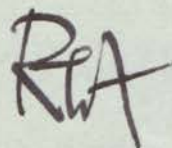


  
SECRETPRIME MINISTERCabinet: Falkland Islands

The paper for Item 1 tomorrow is the draft British "bottom line" agreement (C(82) 24), which will be circulated at the meeting and collected again after it. You will need to explain that this was given by Sir Anthony Parsons to Senor Perez de Cuellar today, for formal transmission to the Argentines. It is seen as a means of heading off a "compromise" draft which we could not accept. No one expects the Argentines to accept, though the possibility cannot be excluded. Our main purpose is to have something to publish, after the Argentines have failed to accept it, as a means of wrong-footing them with international opinion by demonstrating our reasonableness. To do this it has had to go to the limit of what we could defend to British public opinion; article 6(3) therefore says less than we would like about restoring British administration, and self-determination is only glanced at obliquely via references to the United Nations Charter. This balance has been struck by the Sub-Committee, after hearing Sir Anthony Parsons's and Sir Nicholas Henderson's advice.

2. The Cabinet will be being presented with a fait accompli; but their support will of course be needed when the document becomes public.
3. OD(SA) will have decided whether the Cabinet should be told of the 48 hour deadline expiring on Wednesday; or merely that a rapid reply has been demanded.
4. OD(SA) will also have decided whether you should say anything to the Cabinet about landing plans as early as tomorrow. If not, you could say that military preparations are continuing but are not yet complete.



Robert Armstrong

17th May 1982

SECRET