

CONFIDENTIAL

MEETING OF INFORMATION GROUP ON THE FALKLANDS

10 AM MONDAY 10 MAY 1982

Present:

B Ingham - No 10
P Brazier - COI
R Westbrook - FCO
I McDonald - MoD
D Colvin - Cabinet Office
R Hatfield - Presentation Unit
B Mower - No 10.

Diplomatic

FCO confirmed that we could not go much further in briefing about the UN talks. We were negotiating in good faith and in substance. The Costa Mendez interview yesterday might prove difficult but we can express scepticism; there seems to be no change in the Argentine substantive position and this is a matter of presentation. Reports of the EC meeting have not come out well but the FCO indicated that the talks on sanctions had not gone as badly as some had supposed. We can draw on the Tindemans' line that the Community solidarity remained. The reason for the action originally was political not economic. The political imperatives have not changed. We should not assume that we would not get unanimous support at next week's political meeting; there were precedents for "unanimity" being maintained through individual countries not voting.

Military

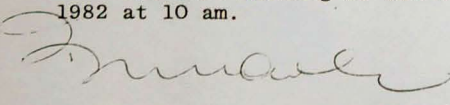
FCO explained in some detail the difficulties they experienced yesterday in obtaining quick briefing on the military incident. The Chairman told the meeting that he was writing to the Chancellor of the Duchy about presentation in general and MOD difficulties in particular.

MoD reported on a meeting with editors complaining that their correspondents with the Task Force could not do their jobs properly. Ian McDonald was recommending that, where a new operation was involved, detailed stories from Task Force correspondents should be held back until the Ministry of Defence had made the first statement. This line would be the more difficult unless MoD were able to speed up their information.

MoD were not aware of what statements, if any, were likely to emerge today.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Group will take place on Tuesday 11 May 1982 at 10 am.


BRIAN MOWER
11 May 1982

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