

# LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 11 AM date: 26.4.82

## PRIME MINISTER'S DAY

The Prime Minister is working in No 10 most of the day.

She would meet her "inner Cabinet" this morning.

This evening at 8.10 pm she will give a live interview on BBC-1 Panorama to Robert Kee and Richard Lindlay.

## IN THE HOUSE

### STATEMENT

There will be a Statement at 3.30 pm from the Prime Minister on the Falklands situation, combining defence and foreign affairs aspects.

### ANSWERS OF INTEREST

No 51 Written 3.30pm: Mr John Hannam to ask S/S Transport when he will publish his Department's Guide to Transport for Disabled People. Answer will say this is published today.)

## SOUTH GEORGIA

We said there were 200 Argentinian prisoners, 80-90 from the submarine. There was one serious Argentine casualty. The BAS had received news yesterday that its people were safe. HMS Exeter had not taken part in the action and was, as far as we knew, undamaged. The submarine was the Sante Fe - an old US-built vessel. We had no further knowledge of numbers.

## OAS

We understood the OAS was due to meet at 10 am but that this meeting was to be delayed.

## STATEMENT

The Government had volunteered a statement, not responded to Opposition pressure. Mr Foot was not unhappy with the arrangements for being involved.

## DU CANN

We said there was no party significance in his meeting this morning.

## NEGOTIATION

In response to questioning we said we thought the South Georgia action would strengthen our negotiating position. We wanted a peaceful solution still; Mr Haig was still in play - we had been in contact with him yesterday by telegram. We had not seen Costa Mendez yet; the ball was in Haig's court.

## BRITS IN ARGENTINA

100,000 of UK descent; 17,000 with dual passports; 7,000 with UK passports. They had been advised to leave by BBC External Services.

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## US ATTITUDE

The US had been left in no doubt that we did not rule out the use of force at any time.

## '48 HOURS'

We said we did not understand these reports.

## CABINET

Cabinet would meet on Wednesday morning to be brought up-to-date and take stock.

## HM QUEEN

The Queen was of course being kept informed; because she had been at Windsor there had been no Audience last week. The Queen was going to Sandringham tomorrow. The Prime Minister simply wanted to bring her up-to-date; the Audience had been arranged before the news of the South Georgia action.

LD

*Serious offences cleared up in the London borough of Newham by Commissioner's office classification groups 1979-81*

	1979	1980*	1981*
Assault			
Robbery and other violent theft	357	376	303
Burglary†	71	56	95
Auto-crime	447	439	587
Other theft and handling	589	657	606
Fraud and forgery	1,254	1,298	1,343
Criminal damage and miscellaneous	400	537	647‡
	436	459	445
Total	3,554	3,822	4,026

\* Figures for 1980 and 1981 are not precisely comparable with those for 1979 because of changes made by new counting rules which were introduced at the beginning of 1980.

† Excludes burglaries involving violence.

‡ Excludes cheque fraud offences which are recorded and investigated centrally in the MPD.

#### Police Cadet School (Lecturers)

**Mr. Tilley** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is making any arrangements to replace the lecturers from the Kilburn polytechnic who teach at the police cadet school, Hendon, following the decision of Brent and Barnet councils to stop funding these posts; and if he will give details of any such arrangements.

**Mr. Whitelaw:** The decision of Brent and Barnet councils raises complex legal and financial issues which I am currently examining in consultation with the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

#### AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

##### Badgers (Tuberculosis)

**Mr. Stephen Ross** asked the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if, as part of his policy to try to eradicate tuberculosis in cattle, he will now initiate a country-wide test to establish those areas where badgers are believed to be free of infection.

**Mrs. Fenner:** We investigate badger populations only as part of our responsibilities for eradicating bovine tuberculosis from cattle. Hence, there would be no justification for a country-wide survey of badgers. However, since 1976 my Department has undertaken to collect and examine badger carcasses reported by members of the public in all parts of the country. The results of these examinations are published in my Department's annual reports on bovine tuberculosis in badgers.

##### Agriculture Ministers (Meeting)

**Mr. Body** asked the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Council of Agriculture Ministers meeting in Luxembourg on 20-21 April.

**Mr. Buchanan-Smith I** represented the United Kingdom. Ministers continued their discussion of the 1982 price package and other measures, concentrating on the arrangements for wine, fruit and vegetables, and olive oil. No conclusions were reached. The Council agreed in principle to meet again on 28-29 April, subject to confirmation by the Presidency.

The current marketing years for milk, beef, sheepmeat and dried fodder were further extended until 2 May.

##### Verticillium Wilt Disease

**Mr. Temple-Morris** asked the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if he will make a statement on progressive verticillium wilt disease in Hereford and Worcester.

**Mr. Peter Walker:** Tests have shown that progressive verticillium wilt disease of hops is present on six farms in the lower Frome valley in Hereford-Worcester in addition to two previously known to be affected. In the light of these results, I have decided to allow the planting of resistant, or "tolerant", hops in Hereford-Worcester under strictly controlled licensing arrangements. Licences to plant resistant hops will be considered only in extreme cases. Plantings will be confined to land which has been grassed down for at least two growing seasons and will be subject to conditions designed to minimise risks to sensitive varieties. The number of licences granted in the foreseeable future is likely to be minimal. The decision to adopt a policy which includes limited plantings of resistant hops does not simply any lessening of the Ministry's determination to combat progressive verticillium wilt. Rather, we are intensifying our attack through inspection and advisory operations and by the introduction of stronger eradication measures, including an increase in the number of plants which have to be grubbed up when progressive verticillium wilt is found.

#### OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

##### South-West Africa People's Organisation

**Mr. Lawrence** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether aid is being given by the European Economic Community directly or indirectly to the South-West Africa People's Organisation.

**Mr. Neil Marten:** Refugees from Namibia have been given support in training and education, but no aid has been provided directly to the South-West Africa People's Organisation.

#### FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

##### Falkland Islands

**Mr. Austin Mitchell** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government's willingness to negotiate with the Argentine Government in the event of their withdrawing troops

extends to the dependencies of the Falkland Islands which were not occupied by them in the early part of the last century.

**Mr. Onslow:** The Argentine claim extends to both the Falkland Islands and the Falkland Islands dependencies. However, until all Argentine troops have withdrawn from the Falkland Islands and the dependencies, it would be premature to speculate on what any subsequent negotiations might cover.

**Mr. Austin Mitchell** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if, as part of any settlement of the Falkland Islands dispute, he will take steps to obtain (a) the right of the Falkland Islanders to self-determination and (b) an undertaking by the Government of the United States of America of the guaranteeing of their rights.

**Mr. Onslow:** The Islanders' right to self-determination has always been central to the Government's position on the Falkland Islands. It remains so. We are ready to consider any effective means of guaranteeing the Islanders' rights. In the present situation, the first requirement, however, is the withdrawal of the Argentine occupying forces, in accordance with Security Council resolution No. 502, and the Government have welcomed the role of the United States Secretary of State in trying to achieve this.

**Mr. Skeet** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what electricity is available on the Falkland Islands; how it is produced; and whether oil fuel supplies continue to be available during the blockade.

**Mr. Onslow:** Three diesel generators supply electricity on a 24-hour basis to Port Stanley. Most farms and settlements have their own private diesel generators. Deliveries of diesel to the Islands are made about every 18 months. None has been due since the declaration of the maritime exclusion zone, or for several months to come.

#### British Antarctic Territories

**Mr. Skeet** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the United Kingdom's claim to the British Antarctic Territories following the expiry of existing treaty arrangements, would be affected by any alteration to British sovereignty over the Falkland Islands dependencies.

**Mr. Onslow:** The dispute over the Falkland Islands and their dependencies has no legal implications for United Kingdom sovereignty over the British Antarctic Territory.

The Antarctic treaty does not have a date of termination. A right exists under article XII of the Antarctic treaty for certain parties to call for a conference to review the operation of the treaty 30 years after its entry into force which was on 23 June 1961.

### NATIONAL FINANCE

#### Mortgage Interest Relief

**Mr. Austin Mitchell** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will bring up to date the information on mortgage interest qualifying for relief as shown in the reply dated 18 December 1979, *Official Report*, c. 133-4, to the hon. Member for Grimsby.

**Mr. Ridley:** Information on the numbers receiving mortgage interest relief was supplied to the hon. Member in my reply of 20 April—[Vol. 22, c. 62]. Estimates for 1982-83 of the average amount of qualifying interest and the average additional net cost of a percentage point increase in interest rates are given below.

#### Mortgage interest 1982-83

Range of total income	Average per mortgagor of mortgage interest qualifying for relief	Average per mortgagor of additional qualifying interest, net of tax relief, for a percentage point increase in interest rates
£	£	£
Under 5,000	795	45
5,000-7,500	950	50
1,500-10,000	1,060	55
10,000-12,000	1,100	55
12,000-15,000	1,210	65
15,000-17,000	1,440	75
17,000-20,000	1,550	70
20,000-30,000	1,890	80
over 30,000	2,250	70
All ranges	1,150	60

#### Tax Relief (Costs)

**Miss Richardson** asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update for 1981-82 and 1982-83 his estimate of tax relief costs at actual and constant prices as provided in his reply to the hon. Member for Barking, on 22 December 1981, *Official Report*, c. 387-88.

**Mr. Ridley:** The available information for 1982-83, with revised estimates for 1981-82, is as follows:

	Life Assurance Relief	Mortgage Interest Relief	Approved* pension schemes	Employers* Contributions to approved pension schemes	Retirement Annuity Relief	Age Allowance
	Estimated cost, £ million					
1981-82	530	2,030	1,000	1,100	310	390
1982-83	600	2,180	1,100	1,200	380	430
	Estimated cost at 1975-76 constant prices, £ million†					
1981-82	250	950	470	515	145	180
1982-83	260	935	470	515	165	185

\* Estimates for approved pension schemes and employers' contributions to approved pension schemes were not provided in the previous reply, but similar estimates were contained in the reply to the hon. Member on 14 January 1981, *Official Report*, c. 588. The bases for the estimates now given are the same as in the previous reply, but they are being reviewed and the estimates may be altered subsequently.

† As in the previous replies, the retail prices index based on 1975-76=100 has been used to convert from current to constant prices.

### Psychotic Depression Analysis

Mr. Ernie Ross asked the Secretary of State for Education and Science if his Department is aware of any research being carried out in the United Kingdom into psychotic depression analysis relating the inability of the hypothalamus to suppress cortisol production; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. William Shelton: The Medical Research Council's brain metabolism unit is carrying out research on the action of the artificial steroid dexamethasone in suppressing cortisol production in severely depressed patients. Such patients, who have persistently high blood concentrations of cortisol, show a very rapid recovery from this suppression. The unit is investigating both the mechanism of the suppression and its use as a test to distinguish depressive illness from early dementia in the elderly.

It is likely that a certain amount of research in this area is also being carried out in universities and medical schools, using funds provided through the University Grants Committee as block grants for teaching and research.

### Schizophrenia

Mr. Ernie Ross asked the Secretary of State for Education and Science if his Department is aware of any research work being carried out into schizophrenia in the United Kingdom with respect to the following: (a) differential rates of flushing following the administration of niacin to schizophrenics and non-schizophrenics, (b) schizophrenia and prostaglandins synthesised from dihomogammalinolenic acid, (c) the incidence of schizophrenia amongst the congenitally blind, (d) the effect of light upon synthesis of melatonin, and hence levels of prostaglandin PGE1, (e) the incidence of arthritis amongst schizophrenics and vice versa; and if he will make a statement of the current findings of the research.

Mr. William Shelton: I shall write to the hon. Member.

### DEFENCE

#### Military Equipment Sales

Mr. Arthur Lewis asked the Secretary of State for Defence whether, in view of the exceptional situation confronting Argentina and the United Kingdom, he will give details of the arms and munitions as supplied by the United Kingdom to the Argentinians for the longest and most convenient stated period of time; and when the latest deliveries were made.

Mr. Pattie: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Warrington (Mr. Hoyle) on 21 April.—[Vol. 22, c. 111-12.]

#### Royal Yacht "Britannia"

Mr. Canavan asked the Secretary of State for Defence what the Royal yacht "Britannia" is doing at the present time; what passengers she is carrying; and for what periods and for what purpose she is expected to be at sea during the course of 1982.

Mr. Wiggin: The Royal yacht "Britannia" is currently en route to St. Nazaire. It is not the normal practice to give details of the Royal yacht's future programme.

Mr. Canavan asked the Secretary of State for Defence whether he will consider offering the Royal yacht "Britannia" as a replacement school-ship for the SS "Uganda" if the Royal yacht "Britannia" is considered to be unsuitable for operations in and around the Falkland Islands.

Mr. Wiggin: No.

Mr. Canavan asked the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has any immediate plans or contingency plans to use the royal yacht "Britannia", in her role as a reserve hospital ship, during current operations in the Falkland Islands area; and for what reasons.

Mr. Wiggin: There are no plans to deploy Her Majesty's yacht "Britannia" as a hospital ship during the present crisis.

### WALES

#### Agriculture and Horticulture Development Scheme

Mr. Morgan asked the Secretary of State for Wales whether he has any plans for extending the scope of the agriculture and horticulture development scheme.

Mr. Nicholas Edwards: No.

#### Unemployed Persons

Mr. D. E. Thomas asked the Secretary of State for Wales if he will publish a table showing the nature of the previous employment of those people currently registered as unemployed in Wales, indicating the number of unemployed people in each such category.

Mr. Nicholas Edwards: The following is the latest comprehensive information available:

Broad Occupational Groups	Numbers registered as unemployed at employment offices-jobcentres in Wales: 11 March 1982
Managerial and professional	13,272
Clerical and related	19,479
Other non-manual occupations including selling and security	11,694
Craft and similar occupations, including foreman in processing and production industries	21,572
General labourers	58,558
Other manual occupations including farming and fishing	34,557
All occupations	159,132

#### Development of Tourism Act

Mr. D. F. Thomas asked the Secretary of State for Wales how many grants have been given and how much expenditure has been incurred in Wales as a result of the granting of financial assistance under section 4 of the Development of Tourism Act 1969 for each year since the Act came into force.

Mr. Nicholas Edwards: The information from the Wales Tourist Board is as follows: