

LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 11 AM date: 15.4.82

PRIME MINISTER'S DAY

The Prime Minister is working in No 10 all day.

The Prime Minister is hoping to leave for Chequers this evening. Original plans catered for a stay until Sunday but this is subject to events.

PRESS NOTICE

Appointment of Robert Leigh-Pemberton as Lord Lieutenant of Kent.

HAIG

We had no idea of his travel plans after Buenos Aires. He might well return here but that too was subject to events.

MEETINGS OF MINISTERS

There were no formal meetings of Ministers but obviously the Prime Minister would be keeping in touch with her colleagues.

WORLD CUP

Government had not formulated its policy on this. There was no Cabinet committee on this; we reminded the Lobby that the Government had no power to prevent sporting contacts but could only persuade and advise.

US ATTITUDES

We said we hoped for maximum advantage and help from our friends. Mr Pym had said that the US was sympathetic to democracy. Mr Haig had to keep credibility with both sides so we were not prepared to join in criticism that the USA should get off the fence. Haig's position should not be prejudiced by uninformed comment. The USA had banned arms sales to Argentina. US interests were identical with those of Britain in wishing to avoid a conflict. We were not very impressed with Mrs Kirkpatrick's comments.

BLOCKADE

We had not heard that a supply ship had reached Port Stanley in the past 24 hours.

NEW PROPOSALS

There were no new proposals beyond those with which Haig left this country. USA and UK were in close contact but there had been no direct communication between the President and Prime Minister.

TASK FORCE

We had no ETA and we did not think the fleet would reduce speed to delay its arrival. We refused to confirm receipt of US intelligence assistance to the fleet.

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PRESS OFFICE BULLETIN

NO 107

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FOREIGN OFFICE PRESS BRIEFING

Foreign Office understand that a number of members of the ODA and Falklands Islands government will be flown back to Britain in the next few days as per current press reports.

Among those flying back will be the Chief Secretary, Dick Baker. He will report of course to Foreign Office. This leaves on the island as senior government official Financial Secretary, Mr Harold Rowlands (himself an islander).

PB