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DEFENCE AND OVERSEA POLICY COMMITTEE

SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AND
THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

MINUTES of a Meeting held at
10 Downing Street on
TUESDAY 25 MAY 1982 at 10.00 am

PRESENT

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw MP
Secretary of State for the
Home Department

The Rt Hon Francis Pym MP
Secretary of State for Foreign
and Commonwealth Affairs

The Rt Hon John Nott MP
Secretary of State for Defence

The Rt Hon Cecil Parkinson MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of
Lancaster and Paymaster General

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT

The Rt Hon Sir Michael Havers QC MP
Attorney General

Admiral of the Fleet
Sir Terence Lewin
Chief of the Defence Staff

Sir Antony Acland
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Sir Michael Palliser
Cabinet Office

SECRETARIAT

Sir Robert Armstrong
Mr R L Wade-Gery
Mr R L L Facer
Brigadier J A C G Eyre

SUBJECT

1. MILITARY ISSUES
2. POLITICAL ISSUES

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1. MILITARY ISSUES

THE CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF briefed the Sub-Committee on the latest military situation.

The Sub-Committee -

Took note.

2. POLITICAL ISSUES

The Sub-Committee had before them telegrams nos. 832-3, 835-6, 839-40 and 842-4 from the British Representative at the United Nations, Sir Antony Parsons, reporting on the current situation in the Security Council; and telegrams reporting the position in the European Community and the attitude of the United States and others.

THE PRIME MINISTER, summing up the discussion, said that of the various possible Resolutions now being canvassed at the Security Council, the Irish and Panamanian drafts would certainly have to be vetoed. The Japanese draft could only be accepted if it omitted reference to the Secretary General's previous efforts, which had now been overtaken by events, and if it included a specific call for an Argentine withdrawal as well as a cessation of hostilities. The non-aligned states' revised version of the Irish draft could be accepted provided that the second operative paragraph read

"Requests the Secretary General, on the basis of the present resolution, to undertake a renewed mission of good offices in accordance with Security Council Resolution 502."

There should be no reference to the Secretary General's statement of 21 May. If possible, the third preambular paragraph should also be omitted. In explanation of vote Sir Antony Parsons should make clear that in Britain's view an Argentine withdrawal would be the only acceptable basis for a ceasefire.

The Sub-Committee -

Invited the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to instruct Sir Antony Parsons in accordance with the Prime Minister's summing up.

Cabinet Office

25 May 1982

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