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MEETING OF INFORMATION GROUP ON THE FALKLANDS

10 AM FRIDAY 23 APRIL, 1982

Present:

B Mower - No 10  
N Kelly - COI  
D Colvin - Cabinet Office  
R Westbrook - FCO  
J Gee - MoD  
R Hatfield - Presentation Unit

Points Arising from Today's Press

- MoD confirmed that they were explaining Admiral Woodward's words in terms of his present position. As he moved further south the rules of engagement continue to be kept under review. There is no change in what the Secretary of State said about the MEZ and about our taking any action to defend our interests. We did not consider it absolutely necessary to inform Parliament before announcing an air blockade around the zone.
- MoD had no knowledge of the Times story about senior officers questioning their lack of air superiority with Ministers.
- FCO could not confirm that Mr Pym had specifically agreed to press Heads of State friendly with the Argentine to 'phone President Galtieri personally but it could be taken that this sort of thing was all part of the diplomatic effort that was going on.
- The position vis-a-vis the UN was that we did not need to go there again before taking military action.

Talks

- Mr Pym was seeing President Reagan this morning and would probably return overnight although we were not confirming this at present. FCO thought that Haig may well pay another visit to Buenos Aires; he was unlikely to continue the talks with Costa Mendez who is thought to be unreliable.

Weekend

- FCO have made no provisions yet for any Statement on Mr Pym's return. He would be unlikely to be in a position to say anything of substance.
- MoD would ensure that Information Divisions as well as Duty Clerks would be told immediately of any military action. In this event any response should be kept in as low a key as possible.

Other Points

- Presentation were asked to look again at the line on "paramountcy of Falklanders' wishes" and at least try to bring back into

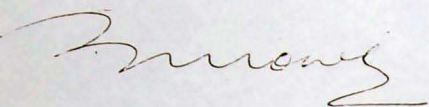
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Ministers' briefing the House of Commons dimension.

- MoD is setting up a large Press Centre in the main concourse of their south building which could be made available for emergency press briefing.

Next Meeting

- 2.45 pm on Monday 26 April 1982.



B MOWER  
23 April 1982

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