



Ref. A09151

MR COLES

Falkland Islands Review

The Financial Secretary of the Treasury, Mr Nicholas Ridley, has been refreshing his memory of the Foreign Office and Cabinet papers relating to the Falkland Islands which he saw while Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, from May 1979.

2. He tells me that neither the Foreign Office nor the Cabinet papers include a note of a meeting which he had with the Prime Minister in September or October 1979. As he remembers, it was a long meeting, and important as orientating Government policy on the subject. The Prime Minister and he were the only two Ministers at it, but Mr Alexander, your predecessor, was there and Mr Ridley thinks that he made a note of the meeting. If a note of the meeting was made, Mr Ridley thinks that it should be made available to the Falkland Islands Review Committee.

3. I should be very grateful if you would check your records to see if you have such a note. It looks to me as if the meeting would probably have been held some time after a memorandum which the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary sent to the Prime Minister on 20 September 1979. ^{review file} There is a note on our files, dated 27 September, reporting that the Prime Minister had called Mr Ridley in for 1½ hours discussion, that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office had no record of the meeting but that Mr Alexander was present.

4. If a note of the meeting is available, I suggest that we might make it available on the same basis as another paper about which I am minuting separately, viz: the note should be sent to Lord Franks under cover of a personal letter, explaining that it is a sensitive note of a private discussion of which he should be aware, and leaving it to his discretion as to whether he shows it to other members of the Committee.

5. If there is a note of the meeting, clearly Mr Ridley should also be allowed to refresh his memory of it.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

29 July 1982