

# LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 11 AM date: 23.4.82

## PRIME MINISTER'S DAY

The Prime Minister will be leaving No 10 at the end of the morning to visit Fleet Headquarters at Northwood, returning after lunch. At 4.30 pm she would be attending a reception at the Guildhall marking the Golden Jubilee of the Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association. Rest of day working at No 10.

## PRESS NOTICES

Visit of Thai Prime Minister.

Appointment of new Head of Policy Unit.

## PYM VISIT

Talks go on. Mr Pym will probably return overnight. The Foreign Secretary would obviously then want to report to the Prime Minister. This could mean him going to Chequers.

The talks were open-ended but it did seem most likely that the Foreign Secretary would return tonight. It should not necessarily be taken as a bad sign if Mr Pym does not consider it worth staying on.

As for the consideration of other possible diplomatic moves outside the Haig process that would lead us to jump fences before we are ready for them. We must see what comes out of the talks.

We would certainly expect the US to apply pressure on Argentina if the talks broke down. The possibility of United States' economic sanctions being brought to bear had to be a significant factor in negotiations.

There had been no phone calls between the President and the Prime Minister.

We had no observations on Mr Healey's US trip.

## ARGENTINE PROPAGANDA STATION

We thought this was dated and good for a laugh.

## OAS

We were relaxed about the OAS meeting on Monday. The OAS was not in the business of rewarding aggressors and there was a mandatory UN resolution that made the position clear.

## AIR COVER

We had no knowledge of any messages from Task Force commanders drawing attention to their worries about the lack of air cover.

## PRIME MINISTER'S MOVEMENTS

The Prime Minister will visit Northwood today as part of the process of keeping in close touch with developments. No Ministers were accompanying the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister would probably go to Chequers over the weekend.

## ECONOMY

We drew attention to the dropping inflation rate and indicated

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2.

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that the Chancellor would be speaking on the radio.

FERDINAND MOUNT

We drew attention to the appointment and gave some background  
(see Bulletin 122).

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to attend weddings and funerals? Is he further aware that those families now realise that the Conservative manifesto that they may have read in May 1979, which said that there would be special support for the family, was a cruel hoax?

**Mr. Raison:** The numbers of refusals among Asian families are low.

#### Metropolitan Police (Foot Patrols)

14. **Mr. John Fraser** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Metropolitan policemen are now engaged on regular foot patrols compared with the number a year previously.

**Mr. Whitelaw:** The commissioner fully shares my wish to see more officers on the beat. In the last year, there was an increase of over 1,600 in the strength of uniformed constables and most of them have been deployed on foot patrols. A more precise figure could be given only at disproportionate cost.

**Mr. Fraser:** May I tell the Home Secretary how much I welcome in my borough the increase in the number of policemen on the beat? Will the right hon. Gentleman confirm that the trend to place policemen on the beat will continue and that, if that means an increase in the strength of the Metropolitan Police because of manpower demands, he would not stand in the way of that increase?

**Mr. Whitelaw:** I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for his remarks. I compliment him on the consistent support that he gives to the police in his borough. I wish that everyone else in that borough would give similar support. I am prepared to consider the question of the future strength of the Metropolitan Police.

**Mr. Marlow:** Does my right hon. Friend agree that the risk to policemen on the beat from hardened criminals carrying guns, which has vastly increased recently, would be reduced if capital punishment were reintroduced?

**Mr. Whitelaw:** That matter will be debated. If I were to give an answer to my hon. Friend, I would be expressing personal views that are not acceptable to many people. I shall not do that until we have the debate.

#### Children and Young Persons Act 1969

16. **Mr. Heddle** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is satisfied with the operation of the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 in respect of those matters for which he has responsibility.

**Mr. Mayhew:** We have included in the Criminal Justice Bill the measures that we consider necessary to improve the operation of the 1969 Act.

**Mr. Heddle:** As, since 1975, on average over 40 per cent. of all burglaries committed in the West Midlands have been committed by under 17-year-olds, will my hon. and learned Friend agree that the 1969 Act is largely a paper tiger? Will he confirm that the Criminal Justice Bill will restore definite powers to the magistrates to ensure that parents are truly accountable in the courts for the actions of their children?

**Mr. Mayhew:** The Bill strengthens the jurisdiction of the criminal courts under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 to make parents of juvenile offenders liable to pay their fines, compensation orders and costs orders. It

also increases to £500 the maximum sum in which they can be bound over to exercise proper care and control. Those will be useful additions to the weapons available to the courts.

**Mr. Kilroy-Silk:** Given that we imprison twice as many juvenile offenders today as we did a decade ago and that 75 per cent. of them re-offend on release from penal establishments, will the hon. and learned Gentleman accept that there should now be a major shift of emphasis and resources away from custodial techniques to treatment and care in the community and, particularly, that more resources should be provided for measures such as intermediate treatment?

**Mr. Mayhew:** It is desirable that, wherever possible and consistent with the safety of the public, young offenders should be kept out of custodial establishments. That is why, for example in the Criminal Justice Bill, we are introducing a residential care order that will enable a young offender to be kept out of custody. I recall that that measure did not win the support of the hon. Gentleman.

**Mr. Peter Bottomley:** Before the final stages of the Criminal Justice Bill, will my hon. and learned Friend consider whether there are sufficient powers for the courts to require parents to pay to the court a small sum each week, part or all of which they could get back after a year or two if their child did not re-offend?

**Mr. Mayhew:** I note my hon. Friend's suggestion. At a later stage he may care to secure that it can be debated in the House.

#### PRIME MINISTER

##### Engagements

Q1. **Mr. Marlow** asked the Prime Minister whether she will list her official engagements for 22 April.

**The Prime Minister (Mrs. Margaret Thatcher):** This morning I presided at a meeting of the Cabinet and had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in the House, I shall have further meetings later today. This evening I hope to attend a dinner given by the Civic Trust.

**Mr. Marlow:** Despite the strong action taken by my right hon. Friend and despite the Government's proper desire for a diplomatic solution, both of which have the full support of the nation, has my right hon. Friend noticed reports that General Galtieri is on his way to the Falkland Islands? Does she agree that that provocative move will not help towards a peaceful settlement?

**The Prime Minister:** I confirm that we strive for a diplomatic and peaceful solution. Nothing that General Galtieri can do by visiting the islands today alters the fact that the islands are under British sovereignty. Neither invasion nor a visit can alter that. The best thing that can be done is to implement United Nations resolution No. 502 by the withdrawal of Argentine troops. That resolution was passed nearly three weeks ago.

**Mr. David Steel:** Did the Cabinet decide this morning to defer publication of the defence White Paper? If so, will it be rewritten to reverse the rundown in naval manpower?

The Prime Minister: Preparations for the White Paper are complete, but the White Paper is not complete. I do not know when it will be ready to be published, but not next week.

Mr. Higgins: While we must all hope that the Argentine Government will now comply with resolution No. 502 and the wishes of the House, if they fail to do so, will my right hon. Friend consider going back to the Security Council and asking for economic sanctions so that we can see who is prepared to stand up and be counted in the battle against aggressors, and be seen to have exhausted all other possible means of persuasion short of military force?

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend knows that at the moment we are concentrating on negotiations through the good offices of Mr. Haig. If those fail, of course we shall consider what other actions should be taken. I can only remind my right hon. Friend that the history of economic sanctions and their effectiveness is not good.

Dr. Owen: Will the Prime Minister confirm that South Georgia is a direct dependency and is only administered by the Falkland Islands governor and that no Government have ever been prepared to countenance any change in that position in discussions with the Argentine? Will she confirm, further, that there are major British interests in relation to the Antarctic and South Georgia?

The Prime Minister: I confirm what the right hon. Gentleman has said. South Georgia was administered as a matter of convenience through the governorship of the Falkland Islands. Our title to it is different from that to the Falkland Islands. It is a separate dependency. It is extremely important—for the reasons that the right hon. Gentleman gave, among others.

Q2. Mr. Jim Marshall asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 22 April.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Marshall: I refer to the Prime Minister's earlier answer. Is she prepared to give an undertaking that no force will be used, either against the East or West Falkland Islands, until all avenues of diplomacy, including the United Nations, have been fully explored and exhausted?

The Prime Minister: I confirm what my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said yesterday, that while we are making every effort to secure a peaceful settlement, the use of force cannot be ruled out.

Mr. Ernie Ross: Will the Prime Minister take time today to study the reports of the Israeli aggression in Lebanon yesterday? Does she agree that this break in the ceasefire by the Israelis is unprovoked aggression and is yet another step towards an invasion of southern Lebanon? Will she take time today to condemn that action?

The Prime Minister: I think that the whole House will have noted what happened yesterday, will have noted it with concern, and will hope that it will give rise to no more hostilities in that region and that the withdrawal from Sinai will continue on time.

Mr. Aitken: Will my right hon. Friend find time today to examine the record of the Argentine junta in failing to honour certain important international agreements? In

particular, will she note the fact that in recent months the junta has dishonoured its international agreement to uphold the authority of the Pope as mediator in the dispute with Chile? Against that background, what possible confidence can Her Majesty's Government have that any agreement that is signed by the Argentine junta is worth the paper that it is written on?

The Prime Minister: I am well aware of what happened in the dispute to which my hon. Friend refers. I think that another meeting has been called by the Pope on the dispute between Argentine and Chile and that it will take place in the coming two days. It is for the reasons that my hon. Friend adduces that we should watch very carefully the task force and its presence until the withdrawal of those troops is complete.

Mr. Foot: While we are all, of course, still deeply concerned about the Falklands crisis, may I return to the question that was put by my hon. Friend the Member for Dundee, West (Mr. Ross) about the other crisis on the borders of Lebanon and Israel? Have the Government made representations on the matter, and are we giving support to the Secretary-General's demands that there should be a re-establishment of the ceasefire? Does this not further illustrate how much we are all dependent, large nations and small, on absolute allegiance to the United Nations charter and the determination to carry it out all over the world?

The Prime Minister: We hope that that ceasefire will not be broken again. I can, of course, assure the right hon. Gentleman that we are doing everything that we can through diplomatic channels to urge restraint, so that the situation does not get worse.

Mr. Edward Gardner: Is my right hon. Friend aware that those of us, from both sides of the House, who have just returned from the spring meeting of the IPU in Lagos found that delegates from all parts of the Commonwealth recognised the justice of our cause, and expressed firm and unequivocal support for what Her Majesty's Government are now doing to deal with the crisis with the Argentine?

The Prime Minister: I am grateful to my hon. and learned Friend. I think that nations almost everywhere recognise that unprovoked aggression must not be seen to succeed, for if it does not only will it be impossible for the people of the Falkland Islands but for many other peoples across the globe.

Mr. Spearing: As the Argentine Government are still defying United Nations resolution No. 502, does that not put a greater obligation on the Security Council and all those members of the United Nations who have condemned Argentine aggression? Can she now assure the House that the policy and action of Her Majesty's Government will be to retain the support of all those countries which have condemned Argentine aggression, but who may have other views about wider aspects of the matter?

The Prime Minister: It is certainly true that some countries may have their own views about the actual sovereignty of the Falkland Islands, but most of them have condemned the unprovoked aggression, and would support us in securing the withdrawal of the Argentine forces. They would also recognise that we, too, have rights of self-defence under article 51 of the United Nations charter.

Q 3. Mr. Heddle asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 22 April.

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Heddle: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the Argentine people have no cause to thank their Government for a rate of inflation of around 140 per cent. Does she further agree that our rate of inflation is continuing its downward spiral and is on target to fall below 10 per cent. this year? Furthermore, will my right hon. Friend take heart today at the announcement that, together with Japan and France, Great Britain is likely to emerge from the world recession well ahead of our industrial competitors?

The Prime Minister: I confirm what my hon. Friend has said. The rate of inflation is falling, is continuing to fall, and we expect that it will be below 10 per cent. well before the end of the year. I also confirm that there are forecasts now which point out that the recovery will quicken in this country in the coming year and will be at least as good as that of our major international competitors and, in some cases, better.

Mr. Gordon Wilson: In relation to the Argentine, does the Prime Minister realise that if the Government engage in hostilities before the processes of negotiation have been fully and adequately carried out, a lot of the support that she has received in the House, and at home and abroad, will disappear like snow off the dike on a hot spring day? Will she, therefore, in pursuit of negotiations for a peaceful settlement, consider the transfer of sovereignty to the United Nations—[HON. MEMBERS: "No."]—so that the people living in the Falkland Islands will be able to have their security guaranteed by an international body?

The Prime Minister: I cannot rule out the use of force. The process of negotiations could go on endlessly. There is a maritime exclusion zone. We must also expect that we have a right of self-defence under article 51 of the charter for islands that have been invaded. Of course, we would all prefer and will do everything possible to seek, a peaceful settlement, but as the hon. Gentleman will understand, that it is not easy, particularly when seeking a settlement with a country, some of whose people say that they will withdraw only if they succeed in obtaining sovereignty as the price of that withdrawal.

Mrs. Knight: Will the Prime Minister dissociate herself from those who suggest that the British flag is just another piece of cloth, and those who consider that it might be a convenient ploy to have it fluttering side by side with the Argentine flag, even before the people of the Falklands have had an opportunity to make their decision clear? Will she stress again the vital importance of the symbolism of the British flag?

The Prime Minister: Yes, of course. To all of us here, and in particular to the Falklands, the flag is a great symbol of pride and allegiance to the Crown. No one would quarrel for a moment with that statement.

#### Engagements

Q4. Mr. Parry asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 22 April.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Parry: Will not the Prime Minister now offer her resignation, in view of the revelation that her Government have recently been supplying arms to the Argentine that may be used against the Falklanders and British forces? Is that not tantamount to treasonable conduct?

The Prime Minister: If the hon. Gentleman looks at the history of the supply of arms to the Argentine he will find that a number of contracts were negotiated during the lifetime of his own Government.

Mr. Hastings: Does my right hon. Friend agree that the truly remarkable achievement of the Royal Navy and the other Services in mounting this task force with such efficiency and speed has been insufficiently recognised to date? Does she further agree that any continuing plea for a restriction of the use of force, or some other kind of compromise, can serve only to bring comfort and strength to the junta, and thus increase the risk of further miscalculation on its part, and loss of life?

The Prime Minister: I agree with my hon. Friend that the speed with which the Royal Navy assembled the task force, and its efficiency throughout, have been a matter of pride for us all. I entirely agree with him that sending the task force, sending it efficiently and well-equipped, has been a factor that is more likely to lead the junta to a peaceful settlement than would have been the case without it.

Q5. Mr. Thomas Cox asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 22 April.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply that I gave some moments ago.

Mr. Cox: Is the Prime Minister aware that her attitude towards the Fascist junta in the Argentine contrasts with the lack of action by her Government towards another Fascist junta, that in Turkey, which is still occupying part of a Commonwealth country, Cyprus? What is her attitude to that occupation? What action is she taking to have those troops removed? What will she do if the general in Ankara refuses to remove Turkish troops from Cyprus?

The Prime Minister: I understand that the military Government in Turkey have said that they intend to return to democratic government as soon as possible. They have indicated to the European Community a timetable under which they hope to achieve that.

Dr. Mawhinney: Does my right hon. Friend agree that if a democracy is unwilling to defend its own territory or people against conventional armed attack after, and only after, all peace negotiations have been exhausted, it might find that its credibility is seriously damaged when it comes together with other democracies in an organisation such as NATO?

The Prime Minister: I fully agree with my hon. Friend. One must be prepared to defend those things in which one believes and be prepared to use force if it is the only way to secure a future of liberty and self-determination.

The Prime Minister: I have at present no plans to do so.

#### Parliamentary Constituencies

Q19. Mr. Wigley asked the Prime Minister whether Her Majesty's Government still expect that any general election held in the autumn of 1983 or later will be based on new constituency boundaries.

The Prime Minister: Yes.

#### Northern Ireland (Devolution)

Q34. Sir John Biggs-Davison asked the Prime Minister whether, having regard to the response in Northern Ireland to the proposal for an Assembly and rolling devolution now before Her Majesty's Ministers, she will have plans prepared instead for a better system of local government and provincial administration subject to the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

The Prime Minister: No. The White Paper "Northern Ireland: A Framework for Devolution" which contains the Government's proposals will be debated shortly.

#### Falkland Islanders (Citizenship)

Mr. Teddy Taylor asked the Prime Minister if, in light of the serious situation in the Falkland Islands, Her Majesty's Government will publish a White Paper setting out the rights of the Falkland Islanders who will shortly become citizens of the British dependent territories by comparison with citizens of Common Market countries and citizens of France's overseas territories.

The Prime Minister: Those Falkland Islanders who will become British dependent territories citizens subject to immigration control will ordinarily have to qualify for admission under the immigration rules although, as my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary said in reply to the question from my hon. Friend on 8 April, they will in the present situation be admitted for settlement. European Community nationals, including French overseas citizens, also have to qualify for admission under the immigration rules, but, by virtue of our EC Treaty obligations, they are admitted to take or seek employment without work permits or to set up in business. I do not think a White Paper on the subject would serve any useful purpose.

#### Arms Sales

Mr. Skinner asked the Prime Minister if she will issue a directive to all Government Departments that all British arms trading with Fascist style dictatorships throughout the world, will be ended; and if she will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: Under already existing machinery, the Government consider carefully every application for a licence to export arms, to whatever destination. In doing so we take a variety of factors into account including the human rights record of the Government concerned. We also have powers to revoke licences once they have been issued, as has been done in the case of goods destined for Argentina.

#### Commonwealth Relations

Mr. Austin Mitchell asked the Prime Minister if, to ensure that Commonwealth relations are separately represented in Cabinet, she will set up a separate Commonwealth Relations Office.

The Prime Minister: No. I regard Britain's relations with the rest of the Commonwealth as important, but believe that the present arrangements for handling them are satisfactory. Responsibility already rests with a Cabinet Minister, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

#### Factory Closures

Mr. Campbell-Savours asked the Prime Minister how many hon. Members she has seen on matters relating to factory closures since she last answered oral questions; and how many jobs are expected to be lost in the closures discussed.

The Prime Minister: I have had no such meetings since 20 April.

#### Information Services (Ministerial Responsibility)

Mr. Eggar asked the Prime Minister which Minister is now responsible for the co-ordination of Government information services.

The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend the Lord President of the Council will exercise this responsibility on the same basis as his predecessor.

#### ENERGY

##### Domestic Supplies (Disconnections)

Mr. Freeson asked the Secretary of State for Energy whether further consideration is being given to the introduction of legally binding rules on fuel boards to replace the present code of practice concerning disconnections through non-payment of accounts.

Mr. Mellor: No. A new code of practice leaflet will be issued by the industries shortly. This will incorporate changes I announced to the House in my reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Fulham (Mr. Stevens) on 20 March.—[Vol. 20, c. 25.] Implementation of the changes will be monitored by the gas and electricity consumer councils; the industries and the consumer councils will wish to consider the results of this monitoring.

##### Advisory Council on Energy Conservation

Mr. Eggar asked the Secretary of State for Energy if he will make a statement on the membership of the Advisory Council on Energy Conservation since the extension of its mandate on 1 January.

Mr. Lawson: Professor Sir Hermann Bondi, who has been chairman of the Advisory Council on Energy Conservation since 1 January 1980, has now given up the chairmanship. The Government are grateful to him for his work in the field of energy conservation and the leadership he has given the council. In his place I have appointed Dr. Robert Telfer, chairman and chief executive of Mather and Platt, as the new chairman.

The following have been appointed members of the council for the period up to 31 December 1983:

Mr. Wiggan: Work is now complete, and the first occupants will be moving in shortly; I expect all the flats to be occupied by the end of next month.

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### Police (Numbers)

Mr. Ralph Howell asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Norfolk, North 11 February, *Official Report*, c. 420, regarding the total numbers employed by the police forces in Northern Ireland, why figures at constant prices are not now readily available.

Mr. John Patten: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 31 March 1982 by my right hon. and learned Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the right hon. Member for Stepney and Poplar (Mr. Shore).—[Vol. 21, c. 124.]

However, the annual staff costs at outturn prices for Royal Ulster Constabulary and Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve officers and civilian support staff for the financial years referred to in my earlier reply are as follows:

	RUC and RUC 'R' Officers	Civilian Support Staff	Total
	£	£	£
1971-72	13,464,000	546,000	14,010,000
1979-80	84,823,000	4,990,000	89,813,000
1981-82	139,370,000	7,000,000	146,370,000

### EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

#### Community Documents (Explanatory Memoranda)

Mr. Stainton asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements are made for public access to explanatory memoranda on European Community documents.

Mr. Hurd: We have arranged that after explanatory memoranda have been delivered to Parliament, copies will be sent to four "Depository Libraries" which, by their own direct arrangements with the European Commission, already maintain a supply of the documents to which the memoranda relate. These libraries are the lending and reference divisions of the British library, the City of Westminster central library and the Liverpool and District scientific, industrial and research library. Copies of the memoranda will also be made available to the national libraries of Scotland and Wales, and to Queen's university library, Belfast.

I hope that these arrangements, which have been agreed by the Scrutiny Committee, will help to improve public understanding of the Community.

### FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

#### Israeli Settlements, West Bank

Mr. Marlow asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will seek, through the European initiative, to minimise Israeli settlements on the West Bank with the objective of preventing problems similar to those in Sinai when an eventual settlement is reached.

Mr. Hurd: The Israeli Government are well aware of our strong views on the need for them to halt the expansion of their settlements in the occupied territories. As the Venice declaration makes clear, we and our partners in the Ten regard these settlements as a serious obstacle to the peace process, and illegal under international law.

#### South Atlantic Islands (British Sovereignty)

Mr. Wigley asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the historical basis of British assertion of sovereignty, respectively, over (a) Port Egmont, (b) West Falklands, (c) East Falklands, (d) South Georgia, (e) the South Sandwich Islands, (f) South Orkneys, (g) South Shetlands and (h) Graham Lands.

Mr. Pym: The United Kingdom has sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, its dependencies and the British Antarctic territory. The basis for British title to each of the individual islands, island groups and territories specified in the question differs according to the historical circumstances in which they came under United Kingdom possession, control and occupation, taking into account the administrative units of which they now form part. We have no doubt about our title to each of the possessions listed.

#### El Salvador

Mr. Cadbury asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to receive the report of the United Kingdom observers sent to the recent elections in El Salvador.

Mr. Hurd [pursuant to his reply, 6 April 1982, c. 306]: A full report has now been received by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. A copy has been placed in the Library of the House today, pending its publication in the Command Paper series.

### SOCIAL SERVICES

#### Safety of Medicines

Dr. Roger Thomas asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he will establish an investigation into the safety of medicines used for treating broncho-respiratory diseases, including those which can be purchased over the counter, in view of suggestions that some may be cardio-toxic.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: Matters relating to adverse reactions to medicinal products are the responsibility of the licensing authority advised as necessary by the Committee on Safety of Medicines. The authority is aware of recent reports of the cardiotoxicity of some products used for the relief of symptoms of broncho-respiratory disease. These reports are being considered though they would seem to contain little that is new.

#### Unemployed Nurses

Dr. Roger Thomas asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he will estimate the number of unemployed nurses who are not registered as unemployed.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: No. There is no information available on which such an estimate could be based.

allied Trades and Technicians shop stewards convenor at Chatham dockyard of 6 April, forwarded to him by the hon. Member for Salford, East;

(2) why the previous supervisors from the naval base complex at Chatham were moved elsewhere;

(3) why paint chippings from HMS "Churchill" at Chatham dockyard were not collected, bagged and removed to the health physics department as required by the safety rules;

(4) why work was done on the active waste tank of HMS "Churchill" without protective clothing, such as health physics overalls, hats, gloves and air fed respirators;

(5) what is the medical condition of the two dockyard workers who were employed on work connected with the removal of the active waste tank from HMS "Churchill";

(6) why the two men at Chatham employed in a radioactive contaminated area were allowed to take their contaminated overalls to the dining and locker rooms used by other workers;

(7) what was the result of the examination of the overalls of the two men employed at Chatham in a radioactive contaminated area four days after they had finished the job in the area concerned;

(8) why written work instructions were not given to the supervisor and the men involved in work on the active waste tank of HMS "Churchill" stating clearly the procedure to be adopted;

(9) why no notice was posted at the entrance to the active waste tank of HMS "Churchill" in Chatham dockyard indicating the level of radioactivity; and why the area was not roped off;

(10) what experience the new supervisory and technical staff employed on the work on HMS "Churchill" involving radioactive contamination had had on this type of work;

(11) on what occasions workmen at Chatham dockyard have been exposed to radiation; and in what circumstances.

**Mr. Pattie:** An urgent technical investigation has been ordered into the employment of two dockyard workers in a radioactive contaminated area of the nuclear complex at Her Majesty's dockyard, Chatham. I would not wish to pre-empt the outcome of this investigation and will give a full reply to the hon. Member and the UCATT shop stewards' convenor upon its completion, which is expected to be by 7 May 1982.

#### Falkland Islands

**Mr. Marlow** asked the Secretary of State for Defence what he estimates to have been the effect of the invasion of the Falkland Islands on (a) applications and (b) acceptances for recruitment to the Armed Services.

**Mr. Wigginn:** Since the Falkland Islands emergency began there has been some increase in the numbers enquiring about joining the Armed Forces; but we have not recruited any more people into either the regular or reserve forces specifically in response to recent events, and the rate of acceptances remains as previously expected.

**Mr. Marlow** asked the Secretary of State for Defence whether the necessary military action will be taken to isolate the Falkland Islands entirely from the Argentine as soon as it is logistically and militarily feasible in order to reduce the potential Argentine military presence in the event of later land based hostilities on the Islands.

**Mr. Wigginn:** A maritime exclusion zone around the Falkland Islands has been in force since 0400 Greenwich mean time on Monday 12 April. I would not want to comment on any further measures we might wish to take.

**Mr. Robert Atkins** asked the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are being taken to keep essential personnel in the Royal Navy who would otherwise be entitled to leave the Service during the Falkland Islands operation.

**Mr. Wigginn** [*pursuant to the reply, 7 April 1982, c. 344*]: So far 25 naval ratings and three Royal Marines who would otherwise have left full-time service during April and May 1982 and whose retention is required in the context of the current operations in the South Atlantic, are being retained in service under section 4 of the Armed Forces Act 1966 and schedule 7, paragraph 4A of the Army Act 1955. The appropriate report to Parliament has been made and copies are available in the Vote Office and in the Library. Further such reports will be made as necessary.

#### Portsmouth Dockyard

**Mr. Peter Lloyd** asked the Secretary of State for Defence how many Portsmouth dockyard-naval base employees were engaged in the preparations for the dispatch of the task force to the Falklands; how many such employees will be retained at the Portsmouth naval base when the dockyard is closed; and if he is satisfied that they will then be sufficient in numbers, range of skills and resources to ensure that a similar task force can be dispatched with equal speed and efficiency.

**Mr. Wigginn:** The number of Portsmouth naval base employees engaged on the preparation of the task force has varied according to day-to-day requirements, but at peak times the number reached a maximum of between 1,200 and 1,500: some 500 to 700 are at present employed on this task. On the closure of the dockyard, it is intended to retain some 1,300 civilians in the naval base. The future size of the dockyard must be primarily determined by the size and composition of the fleet, the repair policy and the long-term needs that these generate. The events of the last few weeks will be carefully studied in relation to future plans, but I am satisfied that with the resources available at the naval base and at the remaining dockyards, there will be sufficient capacity to meet our future commitments.

#### Argentina

**Mr. Skinner** asked the Secretary of State for Defence how many Argentine personnel received military training in the United Kingdom during 1979, 1980 and 1981.

**Mr. Wigginn:** I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Harlow (Mr. Newens) on 8 April 1982.—[Vol. 21, c. 457.]

#### Cambridge House, Woolwich

**Mr. Cartwright** asked the Secretary of State for Defence when work on refurbishing the 36 flats at Cambridge House, Woolwich, started; when it is now expected to be complete; and when the flats will be let to families on the Army waiting list.