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Se refiere a:

14JUN82 1000Z(1100GB) – Lobby briefing. Actividades y situación.

(Margaret Thatcher Foundation) (desclasificado 2013)

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PRIME MINISTER'S DAY

The Prime Minister is working at No 10 all day.

At 10.30 am she chaired a meeting of the Group of Ministers concerned with the Falklands (Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Home Secretary, Chancellor of the Duchy and the Attorney General and the CDS).

IN THE HOUSE

There are no statements planned.

ANSWERS OF INTEREST

No 94 Written 4.00 pm: Mr Albert McQuarrie to ask the Prime Minister whether she has any discussions with her Spanish counterpart on the question of Gibraltar during the NATO Alliance meeting on 10 June and if she will make a statement. (Answer will say that Gibraltar was not discussed and that the UK continues to look forward to the implementation of the measures set out in the Lisbon statement, on 25 June as planned - this answer will be reflected in the Foreign Secretary replies to other questions on the Order Paper from Mr McQuarrie on Spanish border arrangements.)

No 166 Written 4.00 pm: Mr Michael Shersby to ask the Prime Minister whether she will make a statement on the NATO conference in Bonn. (Answer will outline the agreements reached.)

NOTT TO WASHINGTON?

We knocked down the rumour that Mr Nott plus 80 officials were flying to Andrews Air Force Base today. There was no truth in this.

FAHD ENTHRONEMENT

The Duke of Edinburgh and Mr Pym would be flying to Saudi Arabia leaving London at lunchtime today to attend the enthronement of Prince Fahd. Inevitably this would also be a working occasion.

GOVERNOR

Asked about the return to the Falklands of the Governor, we referred the Lobby to Mr Pym's ITN interview last Friday when he said:

"We are indeed talking about the restoration of British administration, we have taken no decision about the Governor himself on his return. Clearly that is a possibility, but there are other possibilities too. I don't think necessarily we will go back to exactly what existed before. There are other possibilities which we are considering and you can't take a final decision about it until we know the exact circumstances in which the Islands are re-possessed."

We reminded the Lobby of one of the Prime Minister's interviews for American television in which she talked about self-government but with special arrangements for defence and foreign affairs.

POPULATION

Lord Shackleton was in the process of up-dating his report which included a section on population. We noted that one way of improving the economic viability of the Islands would be for there to be more

LOBBY BRIEFING

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farmers working smaller holdings but with increased production. The population peaked in 1931 at 2,392. We did not believe the possibility of transporting 200 or so people from St Helena to the Falklands was a starter; we were not in touch with the Falkland Islands Office about the 800 or so people who had contacted them about living on the Falklands.

MFO

No decisions could be taken until the Argentines had withdrawn. Everything was hypothetical at this stage; the Prime Minister had made clear that if necessary we would be prepared to defend the Islands. Many ideas were around but no decisions could be taken. Asked if we could confirm that FCO has produced 17 options for the future, we thought that number too high notwithstanding the FCO's ingenuity.

MOD

They might be saying something later in the day.

STATEMENT

There were no plans for a statement; there was nothing to add to the details which had come out over the weekend.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER AND MR NOTT

Asked about apparent differences between what Mr Nott had said in Parliament and the Prime Minister's interviews in Bonn, we said that there were no real differences; neither the Prime Minister nor Mr Nott knew exactly how many casualties there were and there was also the need to inform next of kin. The figures varied considerably before they were eventually confirmed. Mr Nott was also concerned to withhold the figures as they might be of advantage to the Argentines who had a wholly exaggerated impression of them. The Prime Minister accepted that argument.

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