

LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 12 noon date: 3 April 1982

Asked about the freezing of Argentinian assets in the UK we said an Order would be laid this afternoon. We did not at that stage have figures for the value of these assets. We gave the lobby the most recent trade figures.

We refused to give any details of the position of Invincible or of existing ship movements, or of when the task force would sail. We confirmed that Prince Andrew had reported for duty with Invincible (later the Palace told us that they are now confirming that he will sail with the ship).

We refused to play the head-hunting game or to indulge in speculation along the lines that the Falklands would be impossible to recapture and so we were talking about a naval blockade. We reminded the lobby of the Prime Minister's firm statement that the Government would do whatever it could to restore British sovereignty.

We said there were no plans for further meetings of Cabinet or Ministers. The Prime Minister would be returning to No. 10; she had worked there until the early hours and spoken to the Governor at 8.45 am today.

We had no evidence to suggest that a Commission of Inquiry would be set up.

On Humphrey Atkins, we said it was a simple confusion. A message to the Governor at 8.33 am had been acknowledged. When Mr. Atkins made his statement at 11 am yesterday there was no evidence of any change in the situation.

We again refused to play the 'heads rolling' game.

We agreed to brief the lobby again at 4 pm today and at 5 pm on Sunday.