

MR COLES

ANY PRIME MINISTERIAL VISIT TO FALKLANDS

You should have the following considerations in mind in planning any visit by the Prime Minister to the Falklands:

1. It will be virtually impossible to prevent publicity before the Prime Minister's arrival given the preparations that will have to be made in the Falklands.
2. It may be possible to get the Prime Minister en route from London without publicity, but we cannot count on this. It would be easier to accomplish this if she travelled during a Recess or a weekend but it would only be a matter of time before the news got out, almost certainly before she arrived.
3. Notwithstanding the enormous demand for places I would defend travelling without a media party on grounds of security, but it would be vital to have an MoD TV crew and stills photographer there with facilities for rapid transmission of film back to the UK; and to ensure that we had a sound, reliable writer in the Falklands to cover the entire visit from touchdown to departure. If this situation arose I would like to advise on the choice.
4. The above is the minimalist approach. It will probably satisfy no-one, including the Prime Minister.
5. An alternative approach would be for MoD to offer a facility visit to a group covering TV, radio, agencies, populars, qualities, regional and foreign newspapers which miraculously coincided with a Prime Ministerial visit; again I would like to advise on the choice and would wish to take responsibility for that choice when the inevitable complaints started to flow in. This ploy would of course run the risk of stimulating speculation that the Prime Minister was to visit; that would be lessened if there were an earlier dummy run by a reserve party .

6. Another alternative would be to grasp the nettle - for me to select the media "pool" or "rota" party we wish to travel with us; to call the editors in individually, swear them to secrecy, and take them into our confidence to the extent that I reveal a Prime Ministerial visit is on (but not when) and that we propose to take X with us at short notice; X should not be told yet but should be kept close to the ranch. (I should preface all this by saying that circumstances dictate our chosen method of proceeding and there is no room for alteration).

7. For obvious reasons I would prefer the approach in Paragraph 6 if security allows.

To assist you in considering the alternatives I would advocate taking the following party of 10 for reasons which I explain below:

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|-------------------------------|--|
| BBC/ITN TV                    | - Glyn Mathias (ITN) with 2 crew preferably those who travelled with us to Far East; we know each other and get on. And I can deal with David Nicholas, Editor, ITN, who was by far the most helpful media man throughout the Falklands conflict.    |
| BBC/IRN/BBC Overseas Services | - Gordon Martin, BBC External Services, who has been on several Prime Ministerial tours; a serious, first-class extremely hard working and sympathetic journalist; he would do for <u>all</u> radio, assuming that numbers are severely constrained. |
| Popular Newspapers            | - Jack Warden, Political Editor, Daily Express, chairman of the Lobby and a very senior Lobby correspondent.   |
| Qualities                     | - Jim Wightman, Daily Telegraph political editor, another senior Lobby correspondent who is arguably the soundest and most objective reporter to the Lobby.  |

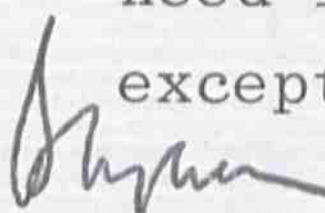
- Provincials - Gordon Jackson, Thomson Regional, experienced and capable.  
Geoffrey Parkhouse, Glasgow Herald, very experienced, statutory Scot.
- Agencies - Press Association/Reuter - Chris Moncrieff, PA Lobby Editor.  
AP - David Mason, an American, regular attender of No 10 briefings.
- Photographer - Martin Cleaver, PA - who was awarded MBE for his performance with the Task Force.
- International - Frank Melville (Time) or William Tuohy (Los Angeles Times) - both vastly experienced foreign correspondents and regular attenders at No 10 briefings.

Apart from Cleaver, the PA photographer, none of the journalists I recommend went with the Task Force. I see no particular reason in view of the behaviour of many of them to give those with the Task Force much consideration. Nor are my suggestions Defence experts. They are predominantly political journalists. I believe that the Prime Minister's visit should be covered principally by political correspondents. I have chosen the most reliable and experienced - and a group which would get on together. Newspapers may object that they want to send feature writers; so far as I am concerned we would be in a seller's market. It is take it or leave it.

Three further points:

- the list clearly indicates a minimum media party of 10 - and that leaves out of account a Welsh (Welsh Guards) representative;
- I need to be brought into the firm planning at the earliest opportunity;
- we must thoroughly investigate the transmission back of pictures, given that any visit is likely to be a short one.

Finally, you may care to see the attached minutes which underline the need for my taking control of the planning. I do not want MoD involved, except to the extent that it is necessary for them to issue our orders.

  
B. INGHAM  
25 November 1982