

## LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 4.00 date: 24.5.82

This morning's lobby was repeated.

We said that the following day's Cabinet meeting would be primarily on the Falkland situation. The group of Ministers concerned with the Falklands had met that morning for about two hours. Asked about the Attorney General's attendance we pointed out that he had been present at the meetings regularly and could obviously advise on aspects of international law. A legal adviser from the FCO had attended in the past also.

Some members of the lobby attempted to identify a difference between our briefing of the previous day and Mr Nott's Statement. They suggested we had encouraged the idea of our forces moving swiftly to complete the job on the Falklands whereas Mr Nott appeared to be indicating a more measured pursuance of our objectives. We said there was no difference of emphasis. Our briefing and that of Mr Nott's was consistent with what the Chief of Defence Staff and Mr Parkinson had said over the weekend. The forces would move as fast as the situation indicated and that this was at the Commander's discretion bearing in mind the situation on the ground and the desire to recover and liberate the Falkland Islands with the minimum loss of life. We thought also that Mr Nott had been reacting to some headlines in that morning's papers which seemed to think it was "all over bar the shouting".

We knew of no substance to the story that President Reagan might not now visit the UK in view of the situation. To suggestions that this alleged cancellation reflected concern in Washington over relations with Latin America we acknowledged the concern but it was building too much on that to suggest the President might cancel his visit.

We denied that the PM's late arrival in the Chamber for Mr Nott's Statement was caused by either a telephone call from Washington or some late news on the military front.

On the World Cup we said that attitudes had not changed. The situation was being kept under review. There was a view which said that since we were in the right over the Falkland issue we should not penalise ourselves by not taking part. We acknowledged, however, concern about how our supporters might behave.

On sanctions we agreed that we were "a bit fed up" with the Irish. On the question of the Summit, though, we said that nothing had in any case been fixed. July had always been the earliest possible date, as envisaged informally during the European Council in March. We would not be rushing to set up the date. We drew attention to the PM's written answer on the subject of Anglo/Irish discussions.