



Eighteenth session

INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION ON  
CARIBBEAN AND WESTERN ATLANTIC TERRITORIES  
UNDER UNITED KINGDOM ADMINISTRATION

Note by the Secretary-General

FAKLAND ISLANDS

In accordance with the statement of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 27 September 1961, the Government of the United Kingdom has transmitted to the Secretary-General the following political and constitutional information on the Territory of the Falkland Islands.

This information, which was received on 1 March 1963, is herewith submitted to the General Assembly at its eighteenth session.<sup>1/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1700 (XVI) of 19 December 1961, this information is also submitted to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories.

## FAKLAND ISLANDS

### AREA AND POPULATION

1. The Falkland Islands consist of two large islands and a number of smaller islands with a total land area of approximately 4,700 square miles. The Falkland Island Dependencies consist of the islands of South Georgia and South Sandwich (and a number of smaller islands) which lie some 800 and 500 miles to the east of the Falkland Islands. The estimated population of the Falkland Islands at 31 December 1960 was 2,127; all were of European descent and most were of British origin. The population of the Dependencies is 500.

### CONSTITUTION

2. The present Constitution, which dates from 1951, provides for a Governor, assisted by an Executive Council, and a Legislative Council. Prior to 1951, the Executive Council and Legislative Council consisted of an equal number of official members (i.e., civil servants) and non-official members nominated by the Governor. Under the 1951 Constitution, elections were introduced for membership of the Legislative Council, and provision was made for a majority of elected members in both the Executive and Legislative Councils.
3. The main features of the present Constitution are as follows:

#### Governor

4. The Governor (at present Sir. E. Arrowsmith) is the head of the administration of the Territory. In the exercise of his powers he is advised by the Executive Council. He normally acts in accordance with the advice he receives from the Executive Council and can only act against this advice in certain specified circumstances.

#### Executive Council

5. The Executive Council is the principal executive organ and normally takes decisions on all matters affecting the internal government of the Territory, including the budget. It is composed of 5 non-official members nominated by the

Governor and 3 civil servants. The present membership of the Executive Council, under the chairmanship of the Governor, is as follows:

Mr. T.A. Gilruth  
Mr. A.G. Barton  
Mr. N.K. Cameron  
Mr. H.C. Harding  
Mr. L.C. Gleadell (Colonial Treasurer)  
Mr. R.H.D. Manders (Colonial Secretary)  
Mr. R.S. Slessor (Senior Medical Officer).

All except the last two named are local inhabitants.

#### Legislative Council

6. The Legislative Council passes laws for the peace, order and good government of the Falkland Islands. The Council must meet at least once a year and usually has several sessions, including a budget session in June or July. The presiding officer is the Governor, and there are 11 other members, of whom 4 are elected, 4 nominated (including two non-officials) and 3 ex officio civil servants. The Governor has only a casting vote.

#### ELECTORAL SYSTEM

7. The four elected members of the Legislative Council are chosen by universal adult suffrage. There are no political parties in the Falkland Islands.

#### JUDICIARY

8. The judicial system of the Falkland Islands consists of a Supreme Court and a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. In view of the small size of the Territory and the few cases which arise, the Governor sits as Judge of the Supreme Court and the Colonial Secretary as Magistrate in the Court of Summary Jurisdiction. The Court of Summary Jurisdiction can also be presided over by a bench of magistrates composed of two or more justices of the peace.

## PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL INHABITANTS IN THE ADMINISTRATION

9. All junior posts in the Administration, and the majority of the senior posts, are held by local inhabitants. Among the senior posts held by local officers are those of Colonial Treasurer, Superintendent of Posts and Telegraphs and the Registrar of the Supreme Court. Most of the justices of the peace are local inhabitants. As already noted, there is a majority of elected inhabitants on both the Executive and Legislative Councils.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

10. Stanley, the capital, has a Town Council consisting of 6 elected members and 3 members nominated by the Governor. Of the 6 elected members, 3 retire every two years and elections are therefore held biennially. The Council derives its revenues principally from rates, but also receives grants from the central Government. It is responsible for the normal range of local government services such as the fire brigade, street cleaning and lighting, housing and town planning.

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