

BOBBY BRIEFING

time: 1250 date: 5.1.82

RESIGNATIONS

We released copies of the exchanges between the PM and Lord Carrington, the PM and Mr Atkins and the PM and Mr Nott.

We said that Lord Carrington had tendered his resignation as he believed that this was the only honourable course for him to pursue. The PM had accepted it very reluctantly; there was no question of her sacking Lord Carrington or rebuking him.

John Nott had also tendered his resignation believing it to be the only honourable course open to him. The PM turned down his offer. She wished him to remain at his post as she considered it vital that he do so at this time. She had the fullest confidence in his ability.

The Lord Privy Seal and Mr Luce had also tendered their resignations which had been accepted.

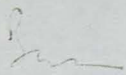
The PM was at present working on reconstructing her Cabinet. We could not say when announcements might be made or indeed whether these would come today.

Asked about who was in charge at the Foreign Office we pointed out that there were still Foreign Office Ministers including Mr Hurd and that obviously the PM was very closely involved. We did not know of any other resignations or if there would be any Statements on this matter in the House.

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POINTS TO BE MADE ABOUT TODAY'S RESIGNATIONS

1. The PM did everything possible to dissuade Lord Carrington from resigning.
2. Mr Atkins and Mr Luce felt that once Lord Carrington had decided to go they should in all honour go with him. As the PM's letter makes clear she understands their reasons of honour, respects them immensely for their action and accepts with the greatest of regret.
3. There is no question of the PM sacking or rebuking Lord Carrington.
4. Mr Nott offered to resign as a matter of honour. The PM refused to accept it. As her letter to Mr Nott makes clear the Ministry of Defence is not the Department responsible for policy towards the Falkland Islands. She considers it vital that Mr Nott continues as Secretary of State for Defence as our forces prepare for the possibility of armed action, and she says she has the fullest confidence in his ability to carry out the crucial test that lies ahead.
5. The PM is now working on the reconstruction of her Government. It is not clear when any names will be announced. We shall, of course, communicate the names when appointments have been made.


B. INGHAM

5 April 1982