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MEETING OF INFORMATION GROUP ON THE FALKLANDS

10 AM WEDNESDAY 16 JUNE 1982

Present:

B Ingham	-	No 10
P Brazier	-	COI
N Fenn	-	FCO
J Gee	-	MoD
D Colvin	-	Cabinet Office
R Hatfield	-	Presentation Unit
S Fuller	-	Presentation Unit
K Long	-	Chancellor of the Duchy's Office
B Mower	-	No 10.

MoD had no further news to report. We did not yet have the surrender terms. These are now needed urgently to counter speculative and inaccurate reports which are circulating.

A signal from Admiral Woodward confirmed the existing suffering and illness among Argentine troops. It was agreed that we should continue to make the most of the bad state in which we found the Argentine troops. This would encourage other Governments to put pressure on the Argentines to respond positively to our message linking the return of prisoners with a total end to hostilities. FCO confirmed that they were keeping up diplomatic pressure with other Governments. Generally there was a sympathetic reaction on this point but they were still (despite all) wanting to know our position on negotiations with Argentina.

FCO confirmed that our EC partners are likely to want to lift sanctions this weekend. However this had been temporarily defused by our message to the Argentine Government: the Danes for example had said that they were waiting for the Argentine response.

FCO reported that Mr Hunt had yesterday given a Press Conference about his return and this seemed to have gone well. He would be going out by the first available means - probably in the next few days.

Mr Blaker and Mr Onslow met yesterday to discuss arrangements for further journalists' going to the Falklands. Figures of 80-100 were mentioned including some 60 from overseas. Our line continued to be that we should arrange facilities as soon as possible. The Chairman brought the Group up-to-date with plans for an Inquiry. He thought it likely that Opposition leaders would be consulted very soon. The intention would be to have a very small group and to range back possibly over the last 20 years. We were guiding journalists away from the idea of former Prime Ministers and from the inclusion of a High Court judge.

Mr Pym is to be interviewed today on World at One and News Night. Mr Nott is likely to accept an invitation from Nationwide:

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MoD were asked also to consider a request from TV Eye.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Group would take place at 10 am on Thursday, 17 June, 1982.

Brian Mower

BRIAN MOWER
17 June 1982

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