

CONFIDENTIAL

MEETING OF INFORMATION GROUP ON THE FALKLANDS

10 AM FRIDAY 30 APRIL 1982

Present:

B Ingham - No 10  
Ned Kelly - COI  
N Fenn - FCO  
J Gee - MoD  
D Colvin - Cabinet Office  
S Fuller - Presentation Unit  
R Hatfield - Presentation Unit  
B Mower - No 10

FCO said that there were likely to be announcements from Washington later today concerning implicit Argentine rejection of the American proposals and consequent US "sanctions". FCO were preparing a briefing line which would probably welcome US support for the British position but indicate our wish that they should do more. It was expected that the Foreign Secretary would take an open Press Conference late this afternoon and fly to Washington tomorrow to see Haig and the Secretary General to maintain our position concerning the quest for diplomatic solutions. Prior to any statement from Washington we should need to maintain the same line as yesterday including a fairly pessimistic view of the likely outcome of current negotiations.

Regarding the Guardian reports of the proposals and Britain's alleged tactic of getting the Argentines to reject before we do, we should maintain our scepticism about "edited leaks" and remind that the proposals were addressed to the Argentine Government. We have made it clear throughout that we see difficulties in individual parts of the proposals but the package might look different in totality.

FCO confirmed reports that the Argentine junta was divided, that they were facing increasing internal pressures and that the economy is in a very bad shape.

Militarily, we should continue to emphasise the difference between the TEZ and invasion - playing down the latter and keeping all options open.

Ministry of Defence expected to be issuing a statement at midday about the names and whereabouts of Argentine prisoners and possibly more on their return. FCO confirmed that the Swedish Government had requested to speak to one of the prisoners and that this was being considered. However, the Geneva Convention required that he should be returned to his own country.

Arrangements for the Weekend

The Prime Minister had indicated her wish for junior Ministers, notably Cranley Onslow and Peter Blaker, to take television and radio bids over the weekend but we were in the hands of events and it may be necessary for a senior Minister to take over. Mr Pym would be

CONFIDENTIAL

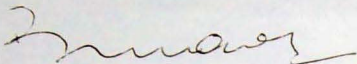
CONFIDENTIAL

in the United States and it was probable that he would take the opportunity to appear on TV.

The Group agreed to keep closely in touch over the weekend. The Chairman said that he would probably see the Press at noon tomorrow and 5 pm on Sunday.

Next Meeting

The next meeting (subject to developments over the weekend) will take place at 10 am on Tuesday 4 April 1982.



B MOWER  
30 April 1982

CONFIDENTIAL