



## CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-930 5422 ext 233 8224

MR WHITMORE

cc Sir R Armstrong.

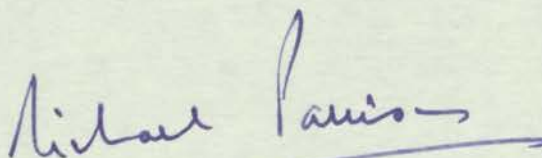
THE FALKLANDS: BRITISH OBJECTIVES

- p.a. M 4/5.*
- No - it doesn't add to our perceptions in any way. Request meeting if you will then to be circulated at the Prime Minister's meeting it would be helpful to know in the course of following.*
- A.S.C. 23/4*
1. I attach a minute I put today to Sir R Armstrong. I have discussed it with him. He asked me to say that he agrees with it and that I should put it to you for the Prime Minister to read, if she wishes, before Sunday's discussions at Chequers.
  2. You will see that its main purpose is to elucidate the direction in which the Prime Minister would wish me to go in carrying out my remit from OD(SA) to assess our objectives in relation to a long-term settlement. It concentrates essentially on one issue, that of sovereignty: though it also draws attention to a number of related matters. Ideally I should have preferred to put it forward after the various supporting papers referred to in it had become available. But time, as the Prime Minister rightly reminded us the other day, is very short: not just before Sunday's meeting, important as that will be, but also because, as the military options expand and become more immediate, so the time for diplomatic discussion, if that is to continue, is foreshortened.
  3. So what I have tried to do in my minute is to recall the basis on which we have so far been operating; to enquire whether the Prime Minister wants to change that basis; and to draw attention to what seem to me to be the risks of such a course. The views in the minute are mine (though, as I say, Sir R Armstrong tells me that he shares them) and I do not think that it would be right for me, until the Prime Minister has considered them, to circulate the minute to any of the other members of OD(SA). Equally, I

hope that, whatever view the Prime Minister takes of the arguments I have tried to set out, she may wish them at some time soon to be considered by her colleagues, particularly if, notwithstanding those arguments, she remains desirous of change. She might therefore like the minute to be circulated at the Chequers meeting; or she might wish to discuss it with me. I am at her disposal.

4. I repeat that I should have preferred to have written this with a greater weight of supporting paper and it may be that the papers, when they come, will not support me. But, given the pressure of time, I hope the Prime Minister will accept this as the best considered judgment that I can offer her at present.

5. I am sending a copy of this minute to Sir R Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Palliser". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

(MICHAEL PALLISER)

23 April 1982.