

LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 4.00 date: 19.4.82

Morning lobby was repeated.

We did not know when we would hear from Buenos Aires; that depended on events. We had no idea of Mr Haig's movements or plans.

We did not know that the navy was slowing down. There was no significance in Mr Pym's 'making steady progress'. We would not give an ETA.

We could not enlarge on assistance to the Falkland Islanders to leave.

We did not encourage suggestions of a UN temporary administration or any other options while Mr Haig was still negotiating.

Asked what Mr Pym meant by saying 'the methods (of implementing resolution 502) were open to discussion' we said the Argentinians must still get off. UK had negotiated freely for 17 years. We discouraged the UN as an option.

We said there was no 'rolling dialogue' BA/Washington/London, although we had contact with Washington. Haig knew our views.

If Haig's effort collapsed we would have to wait and see.

On bank evasion of sanctions we said we were not clear and would try to find out, although D/Trade were the experts.

We said the lobby should not read any great significance into Saturday's events. We were not prepared to enter into details of President Reagan's telephone call. We would not commit ourselves to telling the lobby about all PM's telephone calls with the President.

We said there would be a stock-taking Cabinet at 11.00am on Tuesday with a normal Cabinet likely on Thursday. Mr Pym was likely to meet his EC colleagues for the first time in Brussels; he would thank them for their support and brief them on the situation.

Asked if the current BA talks were the crunch, ie, if Haig failed to achieve our aims it was all over, we said we could not read the future - he could come up with something new. To suggestions we were showing more rigidity we said this was not the time to show any weakening.

We would not put a time limit on how long we were prepared to wait for Haig. There was already an effective blockade of the Falklands.

We thought the Defence White Paper would come at about the end of the month with no fundamental revisions.

We said we could not assume a statement by the Prime Minister tomorrow.

On the US we said that once Haig was out of play we would hope and expect to get the support from the US which others had given us. We did not agree that this meant we should welcome a failure by Haig.

Asked whether the navy's tasks would be set by tomorrow's Cabinet we said not - the meeting had been set up today without any recent news.

On Cabinet's necessity to approve decisions we said the 'inner Cabinet' would seek endorsement of their actions from time to time, and, if necessary, consult the full Cabinet in advance.

ED