

LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 4 PM date: 6.5.82

The morning Lobby was repeated.

We gave the Lobby copies of the Press Notice covering the pay review body reports and Government intentions and also a Press Notice on the appointment of Mr David Orr as Chairman of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body.

On the Civil Service pay situation, we reminded the Lobby of the arrangements whereby the Government had a figure of 4% in mind and had agreed to go to arbitration, reserving the right to ask the House to set aside the award. In the event the Government had decided not to go to the House following the arbitration award. We noted that the Government was not at present prepared to make any more money available and the cash limit would stand. If later in the year some Departments got into difficulties, the Government would have to look at the situation.

Asked about the Top Salaries Review Body, we said this was still being discussed and an announcement would not be long in coming.

MEDIA

Questioned about the exchange during the Prime Minister's Questions on the media, we placed the Prime Minister's responses in the context of the Question which we thought referred to a particular incident in which a TV commentator used a phrase "if you accept the British version". The implication was that the same weight was being given to British and Argentine information. We said the Prime Minister was aware that people were concerned about this kind of treatment in that there had been letters and telephone calls to No 10 of which the Prime Minister would take note. We did not accept that the Prime Minister was talking about bias, but rather neutrality.

FALKLAND ISLANDS

We were not aware of any plans for Mr Pym to go to either New York or Lima.

On Mr Parkinson's attendance at meetings of the Group of Ministers, we emphasised that he was not there just as Chairman of the Party but he was a Cabinet Minister without portfolio and could make a contribution.

HC