

109



Page ...1... of ...1...

Copy ...1... of ...34

*MJM 22/4*

PS/PJS

*Head Reference Dept*

c.c. Mr Wright - *with attach*  
Sir I Sinclair } *with out*  
Mr Gillmore } *att.*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG'S GROUP : 4PM 19 APRIL

Sir Antony Acland is to attend this meeting this afternoon. I understand there are also places for Sir Ian Sinclair and Mr Wright.

2. You told me that in Sir Frank Cooper's view the agenda should concentrate on the decision flow chart and the force tote. Copies of these are attached.

...

*Decided  
at OASA  
(approved)  
19/4*

3. With regard to the Parquet Group, Mr Wright has recorded the decision at this morning's Chiefs of Staff Committee, namely a recommendation that the Group should cross the Argentine 200 mile zone today.

4. The other major decision concerns whether to delay the amphibious Task Force at Ascension Island where it arrives today. If it is intended to keep the Force there for longer than seven days a decision is needed immediately to provide for tents, accommodation storage and other facilities such as water supply. A study done by the MOD shows that with these extra supplies it would be possible to keep the amphibious Task Force at Ascension for up to two months. But since the operational effectiveness of the main naval Task Force is likely to reduce progressively from the end of May, the military judgement is that an amphibious landing on the Falklands could not be deferred beyond the end of May without introducing 'unacceptable operational risks'.

5. A more general consideration, going beyond the scope of this afternoon's meeting, is whether Ministers need soon to be made aware of the long term problems of sustaining our current and projected military deployments. This is perhaps more for the MOD. But insofar as it sets an obvious limit to our scope for negotiating a diplomatic solution from a position of strength, there is an FCO interest in keeping the realities before Ministers' minds. Past mistakes otherwise risk repetition.

P J Weston  
Defence Department

19 April, 1982