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20.7.82  
Mrs Beaver - DS11

SW/82/748  
9/31/F

FIFTH MEETING WITH EDITORS ON FALKLANDS EMERGENCY

... PUS held the fifth in his series of meetings with Editors on media coverage of the Falklands emergency at 11.45am on Friday, 21 May. A list of those who attended is attached at Annex A.

2. On operations, PUS said that there was a good deal of military activity in the Falklands currently.

MOD would shortly be issuing a statement about recent raids made on the Islands by the Task Force and about the loss of a Sea King helicopter and 21 men. We hoped that the Argentines would be finding it difficult to assess the precise locations and scale of operations. PUS went on to ask that Editors cooperated in not clarifying the situation for them, even if they received information; it would be especially helpful if the impression could be given if raids were widespread (which they were). A similar request was being made to correspondents with the Task Force, whose copy would initially be short of this kind of detail.

3. Turning to facilities for the media, PUS said that progress had been made in several of the areas discussed the previous week:

... a. A note had been prepared for Editors (copy at Annex B) on the transmission of pictures from the South Atlantic. Still pictures were now coming in from the Task Force and several ships had the facsimile equipment required. Despite enormous efforts on the part of engineers from BBC/ITV, British Telecom and MOD (including R&D establishments) there was still no early prospect of TV film being transmitted live; one more promising possibility would be to place a ground station on South Georgia and, eventually, on the Falkland Islands. In the meantime, there was a steady movement of shipping back to Ascension which should give a steadier flow of material, even if subject to several days delay.

b. Unlike the Army, the RN did not have photographs of Servicemen readily available (they were kept with other records in ships), but MOD was exploring the possibility of asking the families of casualties whether they would lend photographs for the use of the media.

c. Earlier problems with Customs clearance of film footage from the South Atlantic had been resolved.

d. The system for releasing copy from ships for transmission had been clarified, but there were still delays; it would now only be held up in the case of British losses (where it was clearly right that families and the British public should learn of casualties from the official spokesman first). There were still delays, but these were mainly due to the overload of communications from the Task Force from which MOD was suffering equally.

A number of other initiatives were being made. These were most welcome but it would be helpful if MOD could coordinate a short note giving a contact point which was handed



e. A number of charitable initiatives were being made. These were most welcome but it would be helpful if MOD could coordinate a short note giving a contact point. A copy of the note at Annex C was handed to the Editors.

4. CPR explained that with the amalgamation of the various elements of the Task Force, some redistribution of correspondents between ships was taking place (which would explain why Editors had not heard from some of them recently). Correspondents who wanted to go ashore with any landing forces would generally be allowed to do so, as long as they had had sufficient training aboard to reduce the risks to themselves and the troops they were accompanying. Priority would be given to those who had had less good access to material on the voyage south, eg those in Canberra. The correspondents had agreed amongst themselves that copy from ashore would be pooled, and sent back to London to appear under the individual by-lines of all those with the Task Force whether involved in pooling or not.

5. In answer to questions, PUS made the following points:

a. A press facility would be provided (including interviews) with returning survivors from SHEFFIELD.

b. The Argentine surface Navy was still mainly in port or coastal waters. The main threat came from shore-based aircraft and submarines.

c. The morale and state of readiness of forces on the Falklands was probably patchy depending on whether they were conscript or professional troops.

d. Mirages were not operating from Port Stanley airfield but smaller aircraft (eg Pucara) and transports were probably still able to operate to a limited extent from there and from some of the grass strips around the Islands.

e. We were unable to say much more about the helicopter which had landed in Chile, but it was not true that there had been troops aboard when it crashed.

6. In conclusion, PUS said that as the scale and tempo of military activity increased, there would undoubtedly be confusion and mis-reporting. Sometimes the Argentines would have information before it was received in London. This was inevitable but MOD would strive to keep the press in London up with the news.

21 May 1982

*S Webb*

S WEBB  
PS/PUS



Plus Editors Meeting  
 HR27, MOD MB  
 May 21, 1982  
 TIME: 1150 for 1200

newspaper, Agency, etc	Reporters	Photography	Other details
Press As	David Chipp	Editor in Chief	
BBC External Services	Terry Heron	Deputy Editor	
BBC Ra	John Wilson	Editor, News and Current Affairs	
BBC T	Peter Wilson	Editor	
Daily	David Tye		
Daily	William		
Financial	Geoffrey O		
Guardian	Peter Pa		
Daily	Richard Str		
Daily	Brian Hitchens	Editor, Daily Star	
ITN	DON MORRABIN	Editor	
IRN	Peter Thornton	Deputy Editorial Director	
Sunday People	Nick Lloyd	Editor	
News of the World	Derek Jamieson	Editor	
The Times	C. Douglas Hane	Editor	
Observer	Donald Trelford	Editor	
Sunday Times	Frank Giles	Editor	
Sunday Telegraph	John Thompson	Editor	
Sunday Mirror	Robert Edwards	Editor	
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent	
MAIL ON SUNDAY	Tony Shanks	EDITOR	
SUN	KEVIN McGLADIE	EDITOR	
SUNDAY EXPRESS	MIKE TONGR	EXECUTIVE	
BBC R/ID	ALAN PROCTOR		

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- R L Wade-Gery Esq CMG, Cabinet Office
- R A Burns Esq, FCO
- B Ingham Esq, No 10
- S W J Fuller Esq, SAPU, Cabinet Office



SUBJECT:

Pus Editors' Meeting

VENUE:

HR27, MOD MB

ANNEX A

DATE:

May 21, 1982

TIME:

1150 for 1200

Newspaper, Agency, etc	Reporters	Photography	Other details
Press Association	David Chipp	Editor in Chief	
BBC External Services	Terry Heron	Deputy Editor	
BBC Radio	John Wilson	Editor, News and Current Affairs	
BBC TV	Peter Woon	Editor	
Daily Mail	David Tytler	Assistant Editor	
Daily Telegraph	William Needes	Editor	
Financial Times	Geoffrey Owen	Editor	
Guardian	Peter Preston	Editor	
Daily Mirror	Richard Stott	Deputy Editor	
Daily Star / Daily Express	Brian Hitchens	Editor, Daily Star	
ITN	DON HERRABIN	Editor	
IRN	Peter Thornton	Deputy Editorial Director	
Sunday People	Nick Lloyd	Editor	
News of the World	Derek Jameson	Editor	
The Times	C. Douglas Home	Editor	
Observer	Donald Treford	Editor	
Sunday Times	Frank Giles	Editor	
Sunday Telegraph	John Thompson	Editor	
Sunday Mirror	Robert Edwards	Editor	
Reuters	Graham Stewart	Chief Correspondent	
MAIL ON SUNDAY	TONY SHRIMSLY	EDITOR	
SUN	KEWIN MCKENZIE	EDITOR	
SUNDAY EXPRESS	MIKE TONGER	EXECUTIVE	
BBC A/DG	ALAN BROTHWELL	-	