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MEETING OF INFORMATION GROUP ON THE FALKLANDS

10 AM WEDNESDAY 19 MAY 1982

Present:

B Ingham	-	No 10
J Groves	-	Director General, COI
N Fenn	-	FCO
J Gee	-	MoD
D Colvin	-	Cabinet Office
S Fuller	-	Presentation Unit
R Hatfield	-	Presentation Unit
H Mills	-	Chancellor of the Duchy's Office
B Mower	-	No 10.

Military

MoD confirmed that no operational activity had been reported overnight and they were not aware of anything expected today. They were proposing to announce this morning the start of Spanish Language Broadcasts from Ascension to the Spanish garrison on the Falklands. They would be organised by the MoD using the BBC transmitter: it would be made clear that the BBC themselves were not involved in this. The Group expressed concern about this development and the Chairman suggested that we should avoid putting it out as a Press Notice from the Government Information Service.

There was a brief discussion on the transmission of film from the Task Force if and when an invasion took place. It was agreed that this should be controlled by MoD Press Officers and MoD were asked to look again at the terms of reference for censorship after a landing.

Diplomatic

Ros had given the Secretary General some preliminary ideas, not a definitive response, including requests for further clarification. We regarded this as simply stringing us along a bit further. We believe that a conclusive Argentine draft does exist and Parsons is to ask the Secretary General to state a deadline for a definitive response. We hope to put the Argentines in the position of not responding and thus effectively breaking off negotiations: the next best option would be for the Secretary General to do so if the deadline is not met or if he sees the two sides still to be too far apart: the worst position would be for the Prime Minister to have to announce that we were breaking off the negotiations during the debate tomorrow.

The present intention was for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to publish our proposals at 12.30pm tomorrow. It would be in the form of a draft White Paper with a presentational cover note and the proposals as an annex. This would provide a platform for the Prime Minister's opening speech. There remained the possibility that the proposals could leak in New York in which case we

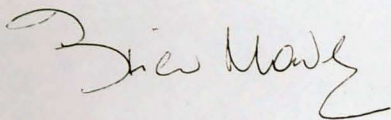
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should have to publish this evening, possibly with a Press Conference by the Foreign Secretary.

Our line today should be that we have received some preliminary Argentine observations. At first sight they are not encouraging. But the Argentines have made clear that this is not their final position and we await their definitive response.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Group will take place at 10 am on Thursday 20 May 1982.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian Mower". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

BRIAN MOWER
19 May 1982