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MEETING OF INFORMATION GROUP ON THE FALKLANDS

10 AM TUESDAY 8 JUNE 1982

Present:

B Ingham - No 10
J Groves - Director General, COI
N Fenn - FCO
R Moore - MoD
D Colvin - Cabinet Office
S Fuller - Presentation Unit
R Hatfield - Presentation Unit
H Mills - Chancellor of the
Duchy's Office
B Mower - No 10.

Military

MoD could not confirm stories about General Moore's statement asking the Argentine garrison to surrender. There is some thought that this could have emanated from a service director; it was not a dispatch from the front. They were, however, prepared to say that General Moore was fully entitled to make such an announcement: it would require no new political guidance.

MoD could not confirm reports of 60 Argentines killed in recent days.

They were expecting to be able to confirm today the destruction of an Argentine aircraft (possibly a Canberra): they also hoped that they may have confirmation of three other enemy aircraft destroyed.

The Norland was to call into Montevideo on the 12 June with Argentine prisoners of war. We were also trying to arrange for the Herald to call with British casualties.

FCO confirmed that we were bringing diplomatic pressure to bear on the Brazilian authorities to stop the air bridge through Recife and to release our Vulcan.

MoD did not know the destination of the Harrier spares carried in the VC10 intercepted at Montevideo. They certainly could not have been going to the Falklands.

Diplomatic

There were no signs at present of Argentina or its friends attempting to take the issue to the General Assembly, possibly because they did not expect to succeed if they tried. A sudden escalation of activity in Port Stanley could well raise the issue again in the Security Council. The FCO were sending messages of thanks and admonishment appropriately to those participating in the vote on the Spanish/Panama Resolution.

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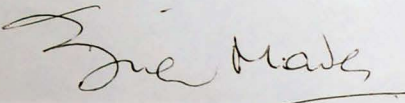
FCO confirmed that they were fending off any suggestions that we were under pressure from the US to pause militarily or accept a US plan. The Chairman confirmed that the Prime Minister knew nothing of such a plan.

The Chairman informed the meeting that President Reagan's speech in the Palace of Westminster would contain only a short reference to the Falklands, concerned with the principles involved, and predicated by a short section on Salvador. The Prime Minister's statement on Versailles would be concerned mainly with world economy.

The meeting agreed with the Chancellor of the Duchy's suggestion that it was not necessary to hold a further meeting with him until next Monday.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Group would take place on Wednesday 9 June 1982 at 10 am.


BRIAN MOWER
8 June 1982