensive theories on the role of the media during the Falklands.

3. Concluding Statements

The 1980s’ literature concerning the media during the Falklands conflict was thorough in its treatment of the subject. Works since the ’80s have served largely to rehash previous research. This thesis constitutes the first thorough reappraisal of those judgements offered by the decade in which the war occurred. To what has already been published in the field, this thesis contributes a careful and documented analysis of the development of both MoD

policy and wider Government policy throughout the conflict. It is unique in its treatment of those groups established specifically to trade in media relations and it presents new conclusions about the suitability and effectiveness of the way in which the Government – not just the MoD – handled the ‘press and public information’ during the Falklands War.¹⁰

¹⁰ In reference to: HCDC, *The Handling of Press and Public Information During the Falklands Conflict*.

Appendix One
Timeline of Events during the Falklands War

Media-related Events	Political/ Military Events
Wednesday 17 March	
According to Admiral Jorge Anaya, a BBC report on HMS <i>Superb</i> 's departure for the Falklands is broadcast	
Friday 19 March	
	Argentine scrap metal merchants land on South Georgia <i>Bahia Buen Suceso</i> leaves Leith harbour on South Georgia. Forty eight scrap merchants remain behind
Thursday 25 March	
	<i>Bahia Paraiso</i> lands Argentine Marines in Leith
Sunday 28 March	
	Argentine invasion fleet sets sail British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, sends a letter to US Secretary of State, Alexander Haig
Monday 29 March	
	British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, takes the decision to send Royal Navy nuclear attack submarines to the South Atlantic
Wednesday 31 March	
	The Joint Intelligence Committee assess that recent incidents on South Georgia were not part of any deliberate ploy British intelligence confirms an Argentine invasion of the Falklands is imminent Chief of Naval Staff and First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Henry Leach, meets with Thatcher and Secretary of State for Defence, John Nott, where the decision is made to send a Task Force to the South Atlantic
Thursday 1 April	
	The Cabinet meets to discuss the crisis The Oversea Defence Committee meet The UN Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, summons the Argentine and British representatives (Eduardo Roca and Anthony Parsons) to appeal for restraint UN Council meets for informal discussions concerning the crisis. UN Security Council then meets publicly Parsons and his team draft a text of Resolution 502 during the evening HMS <i>Spartan</i> and HMS <i>Splendid</i> sail from Faslane

Friday 2 April	
Chiefs of Staff meeting agrees that six journalists should travel with the Task Force	<p>Argentine forces invade the Falkland Islands</p> <p>Cabinet meets and the Task Force is discussed at 0945GMT. Cabinet meets again and the Task Force is approved at 1930GMT</p> <p>UN Security Council meets. Parsons submits the draft of Resolution 502. No vote is taken on 502. The expected visit of the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Nicanor Costa Méndez, is given as the reason</p>
Saturday 3 April	
Ian McDonald, Acting Chief of Public Relations at the MoD, meets with BBC and ITN regarding their representation with the Task Force and pooling arrangements	<p>Emergency Commons' debate takes place. The invasion and the sailing of the Task Force is announced</p> <p>Costa Méndez speaks to the UN Security Council. Resolution 502, demanding an immediate Argentine withdrawal from the Falklands, is passed with 10 votes</p> <p>Argentine forces invade South Georgia</p>
Sunday 4 April	
<p>Lord Carrington sends a message to the Falkland Islanders on the weekly radio programme, <i>Calling the Falklands</i></p> <p>Nott is interviewed by Brian Walden on ITV's <i>Weekend World</i></p>	
Monday 5 April	
<p>Presenter of BBC TV's <i>Panorama</i>, Robert Kee, interviews Lord Carrington</p> <p>BBC World Service broadcasts begin to include messages to Britons in Argentina</p> <p>The Foreign Office and the MoD host a joint press conference marking the return of Governor Rex Hunt and Major Mike Norman to the UK</p>	<p>First meeting of the Oversea Defence Committee on the Falklands</p> <p>The carrier group (HMS <i>Hermes</i> and HMS <i>Invincible</i>) sail from Portsmouth</p> <p>Rear Admiral J. F. 'Sandy' Woodward is appointed to command the Task Force</p> <p>Lord Carrington resigns his position as Foreign Secretary</p>
Tuesday 6 April	
<p>The Cabinet approves the creation of the South Atlantic Presentation Unit</p> <p>The first PR instructions from the MoD are sent to the Task Force</p> <p>Cecil Parkinson becomes Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Paymaster General</p>	<p>Thatcher meets with Harold Wilson and discusses the composition of a 'War Cabinet'</p> <p>The 'War Cabinet' is officially established as a sub-committee of the Oversea Defence Committee</p> <p>Francis Pym becomes Foreign Secretary</p>
Wednesday 7 April	
<p>Captain Jeremy Black, of HMS <i>Invincible</i>, opts to provide solely off-the-record briefings</p> <p>Sir Frank Cooper, Permanent Under-Secretary at the MoD, hosts first Editors' Meeting</p>	<p>Second Commons' debate</p> <p>A Maritime Exclusion Zone around the Falklands is announced</p> <p>US President, Ronald Reagan, approves a peace initiative by Haig</p>
Thursday 8 April	
McDonald meets with BBC and ITN regarding communications with the Task Force journalists and the SCOT satellite	Haig arrives in London for the first stage of his diplomatic 'shuttle' between Buenos Aires and London

<p>A memo is circulated to Private Secretaries detailing the creation of the SAPU</p> <p>The Information Group meets</p> <p>Initial PR instructions are transmitted to additional units in the Task Force</p> <p>The SAPU is officially established and a SAPU circular paper on the establishment of the unit is disseminated</p> <p>The Prime Minister's Chief Press Secretary, Bernard Ingham, meets with representatives of the SAPU</p>	<p>Thatcher announces an inquiry into the events leading up to the crisis</p> <p>UN Secretary General establishes a task group headed by Under-Secretary Rafee Ahmed of Pakistan</p>
Friday 9 April (Good Friday)	
<p>Daily, on-the-record, briefings commence at the MoD</p> <p>Initial PR instructions from the MoD are sent to 28 vessels with the Task Force</p>	<p>SS <i>Canberra</i> sails for the South Atlantic</p> <p>The European Economic Community approves sanctions against Argentina</p>
Saturday 10 April	
<p><i>The Sun</i> reporter with the Task Force, Tony Snow, writes an article on flying with Prince Andrew</p>	<p>Haig arrives in Buenos Aires</p>
Sunday 11 April (Easter Sunday)	
<p>Two engineers are sent to RAF base, Oakhanger, to adapt equipment to receive images transmitted from the Task Force</p> <p>SAPU disseminates its first circular paper</p> <p>CoS meeting rules that journalists should not be permitted to land at Ascension Island</p>	<p>HMS <i>Splendid</i> and HMS <i>Spartan</i> arrive off the Falkland Islands</p>
Monday 12 April (Easter Monday)	
<p>HMS <i>Hermes</i> arrives off Ascension</p>	<p>MEZ around the Falklands comes into force</p> <p>Submarine, HMS <i>Conqueror</i>, arrives off South Georgia</p> <p>Haig returns to London</p>
Tuesday 13 April	
<p>British media reports that submarines have arrived off the Argentine coast</p> <p>Neville Taylor becomes Chief of Public Relations at the MoD, but does not assume responsibility for the running of Falklands-related PR</p> <p>MoD Civilian Public Relations Officer (PRO), Robin Barrat, flies to HMS <i>Invincible</i> to meet with PRO, Rodger Goodwin. The decision is made that journalists aboard HMS <i>Hermes</i> should fly to HMS <i>Invincible</i> to film and interview Captain Black</p> <p>Procedure for the civil reporting of military incidents in the UK is established</p>	
Wednesday 14 April	
<p>Thatcher and Haig speak on the telephone about the crisis</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>Third Commons Debate</p> <p>The Argentine Fleet leaves Puerto Belgrano</p> <p>Haig returns to Washington to brief President Reagan</p>
Thursday 15 April	
<p>Cooper hosts Editors' Meeting</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p>	<p>British destroyer group takes up a holding position in the mid-Atlantic</p> <p>Haig travels to Buenos Aires</p>
Friday 16 April	
<p>HMS <i>Invincible</i> arrives off Ascension</p>	

<p>Captain Black demands that all copy produced onboard HMS <i>Invincible</i> be cleared by his Secretary, Richard Acland</p> <p>OD(SA) decides Task Force journalists should not be permitted access to Ascension Island</p> <p>The true movements of HMS <i>Superb</i> surface</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	
Saturday 17 April	
	<p>Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse, Commander-in-Chief Fleet, arrives at Ascension</p> <p>Fieldhouse chairs a conference at Ascension with Woodward and 3 Commando Brigade</p> <p>Haig presents the Argentine Junta with a 5-Point-Plan</p>
Sunday 18 April	
<p>The telephone line at Ascension is cut to ensure no journalists can make out-going calls</p>	<p>The main Task Force sails from Ascension</p>
Monday 19 April	
<p>RFA <i>Sir Lancelot</i> and RFA <i>Stromness</i> arrives off Ascension</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p> <p>Meeting of Information Officers</p>	<p>OD(SA) authorises the operation to recapture South Georgia (Operation Paraquet)</p> <p>The Argentine response to the 5-Point-Plan is passed to London</p> <p>UN Secretary General submits, to Argentina and Britain, a list of ways in which the UN might help resolve the crisis</p>
Tuesday 20 April	
<p>SS <i>Canberra</i> arrives off Ascension</p> <p>Cooper hosts Editors' Meeting</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p>	<p>Haig returns to Washington</p>
Wednesday 21 April	
<p>SS <i>Canberra</i> journalists are transferred to HMS <i>Fearless</i> for a briefing on the landing options with Commodore Amphibious Warfare and Commander Land Forces, Commander 3 Commando Brigade, Commodore Michael Clapp and Brigadier Julian Thompson</p> <p>The MoD publicly admits the submarine, HMS <i>Superb</i>, is not in the South Atlantic</p> <p>Woodward gives first television interview on board HMS <i>Hermes</i></p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>Operation Paraquet begins</p>
Thursday 22 April	
<p>The MoD revises South Atlantic incident reporting policy</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>Pym arrives in Washington to consult with Haig and to submit the British response to the 5-Point Plan</p> <p>SAS troops land on Fortuna Glacier, South Georgia, but later have to be rescued. Two Harriers crash in the rescue effort, but there are no casualties</p>
Friday 23 April	
<p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	

Saturday 24 April	
McDonald fails to satisfy questions at the MoD daily briefing about a possible recapture of South Georgia	Pym Returns to London Woodward's Task Group rendezvous with mid-Atlantic destroyers Pym and Thatcher clash in OD(SA) meeting on whether or not to accept the latest Argentine proposals
Sunday 25 April	
Facilities for the international media are established in the south entrance hall of the MoD Nott announces the recapture of South Georgia outside No.10. Thatcher tells reporters to 'rejoice' at the news OD(SA) invites Parkinson to undertake ministerial supervision of SAPU	South Georgia is recaptured Argentine submarine, <i>Santa Fe</i> , is driven into harbour by British fire
Monday 26 April	
Robert Kee interviews Thatcher on <i>Panorama</i> A request radio programme is launched by the BBC in conjunction with BBC External Services - presented by Sarah Kennedy The BBC World Service replaces its thrice weekly broadcast to the Falklands with a daily transmission Woodward gives his second television interview on board HMS <i>Hermes</i> Information Group meets Meeting of Information Officers	Formal Argentine surrender of Leith on South Georgia An Argentine soldier is shot dead on South Georgia and an inquiry into the event is ordered Thatcher gives a statement on South Georgia to the Commons. Mention of the aborted SAS landing on South Georgia is omitted
Tuesday 27 April	
Information Group meets	Chiefs of Staff present plans for a British landing on the Falklands (Operation Sutton) to OD(SA) Haig's 'Final Package' is sent to London
Wednesday 28 April	
SAPU circular paper disseminated Information Group meets	A Total Exclusion Zone around the Falklands is announced
Thursday 29 April	
The BBC is given permission by the Government to operate a satellite from Ascension Information Group meets	Fourth Commons debate
Friday 30 April	
SAPU circular paper disseminated Information Group meets	US openly sides with Britain over the crisis TEZ comes into force Major General Jeremy Moore, Commander of the Land Forces, arrives at Ascension for a conference with Brigadier Thompson Argentina announces its own exclusion zone Main Task Group reaches the area of the Falklands
Saturday 1 May	
Fieldhouse finds out from television news that British troops had successfully shot down Argentine aircraft	Initial landings by Special Forces on the Falklands

SAPU circular paper disseminated	Moore is appointed Land Deputy to C-in-C Fleet Vulcan bombing raid on Stanley Airfield Harrier attack on Goose Green Airfield Pym returns to Washington to consult with the US as an 'ally'
Sunday 2 May	
<p><i>Newsnight</i> episode is aired in which the presenter, Peter Snow, refers to 'the British'</p> <p>MoD open the Emergency Press Centre (the Concourse)</p> <p>Task Force journalists are not permitted to report the attack on <i>General Belgrano</i></p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>OD(SA) gives the order to sink the Argentine cruiser, ARA <i>General Belgrano</i></p> <p>The <i>General Belgrano</i> is sunk by the British submarine, HMS <i>Conqueror</i></p> <p>UN Secretary General issues Pym with a new set of 'ideas' for a negotiated settlement</p>
Monday 3 May	
<p>Captain Black sends a signal to Northwood suggesting journalists' copy be sent to London then released simultaneously with the announcement of the event it describes</p> <p>Nott gives a briefing to defence correspondents in the Concourse Hall of the MOD Main Building - 2030GMT</p> <p>In the Commons, John Page MP criticises the conduct of the BBC and news media</p> <p>Thatcher is interviewed on <i>Panorama</i></p> <p>Michael Nicholson, Task Force reporter, broadcasts the name of the submarine which sunk <i>General Belgrano</i></p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>Argentine patrol boats are attacked</p> <p>The Argentine Junta rejects the Peruvian peace initiative, citing the attack on the <i>General Belgrano</i> as the reason why</p>
Tuesday 4 May	
<p>The BBC finds out about the attack on HMS <i>Sheffield</i> from political sources - 1940GMT</p> <p>McDonald announces the loss of the <i>Sheffield</i> in an evening press conference which interrupts the <i>Nine O'Clock News</i></p> <p>Nott announces that 12 men were unaccounted for after the attack on <i>Sheffield</i> - 2300GMT</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>HMS <i>Sheffield</i> is hit by an Exocet missile and abandoned</p> <p>Thatcher calls an emergency meeting in her room in the Commons in response to the attack on <i>Sheffield</i> - 1800GMT</p>
Wednesday 5 May	
<p>Nott makes a statement in the Commons giving more details on the loss of <i>Sheffield</i>. Nott also quotes the BBC's <i>Today</i> programme in the Commons and says its presented 'very fair and reasonable comment'</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>Cabinet meets to discuss the US/Peruvian proposals as a result of Pym's visit to Washington</p> <p>Argentina agrees to proceed with negotiations on the basis of the UN 'ideas' for peace</p>
Thursday 6 May	
<p><i>Daily Star</i> reporter, Mick Seamark's, article, 'Day Thirty Two: Death Stares us in the Face' prompts Captain Black to stress to the HMS <i>Invincible</i> journalists the need to avoid damaging the moral of the servicemen and the morale of their families</p>	<p>Two Harriers from HMS <i>Invincible</i> crash in fog off the Falklands</p>

<p>Task Force journalists are not permitted to report the loss of two Harriers. However, the news is broadcast in the last segment of ITN's <i>News at Ten</i></p> <p>At Prime Minister's Questions John Page MP criticises the media coverage of the Falklands. Thatcher admits concern that the British and Argentine forces are being treated as 'equals' in the media</p> <p>Cooper hosts Editors' Meeting</p> <p>During a speech to the Chartered Building Societies' Institute, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the BBC, George Howard, responds to Thatcher's criticism in the House of Commons that day</p> <p>Winston Churchill MP appears on ITN's <i>News at Ten</i> and criticises the media</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>The Argentine Junta reject the Peruvian plan for a second time</p> <p>Britain agrees to proceed with negotiations based on the 'ideas' of the UN</p>
Friday 7 May	
<p>Twice weekly background briefings for British defence correspondents begin</p> <p>A signal is sent by the Task Group Commander reporting that the media contingent of the Task Force is extremely dissatisfied with what it considers to be unreasonable restraints placed on reporting by MoDUK</p> <p>CoS meeting approves the establishment of a Military Briefing Group</p> <p>Commander Nigel 'Sharky' Ward complains to Black that he was accosted by Snow and Seamark demanding interviews about missing Harrier pilots</p> <p><i>The Sun</i> publishes an editorial, 'Dare call it treason', accusing other publications of being treacherous in their coverage</p> <p>Cooper requests a review of current PR procedures within the MoD</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>OD(SA) meets twice to confer on military and diplomatic events</p> <p>The Peruvian peace initiative collapses</p> <p>The TEZ is extended to 12 miles off the Argentine coast</p> <p>Special Forces land on Pebble Island</p>
Saturday 8 May	
<p>British evening news carries footage of Argentine seamen's funerals and a press conference from Buenos Aires</p> <p><i>The Sun</i> starts to refer to itself as 'the paper that supports our boys'</p> <p>The <i>Daily Mirror</i> publishes an article in response to <i>The Sun</i>'s 'Dare call it treason' editorial, naming the paper the 'Harlot of Fleet Street'</p> <p><i>The Times</i> features a letter from Peter Snow, presenter of <i>Newsnight</i></p> <p>Hunt broadcasts a message to the Falkland Islanders on the BBC World Service on behalf of the Queen</p>	<p>The Landing Force sails from Ascension</p>
Sunday 9 May	
<p>MoD announces that <i>Narwhal</i> has been hit but there are no casualties</p> <p>Argentina runs a 24-hour TV appeal for the war effort, sponsored by large international brands</p>	<p>Argentine fishing vessel, <i>Narwhal</i>, is attacked by Harriers</p> <p>HMS <i>Sheffield</i> sinks</p>

<p>Robert Adley MP lodges a formal protest over the BBC's coverage of the Falklands with Sir Ian Trethowan, Director General of the BBC</p> <p>Nott appears on ITV's <i>Weekend World</i></p> <p>Parkinson is interviewed by Gordon Clough on BBC Radio's <i>World This Weekend</i></p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>Final plans are drawn up for the San Carlos landings</p>
Monday 10 May	
<p>McDonald is forced to announce that information on the attack on <i>Narwhal</i> was incorrect - there were 14 casualties</p> <p>Controversial episode of <i>Panorama</i>, 'Can we Avoid War?' is aired</p> <p>The BBC issues a statement maintaining that it is not neutral in the conflict</p> <p>Pym attacks the BBC at a meeting of the All-Party Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee</p> <p>Nott meets with Taylor and Cooper to discuss PR policy</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p> <p>Meeting of Information Officers</p>	
Tuesday 11 May	
<p>At Prime Minister's questions Sally Oppenheim MP criticises the previous night's episode of <i>Panorama</i>. Thatcher tells the Commons she shares a deep concern about the content of the programme</p> <p>OD(SA) asks Parkinson to address the presentation of the Falklands</p> <p>Cooper hosts the first off-the-record briefing for British defence correspondents</p> <p>Nott hosts a special meeting with editors from BBC, ITN and PA</p> <p><i>The Times</i> features a letter from John Page MP criticising the BBC</p> <p>Richard Francis, Managing Editor of BBC Radio, speaks out in defence of BBC</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	
Wednesday 12 May	
<p>Cooper hosts Editors' Meetings</p> <p>Parkinson hosts a meeting with representatives of the Cabinet Office, SAPU and No.10 Press Office</p> <p>Guidelines are constructed on censorship and PR by military public relations officers in the South Atlantic</p> <p>George Howard, BBC Chairman, and Alasdair Milne, BBC Director-General, address a meeting of the Conservative Media Committee</p> <p>Milne gives a series of media interviews concerning controversy over <i>Panorama</i></p>	<p>SS <i>QEII</i> sails from Southampton</p> <p>HMS <i>Glasgow</i> is hit by a UXB</p> <p>The Argentine Junta concedes to UN Secretary General that sovereignty is <i>not</i> a precondition</p>

Cabinet discuss the coverage of the BBC and concludes that criticism should come from the general public 'lest it be claimed that the Government was attempting to undermine the Corporation's impartiality'

CoS meeting suggests nominations for the Military Briefing Group

Information Group meets

Thursday 13 May

BBC is given permission to establish a TV link from Ascension to the UK. Permission to film is refused

Independent survey is carried out for the BBC Audience Selection Company

HMS *Hermes* journalists are permitted onboard HMS *Invincible* in order to interview survivors from the *Narwhal*. Captain Black is outraged Nicholson is aboard *Invincible*

Unattributable press briefing given to defence correspondents by James Morey Stewart on air-to-air refuelling

Procedure is established by MoD for the reporting of incidents

BBC is criticised in the House of Commons

The first film from the Task Force is screened on British television (film is a fortnight old)

MoD policy on incident reporting is transmitted to the Task Force

Information Group meets

Fifth Commons' debate

Friday 14 May

McDonald takes the weekend off to visit his mother in Glasgow

The Times features letters from the Presenter of *Panorama*, Robert Kee, and the programme's editor, George Carey, regarding their roles in the *Panorama* programme of 10 May

The BBC's *Today* programme is heavily criticised by Viscount Trenchard in the House of Lords

Unattributable press briefing given to defence correspondents by Cooper. UXBs are mentioned in the briefing

North American correspondents receive their first off-the-record briefing from the MoD (chaired by Stewart)

Prince Charles defends the BBC while addressing the Open University

It is revealed that Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, warned ITN to censor an interview with Galtieri

A technical conference is held by Commander Peter Longhurst, and attended by BBC and ITN

SAPU circular paper disseminated

Special Forces night raid on Pebble Island

Parsons and British Ambassador to the UK, Neville Henderson, are called back to London for consultation

Saturday 15 May

Goodwin is instructed that copy on Pebble Island is too long and detailed. Goodwin and Alfred McIlroy spend the evening cutting copy without permission

<p>Nicholson commences an unscripted commentary on an Argentine air attack whilst submitting copy</p> <p>National Union of Journalists (Lime Grove Branch) send a letter to the BBC in support of George Carey</p>	
Sunday 16 May	
<p>Parkinson meets with Cooper and Nott to discuss the public presentation of the Falklands crisis</p> <p>Pictures of the Argentine surrender on South Georgia appear in the Sunday papers</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>OD(SA) draws up the final British proposals for the UN Secretary General</p>
Monday 17 May	
<p>MoD releases a statement about the helicopter crash of 22 April</p> <p>Lewin approaches Cooper about establishing an operations cell to handle PR in MoD</p> <p><i>Panorama</i> is presented by Richard Lindley</p> <p>Thatcher is interviewed on IRN Radio</p> <p>Meeting of Information Officers</p>	<p>Parsons returns to New York</p> <p>A Sea King helicopter crashes - leaving no casualties</p>
Tuesday 18 May	
<p>The News Release Group is established within the MoD</p> <p>Taylor assumes responsibility for PR concerning the Falklands campaign</p> <p>Ian Trethowan, Director-General of the BBC, addresses the All-Party Media Group</p> <p>Project Moonshine (Radio Atlantico del Sur) is given official approval</p> <p>MoD announce the loss of the Sea King helicopter on 17 May</p> <p>A journalist with the Task Force uses the MARISAT link on HMS <i>Olmeda</i> to contact his girlfriend</p> <p>Unattributable press briefing is given to the provincial press by Taylor on Harriers with the Task Force</p> <p>Unattributable press briefing is given to defence correspondents by Stewart. Nott attends for a proportion of the briefing</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>OD (SA) meets the Chiefs of Staff - the decision is taken to land on the Falklands</p> <p>The Amphibious and Carrier Groups rendezvous</p> <p>Parsons is informed by Pérez de Cuéllar that the Argentine response to the British peace proposal amounted to rejection</p>
Wednesday 19 May	
<p>Radio Atlantico del Sur makes its first broadcast</p> <p>Parkinson hosts the first meeting of the PPG</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>OD (SA) gives Woodward the go-ahead to land on the Falklands</p> <p>Parsons receives a full text of the Argentine response to the British peace proposal which amounts to a clear rejection of the terms</p>
Thursday 20 May	
<p>Black orders <i>Invincible</i> journalists be transferred to RFA <i>Resource</i> after guidance from Goodwin</p>	<p>OD(SA) meets before assembly of the Cabinet - Pym appeals for compromise</p>

<p>Unattributable briefing is given to defence correspondents on the air defence of the Task Force. The briefing is repeated for regional correspondents by Stewart</p> <p>Neil Thorne MP tells the Commons the BBC's coverage of the Falklands crisis has improved</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>CoS meet to finalise the landing details</p> <p>Thatcher informs the Commons that the latest peace initiative has failed</p> <p>A helicopter crashes off the Falklands killing 21 of 30 onboard</p>
Friday 21 May	
<p>Double-vetting of Task Force journalists' copy commences in London</p> <p>MoD announce that a number of raids are taking place on the Falklands. The loss of the helicopter on 20 May is announced</p> <p>Cooper hosts off-the-record briefing for Editors</p> <p>MoD makes public details of the complications involved in transmitting pictures from the South Atlantic</p> <p>Kee resigns from his position as presenter of BBC's <i>Panorama</i></p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p> <p>Pym is interviewed on BBC Radio's <i>Today</i></p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>British forces land on the Falklands at San Carlos</p> <p>Open debate commences at the UN Security Council</p> <p>HMS <i>Ardent</i> is sunk</p> <p>HMS <i>Argonaut</i> is hit by a UXB</p> <p>HMS <i>Antrim</i> is hit by a UXB</p> <p>Sixteen Argentine aircraft are downed by the British</p>
Saturday 22 May	
<p>Unattributable press briefing is given to American correspondents. UXBs are mentioned</p> <p>SAPU circular paper disseminated</p>	
Sunday 23 May	
<p>Photograph entitled 'Cuppa for a Brave Para', taken by the <i>Daily Express</i> photographer with the Task Force, Tom Smith, appears in the <i>Sunday Mirror</i></p> <p>Parkinson is interviewed on radio and reassures listeners that the war is not intended to be long and drawn out</p> <p>MoD press release mentions UXBs three times</p> <p>Chiefs of Staff decide that UXBs should no longer be referred to by the media or the MoD</p> <p>British defence correspondents are briefed by Captain Livesey, Director of Naval Warfare, as to the danger of publicising Argentine UXBs and requests no mention of the term be made</p> <p>Tony Benn MP accuses <i>The Sun</i> of wanting a junta-style dictatorship in Britain during an anti-war rally</p> <p>Pym is interviewed by ABC's <i>This Week with David Brinkley</i></p> <p>Information Group meets</p>	<p>HMS <i>Antelope</i> is hit by UXB</p> <p>Anti-war rally takes place in Hyde Park</p>
Monday 24 May	
<p>Nott is interviewed on <i>Panorama</i></p> <p>RFA <i>Resource</i> enters San Carlos waters with the 'Invincible five' onboard</p> <p>Taylor attends a CoS meeting for the first time</p> <p>Nott is interviewed by Richard Lindley on the BBC's <i>Panorama</i></p>	<p>RFA <i>Sir Galahad</i> and <i>Sir Tristram</i> hit by UXBs</p>

<p>Pym is interviewed on IRN Radio Information Group meets Meeting of Information Officers</p>	
Tuesday 25 May	
<p>Nott announces the loss of a ship on ITN's <i>News at Ten</i>, but chose not to name her The '<i>Invincible five</i>' go ashore to be told there is not enough kit available for them to stay on the Islands SAPU circular paper disseminated Information Group meets</p>	<p>HMS <i>Coventry</i> is hit, and later sunk, by a UXB HMS <i>Broadsword</i> is hit by a UXB SS <i>Atlantic Conveyor</i> is sunk</p>
Wednesday 26 May	
<p>Nott names the ship lost the previous day as HMS <i>Coventry</i> and admits his mistake in not naming her sooner The '<i>Invincible five</i>' are transported to RFA <i>Sir Geraint</i> Parkinson pays tribute to the bravery of the Task Force journalists Nott addresses a meeting of Tory backbenchers in which he reportedly promises there would be 'big news very soon' Pym is interviewed on the BBC Overseas Service by Gordon Martin Information Group meets</p>	<p>The OD(SA) questions the lack of movement from the Bridgehead UN Resolution 505 bids Pérez de Cuéllar to seek a settlement on behalf of the UN</p>
Thursday 27 May	
<p>Pym is interviewed on <i>TV Eye</i> The BBC World Service reports that British troops of the 2nd Parachute Regiment are five miles north of Goose Green and Darwin MoD adapts casualty reporting policy SAPU circular paper disseminated Pym is interviewed by Lew Gardner on ITV's <i>TV Eye</i> Information Group meets</p>	<p>3 Para and 45 Commando set out for Teal Inlet SAS land in strength on Mount Kent 2 Para set out for Goose Green</p>
Friday 28 May	
<p>'<i>Invincible five</i>' send a signal to their London offices for assistance in securing earliest return to land News Release Group submits recommendations on casualty reporting MoD announce that operations on the Falklands are in progress - 1330GMT MoD announce that Goose Green has been taken, that prisoners have been taken, that casualties are light and that the next of kin are being informed - 2145GMT Vice Admiral Robert Squires, Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland, criticises the media at the conference of the Royal British Legion Information Group meets</p>	<p>5 Brigade reach South Georgia and transfer to alternative ships The battle for Goose Green commences</p>
Saturday 29 May	
	<p>Goose Green is successfully captured by 2 Para Argentina launches her only remaining Exocet missile</p>

Sunday 30 May	
Unattributable press briefing is given to defence correspondents by Cooper (attended by Taylor)	Moore arrives at San Carlos Bay and assumes control of the Land Forces on the Falklands
Monday 31 May	
Max Hastings, Task Force reporter, is permitted to transmit copy via SAS communications Editors of the ' <i>Invincible five</i> ' receive a signal from their journalists with the Task Force complaining about their lack of access to the islands. Cooper is contacted by editors concerning the treatment and movement of the ' <i>Invincible five</i> ' - 1600GMT. Cooper meets with editors to discuss the plight of the ' <i>Invincible five</i> ' - 1800GMT	42 Commando land on Mount Kent
Tuesday 1 June	
Cooper meets with editors to further discuss the ' <i>Invincible five</i> ' Reports of napalm found at Goose Green begin to surface in London - 2030GMT A senior Naval Officer requests deletion of references to napalm. The BBC and ITN protest this decision - 2055GMT MoD clears the use of the napalm story - 2110GMT Unattributable Q&A session is hosted for defence correspondents by Cooper Information Group meets	5 Brigade disembarks at San Carlos The OD(SA) debate the FCO/Washington Peace Plan Lord Shackleton is ordered to carry out a further report on the Falkland Islands
Wednesday 2 June	
' <i>Invincible five</i> ' are moved to RFA <i>Stromness</i> Unattributable briefing is given to American correspondents by Cooper Unattributable briefing is given to British provincial press by Cooper Thatcher attends a dinner with the Association of American Correspondents SAPU circular paper disseminated Thatcher appears on West German television and records a broadcast for the BBC's Latin American Service Parkinson hosts a meeting of the PPG	UN Security Council offers its peace proposal 2 Para is transported to Bluff Cove Argentine military envoys arrive at the UN
Thursday 3 June	
RFA <i>Stromness</i> moves inshore and the ' <i>Invincible five</i> ' land on the Falklands SAPU circular paper disseminated Information Group meets	Versailles G7 summit opens Reagan's 'Five-Point-Plan' is given to Britain
Friday 4 June	
Unattributable briefing is given to defence correspondents by Cooper Information Group meets	Thatcher attends G7 summit Britain vetoes a ceasefire resolution in the UN US vetoes the ceasefire resolution in the Security Council. She later tries to alter her veto
Saturday 5 June	
	Scots and Welsh Guards embark on Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships destined for Fitzroy
Sunday 6 June	
	Scots and Welsh Guards land at Fitzroy

Monday 7 June	
SAPU circular paper disseminated Information Group meets Meeting of Information Officers	President Reagan arrives in Britain
Tuesday 8 June	
Moore requests the casualties sustained by landing craft <i>not</i> be revealed to the media Film footage of the San Carlos landings is shown for the first time on British television Pym is interviewed on the BBC World Service Information Group meets	HMS <i>Plymouth</i> is hit by a UXB RFA <i>Sir Tristram</i> is hit by a UXB RFA <i>Sir Galahad</i> is bombed and abandoned whilst on fire - later sunk Moore finalises the battle plan for attack on Stanley
Wednesday 9 June	
Cooper hosts Editors' Meeting Former editor of <i>The Times</i> , Sir William Rees-Mogg, delivers a speech to a lunch of PA members in which he praises the work of the Task Force journalists SAPU circular paper disseminated Information Group meets	
Thursday 10 June	
It is announced that there will be an inquiry into the MoD's handling of press and public information Information Group meets	Thatcher warns, speaking after the NATO summit in Bonn, that there might be considerable casualties as a result of the attack at Fitzroy
Friday 11 June	
Pym is interviewed by Trevor McDonald on ITN	The battle for Port Stanley commences
Saturday 12 June	
Forty eight hour news blackout is imposed on the Task Force	Thatcher and Nott visit Northwood HMS <i>Glamorgan</i> is hit by a bomb Mount Longdon and Harriet taken by the Task Force
Sunday 13 June	
Accurate casualty figures relating to the Fitzroy disaster are released	Mount Tumbledown, Mount William and Wireless Ridge are taken by the Task Force
Monday 14 June	
Hastings becomes the 'first man' into Port Stanley Information Group meets Meeting of Information Officers Parkinson hosts a meeting of the PPG	Argentine surrender at Port Stanley
Tuesday 15 June	
Information Group meets	
Wednesday 16 June	
Cooper hosts final Editors' Meeting Information Group meets	
Friday 18 June	
The Concourse Hall closes	

Appendix Two

Dramatis Personae

The Media

British Broadcasting Corporation

George Howard	Chairman, BBC
Sir Ian Trethowan	Director General, BBC
Alasdair Milne	Director General Elect, BBC
Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director General and Deputy Head of Current Affairs, BBC
David Holmes	Director-General's Chief Assistant

BBC Television

Peter Woon	Editor, BBC TV News
Ron Neil	Editor, BBC TV, <i>Newsnight</i> (up to 6 May)
David Lloyd	Editor, BBC TV, <i>Newsnight</i> (7 May onwards)
George Carey	Editor, BBC TV, <i>Panorama</i>
Aubrey Singer	Managing Director, BBC TV
Rik Thompson	Foreign Editor, BBC TV News
Ken Oxley	Chief Engineer, BBC TV News
Christopher Wain	Defence Correspondent, BBC TV News
Keith Graves	Diplomatic Correspondent, BBC TV News
Peter Snow	Presenter, BBC TV, <i>Newsnight</i>
Robert Kee	Presenter, BBC TV, <i>Panorama</i>
Michael Cockerell	Reporter, BBC TV, <i>Panorama</i>
Sir Robin Day	Presenter, BBC TV, <i>Question Time</i> and <i>The World at One</i>

BBC Radio

Richard Francis	Editor, BBC Radio
Larry Hodgson	Editor, BBC Radio
John Wilson	Editor, News and Current Affairs
Bob Kearsley	Editor, BBC Radio News
Christopher Lee	Defence Correspondent, BBC Radio
David McNeil	Diplomatic Correspondent, BBC Radio 4
Brian Redhead	Presenter, <i>Today</i> programme

BBC External Services

Ken Brazier	Editor, BBC News External Services
Terry Heran	Deputy Editor
Gordon Martin	Diplomatic Correspondent, BBC Overseas Service

Independent Television

David Nicholas	Editor, ITN
John Horrabin	Editor, ITN
Geoffrey Archer	Defence Correspondent, ITN
Trevor McDonald	Defence Correspondent, ITN
Michael Brunson	Diplomatic Correspondent, ITN, <i>News at Ten</i>

David Walter	Reporter, ITN, <i>News at Ten</i>
Independent Broadcasting Authority	
Sir Brian Young	Director General, IBA
David Glencross	Deputy Director, IBA
VISNEWS	
Mike Daigneault	Editor-in-Chief
London Weekend Television	
Brian Walden	Presenter, LWT, <i>Weekend World</i>
Independent Radio News	
Peter Thornton	Deputy Editor
Jim Hancock	Presenter, IRN
Newspaper Associations or Agencies	
Terence Pierce-Goulding	Director, Commonwealth Press Union
Michael Reupke	Editor-in-Chief, Reuters
Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent, Reuters
Alexander McDonald	Chairman, Newspaper Conference
Mark Barrington-Ward	Vice Chairman, Newspaper Conference
David Chipp	Editor-in-Chief, Press Association
Ray Smith	Chief News Editor, Press Association
Robert (Bob) Hutchinson	Defence Correspondent, Press Association
John Le Page	Director, Newspaper Proprietors' Association
Arthur Gawen	Chairman, Newspaper Proprietors' Association
Gordon Page	Secretary, Newspaper Society
Newspaper Editors	
Andrew Knight	<i>Economist</i>
Anthony Shrimley	<i>Mail on Sunday</i>
Arnold Kemp	<i>Glasgow Herald</i>
Brian Hitchen	Editor, <i>Daily Star</i>
Lloyd Turner	London Editor, <i>Daily Star</i>
Charles Douglas-Home	<i>The Times</i>
Christopher Ward	<i>Daily Express</i>
Cyril Kersh	<i>Sunday Mirror</i>
David English	<i>Daily Mail</i>
Derek Jameson	<i>News of the World</i>
Donald Trelford	<i>The Observer</i>
Frank Giles	<i>The Sunday Times</i>
Geoffrey Owen	<i>Financial Times</i>
John Thompson	<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>
Kelvin McKenzie	<i>The Sun</i>
Louis Kirby	<i>Evening Standard</i>
Nick Lloyd	<i>Sunday People</i>
Peter Preston	<i>The Guardian</i>
Robert Edwards	<i>Sunday Mirror</i>
William Deedes	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Defence Correspondents	
Air Commodore G. S. Cooper (Air Correspondent)	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Andrew Wilson	<i>The Observer</i>

Anthony Smith	<i>Daily Star</i>
Bridget Bloom	<i>Financial Times</i>
David Fairhall	<i>The Guardian</i>
Ellis Plaice	<i>Daily Mirror</i>
Frank Robson (Air Correspondent)	<i>Daily Express</i>
Gordon Petrie (Acting Defence Correspondent)	<i>Glasgow Herald</i>
Harvey Eliot	<i>Daily Mail</i>
Henry Stanhope	<i>The Times</i>
Jim Meacham	<i>The Economist</i>
Jon Connell	<i>The Sunday Times</i>
Major General Edward Fursdon (Defence Correspondent)	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Michael Evans	<i>Daily Express</i>
R. H. Greenfield	<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>
Tony Smith	<i>Daily Star</i>
Correspondents in Argentina	
Amit Roy	<i>Daily Mail</i>
Christopher Thomas	<i>The Times</i>
David Graves	<i>The Sun</i>
Hugh O'Shaughnessy	<i>Financial Times and The Observer</i>
Ian Mather	<i>The Observer</i>
Isabel Hilton	<i>The Sunday Times</i>
Keith Dovkants	<i>The Standard</i>
Kenneth Clarke	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Michael Field	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Neil Wallis	<i>Daily Star</i>
Paul Connew	<i>Daily Mirror</i>
Ross Benson	<i>Daily Express</i>
Ted Oliver	<i>Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday</i>
Correspondents in America	
Angus MacPherson	Washington Correspondent, <i>Daily Mail</i>
Harold Jackson	Washington Correspondent, <i>The Guardian</i>
Ian Ball	New York Correspondent, <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Jeremy Campbell	Washington Correspondent, <i>The Standard</i>
Moshin Ali	Washington Correspondent, <i>The Times</i>
Nicholas Ashford	Washington Correspondent, <i>The Times</i>
Nigel Nelson	Washington Correspondent, <i>Daily Mirror</i>
Zoriana Pysariwsky	New York Correspondent, <i>The Times</i>
Political Correspondents and Political Editors	
Adam Raphael	Editor, <i>The Observer</i>
Alan Cochrane	Correspondent, <i>Daily Express</i>
Andrew Taylor	Correspondent, <i>Daily Express</i>
Anthony Bevins	Correspondent, <i>The Times</i>
Georgia Jones	Correspondent, <i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>
Gordon Greig	Editor, <i>Daily Mail</i>
James Wightman	Correspondent, <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>

Jill Hartley	Correspondent, <i>Daily Star</i>
John Warden	Editor, <i>Daily Express</i>
Philip Webster	Correspondent, <i>The Times</i>
Simon Jenkins	Political Editor, <i>Economist</i>
Terrance Lancaster	Editor, <i>Daily Mirror</i>
Foreign Correspondents in London	
Nicholas Downie	<i>New York Times</i>
Other Journalists of Note	
Bill Hagerty	Assistant Editor, <i>Sunday Mirror</i>
David Shapland	Deputy Editor, <i>The Sun</i>
David Tytler	Associate Editor, <i>Daily Mail</i>
Dudley Fishburn	Executive Editor, <i>Economist</i>
Edward Dickinson	Deputy Editor, <i>Daily Express</i>
Ernest Barrington	Associate Editor, <i>Sunday People</i>
Fred Emery	Executive Editor, <i>The Times</i>
Henry Macrory	Chief Leader Writer, <i>Sunday Express</i>
Iain Walker	News Editor, <i>Mail on Sunday</i>
Ian Lindsay-Smith	Executive Editor, <i>The Observer</i>
John Grant	Deputy Editor, <i>The Times</i>
Ken Donlan	Assistant Editor, <i>The Sun</i>
Magnus Linklater	Assistant Editor (Features) <i>The Sunday Times</i>
Mike Toner	Executive Editor, <i>Sunday Express</i>
Peregrine Worsthorne	Associate Editor, <i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>
Peter Thompson	Deputy Editor, <i>Daily Mirror</i>
Peter Wilson	News Editor, <i>Sunday Mirror</i>
Philip Kellor	Deputy News Editor, <i>Daily Star</i>
Philip Wrack	Deputy Editor, <i>News of the World</i>
Richard Stott	Deputy Editor, <i>Daily Mirror</i>
Robert McWilliams	Deputy Editor, <i>Sunday Express</i>
Robin Lustig	Assistant Editor, <i>The Observer</i>
Richard Norton-Taylor	Whitehall Correspondent, <i>The Guardian</i>
Roy Wright	Deputy Editor, <i>New Standard</i>
Vic Birkin	Deputy Editor, <i>Sunday Mirror</i>
Diplomatic Correspondents	
Christopher Forbes-Adam	<i>Yorkshire Post</i>
David Adamson	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
Fred Wills	<i>Daily Mirror</i>
John Dickie	<i>Daily Mail</i>
Leo Murray	<i>Liverpool Daily Post</i>
Nicholas Colchester	<i>Financial Times</i>
Patrick Keatley	<i>The Guardian</i>
Robert Stephens	<i>The Observer</i>
Rosemary Righter	<i>The Sunday Times</i>
Simon Scott-Plummer	<i>The Times</i>

Political and Military

War Cabinet (OD(SA))	
Margaret Thatcher	Prime Minister
William Whitelaw	Home Secretary
John Nott	Secretary of State for Defence
Francis Pym	Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (6 April 1982 - 11 June 1983)
Cecil Parkinson	Paymaster General, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Conservative Party Chairman
The Rt. Hon. Sir Michael Havers QC MP	Attorney General
Advisers	
Sir Michael Palliser	Ex Permanent Secretary of Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Special Consultant to the Prime Minister
Persons Involved in the Diplomatic Effort	
Nicholas Henderson	British Ambassador to the USA
Anthony Parsons	British Representative at the UN
Ronald Reagan	President of the USA
Alexander Haig	US Secretary of State
Anthony Williams	British Ambassador to Argentina
Cabinet Office Officials	
Sir Robert Armstrong	Cabinet Secretary and Co-Secretary to the War Cabinet
Robert Wade-Gery	Deputy Secretary of the Cabinet and Co-Secretary to the War Cabinet
David Colvin	Cabinet Secretary and part of the SAPU
Simon Fuller	South Atlantic Presentation Unit
Robert Hatfield	South Atlantic Presentation Unit
Prominent Members of Parliament	
David Steel	Leader of the Liberal Party
Michael Foot	Leader of the Labour Party
Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith	Chairman of the Conservative Media Group
Cranley Onslow	Chairman of the 1922 Committee of Conservative Backbenchers
Michael Jopling	Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and Conservative Chief Whip
Alan Clark	Conservative
Anthony Foulkes	Labour
David Winnick	Labour
Eldon Griffiths	Conservative
John Page	Conservative
John Stokes	Conservative
Sally Oppenheimer	Conservative
Sir Anthony Meyer	Conservative
Tam Dalyell	Labour
Winston Churchill	Conservative

Number 10, Downing Street	
Arthur 'John' Coles	Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
Ian Gow	Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
Michael Pattison	Private Secretary to the Prime Minister (Home Affairs)
John Hoskyns	Head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit
Bernard Ingham	Chief Press Secretary
Brian Mower	Deputy Chief Press Secretary
Hugh Colver	Press Officer
Ian Kydd	Press Officer
Liz Drummond	Press Officer
Sheenagh Wallace	Press Officer
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	
Lord Peter Carrington	Secretary of State (4 May 1979 - 5 April 1982)
Sir Anthony Acland	Permanent Under-Secretary
John Holmes	Assistant Private Secretary to the Secretary of State
P. Robin Fearn	Head of the South Atlantic Department
Nicholas Fenn	Head of the News Department
Roger Westbrook	Deputy Head of the News Department
Peter Marshall	News Department
A. Anthony Joy	News Department
Christopher Wilton	News Department
Alan Payne	Emergency Unit
Henry Hogger	Emergency Unit
Central Office of Information	
John Groves	Director General, COI and Head of the Government Information Service
Ministry of Defence Officials in London	
Sir Frank Cooper	Permanent Under-Secretary
David Omand	Private Secretary to the Secretary of State
Jennifer Ridley	Assistant Private Secretary
Colonel John Martin Garrod	Colonel General Staff to the Commandant General Royal Marines
Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Donkin	Royal Marine - Military Briefing Group
Colonel Neil Maude	Royal Marine - Military Briefing Group
Major General John Owen	Royal Marine - Military Briefing Group
Commander Peter Longhurst	Directorate of Naval Operational Requirements
Rear Admiral William Ash	Secretary of the D-Notice Committee
James Morey Stewart	Assistant Under-Secretary
Ministry of Defence Public Relations Department	
Neville Taylor	Chief of Public Relations
Ian McDonald	Acting Chief of Public Relations/ Deputy Chief of Public Relations
Brigadier David Ramsbotham	Director of Public Relations (Army)
Captain Ian Sutherland	Director of Public Relations (Navy)
Air Commodore John Miller	Director of Public Relations (Royal Air Force)
Jack Gee	Chief Press Officer
M. Pentreath	Press Officer

F. E Dodman	Press Officer
R. Moore	Press Officer
Christopher Worrall	Press Officer
Ministry of Defence Public Relations Officers in the South Atlantic	
Graeme Hammond	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
Martin Helm	SS <i>Canberra</i>
Allan George	SS <i>Canberra</i>
Robin Barrett	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
Roger Goodwin	HMS <i>Invincible</i>
Alan Percival	SS <i>Canberra</i>
Brian Barton	<i>QEII</i>
Chiefs of Staff	
Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Terence Lewin	Chief of Defence Staff
Admiral Sir Henry Leach	First Sea Lord
General Sir Edwin Bramall	Chief of the General Staff
Air Chief Marshall Sir Michael Beetham	Chief of the Air Staff
Vice Admiral Sir William Stanley	Vice Chief of Naval Staff
Military Commanders in Britain	
Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse	Commander-in-Chief of Fleet
Lieutenant Jonathon Band	Flag Lieutenant to Commander-in-Chief Fleet
Vice Admiral Robert Squires	Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland
Military Commanders in the South Atlantic: Land Forces	
Major General Jeremy Moore	Commander, Land Forces
Brigadier Julian Thompson RM	Commander, 3 Commando Brigade
Lieutenant Colonel Malcolm Hunt	40 Commando RM
Lieutenant Colonel Nick Vaux	42 Commando RM
Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Whitehead	45 Commando RM
Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Jones	Commander, 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment
Major Christopher Keeble	Second in Command, 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment
Captain John Crosland	2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment
Lieutenant Colonel Hew Pike	3rd Battalion Parachute Regiment
Brigadier Anthony Wilson	Commander, 5 Infantry Brigade
Military Commanders in the South Atlantic: Naval Force	
Rear Admiral John 'Sandy' Woodward	Commander, Task Group
Captain Peter Woodhead	Chief of Staff to Flag Officer
Captain Peter Dunt	Secretary to Woodward and Group Logistics Officer
Captain Jeremy Sanders	Staff Officer (Operations) to Woodward
Commodore Michael Clapp	Commodore Amphibious Warfare
Captain Linley Middleton	Captain HMS <i>Hermes</i>
Captain Jeremy J. Black	Captain HMS <i>Invincible</i>
Captain Christopher Burne	Senior Naval Officer SS <i>Canberra</i>
Captain Martin Reed	Merchant Navy aboard SS <i>Canberra</i>
Captain David Hart Dyke	Captain HMS <i>Coventry</i>
Captain Sam Salt	Captain HMS <i>Sheffield</i>
Captain John Coward	Captain HMS <i>Brilliant</i>
Captain Hugh Balfour	Captain HMS <i>Exeter</i>
Captain Nicholas Barker	Captain HMS <i>Endurance</i>

Other Relevant Members of the Armed Forces in the South Atlantic

Canon Roger Devonshire	Chaplain on HMS <i>Hermes</i>
Lieutenant Alan 'Wiggy' Bennett	Piolet based on HMS <i>Brilliant</i>
Lieutenant Barry Bryant	Piolet based on HMS <i>Brilliant</i>
Lieutenant Nicholas Butler	Piolet based on HMS <i>Brilliant</i>
Captain Jeremy Larken	Captain HMS <i>Fearless</i>
Captain James Weatherall	Captain HMS <i>Andromeda</i>
Neil 'Nobby' Hall	Officer on HMS <i>Andromeda</i>

Armed Forces' Public Relations Officers

Captain David Nicholls	Royal Marines
Lieutenant Colonel David Dunn	5 Infantry Brigade Headquarters
Major Mike Norman	Royal Marines and ex Commanding Officer of Naval Party 8901
Sergeant David Menelly	Royal Marines
Captain Bob Derby	Parachute Regiment
Commander Tony Moran	HMS <i>Hermes</i>

Appendix Three

Task Force Journalists

Broadcasting Organisations

BBC TV	Brian Hanrahan	Reporter	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
	John Jockell	Cameraman	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
	Bernard Hesketh	Soundman	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
	Mark Singleton	Engineer	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
BBC Radio	Robert Fox	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
ITN	Michael Nicholson	Reporter	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
	Jeremy Hands	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
	Bob Hammond	Cameraman	SS <i>Canberra</i>
	John Martin	Soundman	SS <i>Canberra</i>
IRN	Kim Sabido	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>

National Daily Newspapers

<i>The Times</i>	John Witherow	Reporter	HMS <i>Invincible</i>
<i>The Guardian</i>	Gareth Parry	Reporter	HMS <i>Invincible</i>
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	Alfred McIlroy	Reporter	HMS <i>Invincible</i>
<i>The Sun</i>	Tony Snow	Reporter	HMS <i>Invincible</i>
<i>Daily Star</i>	Michael Seamark	Reporter	HMS <i>Invincible</i>
<i>Daily Mail</i>	David Norris	Reporter	HMS <i>Stromness</i> to SS <i>Canberra</i>
<i>Daily Express</i>	Robert McGowan	Reporter	RFA <i>Sir Lancelot</i> to SS <i>Canberra</i>
<i>Daily Express</i>	Tom Smith	Photographer	RFA <i>Sir Lancelot</i> to SS <i>Canberra</i>
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Alistair McQueen	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>

National Sunday Newspapers

<i>The Sunday Times</i>	John Shirley	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
<i>The Observer</i>	Patrick Bishop	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>	Charles Lawrence	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>

Regional Newspapers

<i>Standard</i>	Max Hastings	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
<i>Glasgow Herald</i>	Ian Bruce	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
<i>Wolverhampton Express and Star</i>	Martin Lowe replaced by Derek Hudson (<i>Yorkshire Post</i>)	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>

Media Agencies

Reuters	Leslie Dowd	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
Press Association	Peter Archer	Reporter	HMS <i>Hermes</i>
	replaced by Richard Saville	Reporter	SS <i>Canberra</i>
	Martin Cleaver	Photographer	HMS <i>Hermes</i>

Appendix Four

The History of the Ministry of Defence Public Relations Department

The MoD was a relatively youthful organisation when the Falklands crisis broke. Post World War Two, and up until 1964, the country's defence organisation consisted of five Government Departments of State: the Admiralty, the Air Ministry, the Ministry of Aviation, the War Office and the Ministry of Defence. In 1964 the MoD, Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry unified under the banner of the Ministry of Defence. Later, in 1971, the Ministry of Aviation (by 1971, known as the Ministry of Aviation Supply) was amalgamated into the greater defence establishment, creating the Ministry of Defence which would come to oversee information policy during the Falklands War.¹ The MoD, thus, was a monolithic creature. John Nott, Secretary of State for Defence during the Falklands, later wrote of his ascendance to the department in January 1981 and reflected that the MoD was '...a bureaucratic and lumbering monster – tribal in its attitudes and rivalries...'² The nature of the organisation as a whole, rife with rivalries and competition between the Services, dictated that departments were not renowned for communication and co-operation.

The Public Relations Department was, comparatively, of little consequence in the overall MoD hierarchy. Theoretically the Chief of Public Relations at the MoD was answerable only to the Secretary of State, the Chief of Defence Staff and the Permanent Under-Secretary (see Figure 1). In practice, his authority within the organisation was limited. The PR department of the MoD was a predominantly civilian division of a principally military establishment. The tension and friction between the civilian and military branches of the Ministry have been well documented.³ MoDPR fell uncomfortably between the two, being comprised of both civilian *and* military staff. Although there was debate about the competency of civilian staff managing military PR, the head of MoDPR made clear his thoughts on the matter during his evidence to the House of Commons Defence Committee inquiry: 'I would not myself argue that all the public relations tasks in the Ministry of

¹ MoD, *History of the Ministry of Defence*, Dec. 2012

<www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49053/history_of_mod.pdf> [Accessed 11 Aug. 2014].

² Nott, p.222.

³ For example: D. Boren, 'Establishing Civilian Supremacy: Influence within Britain's Ministry of Defence, 1972-82', in Ed. P. Smith, *Government and the Armed Forces in Britain 1956-1990* (Hambledon Continuum, 2010).

Defence, even in an operational situation, are the sole prerogative of the military. I think there is a different job which can and should be done by the civilian.’⁴

The function of MoDPR was twofold: to supply information to the media, and to ensure the Ministry’s case was presented effectively and disseminated through the media.⁵ At the head of MoDPR was the Chief of Public Relations, a member of the Government Information Service, directly answerable to the Permanent Under-Secretary for Defence. The CPR’s immediate subordinate was the Deputy Chief of Public Relations. During the Falklands conflict the department found itself in an intermediary position between CPRs. Leslie Jeanes had been responsible for the department until the start of 1982. By April of that year the department was still without a permanent head and under the control of the department’s Deputy: *Acting* Chief of Public Relations, Ian McDonald.⁶

⁴ Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.373, q.1566.

⁵ HCDC, v.i, p.ix, q.18.

⁶ For information on the history of the Ministry’s PR Department: Hooper; Mercer et al.

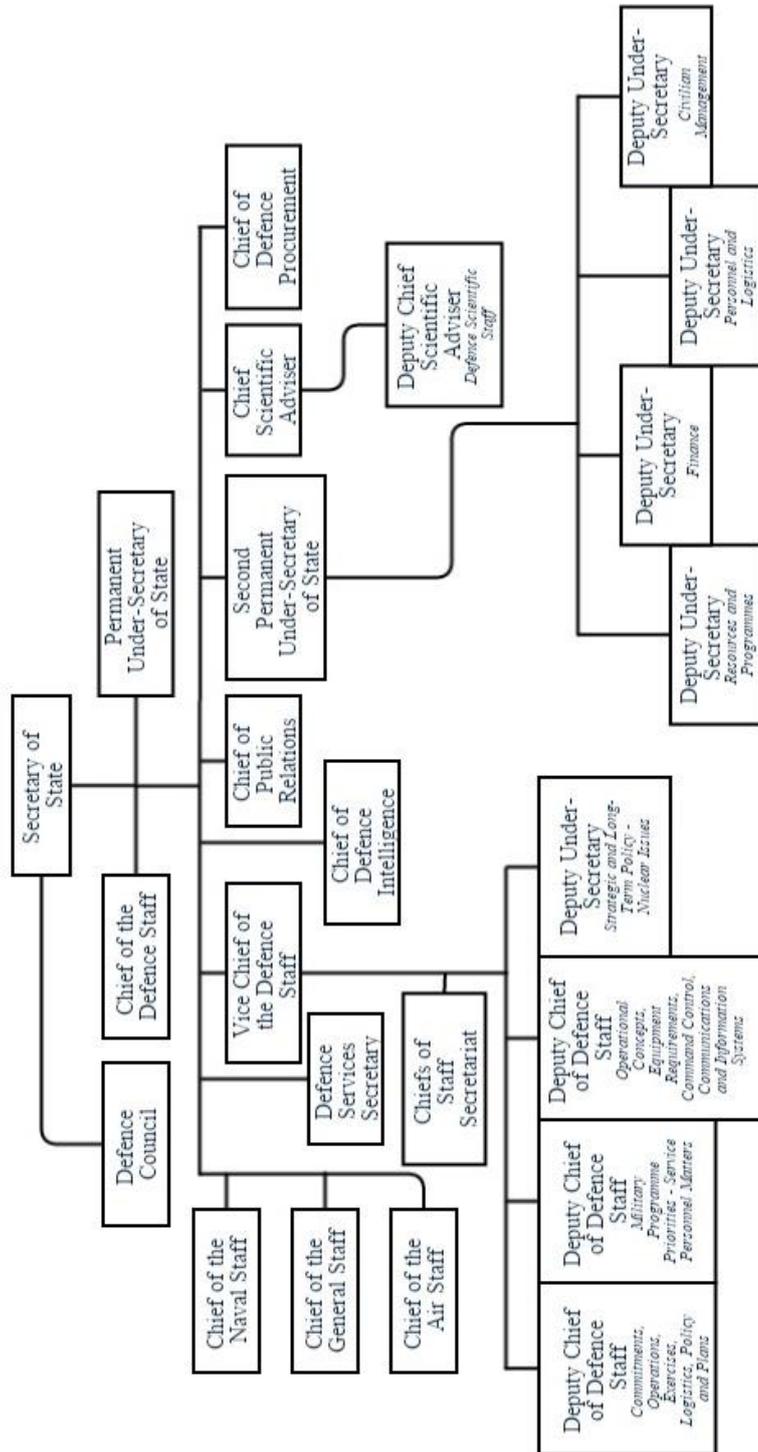


Figure 1: Organisational Chart of the Ministry of Defence in April 1982

McDonald's immediate inferiors were the Directors of Public Relations for each of the three Services. The Directors of Public Relations for the Navy (DPR(N)), Army (DPR(A)) and Air Force (DPR(RAF)) were required to be of certain ranks: Captain RN, Brigadier and Air Commodore respectively. Although the DPRs were directly responsible to the CPR (or ACPR), in practice their loyalties lay with their Service. Miles Hudson and John Stanier considered that 'the one belief they all three shared... was that each was responsible

to his own Chief of Staff and not to the Civil Service.⁷ Technically this was not the case. The DPRs were responsible to the CPR. However, they were selected by their Chief of Staff (in consultation with CPR), their military training dictated their allegiance be with their commanding *officer* and it was their own Chief of Staff who would likely dictate the progress of their career in the long-term.⁸

The lower levels of the MoDPR hierarchy were supported by MoD Press Officers (see Figure 2). The vast majority of employees based in the headquarters of MoDPR, the Defence Press Office, were Press Officers. They were civilian staff who managed the day-to-day running of the department; answering telephone calls, organising press visits to military locations and fielding questions.

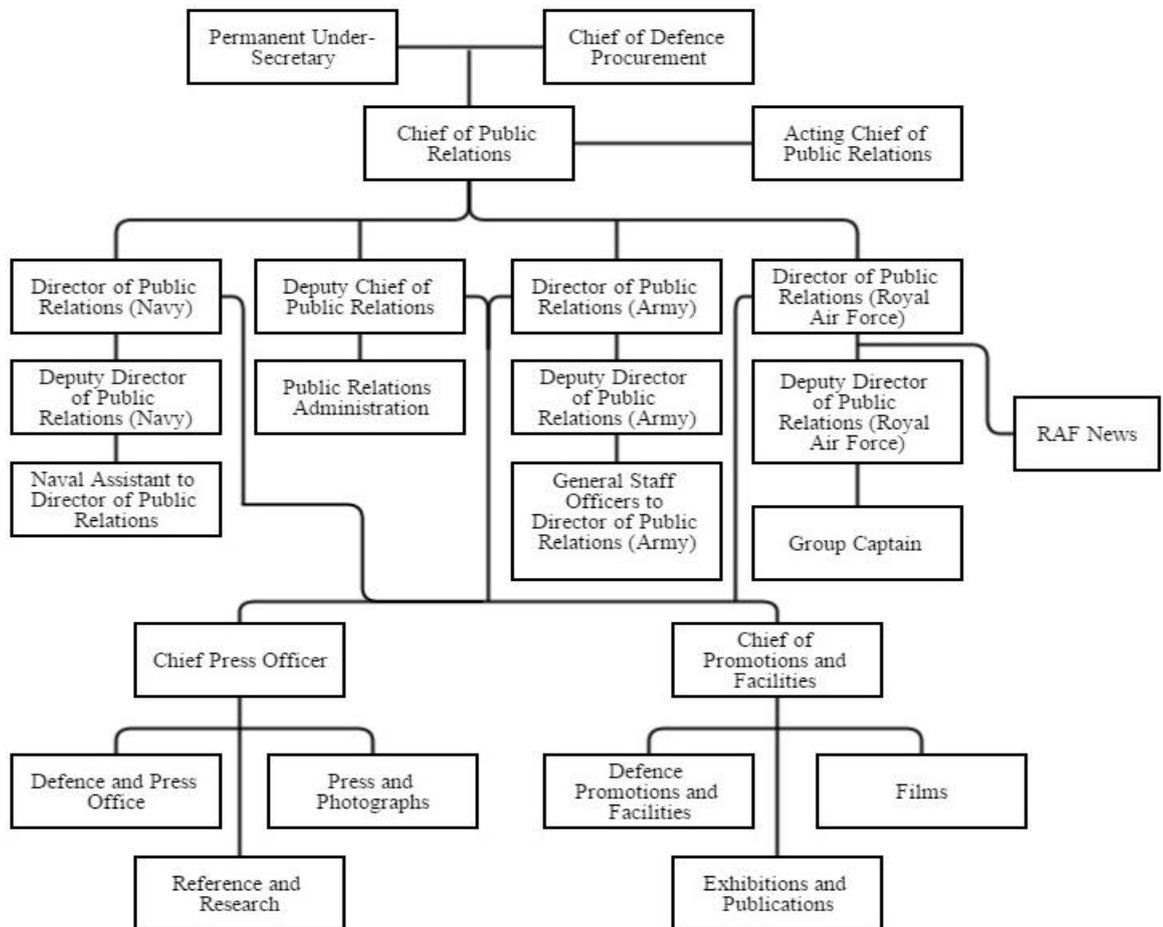


Figure 2: *Organisational Chart of the Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Defence in April 1982*⁹

⁷ Hudson and Stanier, p.180.

⁸ For information on DPRs: Mercer et al., pp.72-78.

⁹ Information from Hooper, pp.198-199.

The composition of MoDPR has constituted a small point of contention amongst authors. George Boyce argued that the Government's publicity work was hampered by a series of cuts in staff during 1981.¹⁰ The greater MoD had been subject to extensive reductions as a result of the 1981 Defence Review, carried out by Nott and published in June of the same year. However, the PR department had emerged from the cutbacks relatively unscathed. In 1982 the new CPR of the department told the House of Commons Defence Committee that MoDPR employed around 80 members of staff at headquarters in London – 40 of whom were professional information staff and 12 of whom were serving officers.¹¹ In one of the two MoD commissioned histories it was argued that the MoD employed more staff in its public relations department than any other Ministry (this was based on information supplied directly by the MoD). However, whilst MoDPR did employ the services of nearly five times the amount of press and information officers as the Home Office, the Ministry of Trade and Industry could boast more PR staff (see Figure 3). On 6 May 1982, John Stokes, Conservative MP for Halesowen and Stourbridge, requested that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Geoffrey Howe, list by Government department the number of Press Officers employed and the cost for those employees over the last year. Mr Hayhoe, Conservative MP for Brentford and Isleworth, replied that 'There are no grades or groups of staff in the Civil Service designated as "press officers". Press office work in Government departments is normally carried out by members of the information officer group. Information officers are engaged on a wide variety of duties including Government publicity, recruitment advertising and exhibitions as well as press office work. Those performing press office work could not be identified centrally without incurring disproportionate cost'.¹² The basic cost to the tax payer for the salaries of the information officer group of staff was £11.9 million in 1982.

¹⁰ Boyce, p.151.

¹¹ Taylor, HCDC, v.ii, p.370, q.1535.

¹² HC Deb., 6 May 1982, v.xxiii, c.120.

Figure 3: Table to show information and press staff employed by Government Ministries in January 1982¹³

Department	Staff in post 1 January 1982*	Department	Staff in post 1 January 1982*
Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	17	Central Office of Information	469
Defence	146	Trade and Industry	157
Education and Science	13	Transport	18
Employment Group	77	Welsh Office	20
Energy	21	Scottish Office	19
Environment	44	Population Censuses and Surveys	45
Health and Social Security	17	Other Departments	74
Home Office	25	TOTAL	1,162

* Full-time equivalents; part-timers counted as half units. Figures at 1 January 1982 were provisional.

The MoD and the Media before the War

The relationship between the military and the media before April 1982 had been a combination of the successful and the unproductive, according to the Service involved. Of course, gauging the views and attitudes of the Services – or even one Service – is a particularly troublesome task. One must necessarily fall prey to generalisation when considering a single-Service attitude, since, in 1982, the ‘military’ consisted of about 325,000 people. The TA alone was made up of 70,000 personnel.¹⁴ Attitudes to the media varied further between regiments, squadrons, units and ships. Whilst understanding the dangers of generality, it is possible to determine each of the Services’ broad position on public relations. Much has been written on individual Services’ ability to deal effectively with the media. The consensus among historians - and the consensus among members of the military - has been that the Army was better equipped to handle the media due, largely, to its experience of working closely with journalists during ‘The Troubles’ in Northern Ireland. The consensus extends to the attitude of the Navy which was deemed the ‘*Secret Service*’.¹⁵ Max Hastings, a journalist with the Task Force, accused the Navy of being ‘bitterly opposed to publicity for its own sake’.¹⁶ The Navy’s first-hand encounters with the media had been limited to a few NATO exercises and restricted contact in the Cod War of the 1970s.¹⁷ The Royal Air Force had always maintained a low-key relationship with the media. The nature of the RAF’s role in conflict dictated that journalists could not shadow

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Mercer et al., p.62.; *Statement on the Defence Estimates 1982*, Cmnd.8529. (HMSO, 1981) p.12.

¹⁵ Consensus exists among: Hooper; Hastings and Jenkins; Freedman, v.ii.; Harris. Military consensus: Moore, ‘The Falklands War’. Consensus in interviews: J. Band, Interview; Thompson, Interview; Clapp, Interview; and in first-hand accounts: Fox; Bishop and Witherow.

¹⁶ Hastings, HCDC, v.ii, p.214, q.656.

¹⁷ For information on the media and the Cod War: Morrison and Tumber, pp.191-193.

members of the Service. Their comparatively limited role in the Falklands War has determined that the attitude of the Service is considered by historians of the media and war of less consequence to the conflict than those of the Army and Navy.¹⁸ So, in April 1982, the British media faced a responsive Army which understood the necessity of a healthy and positive relationship with it, and a Navy which shunned publicity and longed to remain out of the spotlight – free from attention and free, most importantly perhaps, from judgement.

The individual Services' attitudes towards, and relationships with, the media are recognised. The relationship between the Ministry of Defence's central body for dealing with PR and the Media constitutes a less-trodden academic landscape. Yet the previous relationship between the two became significant when the war began. As was pointed out in the findings of the House of Commons Defence Committee, the arrangements for the media had to be made with great urgency, and in those strenuous circumstances '...the state of relations between the Ministry of Defence and the press prior to the emergency assumes a larger significance'.¹⁹ Very few works on the role of the media in the war deal directly with the previous co-operation between MoDPR and the media. Mercer et al. is the exception. The authors argue that the MoDPR department was not wholly unpopular with journalists prior to the start of the war. The media's rapport with Ian McDonald is explored further also. It is claimed that McDonald's financial expertise assisted defence correspondents in their bid to cover the Defence Review, thus McDonald was not in any way 'unpopular'.²⁰ However, the evidence submitted to the HCDC following the war told a different story altogether. Admiral Sir Henry Leach, First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff in 1982, told the Committee that '...the general relationship between the Ministry of Defence and the media was somewhat short of the ideal prior to the campaign. I think this led to a feeling, certainly this was my judgement of it, of something of a "we and they" situation which I think is undesirable.'²¹ This view was supported by the testimony of the Editor of *The Times*, Charles Douglas-Home who said the relationship '...was always based on a certain degree of scepticism and a feeling that perhaps one as a journalist was never encouraged to penetrate very far into the workings of defence.'²² Henry Stanhope, Defence Correspondent for *The Times* in 1982, believes that the relationship between the

¹⁸ More recently the RAF in the campaign has attracted more attention: J. Pook, *RAF Harrier Ground Attack Falklands* (Pen & Sword Aviation, 2007); K. Darling, *RAF Strike Command 1968-2007: Aircraft, Men and Action* (Pen & Sword Aviation, 2012).

¹⁹ HCDC, v.i, p.xxi, q.45.

²⁰ Mercer et al., p.34. For details of the MoD-media relationship prior to the War: Mercer et al., pp.28-36.

²¹ Leach, HCDC, v.ii, p.340, q.1379.

²² Douglas-Home, HCDC, v.ii, p.359, q.1487.

MoD and the media (the press at least) was a constant. The MoD kept the journalists at arm's length before the war, and they continued to do so throughout.²³ Indeed, the Director of Public Relations (Army), Brigadier Ramsbotham, told a conference of Information Officers in Oberammergau, at the 'NATO School', that in terms of operational PR the Ministry was 'clueless, leaderless and rudderless'. The Brigadier apparently added, 'God help us, if anything happens in the next few months'.²⁴ Thus MoDPR stood, at the start line of war, on the back foot with the media, divided by competition and separated by distinct attitudes towards publicity. Any future co-operation with the media was plagued by the tribulations of the past and doomed to fail given the aims each side would have on the first day of the crisis. As the *Sunday Times* Insight Team was to emphasise, the fundamental goals of the two organisations were distinct: 'The battle lines between the ministry and the media, however, had been drawn virtually from the start of the conflict. As in all wars the interests of the two were entirely divergent: one wanted the suppression of facts, the other wanted their widest dissemination'.²⁵

²³ H. Stanhope, Interview, 21 Aug. 2013.

²⁴ Conference of Information Officers, Oberammergau, 1982, cited in Mercer et al., p.35.

²⁵ Eds. Eddy et al., p.210.

Appendix Five
Signal of 6 and 8 April

FM CINCFLEET
TO RBDFNJ/ CTG 317.8
TG 317.8
RBDA[W/ CBFSU ASCENSION
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L
SIC 19F/EUA/YAA
OPERATION CORPORATE
CINCFLEET 061950Z

1. Need for tight security during Operation Corporate cannot be too highly stressed. Following guidance is to be disseminated as appropriate to ships companies and staffs.
2. General guidance on security when dealing with the press is given in BR4005, Chapt 3.
3. Ships companies of ships with members of the press embarked are to be reminded of basic rules and are to be specifically briefed to avoid talking to or being overheard by press on such matters as:
 - (A) Operational plans, which would enable a potential enemy to deduce details of our intentions
 - (B) Speculation about possible courses of action
 - (C) State of readiness and detailed operational capability of individual units or formations
 - (D) Location, employment and operational movements of individual units.
 - (E) Particulars of current tactics and techniques
 - (F) Operational capabilities of all types of equipments
 - (G) Stocks of equipment and other details of logistics
 - (H) Information about intelligence (especially communications intelligence) on Argentinian dispositions or capabilities
 - (I) Communications
 - (J) Equipment or other defects
4. It is important that all correspondents on board should continue to feel free to file their stories and material. We rely on public opinion in UK being kept informed but it is also vital that nothing is published which puts at risk lives or success of operation.
5. Position has been discussed informally with all editors, they have agreed that they should act responsibly in this matter, consulting MOD or D-Notice committee when in doubt.
6. Commanding officers should ensure through information officers that all correspondents with the Task Force are reminded of the need for responsible reporting and in particular of

the difficult [sic] areas itemised above. Speculation by correspondents aboard about operational plans (2 (A) above) is very dangerous since it will seem more authoritative.

7. This reminder from information officers should be sufficient in all cases. If not, commanding officers will be able, in overriding interest of security, to stop transmission of a particular item: it is hoped however, this does not become necessary.

8. TV and radio. By their very nature, may be more difficult to control but information officers should be instructed to do their best to ensure that guidelines set out above are met.

9. The above guidelines apply equally to all service and civilian personnel, particularly those ashore in Ascension.

10. Censorship of private mail and public communication channels (telephone calls, cables etc.) is not being implemented during current operation. But all personnel are to be reminded of vital importance of security in all matters pertaining to the operation and are to be instructed not to divulge the information outlined above or other classified information in their personal correspondence and communications.

Appendix Six Northwood and MoDPR

Literature, as well as the Task Force journalists, has accused those running the war from Northwood of also running a private campaign against the journalists with the Fleet. Michael Nicholson, the ITN reporter in the South Atlantic wrote:

From the moment we left Portsmouth there was a determined covert campaign to silence us. It was directed by Sir John from his comfortable war bunker at naval headquarters HMS *Warrior*, hidden among the mansions of the stockbroker belt in London's suburban Northwood, and it was enthusiastically obeyed by most officers aboard *Hermes* and her sister carrier *Invincible*.¹

Robert Fox also identified Northwood as controlling PR policy, along with MoD, the Task Force commander, Rear-Admiral John 'Sandy' Woodward, and the Senior Naval Officer of *Canberra*, Captain Christopher Burne.² Northwood seemed, to many of the journalists who gave evidence to the HCDC, to be the main executors of PR policy and essentially, the one running the show. One reason Northwood was viewed as managing policy was because many signals originated from there. The sign for the Commander-in-Chief at Northwood, 'CINCFLEET', was on many, if not the majority, of the signals transmitted to the Task Force containing instructions or guidance on public relations. In addition, all signals would travel through Northwood's communications centre. Those signals were not always translated into copies for C-in-C to read. Fieldhouse maintained that signals 'actually passed through my headquarters if they came on certain circuits, but they literally came through the wires. They never actually appeared on paper...'³ Major General Moore claimed that all instructions on PR 'were issued from the Fleet Headquarters...'⁴ The origin of signals gave the overall impression that South Atlantic PR policy was developed and orchestrated by Northwood. However, in reality, Northwood's role was limited with regard to policy.

MoDPR was not the only part of the MoD able to influence policy in the South Atlantic. There were many ways in which MoDPR and Northwood clashed over policy regarding

¹ Nicholson, p.215.

² Fox, pp.9-10.

³ Fieldhouse, HCDC, v.ii, p.350, q.1432.

⁴ Moore, HCDC, v.ii, p.281, q.1109.

public relations. There was, however, one reason why the two entities conflicted: ‘operational security’. ‘Operational security’ would be a term which would plague the conduct of the Ministry during the Falklands. Many historians have commented on the phrase and pointed to the fact that it was really a ‘catch-all’ saying to prevent information being released which might encourage a negative view of either the British Forces or the British Government.⁵ The HCDC judged that:

If used too loosely, with phrases like “that is an operational matter” being taken as a catch-all justification for not releasing inconvenient pieces of news, then the concept may be devalued and public and media confidence in the Government’s spokesmen will suffer.⁶

The academics commissioned by the MoD wrote in their study that ‘...we differ fundamentally with the Whitehall view of what qualifies as a security risk; to us, this means something which jeopardizes individual or operational security rather than everything which carries any form of internal Whitehall security classifications’.⁷ Because the expression is discussed in depth in other works, here it is discussed only briefly.

One of the most controversial aspects of the lack of definition was that the MoD was able to withhold, delay or alter information under the guise that it might endanger ‘operational security’. Differing opinions over what actually constituted information which might jeopardise ‘operational security’ dictated that media-military relations soured as the term was increasingly used by the MoD. It also had an effect on the relationship between MoDPR and Northwood. Fieldhouse told the HCDC:

There was a debate between Northwood and the Ministry of Defence because...we considered the military considerations to be paramount. My business was to win, to put it bluntly, and there were occasions when I felt that information was being given which ran contrary to the military interest and in those circumstances I stated my view...⁸

Indeed, the relationship between Northwood and the MoD would be of paramount importance, particularly when considered in the context of the PR chain of command.

Fundamentally, there were two reasons why the relationship between MoDPR and Northwood became strained during the Falklands War. Firstly, there was a lack of

⁵ Dodds, ‘Contesting War’, p.224.; Mercer et al., p.ix.; Morrison and Tumber, p.189.

⁶ HCDC, v.i, p.xi, q.23.

⁷ Mercer et al., p.ix.

⁸ Fieldhouse, HCDC, v.ii, p.343, q.1395.

machinery in place to allow for smooth consultation and communication between the departments. Secondly, information on military events in the South Atlantic was not transmitted through Northwood to MoDPR in sufficient time or in enough detail. Northwood and MoDPR had not had much occasion for regular contact prior to the outbreak of the Falklands crisis. This meant there was no standard of co-operation between the two. This certainly affected their relationship in April 1982. There was no secure telephone line between MoDPR and the PR staff at Northwood. There was no consultation with Northwood when creating policy, bar the original advice on the number of journalists the Navy would accept on board during the first weekend of the crisis. The sole means of liaison between the two departments were the DPRs. The Falklands was very much a Navy affair: the Fleet was under the control of C-in-C Fleet and constituted the bulk of British Forces during the first phase of the campaign. The Chief of Defence Staff at the time, Admiral Sir Terence Lewin, was a naval man. Consequentially, McDonald requested that DPR(N) liaise closely with Northwood.⁹ This had limited effect, as DPR(N) was starved of information in the early stages of the campaign. Captain Sutherland's lack of tangible data about the war prevented him from efficiently co-ordinating with Northwood. Neville Taylor, the subsequent CPR at MoDPR, told Mercer et al. in a private interview that '...on the PR side we need a link with the chaps who are poring over the charts in the bunkers in Northwood'.¹⁰ The lack of machinery to connect the two departments had a significant implication – a lack of supply to MoDPR of accurate and current military information.

Northwood, on several occasions, failed to communicate military information to MoDPR. Taylor outlined the situation:

The only arrangement we had was that essential operational information went from the Task Force to Northwood. Northwood may or may not then tell MoD. Nearly all the time we were trailing behind information available to correspondents and being transmitted by correspondents, but not known here in MoD.¹¹

MoDPR would, much of the time, learn of significant military events in the South Atlantic from reports transmitted by the Fleet, which would arrive via signal. The scarcity of information became so serious that McDonald addressed the Chiefs of Staff on the matter on 2 May: 'He [McDonald]...reminded the Committee of the need to give him timely

⁹ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.257, q.954.

¹⁰ Taylor in Mercer et al., p.101.

¹¹ Ibid., p.176.

information on events, for him to release before Argentine accounts gained currency'.¹² John Nott observed that one of the major 'headaches' of the war was the 'lack of information coming back from the frontline'. He said that 'some of the information, they [those at Northwood] felt, would be damaging to release, but it was not ultimately a pure military decision'.¹³ There is some evidence that the reasoning behind Northwood's refusal to transmit information to MoDPR was a lack of trust – not necessarily of MoDPR, but of London and Westminster in general. Northwood may have feared that sensitive information, once transmitted to the MoD, would be leaked.¹⁴ The prime example of why this might be the case is that of the release of the news that HMS *Sheffield* had been attacked. Freedman identified that 'many in Northwood and the South Atlantic would have liked the news delayed...'¹⁵ The news of the loss of *Sheffield* was announced against Task Force wishes. There was one main reason why the Task Force and Northwood wished to keep the news of the *Sheffield* from being reported. The British wanted to bait the Argentines into the path of British attacks by encouraging them to return to the scene of the hit in order to discover how successful their attack had been. Without British reports of the event, the Argentines would have no way of knowing how effective their operation had been. In order to achieve this deceit, journalists with the Task Force were banned from reporting on the British loss. They were told that Northwood had imposed a complete news blackout.¹⁶ However, within an hour of Task Force journalists being told this, the BBC World Service reported a MoD press conference when the loss of *Sheffield* was announced. McDonald's voice reported to the world that:

HMS *Sheffield*, a Type 42 Destroyer, was attacked and hit late this afternoon by an Argentine missile. The ship caught fire, which spread out of control. When there was no longer any hope of saving the ship, the ship's company abandoned ship. All who abandoned her were picked up. It is feared there have been a number of casualties, but we have no details of them yet.¹⁷

The announcement of the loss of the *Sheffield* ahead of time had two implications: relations with Task Force journalists were put in further jeopardy, and Northwood was encouraged to believe that the MoD could not be trusted with information. Task Force journalists were banned from filing reports two days before the damage to the *Sheffield* was inflicted, when

¹² CoS, 2 May, TNA, FCO7/4474 f.74.

¹³ Nott in Mercer et al., p.171.

¹⁴ See Mercer et al. pp.178-180.

¹⁵ Freedman, v.ii, p.413.

¹⁶ According to interviews in Morrison and Tumber, p.251.

¹⁷ McDonald, 'Falklands War: HMS *Sheffield* Sunk', *IRN Radio*, 4 May, <www.bufovc.ac.uk/tvandrado/lbc/index.php/segment/0119a00135003>.

the Argentine cruiser, the ARA *General Belgrano*, was sunk by British Forces – only to hear the news announced by the BBC World Service. The sinking of the *Belgrano* had its own significance in highlighting the problematic communication between Northwood and the MoD. John Nott made a statement in the House of Commons about the attack on the cruiser on 4 May. A fact not communicated to MoD was that the *Belgrano* had changed its course at the time of the attack. Nott's subsequent statement in the Commons claimed that the surface group to which the *Belgrano* belonged was 'close to the total exclusion zone and was closing on elements of our task force...'¹⁸ The repercussion of inexact information flow from Northwood to the MoD was that the Secretary of State, and through him the Government, disseminated incorrect information on the campaign.

Due to the experience of the *Belgrano* two days before, Task Force journalists became increasingly concerned at the restrictions being imposed upon them. Peter Archer of the PA was told by a minder that 'there are some things you won't even be allowed to tell your grandchildren'.¹⁹ Alfred McIlroy, *The Daily Telegraph* reporter onboard HMS *Invincible*, was driven to write an article on the issue entitled, 'CONCERN AT NEWS DELAY', in which he wrote that both the sinking of the *Belgrano* and the *Sheffield* were examples of gagging the journalists with the Fleet.²⁰ The matter was even picked up in a Chiefs of Staff meeting on 7 May when McDonald emphasised that 'it was essential that the goodwill of the press, and in particular of our accredited defence correspondents, was retained'. A measure McDonald suggested, to ensure this happened, was 'the adoption of a more positive attitude to the rapid release of factual information' from Northwood.²¹ However, the incident had affirmed Northwood's misgivings about the MoD and the release of information the headquarters passed to 'London'. A senior Royal Navy Officer said that 'in the wider context there were times when there was a lack of trust on the Northwood side and they felt that if something went to Whitehall it would be leaked and that would be prejudicial to what Northwood was trying to do'.²² The *Sheffield* episode, therefore, had serious implications for the future release of information from Northwood to the MoD.

Despite the two basic issues which precluded successful communication between Northwood and MoDPR, there is evidence that Northwood played a less significant role in

¹⁸ Nott, HC Deb., 4 May, v.xxiii, c.30.

¹⁹ PA memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.312, q.11.

²⁰ McIlroy, 'CONCERN AT NEWS DELAY', *The Daily Telegraph*, 11 May, p.28.

²¹ CoS, 7 May, N.A., FCO7/4474 f.82.

²² Mercer et al., p.179.

PR policy than has sometimes been assumed. The lack of communication between the two departments, instead of being a product of Northwood's attempts to control all aspects of the campaign, was actually merely a product of the chaotic nature of the crisis. Northwood and its inhabitants had had very little to do with the media. They were inexperienced and the majority of mistakes made were not committed maliciously. Northwood did have its own public relations department. It was a small body of, according to the Flag Lieutenant to C-in-C Fleet, three or four men, whose primary role was to keep the C-in-C updated on the media representation of the conflict.²³ It was headed by Lawrence 'Lawrie' Phillips.²⁴ At no time during the conflict did the PR team at Northwood directly liaise with the PR department of the MoD. The MoD later admitted that, in fact, no written directives were given to Northwood PR staff throughout the campaign.²⁵ Northwood PR played no tangible role in the formulation of policy. Its main responsibility was to keep the Fleet, as well as the command at Northwood, up to date on how the operation was being reported in the media.²⁶ Despite having its own PR department, Northwood remained inexperienced when it came to the media – especially when it came to conducting an operation when the media would be with the Forces. Even the PR department was relegated to cutting material from newspapers. This is not to underestimate the importance of keeping the Fleet apprised of the larger situation and of media content. Indeed, many prominent members of the Task Force would later write to Phillips expressing their gratitude for his team's service during the war.²⁷

The role of Northwood was further limited by having nothing to do with the *process* of managing PR policy. Whenever Northwood was involved in PR, it was to voice concern or opinion in *specific* cases. For example, Northwood never had any role in censoring material from the Task Force, or in policy relating to censorship. Fieldhouse told the HCDC that 'in the material business of censorship... we had no part'.²⁸ The final report of the HCDC confirmed that 'at no point was HMS *Warrior*, the headquarters of C-in-C Fleet, involved in the direct vetting of press reports'.²⁹ Northwood would make its stance known to MoDPR if it thought that information should be delayed, censored or released quickly. Cooper admitted that there 'were arguments occasionally between ourselves and

²³ Band, Interview.

²⁴ L. Phillips, Interview, 15 Apr. 2014.

²⁵ MoD letter in Mercer et al., p.42.

²⁶ Phillips, Interview.

²⁷ Personal letters provided by Phillips.

²⁸ Fieldhouse, HCDC, v.ii, p.351, q.1435.

²⁹ HCDC, v.i, p.xxix, q.65.

Northwood...as to what we should do on a particular issue'.³⁰ Chief examples of this system throughout the campaign can be seen in the events of the sinking of HMS *Sheffield* on 4 May, the sinking of HMS *Coventry* on 25 May and also the attacks on the landing craft RFA *Sir Tristram* and RFA *Sir Galahad* off Fitzroy on 8 June. The announcement of the sinking of HMS *Coventry* was delayed nearly 24 hours on the advice of the Chief of Defence Staff and the Chief of Naval Staff, Lewin and Leach respectively. Instead, Nott announced that 'a ship' had been badly damaged, without releasing the name of the vessel. On 8 June Argentine Skyhawks attacked landing craft which were unloading troops and equipment at Fitzroy Bay. The casualties sustained in the attack constituted the greatest loss of life in the conflict – there were 43 fatalities and 46 men were wounded. Major General Moore on the Falklands and Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse in London both tried to have casualty figures withheld from the public:

When I discussed the incident with the Commander-in-Chief that evening I asked, I thought entirely justifiably – and he agreed – that the extent of the casualties we had suffered be withheld from publications for a couple of days,...because I feared that if the enemy realised the full extent of the damage he had managed to cause he might feel able to withdraw one or more battalions from their present, southward-facing deployments to reinforce the mountains...³¹

Despite Northwood intervening in specific cases, and even though the view of Northwood was consistently sought on the release of operational information, it should be emphasised that Northwood and C-in-C had 'no formal role in information release'.³²

The PR Chain of Command

The role of Northwood in PR policy has been emphasised because of its unique position in the chain of command. Few analyses of the role of the media in the Falklands pay specific notice to the importance of the chain of command within policy. Mostly the chain attracted a brief overview.³³ Among those histories which pay some attention to the topic there has been disagreement over the structure of the chain. Morrison and Tumber wrote that civilians at the MoD were forced to succumb to the military hierarchy: to communicate with the minders they had to report to the Task Force Commanders and work down through the various levels of command.³⁴ Freedman places less emphasis on the position of

³⁰ Cooper, HCDC, v.ii, p.31, q.79.

³¹ Moore, 'The Falklands War', p.150.

³² HCDC, v.i, p.xxviii, q.63.

³³ See: Morrison and Tumber, pp.8-10.; Freedman, v.ii, pp.409-410.

³⁴ Morrison and Tumber, p.192.

the military, stating that ‘even Northwood was not fully in the loop because the PR chain of command did not follow the operational chain of command’.³⁵ The study which devoted the most consideration to the subject was *The Fog of War*.³⁶ Even with the material released from the National Archives, very little can be added to the authors’ evaluation. The study is thorough in its treatment of signal material and benefits from privileged material supplied by the MoD. The main argument advanced by Mercer et al. was that the chain of command in the Falklands War failed to relay information both up and down the chain. Policy was relayed from the top down, but raw facts were not always successfully transmitted from the bottom, up.³⁷ There was no specific PR chain of command during the war. Signals from MoDPR were not always treated by the military with the same importance as those from CINCFLEET. In addition, when the land campaign began, the Navy vessels found themselves increasingly out of touch with PR policy as signals bypassed them. Furthermore, signals bearing information from the Falklands went straight to CINCFLEET, and from there had to be relayed to MODUK.

It is contended here that there were two PR-related problems which immediately resulted from the use of the military chain of command. First, information contained in signals often was not disseminated to the appropriate personnel on board naval vessels. After the Task Force reached Ascension, Woodward was left without a public relations adviser, since Robin Barrett (Deputy Head of Public Relations at Northwood) was forced to leave due to ill health. There were only five MoD PROs between the whole Fleet. The lack of PROs dictated that the chain ‘virtually ceased to exist’ beneath the headquarters of the Task Force commanding officers.³⁸ This meant that guidelines and instructions concerning PR were often not distributed further than a handful of personnel. The second problem was that the majority of information relayed from the Task Force was communicated directly with CINCFLEET. Information of major events or even situation reports had to be signalled from CINCFLEET to the Ministry. Not only did Northwood keep information from the MoD, but the chain of command ensured that often the MoD would be tardily notified of events.

The gravity of the situation regarding the chain of command was recognised on 10 May, when John Nott met with Cooper and Taylor to discuss policy. Notes of the meeting

³⁵ Freedman, v.ii, p.410.

³⁶ Mercer et al., pp.96-103.

³⁷ Ibid., p.96.

³⁸ Mercer et al., p.98.

recorded that ‘the Secretary of State identified the most pressing problem as being the failure of the normal chain of command to keep those responsible in the MOD informed in as speedy and full a way as they required for effective PR action’.³⁹ However, Nott contradicted this later in 1982, when he claimed that the chain of command was ‘an extremely simple chain’.⁴⁰ He claimed that the chain was simple: the Prime Minister, War Cabinet, Chief of Defence Staff or C-in-C would make a decision and formulate an order, and that would be relayed down the chain of command. In practice, however, the chain was far from simple and often excluded important organisations, groups or people from the knowledge or information necessary to administer successful PR policy. The MoD stood on the periphery of most Task Force communication which had serious consequences for public relations in the South Atlantic.

³⁹ Omand to Taylor, 11 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E27/13.

⁴⁰ Nott, HCDC, v.ii, p.437, q.1844.

Appendix Seven
Extract from Signal of 11 May

MoDUK to CTF 317, 11 May 1982¹

The prescribed method of reporting an incident from the Task Force:

- A. TIME OF INCIDENT**

- B. WHETHER WITHIN OR OUTSIDE TEZ**

- C. LOCATION OF INCIDENT**

- D. OWN UNIT(S) INVOLVED**

- E. ENEMY UNIT(S) INVOLVED**

- F. BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES**

- G. NUMBER OF OWN CASUALTIES**

- H. NUMBER OF ENEMY CASUALTIES**

¹ Signal MoDUK to CTF 317, 11 May 1982, HCDC, v,ii, p.481.

Appendix Eight
Signal of 13 May

FROM MODUK
TO CTF 317
INFO CTG 317.8
C O N F I D E N T I A L

1. FURTHER TO PARA 2 OD MODUK 19F/111030Z MAY AND IN VIEW OF GROWING CONCERN OVER MEDIA RELATIONS AND ALLEGED QUOTE UNNECESSARY CENSORSHIP UNQUOTE AFFECTING EMBARKED CORRESPONDENTS REQUEST FOLLOWING SEQUENCE OF EVENTS AND PROCEDURE FOR TG AND EMBARKED MEDIA REPS

A). TG UNIT CONCERNED MAKES FLASH INCIDENT REPORT, COPY TO MODUK

B). AS SON [sic] AS PRACTICAL THEREAFTER, EMBARKED PRESS SHOULD BE BRIEFED ABOUT INCIDENT AND THE SECURITY AND CASUALTY IMPLICATIONS.

- C). (A) IF FLASH INCIDENT REPORT CONCERNS ARGENTINE LOSSES THERE ARE TWO POSSIBILITIES:**
- 1. MODUK WILL INITIATE PRESS RELEASE AND INFORM CTG (THROUGH CTF) OF INTENDED RELEASE TIME. THIS WILL ENABLE CTG TO CLEAR COPY, WHICH SHOULD NOT BE RELEASED BEFORE MOD STATEMENT**
 - 2. MODUK WILL SIGNAL FLASH QUOTE HOLD UNQUOTE MESSAGE TO CTG INFOR CTF AND UNIT CONCERNED**

(B) IF FLASH INCIDENT REPORT CONCERNS UK LOSS/DAMAGE/CASUALTY WHETHER BY ENEMY ACTION OR ACCIDENT, 'HOLD' WILL AUTOMATICALLY APLY [sic]. LIFTING OF 'HOLD' INSTRUCTION WOULD BE AUTHORISED ONLY BY MODUK. MODUK WILL INFORM CTG (THROUGH CTF) OF TIME WHEN MODUK WILL MAKE INITIAL PRESS RELEASE. EMBARKED PRESS WOULD BE FREE TO SEND COPY CLEARED BY CT FROM THAT TIME

D) T. UNIT RELEASES IMMEDIATE AMPLIFYING SIGNALS

E) UNLESS 'HOLD' IS IN FORCE, NO PRESS RESTRICTIONS, OTHER THAN TO PRESERVE OPERATIONAL SECURITY, APPLY

F) IF 'HOLD' IMPOSED ONLY MOD WILL AUTHORISE 'RELEASE' GUIDANCE ON OBVIOUS SENSITIVE AREAS OF INFORMATION WAS GIVEN IN MODUK 081845Z APRIL 82

Appendix Nine

Task Force Censorship and 'Local Boy' Stories

One area of censorship which the MoD did attempt to address in early May 1982 was the naming of individuals within Task Force copy. Most histories of the media and the Falklands mention the inconsistencies experienced by Task Force journalists regarding the naming of individuals with the Force. However, most accounts came directly from the testimony of the Task Force journalists at the HCDC, or from their subsequent interviews or publications. No historian has considered the policy disseminated by the MoD on this matter in any detail. The example serves well to demonstrate the one area in which the MoD attempted to project a more comprehensive censorship policy to the Task Force. That effort, however, instead of aiding the situation, caused confusion and led to greater inconsistencies in censorship. The HCDC found that the MoD pursued policies to exclude the names of individuals 'rather erratically.' The naming of units also caused mild controversy during the war. It was important for the media to receive stories which included this type of information. It was crucial, in fact, for the regional press, which relied on 'local boy' stories to fill their pages. Britain's thirst for information from the Fleet and insatiable appetite for articles on local heroes dictated a demand for stories about people to which they could relate. As James Alluich affirmed in his book on the cultural impact of the Falklands: 'Most important of all was the news industry's reliance upon the human interest story'.¹

During the HCDC inquiry, a host of journalists spoke on the inconsistencies which amounted as a result of the lack of policy on what units might be named, and when. At the very start of the conflict, journalists were not permitted to name the ships they were travelling on. Robert McGowan was forced to refer to the ship he was on, RFA *Sir Lancelot* as 'Cinderella' – she knew she was going to the ball, but nobody else did.² The ban on naming units was not as easy to cope with for journalists on the Falklands. Much of the time, the censoring of this information seemed absurd. For example, in a report by Leslie Dowd, of Reuters, a reference to the 'parachute regiment' had been cut by the censor. However, the censor also deleted the name of an Army captain – he replaced it with the phrase, 'a paratroop captain said...'³ Robert Fox had to interview Colonel Nick

¹ Alluich, p.18.

² Hands and McGowan, p.22.

³ *Daily Mail* memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.124.

Vaux after the recapture of South Georgia without naming any Unit, Company or officer. The next day, an array of Fleet Street's publications produced stories on the Colonel himself, complete with pictures and details of his command.⁴

Inconsistencies in naming individuals or units came about due to the lack of clear and coherent – or current – guidelines. The naming of individuals was particularly perilous, as it tended to have an effect on the family of the serviceman in the UK. The media often sought out the families of named servicemen in the South Atlantic in the pursuit of 'local boy' stories. Major General Moore later wrote that he felt concern over how the media might impinge on the morale of his troops by harassing their families, the stress about which could be transmitted to the men fighting in the Falklands.⁵ A current study on the effect of media reporting on the relatives of Task Force personnel is being conducted by Victoria Woodman of the University of Portsmouth.⁶ Mercer et al. also devoted the subject some analysis.⁷ The subject of 'local boy' stories was brought up in the Editors' Meeting of 20 April. When editors were invited to comment on how facilities provided for their organisations were working, there was a common complaint that 'there was an unfilled market for 'local boy' stories'.⁸

Policy on the naming of servicemen in copy was decided on by the CoS on 21 April. It was agreed at their meeting that "'local boy' stories could be used provided policy issues were not discussed."⁹ Policy was considered by the MoD and then conveyed to the Task Force on 1 May. The MoD instructed that rank, first name and surname 'MAY BE GIVEN IF INDIVIDUAL AGREES TO PUBLICITY.' It went on to recommend that addresses should be given in limited form – without house numbers or names. Street names could be given.¹⁰ This seemed a very positive approach to the use of individuals' names in copy. However, the Task Group transmitted a signal intended for Captain Sutherland, noting concern about this new policy. The signal stated that it was becoming apparent that messages passed on by the press were 'unhelpful'. It said that 'PRESS IN UK REACT BY VISITING AND TELEPHONING HOMES DAY AND NIGHT SEEKING COMMENT FROM WIVES OF THOSE NAMED.'¹¹ By 9 May the situation remained unaltered, with

⁴ Fox memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.141.

⁵ Moore, 'The Falklands War', p.149.

⁶ Woodman's PhD is to be completed in 2016.

⁷ Mercer et al., pp.90-95.

⁸ Note for the record, 21 Apr., MoD, DEFE31/221 f.2.

⁹ CoS, 21 Apr., TNA, FCO7/4473 f.47.

¹⁰ MODUK to CTG 317.8, 1 May, HCDC, v.ii, p.476.

¹¹ CTF 317 to MODUK and CTG Group, 3 May, HCDC, v.ii, p.477.

no further communication from MoD to the Task Force in order to remedy the situation. CINCFLEET was forced to contact the MoD to relay the anxieties of the men in the South Atlantic. The signal read:

THERE IS CONCERN PARTICULARLY AMONGST LANDING FORCES THAT
POPULAR PRESS IS PUBLISHING PHOTOS AND PERSONAL DETAILS OF
SERVICEMEN AND THEIR RELATIVES INCLUDING
TOWNS/VILLAGES...IMPLICATIONS OR AVAILABILITY OF SUCH DETAILED
INFORMATION ARE OBVIOUS IN INTERROGATION CONTEXT...¹²

Much of the Task Force was concerned about what repercussions there might be from such details being publicised – specifically what had been printed in the Press. If one of the servicemen who had been named in the media was captured on the Falklands and interrogated, the Argentines would have the advantage of knowing a variety of information about their prisoner. On 12 May censorship guidelines for the land campaign were constructed by the PRO of 3 Commando Brigade, Captain David Nicholls RM, in conjunction with the three civilian PROs onboard *Canberra*: Martin Helm, Allan George and Alan Percival.¹³ On 12 May the last policy update on the naming of individuals was transmitted to the rest of the Task Force. The instructions stated that individuals could be mentioned in copy, but that the names of the NoK and home towns or villages of the servicemen involved in the land campaign must not be revealed. The express permission of naval forces' details should be sought before submission.¹⁴

The last policy information transmitted from the MoD on the subject of naming individuals with the Task Force was sent on 1 May. Despite complaints and worries addressed by two signals (one from the Task Group and one from CINCFLEET) to MODUK, there was no attempt to address the weaknesses of the policy. Even as far into the conflict as 1 June, the CoS heard that disclosure of unit and individual names was 'causing strong reactions among the Task Force'.¹⁵ At the end of the war the MoD position towards naming individuals was relaxed. It was agreed on 14 June that 'in the light of the changed operational situation, they [the CoS] would in future allow the names of individuals selectively to be released to the press, and in particular allow 'local boy' stories to be released.'¹⁶ Additionally, on the return journey of the *Canberra*, journalists from the

¹² CINCFLEET to MODUK and MODUK NAVY, 9 May, HCDC, v.ii, p.479.

¹³ See Chapter Three.

¹⁴ CTG 317.8 to CTF 317, MODUK Navy and CTG 317.1, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E28.

¹⁵ CoS, 1 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.108.

¹⁶ CoS, 14 Jun., TNA, FCO7/4475 f.119.

regional press were permitted access to the ship in order for them to speak to the troops.¹⁷ However, this did not rectify the errors committed by the MoD in dealing with the issue. Only one policy update was sent to the Task Force. The only other attempt to readdress the situation was made from the South Atlantic on 12 May. What is apparent from the lack of guidelines on the subject, and the lack of effort exerted to remedy the situation, or to allay the concerns of both the Task Group and Northwood, is that the MoD failed to provide adequate policy on the censorship of Task Force journalists' copy concerning the naming of units and names of individuals.

¹⁷ The Newspaper Society memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.453, q.1.

Appendix 10

The Role of Ian McDonald as MoD Spokesman

When McDonald initiated the ‘12 o’clock follies’, he also assumed the role of MoD spokesman. He told the HCDC that ‘it was policy that there should be one main spokesman because in the on-the-record question and answer sessions it was very important indeed that there was a complete consistency of view’.¹ McDonald attracted vast amounts of attention in his new-found role. Even today, the memory of the Ministry’s mouthpiece remains strong in the minds of those who lived through the conflict. *The Sunday Times* Insight Team felt that ‘it was McDonald who became the most public expression of Cooper’s policy’.² His approach to reading the news - careful and sombre - was heavily criticised and even ridiculed during the war. The literature of the Falklands and the media has provided comment on the tone adopted by McDonald - assessments are mostly limited to regurgitations of the criticism that he was too grave.³ This section provides an assessment of McDonald’s public image during the war.

Two of McDonald’s nicknames in 1982 were ‘McDalek’ and the ‘speak-your-weight-machine’.⁴ Keith Waterhouse, in his column for the *Daily Mirror*, accused McDonald of being ‘the only man in the world to speak in Braille’.⁵ The public was in no way neutral towards McDonald, who became a regular on television. During the war there was a multitude of articles authored on him. Critical articles included titles such as ‘Soften your image Mac’, and ‘Smile for the camera, “Mr News” is told’.⁶ Frank Johnson of *The Times* even declared McDonald to be the ‘messenger of death’. He claimed ‘none is better qualified for the role’.⁷ Letters from the public questioned his talent as a news reader. One such letter appeared in *The Times* on 14 May and read: ‘...I do feel that the news would seem less depressing if the Defence Ministry could find a spokesman with an animate face and voice’.⁸ The British Ambassador to the US, Henderson, even signalled the MOD on 11

¹ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii, p.398, q.1766.

² Eds. Eddy et al., p.210.

³ See: Eds. Eddy et al., p.210.; Ingham, p.289.; Harris, p.103.; Nott, p.263.; Hastings and Jenkins, p.209.; Harris, p.418.; Hart Dyke, p.230.

⁴ ‘McDalek’ in Eds. Eddy et al., p.210.; ‘speak-your-weight-machine’, in Harris, p.103.

⁵ Waterhouse, ‘A diet of rich damp cake’, *Daily Mirror*, 31 May, p.10.

⁶ ‘Soften your image Mac’, *Daily Mirror*, 14 May, p.3.; ‘Smile for camera, ‘Mr News’ is told’, *Daily Express*, 14 May, p.2.

⁷ F. Johnson, ‘The hardships of war in the Commons trenches’, *The Times*, 27 May, p.28.

⁸ C. Bermant, Letter to *The Times*, 14 May, p.11.

May to inform it that ‘MOD SPOKESMAN DOES NOT COME OVER WELL TO US VIEWERS TALKING SEPULCHRALLY AT DICTATION SPEED. WHERE IS DPR NAVY QUES//’.⁹ One of the main criticisms of McDonald was that he appeared to be completely subservient to the MoD. For many, the key issue was that McDonald was a civil servant, and his primary duty was to his superior Ministers. David Cross wrote an article entitled ‘News present with a strict brief’, and McDonald was made the subject of humorous cartoons (see Figure 1).¹⁰ However, McDonald defended himself, and his style, during and after the war. On 23 May McDonald was reported as saying: ‘I know there have been criticisms – perhaps they are right to say I am a bit funereal. But I speak slowly because lots of people don’t speak as fast as is common practice in London’.¹¹ In a radio interview on 2 June he maintained that: ‘I do think that the factual news that I give is important and serious news and therefore deserves to be read as such. I think it would be quite wrong to attempt to be superficial or to laugh or giggle. The news is important and serious, you know it's about people's lives - people's families are listening!’¹² Even some newspapers called for the teasing and condemnation to cease. The *Daily Telegraph* devoted an editorial titled ‘SHOOTING THE MESSENGER’ to McDonald’s defence. The piece demanded that ‘...attacks on Mr McDonald, it needs to be said, are grossly unfair’.¹³ The *Sunday Telegraph* followed its sister publication’s lead and insisted that ‘it is right and proper that news about battles, often involving tragic death tolls, should be announced in a special tone of voice intended to emphasise the gravity of the occasion’.¹⁴



Figure 1: *Cartoonist: P. Brookes, Article: S. Jenkins, ‘When soldiers play journalists and journalists play at soldiers’, ‘The Times’, 10 May 1982, p.8.*

⁹ Henderson to MoD UK, 11 May, MoD, DEFE24/2266 f.E14.

¹⁰ D. Cross, ‘London: News presenter with a strict brief’, *The Times*, 6 May, p.2.

¹¹ ‘Now Ian speaks for himself’, *Daily Mirror*, 24 May, p.13.

¹² McDonald, ‘Ian McDonald on his Job as MoD Spokesman’, *BBC Radio News*, 2 Jun. <www.bufovc.ac.uk/tvandrado/lbc/index.php/segment/0010500481005>.

¹³ Editorial, ‘SHOOTING THE MESSENGER’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 May, p.14.

¹⁴ Editorial, ‘First things first’, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 6 Jun., p.16.

McDonald was not universally disliked or joked about – he managed to gain a brigade of loyal fans throughout the course of the conflict. Later, McDonald was to tell IRN that he did not have time to realise he had become a national figure.¹⁵ McDonald, it emerged, was very popular with the ladies. The *Mirror* dubbed him ‘our latest and most unlikely sex symbol’, ‘The heart throb of the MoD’.¹⁶ There was a clamour to interview friends of the new celebrity and when McDonald’s mother was prepared to give interviews, a number of newspapers sent reporters to Scotland to ask the lady for more details about her son. The *Daily Express* boasted that his mother, Annie McDonald, had given them precious pictures of him as a baby.¹⁷ *The Sun* went one step further and plastered a whole page with a photograph of McDonald as an infant, lying half-naked, face down on the floor, along with the line that: ‘The chubby-bottomed baby boy is none other than pokerfaced Ian McDonald, the best known civil servant in the world’.¹⁸ McDonald’s education and level of intelligence also caught headlines during the war. Ian Mather, one of three journalists imprisoned during the conflict in Argentina, wrote later that Ian McDonald was well-known for his ‘idiosyncratic habit’ of quoting Shakespeare.¹⁹ This was problematic for some journalists, according to reports, particularly those from the US. *The Daily Telegraph*’s correspondents found this particularly humorous, and included articles such as: ‘U.S. REPORTER TOLD THAT HAMLET HAD A WORD FOR IT’, and ‘U.S. ‘BAFFLED BY BRITISH RETICENCE AND JUNTA LIES’’.²⁰ Ian Ball of the *Telegraph* even related that ‘what Britain’s Ministry of Defence spokesman, borrowing from Shakespeare, likened to “the counterfeit presentation of two brothers,” has become a major theme in American coverage of the Falklands conflict’.²¹ McDonald’s sharp wit also kept reporters on their toes when the cameras stopped rolling. When McDonald was asked by one reporter how the ferocity of the SAS was a news story, he replied: ‘Well...if the Argentines didn’t know about it before, then presumably it was news to them’.²²

Commentary on McDonald, and the demand for background on him - of the depth denied

¹⁵ Ingham and McDonald, ‘Government Split on Falklands Media Coverage’, *IRN* (Unknown date in 1982) <www.bufvc.ac.uk/tvandrado/lbc/index.php/segment/0023300059024>.

¹⁶ ‘The heart throb of the MoD’, *Daily Mirror*, 12 May, p.13.

¹⁷ ‘Now Ian speaks for himself’, *Daily Mirror*, 24 May, p.13.

¹⁸ P. Kennedy, ‘Oh baby! Just look at TV’s latest star now’, *The Sun*, 25 May, p.7.

¹⁹ Mather, ‘I went as a Reporter but ended up a Prisoner of War’, *Observer*, 1 Apr. 2007 <www.theguardian.com/media/2007/apr/01/pressandpublishing.business>.

²⁰ T. Conyers, ‘U.S. REPORTER TOLD THAT HAMLET HAD A WORD FOR IT’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 May, p.4.; I. Ball, ‘U.S. ‘BAFFLED BY BRITISH RETICENCE AND JUNTA LIES’’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 May, p.5.

²¹ Ball, ‘U.S. ‘BAFFLED BY BRITISH RETICENCE AND JUNTA LIES’’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 May, p.5.

²² ‘Tactical evasions’, *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 May, p.22.

to the media about the war - was indicative of the emotive reactions his style of briefing provoked in the general public – and in the media.

Ian McDonald suffered one further criticism. He lacked experience as a spokesman, and experience appearing on television. McDonald told the HCDC, when asked if he had any experience: ‘As a spokesman, no...television camera technique and so forth, no’.²³ He also admitted this fact during the war: ‘Before I started to speak on television during this time, I’d never done so before’.²⁴ However, Mercer et al. pointed out that there was precedent for the Chief of PR to be a Government spokesman. Nicholas Fenn had been the spokesman during the Zimbabwe peace talks at Lancaster House in 1979.²⁵ The criticism that McDonald was a civil servant was furthered by Bernard Ingham in his own account of the war when he argued: ‘He should never have been put in this position. In our kind of Democracy the only acceptable spokesmen...is a Minister. Ian McDonald’s up-front job was for a Minister of the Crown and no one else’.²⁶ Yet the main thrust of criticism concerned his delivery, and not his experience. In fact, McDonald was perhaps more reliable as a source of accurate information than many others would have been in his position. During the war the MoD observed a policy of only telling the ‘truth’ in its public statements – even if this meant it could report the bare minimum as a result. The MoD submitted to the HCDC that: ‘During the military operations to recover the Falkland Islands, our policy was to tell the truth as quickly and accurately as we could, consistent with the safety and security of our forces’.²⁷ According to one PRO interviewed by Mercer et al., a noticeboard in the MoD demanded: ‘You will not tell any lies; you will not say anything that will jeopardize the Task Force or the lives or members of the Task Force’.²⁸ A meeting of Information Officers on 10 May agreed that ‘press criticism was directed more at the speed and amount of information available rather than the truth’.²⁹ McDonald embodied the policy to tell nothing but the truth. Nott later confirmed that ‘it was painfully obvious to the whole world that Ian could only speak the truth’.³⁰ However, adherence to this policy meant that, often, McDonald had to resort to the phrase ‘no comment’, when answering questions. The fact that Q&A sessions were also on-the-record meant that

²³ McDonald, HCDC, v.ii p.398, q.1762.

²⁴ McDonald, ‘Ian McDonald on his Job as MoD Spokesman’, *BBC Radio*, 2 Jun. <www.bufovc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0010500481005>.

²⁵ Mercer et al., p.182.

²⁶ Ingham, p.289.

²⁷ MoD memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.1, q.2.

²⁸ Mercer et al., p.46.

²⁹ MIO, 10 May, TNA, CAB134/4636 f.17.

³⁰ Nott, p.263.

McDonald was left unable to counter much rumour or disinformation beyond this expression.³¹ From the journalists' point of view, this furthered the effect of the on-the-record briefings in limiting accessible information. At a meeting with editors on 6 May, one of the main complaints was that the MoD was unable to 'confirm or deny stories originating from overseas...'³² The BBC testified that: 'The decision that there should be one official MoD spokesman, who would say as little as possible to the press 'off the record' (even to accredited Defence Correspondents) had the effect of maximising the suspicion of journalists'.³³

McDonald was a public figure throughout the Falklands War. His appearances on television as the official spokesman of MoD policy were widely controversial. He was ridiculed and heavily criticised for his deliverance, tone and style. Yet he always received a large fan base and became a celebrity as a result of his new position. Despite his lack of experience in presenting the news or in television, McDonald performed the role of spokesman to the very best of his ability. His inexperience in the media spotlight was perhaps the reason for his unfaltering sombre technique when reporting both positive and tragic news. Quite rightly, those who defended his position reminded the public that the tone of his performance was directly linked to the gravity of the situation. However, the effect of the lack of unattributable briefings in the ministry throughout the majority of the war was exacerbated by McDonald's strict adherence to the truth. In principal the policy was laudable, but it dictated that McDonald was in the unfortunate position of being unable to either deny or confirm rumours at the on-the-record Q&A sessions provided after the daily briefings.

³¹ See: Jenkins, 'When soldiers play journalists and journalists play at soldiers', *The Times*, 10 May, p.8.

³² Note for the record, 7 May, MoD, DEFE31/221 f.3.

³³ BBC memorandum, HCDC, v.ii, p.45, q.c.

Appendix 11
Attendance at Editors' Meetings throughout the Falklands War

Editors' Meeting
7 April 1982, 1750 for 1800

Organisation	Representative	Position
BBC Radio News	Larry Hodgson	Editor
BBC Television	Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director-General
<i>Daily Express</i>	Christopher Ward	Editor
<i>Daily Mail</i>	David English	Editor
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Peter Thompson	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Star</i>	Brian Steel	Editor
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	William Deedes	Editor
<i>Financial Times</i>	Geoffrey Owen	Editor
<i>The Guardian</i>	Peter Preston	Editor
IRN	Peter Thornton	News Editor
ITN	David Nicholas	Editor
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	Iain Walker	News Editor
<i>News of the World</i>	Philip Wrack	Deputy Editor
Newspaper Conference	Alex MacDonald	Chairman
<i>The Observer</i>	Donald Trelford	Editor
PA	David Chipp	Editor-in-Chief
<i>Sunday Express</i>	Robert McWilliams	Deputy Editor
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	Vic Birkin	Deputy Editor
<i>The Sunday People</i>	Nick Lloyd	Editor
<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>	John Thompson	Editor
<i>The Sunday Times</i>	Frank Giles	Editor
<i>The Sun</i>	Kelvin McKenzie	Editor
<i>The Times</i>	John Grant	Deputy Editor

Editors' Meeting
20 April 1982, 1750 for 1800

Organisation	Representative	Position
BBC External Services	Ken Brazier	Editor
BBC Radio	John Wilson	Editor
BBC Radio	Larry Hodgson	Deputy Editor
BBC Television	Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director-General
BBC TV News	Peter Woon	Editor
<i>Daily Express</i>	Christopher Ward	Editor

<i>Daily Mail</i>	David Tytler	Assistant Editor
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Richard Scott	Assistant Editor
<i>Daily Star</i>	Brian Hitchens	Editor
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	William Deedes	Editor
<i>Economist</i>	Dudley Fishburn	Executive Editor
<i>Financial Times</i>	G. D. Owen	Editor
<i>The Guardian</i>	Peter Preston	Editor
IRN	Peter Thornton	Editor
ITN	David Nicholas	Editor
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	Anthony Shrimpsley	Associate Editor
<i>News of the World</i>	Derek Jameson	Editor
Newspaper Conference	M. Barrington-Ward	Vice-Chairman
<i>The Observer</i>	Donald Trelford	Editor
PA	David Chipp	Editor-in-Chief
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent
<i>Sunday Express</i>	Michael Toner	Political Editor
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	Bill Hagerty	Assistant Editor
<i>The Sunday People</i>	Ernest Burrington	Associate Editor
<i>The Sunday Times</i>	Frank Giles	Editor
<i>The Sun</i>	David Shapland	Deputy Editor
<i>The Times</i>	Fred Emery	Executive Editor

**Editors' Meeting
6 May 1982, 1750 for 1800**

Organisation	Representative	Position
BBC	Peter Woon	News Editor
BBC External Services	Ken Brazier	Editor
BBC Radio	John Wilson	
	Larry Hodgson	Deputy Editor
BBC TV	Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director-General
<i>Daily Express</i>	Christopher Ward	Editor
<i>Daily Mail</i>	David Tytler	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Peter Thompson	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Star</i>	Brian Hitchens	Editor
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	William Deedes	Editor
<i>Economist</i>	Andrew Knight	Editor
<i>Financial Times</i>	G. D. Owen	Editor
<i>The Guardian</i>	Peter Preston	Editor
IRN	Peter Thornton	Editor
ITN	David Nicholas	Editor
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	Anthony Shrimpsley	Associate Editor
<i>News of the World</i>	Derek Jameson	Editor
Newspaper Conference	Alexander McDonald	Chief Correspondent
<i>The Observer</i>	Ian Lindsey-Smith	Associate Editor

PA	David Chipp	Editor-in-Chief
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Associate Editor
<i>Sunday Express</i>	Mike Toner	Political Editor
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	Bill Hagerty	Assistant Editor
<i>The Sunday People</i>	Nick Lloyd	Editor
<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>	John Thompson	Editor
<i>The Sunday Times</i>	Frank Giles	Editor
<i>The Sun</i>	David Shapland	Deputy Editor
<i>The Times</i>	Fred Emery	Executive Editor

Editors' Meeting
12 May 1982, 1750 for 1800

Organisation	Representative	Position
BBC External Services	Terry Heran	Deputy Editor
BBC External Services	Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director-General
BBC Radio	Larry Hodgson	Editor
BBC TV	Peter Woon	Editor
<i>Daily Express</i>	Christopher Ward	Editor
<i>Daily Mail</i>	David Tytler	Associate Editor
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Peter Thompson	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Star</i>	Brian Hitchens	Editor
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	William Deedes	Editor
<i>Financial Times</i>	Geoffrey Owen	Editor
<i>The Guardian</i>	Peter Preston	Editor
ITN	David Nicholas	Editor
<i>News of the World</i>	Philip Wrack	Deputy Editor
Newspaper Conference	Alexander McDonald	Chief Correspondent
<i>The Observer</i>	Ian Lindsay-Smith	Executive Editor
PA	David Chipp	Editor
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent
<i>Sunday Express</i>	Henry Macory	Chief Leader Writer
<i>The Sunday People</i>	Ernie Barrington	Associate Editor
<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>	John Thompson	Editor
<i>The Sunday Times</i>	Magnus Linklater	Features Editor
<i>The Mail on Sunday</i>	Anthony Shrimley	Editor
<i>The Sun</i>	Ken Donlan	Managing Editor
<i>The Times</i>	Fred Emery	Executive Editor

**Editors' Meeting
20 May 1982, 1150 for 1200**

Organisation	Representative	Position
BBC	Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director-General
BBC External Services	Terry Heran	Deputy Editor
BBC Radio	John Wilson	Editor - News and Current Affairs
BBC TV	Peter Woon	Editor
<i>Daily Mail</i>	David Tytler	Assistant Editor
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Richard Stott	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Star</i>	Brian Hitchens	Editor
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	William Deedes	Editor
<i>Financial Times</i>	Geoffrey Owen	Editor
<i>The Guardian</i>	Peter Preston	Editor
IRN	Peter Thornton	Deputy Editor
ITN	John Horrabin	Editor
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	Anthony Shrimley	Editor
<i>News of the World</i>	Derek Jameson	Editor
<i>The Observer</i>	Donald Trelford	Editor
PA	David Chipp	Editor-in-Chief
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent
<i>Sunday Express</i>	Mike Toner	Executive Editor
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	Robert Edwards	Editor
<i>The Sunday People</i>	Nick Lloyd	Editor
<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>	John Thompson	Editor
<i>The Sunday Times</i>	Frank Giles	Editor
<i>The Sun</i>	Kelvin McKenzie	Editor
<i>The Times</i>	Charles Douglas-Home	Editor

**Editors' Meeting
9 June 1982, 1750 for 1800**

Organisation	Representative	Position
BBC	Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director-General
BBC External Services	Ken Brazier	Editor
BBC Radio	John Wilson	Editor - News and Current Affairs
BBC Radio	Larry Hodgson	Editor
BBC TV	Peter Woon	Editor
<i>Daily Express</i>	Edward Dickinson	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Mail</i>	David Tytler	Assistant Editor
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Richard Stott	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Star</i>	Philip Kellor	Deputy News Editor
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	William Deedes	Editor

<i>Evening Standard</i>	Roy Wright	Deputy Editor
<i>Financial Times</i>	Geoffrey Owen	Editor
<i>The Guardian</i>	Peter Preston	Editor
IRN	Peter Thornton	Deputy Editor
ITN	David Nicholas	Editor
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	Anthony Shrimpsley	Editor
<i>News of the World</i>	Derek Jameson	Editor
Newspaper Conference	Alex McDonald	Chairman
Newspaper Conference	Mark Barrington- Ward	Vice-Chairman
Newspaper Proprietors Association	John Le Page	Director
Newspaper Society	Gordon Page	Secretary
<i>The Observer</i>	Donald Trelford	Editor
PA	David Chipp	Editor-in-Chief
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent
<i>Sunday Express</i>	Mike Toner	Executive Editor
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	Peter Wilson	News Editor
<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>	Peregrine Worsthorne	Associate Editor
<i>The Sun</i>	Ken Donlan	Assistant Editor
<i>The Times</i>	Fred Emery	Executive Editor

**Editors' Meeting
16 June 1982, 1750 for 1800**

Organisation	Representative	Position
BBC	Alan Protheroe	Assistant Director- General
BBC External Services	Ken Brazier	Editor
BBC News and Current Affairs	John Wilson	Editor
BBC Radio	Larry Hodgson	Editor
BBC TV	Peter Woon	Editor
<i>Daily Express</i>	Christopher Ward	Editor
<i>Daily Mail</i>	David Tytler	Associate Editor
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	Peter Thompson	Deputy Editor
<i>Daily Star</i>	Brian Hitchens	Editor
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	Morrison Holcrow	
<i>Economist</i>	Andrew Knight or Dudley Fishburn	Editor Executive Editor
<i>Evening Standard</i>	Louis Kirby	Editor
<i>Financial Times</i>	Geoffrey Owen	Editor
<i>The Guardian</i>	Peter Preston	Editor
IRN	Peter Thornton	Deputy Editor
ITN	John Horrabin	Editor
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	Anthony Shrimpsley	Editor
<i>News of the World</i>	Derek Jameson	Editor
Newspaper Conference	Alex McDonald	Chairman

Newspaper Society	Gordon Page	Secretary
NPA	Arthur Gawen	Chairman
<i>The Observer</i>	Robin Lustig	Assistant Editor
PA	David Chipp	Editor-in-Chief
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent
<i>Sunday Express</i>	Mike Toner	Political Editor
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	Cyril Kersh	Editor
<i>The Sunday People</i>	Nick Lloyd	Editor
<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i>	Peregrine Worsthorne	Associate Editor
<i>The Sunday Times</i>	Frank Giles or Magnus Linklater	Editor
<i>The Sun</i>	Kelvin McKenzie and David Shapland	Features Editor
<i>The Times</i>	Fred Emery	Editor
		Deputy Editor
		Executive Editor

Appendix 12

Attendance at Meetings of Information Officers throughout the Falklands War

Meeting of Information Officers Monday 19 April 1982

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Taylor	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
J. Groves	CoI
Jeffries	CoI
J. P. O. Lewis	Board of Inland Revenue
R. Davy	Central Statistical Office
T. Perks	Department of Education and Science
I. Gillis	Department of Energy
D. Fawell	Department of Health and Social Security
J. Woodrow	Department of Industry
J. Hewlett-Davies	Department of the Environment
M. Garrod	Department of Trade
Rowe	Department of Transport
A. Wood	Home Office
H. Jarman	Management and Personnel Office
J. A. Colmer	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
R. C. A. Christopherson	Northern Ireland Office
P. Broderick	Overseas Development Administration
J. Monaghan	Treasury
Roberts	Welsh Office

Meeting of Information Officers Monday 10 May 1982

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
R. Westbrook	FCO
J. Dobbie	FCO
Jeffries	CoI
J. P. O. Lewis	Board of Inland Revenue
R. Davy	Central Statistical Office
N. Gaffin	Department of Education and Science
I. Gillis	Department of Energy
F. Birtles	Department of the Environment
J. Bolitho	Department of Health and Social Security
J. Woodrow	Department of Industry
M. Butcher	Department of Employment
M. Garrod	Department of Trade
R. Rowe	Department of Transport
A. Wood	Home Office
H. Jarman	Management and Personnel Office
J. A. Colmer	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

J. Murphy	Overseas Development Administration
F. Corbett	Scottish Office
S. Wallace	Secretary
J. Monaghan	Treasury
Roberts	Welsh Office

**Meeting of Information Officers
Monday 17 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
C. Wilton	FCO
J. Groves	COI
S. Jeffries	COI
N. Taylor	MoD
R. Davy	Central Statistical Office
I. Gillis	Department of Energy
F. Birtles	Department of the Environment
J. Hewlett-Davies	Department of the Environment
D. Silvan-Evans	Department of Industry
A. Moorey	Department of Employment
L. A. R. Crump	Department of Transport
J A L Dahn	HM Customs and Excise
A. Wood	Home Office
R. Stiles	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
R. C. A. Christopherson	Northern Ireland Office
P. Broderick	Overseas Development Administration
S. Sutherland	Scottish Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)
A. Thomas	Welsh Office

**Meeting of Information Officers
Monday 24 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
A. A. Joy	FCO
J. Doble	FCO
J. Groves	CoI
S. Jeffries	CoI
H. Colver	Cabinet Office
R. Davy	Central Statistical Office
N. Gaffin	Department of Education and Science
G. Meredith	Department of Energy
J. Bolitho	Department of Health and Social Security
D. Silvan-Evans	Department of Industry
A. Moorey	Department of Employment
F. Birtles	Department of the Environment
R. F. Mayes	Department of Trade
R. Rowe	Department of Transport
D. Grant	Home Office

J. A. L. Dahn	HM Customs and Excise
H. Jarmany	Management and Personnel Office
J. A. Colmer	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
R. C. A. Christopherson	Northern Ireland Office
J. Murphy	Overseas Development Administration
S. Sutherland	Scottish Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)
J. Monaghan	Treasury
G. Roberts	Welsh Office

**Meeting of Information Officers
Monday 7 June 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
R. Westbrook	FCO
C. Wilton	FCO
J. Groves	CoI
H. Lumsden	Central Statistical Office
T. Perks	Department of Education and Science
G. Meredith	Department of Energy
J. Bolitho	Department of Health and Social Security
J. Woodrow	Department of Industry
A. Moorey	Department of Employment
M. Devereau	Department of the Environment
R. F. Mayes	Department of Trade
J. Robson	Department of Transport
A. Wood	Home Office
J. A. L. Dahn	HM Customs and Excise
H. Jarmany	Management and Personnel Office
J. A. Colmer	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
L. Drummond	Northern Ireland Office
J. Murphy	Overseas Development Administration
F. Corbett	Scottish Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)
S. Wallace	Secretary (No.10)
M. Hall	Treasury
G. Roberts	Welsh Office

**Meeting of Information Officers
Monday 14 June 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
R. Westbrook	FCO
S. Jeffries	CoI
N. Taylor	MoD
M. Pentreath	MoD
H. Lumsden	Central Statistical Office
T. Perks	Department of Education and Science

I. Gillis
M. Butcher
J. Hewlett-Davies
M. Devereau
R. F. Mayes
L. A. R. Crump
A. Wood
J. A. L. Dahn
R. Stiles
L. Drummond
P. Broderick
B. Mower
S. Wallace
J. Monaghan
A. Thompson

Department of Energy
Department of Employment
Department of the Environment
Department of the Environment
Department of Trade
Department of Transport
Home Office
HM Customs and Excise
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Northern Ireland Office
Overseas Development Administration
Secretary (No.10)
Secretary (No.10)
Treasury
Welsh Office

Appendix 13
Attendance at the Information Group throughout the Falklands War

Meeting of the Information Group
8 April 1982

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Fenn	FCO
I. McDonald	MoD
S. Jeffries	COI
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

Meeting of the Information Group
14 April 1982

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Fenn	FCO
N. Kelly	COI
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

Meeting of the Information Group
16 April 1982

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Fenn	FCO
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit

Meeting of the Information Group
21 April 1982

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Gee	MoD
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

Meeting of the Information Group
22 April 1982

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
I. McDonald	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
23 April 1982**

B. Mower	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
R. Westbrook	FCO
J. Gee	MoD
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit

**Meeting of the Information Group
26 April 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
27 April 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
I. McDonald	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
28 April 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
29 April 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
D. Wright	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
30 April 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
2 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
J. Whiting	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Colver	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
3 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
I. McDonald	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Colver	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
4 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
5 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
I. McDonald	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit

R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
6 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
7 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
I. McDonald	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
9 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
R. Westbrook	FCO
C. Worrall	MoD
H. Colver	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
10 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
I. McDonald	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
11 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
I. McDonald	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit

S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
12 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
C. Worrall	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
13 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
16 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
N. Taylor	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO

**Meeting of the Information Group
17 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
18 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit

R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
K. Long	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
19 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
20 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
K. Long	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
21 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
23 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
j. gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
24 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
M. Pentreath	MoD
P. Brazier	COI
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
I. Kydd	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
25 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
F. Dodman	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
26 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
J. Gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
27 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
M. Pentreath	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
28 May 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
j. gee	MoD
N. Fenn	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit

S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
1 June 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
J. Gee	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
K. Long	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
I. Kydd	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
2 June 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
R. Moore	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
K. Long	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
3 June 1982**

B. Mower	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
N. Fenn	FCO
F. Dodman	MoD
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
K. Long	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
I. Kydd	Secretary (No.10)

**Meeting of the Information Group
4 June 1982**

B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
A. Leys	COI
M. Pentreath	MoD
R. Westbrook	FCO
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
K. Long	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)

Meeting of the Information Group	
7 June 1982	
B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
R. Westbrook	FCO
M. Pentreath	MoD
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)
Meeting of the Information Group	
8 June 1982	
B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
J. Groves	COI
N. Fenn	FCO
R. Moore	MoD
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
B. Mower	Secretary (No.10)
Meeting of the Information Group	
9 June 1982	
B. Mower	Chair (No.10)
P. Brazier	COI
N. Fenn	FCO
J. Gee	MoD
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
Meeting of the Information Group	
10 June 1982	
B. Mower	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
R. Westbrook	FCO
F. Dodman	MoD
D. Colvin	Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
S. Fuller	Presentation Unit
R. Hatfield	Presentation Unit
H. Mills	Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
I. Kydd	Secretary (No.10)
Meeting of the Information Group	
14 June 1982	
B. Ingham	Chair (No.10)
N. Kelly	COI
P. Marshall	FCO
M. Pentreath	MoD

D. Colvin
S. Fuller
R. Hatfield
K. Long
B. Mower

Cabinet Office and Presentation Unit
Presentation Unit
Presentation Unit
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office
Secretary (No.10)

Colonialism - Britain's responsibility	Colonialism	Civilians with the Task Force
Colonialism - relic of the past		
Communications difficulties	Communication difficulties	
		Commitment to force – Argentine
		Commitment to force – British
Condition of Argentine prisoners - negative	Condition of prisoners - Argentine - N	
Condition of Argentine prisoners - positive	Condition of prisoners - Argentine - P	
Condition of British prisoners - positive	Condition of prisoners - British - P	
Conditions of British prisoners - negative	Condition of prisoners - British - N	
Conditions of conflict - weather, terrain	Conditions of conflict	
Conflict over name - Malvinas or Falklands	Conflict over name	
Criticism of British Gov. for not realizing invasion	Criticism of British Government - late response	
Democracy		
Details of operations, battles		
Diplomacy - as a way of not solving problem	Diplomacy - not the way	
Diplomacy as a way of solving problem	Diplomacy - the way	
Disbelief of British invasion of Falklands		
Discipline of troops, looting etc. – Argentine	Discipline - Argentine	
Discipline of troops, looting etc. - British	Discipline – British	
East-West conflict	East-West conflict	
		Economic implications of crisis
		Education on Falklands
		Education on war
		Effect in Britain - N
		Effect in Britain - P
Falklanders' reaction to invasion	Falklanders' reaction to invasion	
Falklands - Englishness, love for Britain	Falklands - Britishness	
Falklands - links with Argentina, trade, medical, tourism, education		
Falklands - they are Argentina's	Falklands - links with Argentina	
Falklands reaction to invasion		
		Families of the Task Force - N
		Families of the Task Force – P
Fascism		
Funerals - Argentina	Funerals – Argentine	
Funerals - British	Funerals – British	
Future of Falklands after war - economic	Future of Falklands - economic	
Future of Falklands after war - political	Future of Falklands - political	
		Future of Falklands - natural
		Government criticism of the media
History of Falklands	History of Falklands	
Importance of media in context of communications war	Importance of the media	
Invasion - reasons for Argentina - economic problems	Invasion - economic reasons	
Invasion - reasons for Argentina - Galtieri's personal position	Invasion - Galtieri's agenda	
Invasion - reasons for Argentina - social and political	Invasion - social and political reasons	

Invasion - reasons for Argentina, geographical	Invasion - geographical reasons	
Invasion - reasons for Argentina, legal entitlement	Invasion - legal entitlement	Jingoism - discussion of Jingoism - the use of
Lack of equipment - i.e. flash masks (Argentina)	Lack of equipment - Argentina	
Lack of equipment - i.e. flash masks British	Lack of equipment - British	
Lack of support for Argentine position, UN, EEC, world (except USA)	Lack of support for Argentina - UN, EEC, World	
Lack of support for British position - UN, EEC, world (except USA)	Lack of support for Britain - UN, EEC, World	
Lack of support for invasion within Argentina	Lack of support for invasion – Argentina	
Lack of support for war within Argentina	Lack of support for war - Argentina	
Lack of support in Britain - opinion polls, public	Lack of support for war - Britain – public	Lack of support for war - Britain - parliamentary Media - Argentine Media - criticism of British journalism Media - criticism of journalism from Task Force Media - praise of British journalism Media - praise of journalism from Task Force
Legal position - status of Falklands	Legal arguments	
Military equipment - capacity, ships, planes (Argentina)	Military equipment - Argentine	
Military equipment - capacity, ships, planes (British)	Military equipment - British	
Military equipment during war - e.g. Exocet	Military equipment used in Falklands conflict	Military figures - Argentine Military figures - British
Military mistakes - Argentina - unexploded bombs	Military mistakes - Argentine	
Military mistakes – British	Military mistakes - British	MoD - media-related criticism MoD - media-related praise
Moral arguments against conflict		
Morale of troops - Argentine - negative	Morale - Argentine - N	
Morale of troops - Argentine, positive	Morale - Argentine - P	
Morale of troops - British - negative	Morale - British – N	
Morale of troops - British - positive	Morale - British – P	
Neutral position - Ireland, Italy	Neutral countries	Officers - N Officers - P
Opposition in Britain to sending of Task Force - public display, opinion polls	Opposition in Britain - public	
Opposition in Britain to sending of Task Force – Parliamentary	Opposition in Britain - parliamentary	
Opposition within Argentina to Government	Opposition movement in Argentina	

Patriotism - British honour at stake	Patriotism	Organisation of British forces
Peace plans - Haig - likelihood of failure	Peace plan - Haig - failure	Parliamentary events
Peace plans - Haig - likelihood of success	Peace plan - Haig - success	
Peace plans - Peru - likelihood of failure	Peace plan - Peru - failure	Peace plan - Haig - neutral
Peace plans - Peru - likelihood of success	Peace plan - Peru - success	
Peace plans - UN - likelihood of failure	Peace plan - UN - failure	
Peace plans - UN - likelihood of success	Peace plan - UN - success	
Political capital being made by Thatcher and Gov.	Political capital	
Political control of Argentine mass media	Media - Argentine - political control	Political figures - Argentine - N
Political control of British mass media	Media - British - political control	Political figures - Argentine - P
		Political figures - British - N
		Political figures - British - P
Political system - Argentinian , fascist, Junta - unrepresentative – descriptive	Political system - Argentine – descriptive	
Political system - Argentinian fascist, Junta unrepresentative, critical	Political system - Argentine - critical	
Political system - British parliamentary democracy – representativeness	Political system - British	
Political/military comparison without the conflicts - Hitler/Ruhr, Cuba, Berlin		
Pope's visit - decision to visit Britain - should not come	Pope's visit - should not come	
Pope's visit - decision to visit Britain, should come	Pope's visit - should come	
Pope's visit in Argentina	Pope's visit - Argentina	
Pope's visit to Britain	Pope's visit – Britain	
Possibility of casualties - Argentina - light	Possibility of casualties - Argentina – light	
Possibility of casualties - British - light	Possibility of casualties - British - light	
Possibility of casualties - Falklands, light	Possibility of casualties - Falklands – light	
Possibility of causalities - Argentine, heavy	Possibility of casualties - Argentine – heavy	
Possibility of causalities - British, heavy	Possibility of casualties - British – heavy	
Possibility of causalities - Falklanders – heavy	Possibility of casualties - Falklanders – heavy	
Possibility of fighting	Possibility of armed conflict or war	
Previous Argentine conflicts - external	Previous conflicts - Argentine – external	
Previous Argentine conflicts - internal	Previous conflicts - Argentine - internal	
Previous British conflicts - Suez, World War II, Cyprus	Previous conflicts - British	
Prince Andrew	Prince Andrew	Propaganda - Argentine

<p>Recall of Task Force - calls for Recall of Task Force - impractical, present/future Recall of Task Force - impractical, present/future Religious reactions - Argentine position, lack of support for Religious reactions - Argentine position, support for Religious reactions - British position - lack of support for Religious reactions - British position - support for Repatriation of bodies</p> <p>Ridicule/comment of Argentine figures in British media Ridicule/comment of British figures in Argentine media display S. American criticism of Argentina (lack of support) Self-determination for Falklanders (refs. To) Skill of troops - Argentine Skill of troops - British South American disputes with Argentina South American support for Argentina South American support for Britain</p> <p>Sovereignty - Argentinian Sovereignty - British Special terms during Conflict - i.e. yomping</p> <p>State of Argentine armed forces State of Argentine armed forces - negative State of British armed forces - cuts – negative State of British armed forces - ready – positive State of war - Argentina might lose State of war - Argentine winning State of war - British might lose State of war - British winning</p> <p>Support for Argentine position - UN, EEC, world (except USA) Support for British position - UN, EEC, world (except USA) Support for invasion within Argentina Support for sending Task Force – Parliamentary</p>	<p>Religious reaction - lack of support – Argentina</p> <p>Religious reaction - support - Argentina Religious reaction - lack of support – Britain</p> <p>Religious reaction - support - Britain Repatriation of bodies</p> <p>Self determination Skill – Argentine Skill – British South America - disputes - Argentina South America - support - Argentina South America - support - Britain</p> <p>Sovereignty – Argentine Sovereignty – British</p> <p>Special terms</p> <p>State of Argentine armed forces</p> <p>State of British forces - N State of British forces - P State of war - Argentina - lose State of war - Argentina - win State of war - British - lose State of War - British - win</p> <p>Support for Argentina - UN, EEC, World Support for Britain - UN, EEC, World Invasion - support - Argentine Support in Britain - parliamentary</p>	<p>Propaganda - British Regulars - N Regulars - P</p> <p>Reporting on UN events Reports on armed conflict</p> <p>South America - lack of support - Argentina</p> <p>Speculation - Argentine action Speculation - British action</p> <p>Stories - N Stories - P</p>
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Support for sending Task Force - public display - opinion polls Support for war within Argentina	Support in Britain - public Support for war - Argentine	Support for war - British
Symbols of Argentine nationalism - self-sacrifice Symbols of British nationalism Tactical discussions - military, battle plans Tactical discussions during war Task Force preparations, training, equipment	Task Force - preparations	Task Force journalists - armed conflict Task Force journalists - N Task Force journalists - non-battle Task Force journalists - P
Terrorism Trade British-Argentine - arms, training Trade, British-Argentine - economic	Trade - Argentine-British - arms Trade - Argentine-British - economic	Trade - Argentine-Russian
Treatment of Argentine prisoners – negative Treatment of Argentine prisoners - positive Treatment of British prisoners - negative Treatment of British prisoners - positive Unfair fighting tactics - napalm (British) Unfair fighting tactics - napalm, white flags (Argentina) US aid to Argentina US aid to Britain - military, communication, intelligence	Treatment of prisoners - Argentine - N Treatment of prisoners - Argentine - P Treatment of prisoners - British - N Treatment of prisoners - British - P Unfair tactics - British Unfair tactics - Argentine US - aid to Argentina US - aid to Britain	US - criticism of
US links with South America - economic US links with South America - political US neutral	US-South America - economic US-South America - political US - neutral position	US - public opinion - pro-Argentine US - public opinion - pro-British
US support for Argentine position US support for British position Whole escapade is madness	US - support - Argentina US - support - Britain Crisis is madness	World Cup - Argentina's participation
World Cup - British should not participate World Cup - British should participate	World Cup - Britain - N World Cup - Britain - P	World Cup - neutral

Appendix 15

Themes used in Content Analysis and their Descriptions

Wording used in thesis	Description of Theme
Aggression - need to combat	The need to combat the Argentine aggression displayed through the invasion of the Falkland Islands
Aggression - not the way	Aggression is not a suitable way of resolving the dispute over the Falklands
Aggression - the way	Aggression is a suitable response in order to resolve the Falklands crisis
Claim to the Falklands – Argentine	Discussion of the Argentine claim to the Falklands - to include history and arguments for
Argentine history	Argentine history - political, social and economic
Argentine treatment of the Falklands – N	Argentine treatment of the Falklands and the persons of the Falklands – negative
Argentine treatment of the Falklands – P	Argentine treatment of the Falklands and the persons of the Falklands – positive
Argentines in Britain – N	The treatment of peoples of Argentine descent, Argentine tourists or Argentines in permanent residency in Britain - negative+C28
Argentines in Britain – P	The treatment of peoples of Argentine descent, Argentine tourists or Argentines in permanent residency in Britain - positive
Arms trade – Argentina	Arms trade - supplies to Argentina from the EU, US and World
Arms trade – Britain	Arms trade - supplies to Britain from the EU, US and World
Arms trade – general	Arms trade - general and world-wide
Belgrano – N	The sinking of the Belgrano - comment on British action - negative
Belgrano neutral	The sinking of the Belgrano - comment on British action - neutral
Belgrano – P	The sinking of the Belgrano - comment on British action - positive
British confidence	British confidence in her eventual victory - diplomatic or military
Bravery – Argentine	Accounts of the bravery of Argentine troops
Bravery – British	Accounts of the bravery of British troops
British in Argentina - lack of support	Lack of support for Britain by peoples of British descent in, British tourists in, or British in permanent residency in Argentina
British in Argentina – links	The history and links between the British in Argentina - peoples of British descent or in permanent residency
British in Argentina – support	Support for Britain by peoples of British descent in, British tourists in, or British in permanent residency in Argentina
British in Argentina - treatment of – N	Treatment of peoples of British descent, British tourists, or British in permanent residency, in Argentina - negative
British in Argentina - treatment of – P	Treatment of peoples of British descent, British tourists, or British in permanent residency, in Argentina - positive
South America - links with Britain	South American links with Britain - economic, political and social
British treatment of the Falklanders – P	Treatment of the Falklanders by the British - before or during the course of the conflict - positive
British treatment of the Falklanders – N	Treatment of the Falklanders by the British - before or during the course of the conflict - negative
British-Argentine relationship after war	Speculation as to the nature of the British-Argentine relationship after war - economic, political and social
Casualties - British – heavy	British casualties - heavy - i.e. over 10 people wounded or killed
Casualties - British – light	British casualties - light - i.e. under 10 people wounded or killed
Casualties - Argentine – heavy	Argentine casualties - heavy - i.e. over 10 people wounded or killed
Casualties - Argentine - light	Argentine casualties - light - i.e. under 10 people wounded or killed
Censorship – Argentine	References or description of censorship of the mass media in Argentina
Censorship – British	References or description of censorship of the mass media in Britain
Civilians with the Task Force	Stories, accounts or mention of civilians travelling with, or involved with the Task Force

Colonialism	Mention, or comment on, Britain's colonial possessions, responsibilities, or colonial past
Communication difficulties	Communication difficulties - to include technical problems with satellites, delays in copy or despatches, conditions affecting transmissions, delayed or lost correspondence with the Task Force
Commitment to force - Argentine	Signs of, mention of or discussion on the Argentine commitment to the use of force in the Falklands crisis
Commitment to force - British	Signs of, mention of or discussion on the British commitment to the use of force in the Falklands crisis
Condition of prisoners - Argentine - N	Condition of Argentine prisoners or hostages - negative
Condition of prisoners - Argentine - P	Condition of Argentine prisoners or hostages - positive
Condition of prisoners - British - P	Condition of British prisoners or hostages - positive
Condition of prisoners - British - N	Condition of British prisoners or hostages - negative
Conditions of conflict	Conditions of conflict - to include weather conditions and conditions of terrain
Conflict over name	Conflict over whether the Falklands Islands should be named the Falklands or Islas Malvinas
Criticism of British Government - late response	Criticism of the British Government for not having anticipated the Argentine invasion of the Falklands or responding late to information and intelligence
Diplomacy - not the way	The use of diplomacy in the Falklands crisis is not a suitable way of resolving the situation - to include argument of the text or reference to that argument by a third party
Diplomacy - the way	The use of diplomacy in the Falklands crisis is a suitable way of resolving the situation - to include argument of the text or reference to that argument by a third party
Discipline - Argentine	Poor discipline of Argentine troops - to include actions of looting, criminal damage and poor behaviour
Discipline - British	Poor discipline of British troops - to include actions of looting, criminal damage and poor behaviour
East-West conflict	East-West conflict or tension between Russia and Western Europe or the United States
Economic implications of crisis	Economic implications of the crisis, or of fighting a war, for both Argentina and Britain
Education on Falklands	Reports, accounts, articles or descriptions specifically aimed at educating the public on the Falkland Islands
Education on war	Reports, accounts, articles or descriptions specifically aimed at educating the public on the art, operation or considerations of war/armed conflict
Effect in Britain - N	Effect of the Falklands crisis on the greater population of Britain - economically, socially or politically - negative
Effect in Britain - P	Effect of the Falklands crisis on the greater population of Britain - economically, socially or politically - positive
Falklanders' reaction to invasion	The reaction to the invasion of the Falklands by their inhabitants - negative or positive
Falklands - Britishness	The British nature of the Falkland Islands or Falkland Islanders. Includes accounts, articles, or descriptions of how much the Falklanders feel they belong to Britain
Falklands - links with Argentina	Links between Argentina and the Falkland Islands. To include trade, medical, tourism, education and general resources
Families of the Task Force - N	Mention of, discussion of the effect on, or accounts relating to, the families of servicemen in the Task Force - negative
Families of the Task Force - P	Mention of, discussion of the effect on, or accounts relating to, the families of servicemen in the Task Force - positive
Funerals - Argentine	Funerals of Argentine servicemen - on the Falkland Islands or in Argentina
Funerals - British	Funerals of British servicemen - on the Falkland Islands or in Britain
Future of Falklands - economic	The future of the Falkland Islands - to include economics or monetary advantages of reclaiming the islands/ hindrances
Future of Falklands - political	The future of the Falkland Islands - to include the political outcomes possible - administration of the islands etc.

Future of Falklands - natural	The future of the Falkland Islands - natural - to include conservation measures and future natural status of the Islands
Government criticism of the media	Government-led criticism of the media in Britain and British journalism
History of Falklands	History of the Falklands - to include discovery of, exploration of, economic, social and political history
Importance of the media	The importance of the media in the context of a communications war
Invasion - economic reasons	Reasons for the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands - economic advantages
Invasion - Galtieri's agenda	Reasons for the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands - to fulfil Galtieri's own political position or political agenda
Invasion - social and political reasons	Reasons for the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands - social and political
Invasion - geographical reasons	Reasons for the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands - geographical position
Invasion - legal entitlement	Reasons for the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands - legal entitlement
Jingoism - discussion of	Jingoism in the British press - discussion of
Jingoism - the use of	Jingoism in the British press - use of
Lack of equipment - Argentina	Reference to, or judgement on, Argentina's lack of military equipment or equipment which would be beneficial to the Argentine army
Lack of equipment - British	Reference to, or judgement on, Britain's lack of military equipment or equipment which would be beneficial to the Task Force
Lack of support for Argentina - UN, EEC, World	Lack of support for Argentina within the UN, EEC and wider-world - includes accounts, articles or descriptions of groups who do not support Argentina within countries which might otherwise support her
Lack of support for Britain - UN, EEC, World	Lack of support for Britain within the UN, EEC and wider-world - includes accounts, articles or descriptions of groups who do not support Britain within countries which might otherwise support her
Lack of support for invasion - Argentina	Lack of support for the Argentine invasion of the Falklands within Argentina
Lack of support for war - Argentina	Lack of support for war within Argentina
Lack of support for war - Britain - public	Lack of support for war within Britain - referring to the British public
Lack of support for war - Britain - parliamentary	Lack of support for war within Britain - referring to the British parliament
Media - Argentine	Discussion of the processes of and ethics of the Argentine media
Media - criticism of British journalism	Criticism of the conduct of the British media (in Britain)
Media - criticism of journalism from Task Force	Criticism of the conduct of journalists accompanying the Task Force
Media - praise of British journalism	Praise of the conduct of the British media (in Britain)
Media - praise of journalism from Task Force	Praise of the conduct of journalists accompanying the Task Force
Legal arguments	Legal arguments - concerning the status of the Falklands, Britain's right to self-defence, UN resolution 502
Military equipment - Argentine	Argentine military equipment - to include military capacity, troop movements, requisitioned ships and general equipment
Military equipment - British	British military equipment - to include military capacity, troop movements, requisitioned ships and general equipment
Military equipment used in Falklands conflict	Military equipment used in the Falklands conflict - to include discussion on the Exocet missile etc.
Military figures - Argentine	Presentation of Argentine military figures in the British press
Military figures - British	Presentation of British military figures in the British press
Military mistakes - Argentine	Argentine Military mistakes - to include unexploded bombs, crash-landings, or operational mistakes
Military mistakes - British	British Military mistakes - to include unexploded bombs, crash-landings, or operational mistakes
MoD - media-related criticism	Media-related criticism of the Ministry of Defence - to include communication difficulties, the release of news, organisation of Task Force attributed journalists and criticism of Ian McDonald

MoD - media-related praise	Media-related praise of the Ministry of Defence - to include the release of news, communication with Task Force personnel's families and praise of Ian McDonald
Morale - Argentine - N	Morale of servicemen - Argentine - negative
Morale - Argentine - P	Morale of servicemen - Argentine - positive
Morale - British - N	Morale of servicemen - British - negative
Morale - British - P	Morale of servicemen - British - positive
Neutral countries	Countries which adopt neutral status in the conflict - specifically relating to Italy and Ireland
Officers - N	Presentation of British officers - negative
Officers - P	Presentation of British officers - positive
Opposition in Britain - public	Opposition to the Government's line on the Falklands or British military action within Britain and specific to the British public - to include discussion on public displays or opinion polls
Opposition in Britain - parliamentary	Opposition to the Government's line on the Falklands or British military action within Britain and specific to parliament
Opposition movement in Argentina	Opposition to the Junta's line on the Falklands or Argentine military action within Argentina
Organisation of British forces	Organisation of British forces - to include discussion on protocol and red tape
Parliamentary events	Discussion on events within parliament or specifically to do with politics within Britain
Patriotism	Patriotism - displays of nationalism, or love of one's country - Argentine or British
Peace plan - Haig - failure	Haig peace plan - references to, or discussion on, the likelihood of the plan's failure
Peace plan - Haig - success	Haig peace plan - references to, or discussion on, the likelihood of the plan's success
Peace plan - Haig - neutral	Haig peace plan - neutral discussion of
Peace plan - Peru - failure	Peru's peace plan - references to, or discussion on, the likelihood of the plan's failure
Peace plan - Peru - success	Peru's peace plan - references to, or discussion on, the likelihood of the plan's success
Peace plan - UN - failure	UN peace plan - references to, or discussion on, the likelihood of the plan's failure
Peace plan - UN - success	UN peace plan - references to, or discussion on, the likelihood of the plan's success
Political capital	Political capital made by the Thatcher Government as a result of the Falklands crisis
Media - Argentine - political control	References to, or discussion of, Argentine political control of the mass media
Media - British - political control	References to, or discussion of, British political control of the mass media
Political figures - Argentine - N	Presentation of Argentine political figures - negative
Political figures - Argentine - P	Presentation of Argentine political figures - positive
Political figures - British - N	Presentation of British political figures - negative
Political figures - British - P	Presentation of British political figures - positive
Political system - Argentine - descriptive	Argentine political system - descriptive discussion of, or references to, the fascist Junta or the unrepresentative nature of the system
Political system - Argentine - critical	Argentine political system - critical discussion of, or references to, the fascist Junta or the unrepresentative nature of the system
Political system - British	British political system - descriptive discussion of, or reference to, parliamentary system
Pope's visit - should not come	Pope's visit to Britain - comment on or speculation on the fact that he should no longer continue with his scheduled visit
Pope's visit - should come	Pope's visit to Britain - comment on or speculation on the fact that he should continue with his scheduled visit
Pope's visit - Argentina	Pope's visit to Argentina
Pope's visit - Britain	Pope's visit to Britain

Possibility of casualties - Argentina - light	The possibility of Argentine casualties - light - i.e. under 10 people predicted to be wounded or killed
Possibility of casualties - British - light	The possibility of British casualties - light - i.e. under 10 people predicted to be wounded or killed
Possibility of casualties - Falklands - light	The possibility of Falkland casualties - light - i.e. under 10 people predicted to be wounded or killed
Possibility of casualties - Argentine - heavy	The possibility of Argentine casualties - heavy - i.e. over 10 people predicted to be wounded or killed
Possibility of casualties - British - heavy	The possibility of British casualties - heavy - i.e. over 10 people predicted to be wounded or killed
Possibility of casualties - Falklanders - heavy	The possibility of Falkland casualties - heavy - i.e. over 10 people predicted to be wounded or killed
Possibility of armed conflict or war	The possibility of crisis resulting in armed conflict or a war
Previous conflicts - Argentine - external	Discussion of, links or reference to previous Argentine conflicts - specifically with other countries
Previous conflicts - Argentine - internal	Discussion of, links or reference to previous Argentine conflicts - specifically those fought internally, to include the 'Dirty War' and illegal action in Argentina in the 1970s
Previous conflicts - British	Discussion of, links or reference to previous British conflicts - specifically those with other countries
Prince Andrew	Articles on, discussion of or reference to, the role of Prince Andrew as a member of the Task Force in the Falklands conflict
Propaganda - Argentine	Argentine use of propaganda - both internal and external use
Propaganda - British	British use of propaganda - both internal and external use
Regulars - N	Presentation of regular British servicemen - negative
Regulars - P	Presentation of regular British servicemen - positive
Religious reaction - lack of support - Argentina	Religious reactions demonstrating a lack of support for Argentina
Religious reaction - support - Argentina	Religious reactions demonstrating support for Argentina
Religious reaction - lack of support - Britain	Religious reactions demonstrating a lack of support for Britain
Religious reaction - support - Britain	Religious reactions demonstrating support for Britain
Repatriation of bodies	Stories or discussion relating to the repatriation of British servicemen's bodies
Reporting on UN events	Discussion on events within the United Nations
Reports on armed conflict	Reports, descriptions of, or discussion on armed conflict between Argentina and Britain
Self-determination	The Falkland Islanders' right to self-determination - either argued in text or where references are made to arguments for self determination
Skill - Argentine	Skill of Argentine troops
Skill - British	Skill of British troops
South America - disputes - Argentina	South American disputes with Argentina - territorial, economic, political or social - to include historical disputes or present-day disputes
South America - support - Argentina	South American support for Argentina
South America - support - Britain	South American support for Britain
South America - lack of support - Argentina	South American criticism of, or lack of support for, Argentina
Sovereignty - Argentine	Sovereignty of the Falklands belongs to Argentina - either argued in text or where references are made to arguments for Argentine Sovereignty
Sovereignty - British	Sovereignty of the Falklands belongs to Britain - either argued in text or where references are made to arguments for British Sovereignty
Special terms	Special terms used during the conflict or which are specific to the conflict - to include 'yomping' and other informal terms
Speculation - Argentine action	Speculation or rumour about intended Argentine action
Speculation - British action	Speculation or rumour about intended British action
State of Argentine Armed Forces	The state of the Argentine armed forces - preparedness, training, economic state
State of British forces - N	The state of the British forces - not prepared, unable to fight a war against Argentina

State of British forces – P	The state of the British forces - prepared, able to fight a war against Argentina
State of war - Argentina - lose	Comment on the state or progress of the war - Argentina may lose
State of war - Argentina - win	Comment on the state or progress of the war - Argentina may win
State of war - British - lose	Comment on the state or progress of the war - Britain may lose
State of War - British - win	Comment on the state or progress of the war - Britain may win
Stories – N	Stories relating to the Falkland Islands or the conflict from people in Britain – negative
Stories – P	Stories relating to the Falkland Islands or the conflict from people in Britain – positive
Support for Argentina - UN, EEC, World	Support for Argentina within the UN, EEC and wider-world - includes accounts, articles or descriptions of groups who support Argentina within countries which might otherwise oppose her
Support for Britain - UN, EEC, World	Support for Britain within the UN, EEC and wider-world - includes accounts, articles or descriptions of groups who support Britain within countries which might otherwise oppose her
Invasion - support - Argentine	Argentine support for the initial invasion of the Falkland Islands
Support in Britain - parliamentary	Support for the Government's line on the Falklands or British military action within Britain and specific to parliament
Support in Britain - public	Support for the Government's line on the Falklands or British military action within Britain and specific to the British public - to include discussion on public displays or opinion polls
Support for war - Argentine	Support for an Argentine-British war within Argentina
Support for war – British	Support for an Argentine-British war within Britain
Task Force - preparations	Preparations for the Task Force - to include requisitioning of ships, training, preparation of equipment and economic provision
Task Force journalists - armed conflict	Stories originating from journalists accredited to the Task Force - accounts of armed conflict
Task Force journalists - N	Stories originating from journalists accredited to the Task Force - negative accounts
Task Force journalists - non-battle	Stories originating from journalists accredited to the Task Force - non-battle stories
Task Force journalists - P	Stories originating from journalists accredited to the Task Force - positive accounts
Trade - Argentine-British - arms	Trade between Argentina and Britain - to include arms sales and military training
Trade - Argentine-British - economic	Trade between Argentina and Britain - to include only economic trade
Trade - Argentine-Russian	Trade between Argentina and Russia - to include arms sales where appropriate
Treatment of prisoners - Argentine - N	Treatment of Argentine prisoners or hostages - negative
Treatment of prisoners - Argentine - P	Treatment of Argentine prisoners or hostages - positive
Treatment of prisoners - British - N	Treatment of British prisoners or hostages - negative
Treatment of prisoners - British - P	Treatment of British prisoners or hostages - positive
Unfair tactics – British	Reports of or speculation on the use of unfair fighting tactics by Britain - to include the use of napalm, using prisoners to clear minefields, the use of white flags etc.
Unfair tactics - Argentine	Reports of or speculation on the use of unfair fighting tactics by Argentina - to include the use of napalm, using prisoners to clear minefields, the use of white flags etc.
US - aid to Argentina	United States aid to Argentina throughout the course of the crisis/ conflict
US - aid to Britain	United States aid to Britain throughout the course of the crisis/ conflict
US - criticism of	Criticism of the United States Government for not aligning with Britain, or not aligning sooner
US-South America - economic	United States- South American links - economic
US-South America - political	United States- South American links - political
US - neutral position	Comment on, reference to, or discussion of, the neutral status of the United States
US - public opinion - pro-Argentine	Pro-Argentine public opinion within the United States

US - public opinion - pro-British	Pro-British public opinion within the United States
US - support – Argentina	Support of the United States for Argentina
US - support – Britain	Support of the United States for Britain
Crisis is madness	The departure of a British Task Force and a potential conflict or the actual war is madness
World Cup - Argentina's participation	The World Cup competition - articles relating to whether or not Argentina should be allowed to participate
World Cup - Britain – N	The World Cup competition - the argument that Britain should not participate - either argued in text or where references are made to arguments against Britain's participation
World Cup - Britain – P	The World Cup competition - the argument that Britain should participate - either argued in text or where references are made to arguments for Britain's participation
World Cup – neutral	The World Cup competition - neutral reporting of preparations for and events concerning the contest

Appendix 16

Example of a Day's-Worth of Newspaper Analysis

The Times		Possible articles on one page and how many related to the Falklands										Cartoons and whether Falklands-related noted		Title of article, its origin and themes associated noted		Letters to the editor, or public opinion pieces, noted and how many relate to the Falklands
Page no.	Type of page	Possible articles per page	Articles on the Falklands	Advert	Double page	Cartoon	Cartoon on the Falklands	Editorial	Editorial on the Falklands	Letters to the Editor	Letters on the Falklands	Title of Falklands-related article	Origin of Falklands-related article	Themes allocated to Falklands-related article	Red stories denote media-related themes	Editorials noted separately and in blue when related to the Falklands
1		15	4	1								1) Banks concern on Argentina 2) Troops stay on Falklands 'alive or dead' 3) Falklands 'the way', Cabinet 4) Argonotes ponder on 'young' argon	1) Britain 2) Buenos Aires 3) Buenos Aires	1) Economic implications of crisis, Effect in Britain - N 2) Argentine treatment of the Falklands - N, Future of Falklands - political 3) British confidence, Diplomacy - the way, Peace plan - Haig - fallacy 4) Treatment of prisoners - British - N		
2		12	1	0								1) Post on EEC not charged by Falklands	1) Britain	1) Economic implications of crisis, Effect in Britain - UN, EEC, World		
3		8	0	1												
4	Editorials and Letters	10	5	1		1	1		2	1	14	1) E.D. EUROPE IN A WIDER WORLD				
5		0	0	1												
6		9	0	0												
7		1	0	1												
8	The Times Diary	13	2			1	0					1) Argentina calling The Times Diary Leader	1) Britain 2) Britain	1) Media - criticism of British journalism 2) Effect in Britain - N		

Double-page spread noted
Advertisements counted

N.B. This is not the actual analysis of *The Times* on 19 April 1982 – it is merely a representation of the template used in order to conduct the analysis

Appendix 17

Definition of Time Periods Employed in Content Analysis

In order to make the sample included in this analysis comparable with that of analysis of television news, the same method concerning dates was followed. In *Journalists at War* the duration of the conflict was divided into five distinct time periods. These date brackets are observed in this content analysis.¹ Each period covers various events which occurred in the campaign, making thematic analysis more effective. The first period, from 2 April to 4 April, covers the invasion of the islands, the first House of Commons debate on the invasion and the extensive, but brief, preparation of the Task Force. The second period spans from 5 to 24 April. This period comprises the sailing of the Task Force, Alexander Haig's 'shuttle diplomacy', as well as the UN and EEC resolutions concerning the Falklands. The recapture of South Georgia and the United States' decision to side publicly with Britain are included in the third period considered - 25 to 30 April. May 1 to 20, the fourth period studied, covered the first signs of action on the Falkland Islands since the Argentine invasion - the bombing of the Port Stanley runway, the sinking of the *General Belgrano* and HMS *Sheffield* and the shooting down of Argentine planes. The period ended with the failure of Britain and Argentina to reach a peaceful solution to the crisis. The final period examined fell between 21 May and 15 June. This stage involved the destruction of British naval and merchant ships, the successful British campaign at Goose Green, the Bluff Cove disaster and the advance of British troops with the ceasefire and surrender of Argentine troops.

¹ Morrison and Tumber, p.258.

Appendix 18
Original Locations and how they were defined in this Thesis

Original Location and Report Type as listed in <i>Journalists at War</i>	Origin Allocated
British film from Argentina - interviews with Argentinians and British, parades, funerals, general film	Argentina
Other film, i.e. NBC from Argentina	Argentina
Argentinian film - invasion film plus entry into Stanley and all Falklands film	Argentine source
Argentine film from Argentina	Argentine source
Argentinian film - official Government information film, propaganda film	Argentine source
Studio, e.g. newsreader, expert witness, studio discussion, drawings, graphs, maps, photographs and models	Britain
Home film - interviews with politicians, wives, parliamentary reports, statements, vox pop, home film abroad	Britain
Diplomatic film, i.e. Haig shuttle, EEC reports, UN etc.	Britain
Pre-sailing Task Force film, i.e. embarkation, training preparation	Britain
Home film - official war statements only - i.e. Ian McDonald and John Nott or anyone making official war statements, but not at Parliament	Britain
MoD and COI film, i.e. simulated, training and official Falklands film (historical film of Falklands kelpers). Only if stated as caption or announcement	Britain
BBC, ITN film - i.e. simulated training and official Falklands film (historical film of Falklands kelpers)	Britain
Other film, i.e. NBC from rest of the world	Other
British film from South America excluding Falklands and Argentina	South America
Other film, i.e. NBC from South America	South America
Task Force film on board ships and on Falklands - radio report with or without still picture	Task Force
Task Force film on board ships and on Falklands - commentary plus film - all ITN and BBC film	Task Force

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