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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

30 June 1982

See John,

Falkland Islands Inquiry

The Prime Minister took the opportunity to have a word after OD this morning with the Home Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Defence Secretary and Lord Privy Seal about the possible Conservative members of the Falkland Islands Inquiry. Sir Robert Armstrong was also present.

The Prime Minister said that Mr. Foot felt strongly that the Labour representatives on the Inquiry should be active politicians if they were to carry conviction within their own Party. He was thinking of putting forward members of the Commons and at least one member of his own Front Bench. When she had seen him and Mr. Healey last Friday, he had mentioned the names of Mr. Merlyn Rees and Mr. John Morris, though in discussion **he had appeared ready to exchange Lord Elwyn-Jones for Mr. Morris.** It would be important for the Conservative members of the Committee broadly to match the Labour representatives. She and the Home Secretary had already given a good deal of thought to who the Conservative names should be, but this was not easy for the choice was in practice fairly narrow.

In discussion it was agreed that if Labour put forward a member drawn from the Commons, the Government should ideally do the same. The meeting then considered a number of Conservative ex-Ministers who were Privy Counsellors and still in the Commons but, for one reason or another, discarded them all. There was agreement that the best combination of Conservative representatives would be Lord Barber and Lord Watkinson.

The Prime Minister said that she would arrange for an approach to be made shortly to Lord Barber and Lord Watkinson. Sir Robert Armstrong should see Lord Franks, on her behalf, as soon as possible to invite him to chair the Inquiry. He should also sound out Sir Patrick Nairne to see how he would respond to an invitation from the Prime Minister to serve as a member of the Committee. She would like these approaches to be made before she saw Mr. Foot again early next week.

I am sending copies of this letter to Michael Collon (Lord Chancellor's Office), Brian Fall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), David Omand (Ministry of Defence), David Heyhoe (Lord President's Office).

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/ Jim Buckley

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Jim Buckley (Lord Privy Seal's Office), Keith Long (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office), Jim Nursaw (Law Officers' Department), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours truly,

Alvin L. Williams.

John Halliday, Esq.,
Home Office.

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