

We reported that the Prime Minister had worked on her speech until the early hours of the morning and again before the Cabinet meeting at 10.30 am. This meeting, with only Mr Walker and Mr Younger absent, had lasted until just before 12 noon: there would now be no Cabinet on the following day and there were no meetings of Ministers planned, though of course the Prime Minister would be keeping in touch with senior colleagues. The House, due to reassemble next week, would also be kept in touch of course.

We repeated the announcements made by MoD that morning to the effect that the charter of the cargo ship Atlantic Conveyor would enable a sea lift of additional Harriers which would allow for the doubling of the Harrier force in the South Atlantic. We also mentioned the preparation of HMS Intrepid for sea explaining that these additional measures would provide extra capability for the task force over an extended period.

On the Haig "shuttle" we again explained the sequence of events. We would not be drawn on what "further ideas" referred to nor did we indicate any follow-up to Mr Foot's suggestion in the debate of further moves through the UN. The Government was of course keen to see a diplomatic settlement but we had always said the task force would be used if necessary. We noted that the Argentinians had left the MEZ quickly.

Asked to comment on Mr Powell's point in the debate that it was a question of defending territory as well as people and that a peaceful solution should not compromise that, we pointed to the Prime Minister's words in her opening statement on the need to recover the Falklands.

We said that up to the time of the Lobby briefing we had not heard from the Falkland Islands' Chief Secretary. Mr Pym might be able to refer to any word from him in his winding up speech.

Asked if there was any regret about an announcement that Royal Marines taken off the Islands by the Argentinians were now returning to the South Atlantic with the task force and that this might prejudice action taken by Argentina over the remaining Royal Marines, we said we had not heard any regrets expressed. Presumably the Argentinians would understand the significance of returning marines with immediate and first-hand experience.

Asked why Mr Haig had gone back to Washington to consult, we said it was useful to return to base from time to time during these missions. He had had the benefit of meetings in London and Buenos Aires and would be able to relay all this to the President, who we assumed he would see later that day. We said we did not know when Mr Haig would return to Argentina. We agreed that Friday appeared to be the earliest opportunity.

On the question of Mrs Kirkpatrick, we said there was no question of the British Government making a fuss though we had noted that our Ambassador thought it deplorable that she had gone to the dinner. We would not be pursuing the matter.

We resisted attempts by the Lobby to suggest that the UK was angry that the Americans were playing Argentina and the UK as equals. On the particular point of US imposing sanctions, we said the Americans were trying to be helpful and economic sanctions would hardly help them to achieve a diplomatic conclusion.

Similarly we did not encourage the idea that the Pope had been unhelpful in asking both sides to back off.

# LOBBY BRIEFING

2.

time: 4 PM

date: 14.4.82

Asked about the remaining Royal Marines, we said that the Government was anxious to know what had happened to them. There had been reports that some had been landed at an Argentine port but these were unconfirmed. The Red Cross had been asked to assist.

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