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MEETING OF INFORMATION GROUP ON THE FALKLANDS

10 AM TUESDAY 1 JUNE 1982

Present:

B Mower	-	No 10
J Groves	-	Director General, COI
R Westbrook	-	FCO
J Gee	-	MoD
D Colvin	-	Cabinet Office
S Fuller	-	Presentation Unit
R Hatfield	-	Presentation Unit
K Long	-	Chancellor of the Duchy's Office
I Kydd	-	No 10.

Military

It was not possible to say precisely where our troops were in relation to Port Stanley. Twelve miles away, as generally reported by the Press, was probably too optimistic although special forces had taken certain points. Mount Kent had been taken. 5 Brigade would all be ashore in the next 12 hours (one battalion had come ashore overnight). Nothing was being said publicly about this. The Uganda was in Grantham Sound. 250 Argentines were killed at Goose Green; 87 were injured. MoD hoped to make an announcement about this by lunchtime; in the meantime No 10 would refer, if asked, to substantial casualties. We had used one battalion of 650 men in that action.

MoD hoped to obtain photographs of the Argentine surrender and clean up at Goose Green/Darwin. There was no doubt that a considerable amount of vandalism and wilful damage had taken place. Reports were not clear regarding the white flag incident. MoD reported that some information they had received from Goose Green could have significant implications if confirmed.

The Argentine hospital ship, Bahia Paraiso, would go into Stanley today to pick up casualties and would later rendezvous with the Uganda to transfer Argentine casualties. The rendezvous would take place in the "hospital box", the designated sea area where hospital ships were stationed. We were holding Argentine prisoners at the San Carlos bridgehead and on board RFA Percival.

Astiz would be held at Colchester once he had arrived in this country. It was understood that the latest position was that he would not answer questions.

The question of bringing bodies back to this country for burial was being discussed at ODSA. The bodies would in any case be moved and given a proper burial. There was a precedent (Borneo) for bringing bodies back to this country.

We did get some supplies off the Atlantic Conveyor before it sank but no details were being given publicly.

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A Max Hastings dispatch on an SAS raid, which described in detail names and places, had not been published under a D-Notice order.

Only one attack on ships had been reported over the weekend. None of our ships were hit. Reports that we had brought down an Exocet were thought to be true. MoD had no information confirming that we had brought down a Super Etendard.

The question of Argentine surrender would be a matter for the operational judgement of the Field Commander.

Diplomatic

SCR505 gave the UNSG seven days. Timing was difficult to calculate but was likely to be up by this evening. We had sent a second message to the UNSG which Anthony Parsons would probably publish. In the meantime the UNSG, encouraged by David Owen, was putting forward new proposals for a ceasefire. Anthony Parsons thought this new plan was unacceptable because it called for token withdrawal of British troops. We would probably be replying to the UNSG and also to Secretary Haig in the course of today. In the meantime both sets of proposals were being considered by ODSA. Our public line should therefore continue to be that the UNSG had been instructed by the Security Council to continue to use his good offices. The UK and the Argentines had put forward their requirements for a ceasefire to which clarification was still being sought.

The latest Haig proposals were not public and there had been no substantial public statements on the Secretary General's proposals and our and the Argentine's response to his question about a ceasefire. Nevertheless, our position was well known and had been made clear by the Prime Minister in the House last Thursday. It was not known publicly that we had responded to the Argentine reply to the UNSG.

The Security Council would meet tonight. The UNSG would probably publish his new proposals. He might then suggest postponement of further considerations in the Security Council while he was in touch with both parties in respect of his new proposals. In any case there would not be time for a Resolution this evening.

Intensive diplomatic activity continued at every point to prevent arms sales to Argentina. There was some discussion about whether or not this line could still hold following weekend Press coverage of Israeli arms supplies. It was thought there might be a good case before the non-aligned meeting for judicious briefing highlighting the role of South Africa, Israel and Libya.

It was not for us to comment on differences between Secretary Haig and Mrs Kirkpatrick.

Broadcasts/Briefings

The Prime Minister would be giving interviews to the BBC, ITN, the Washington Post and would be attending a dinner hosted by the Association of American Correspondents in London. All these would take place on Wednesday. Frank Cooper would be giving an unattribut-

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able briefing later today. COI hoped the Prime Minister would be able to give a radio interview for their Latin American service.

Lord Shackleton

He would be joining the Cabinet Office for the next two weeks in order to up-date his 1976 Report. This followed his recent meetings with the Prime Minister. No 10 would consider how and when any announcement of this might be made.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Group would take place at 10 am on Wednesday 2 June 1982.



I KYDD

1 June 1982