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ALW 040/325/2		
RECEIVED Y NO. 18		
25 JUL 1980		
DESK OFFICER		REGISTRY
INDEX	PA	Action Taken

*Mr. Bishop*

*P 13/7*

*See 184*

*Mr. Davies*

*24/7*  
*CEB*

*PAN*

PS

FALKLAND ISLANDS

1. With a view to making some of the Tory backbenchers think through the problems which underlie our attitude to the Falkland Islands, Mr Ridley has given two discussion lunches for Members. No officials were present at either lunch. Mr Ridley has written the attached minute setting out his impressions.

*[Signature]*

22 July 1980

K D Temple  
PS/Mr Ridley

- cc: PS/LPS
- PS/PUS
- Mr Day o.r.
- Mr Harding
- Mr Fearn ✓

FALKLANDS CONSULTATIVE LUNCHESES

8 JULY

Alan Clark MP  
Ray Whitney MP  
Sir Bernard Braine MP  
Michael McNair Wilson MP  
John Farr MP  
Sir Nigel Fisher MP

22 JULY

Geoffrey Rippon MP  
Peter Bottomley MP  
Anthony Kershaw MP  
Michael Brown MP  
John Biggs-Davison MP  
Patrick Wall MP  
Peter Morrison MP

At the first lunch Ray Whitney was in favour of a settlement with Argentina at any price: Alan Clark, the most die-hard on the other side. The other four adopted a much more reasonable position. At the second lunch, Patrick Wall was the hardliner, with Tony Kershaw the most realistic, the other four occupying the same reasonable position as at the first lunch. All appreciated being consulted and certainly benefitted from having the facts of the situation explained, about which they were woefully ignorant.

I did not go so far as to suggest solutions but merely gave them the facts, described the nature of the problem and outlined the three possible options. I did however invite them to ponder on the question of what the word 'sovereignty' actually means.

I think the nearest one can get to summarising their views is the following:

1. They are happy to negotiate with the Argentines and see the point of realising the economic potential by removing the threat to the future of the Islands.
2. They rest content with being told that nothing will be concluded which is not acceptable to the Islanders. They all affirmed that any solution that was acceptable

to the Islanders would be acceptable to the Tory Party in Parliament.

3. At the first lunch they attached enormous importance to our extending the airport to take long range jets, partly as a symbolic gesture of defiance against the Argentine and partly as a precaution against negotiations breaking down. It would certainly put us in a strong position in relation to public opinion to undertake this, although I do not judge it to be necessary under the present circumstances. At the second lunch the point was made more in the form that we must be in a position to supply and to defend the Islands if necessary.
4. They wanted the process of consultation to be continued and offered to form a group of those interested, either Government or all-party to which I could come for future consultations whenever I wished. I accepted this in principle but said the time was not yet ripe.

NR

22 July 1980

Nicholas Ridley