

CONFIDENTIAL

MR. HATFIELD

The Prime Minister has seen Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 6 August (reference AO9232) about the Falkland Islands Economic Study 1982. She has agreed that the Report should be made available to the Secretaries of State for Energy and Scotland and the Minister of Agriculture on the same basis as to members of OD(FAF). She has also commented that the Civil Commissioner in Port Stanley will probably have to discuss the Report with the Military Commissioner.

On publication of the Report, the Prime Minister agrees that it would be best to aim for shortly after the Ministerial discussion of 6 September at which Ministers can consider the public line which the Government should take.

TIM FLESHER

9 August 1982

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Prime Minister:

agree i) to the additions
to the circulation list
ii) that publication
of the sanitised version can
be after the Ministerial meeting
on 6 September

Yes Mr

Ref. A09232

MR COLES

Falkland Islands Economic Study 1982

Thank you for your minute of 3 August. We have now arranged for the members of OD(FAF) to receive copies of the confidential version of Lord Shackleton's report, stressing the Prime Minister's wish that it should be circulated within Departments on a strict "need to know" basis and that its contents should be carefully protected.

JF
6/8

2. The report was considered at a meeting of ODO(SA)(FE) on 4 August with a view to preparing an interdepartmentally agreed commentary to help Ministers in their examination of the report at the next meeting of OD(FAF) on 6 September. Officials thought that it would be useful if copies of the confidential version of the report could also be made available to the Secretary of State for Energy, the Minister of Agriculture and the Secretary of State for Scotland, whose Departments have a direct interest in certain aspects of the report and will have a contribution to make to the preparation of the official commentary. I should be grateful for the Prime Minister's agreement to the report being made available to these three Ministers on the same basis as to the members of OD(FAF). It would also be sensible for them to be invited to the OD(FAF) meeting on 6 September.

3. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary will be making a copy of the report available to the Minister for Overseas Development, whose senior officials will be directly involved in assessing the report's recommendations; and I understand that the Prime Minister has already agreed (your telephone conversation with Mr Goodall of 4 August) that a copy may be sent to the Civil Commissioner at Port Stanley, on the strict understanding that it is for his personal information only and that he is not to reveal that he has received it or to discuss its contents with anyone else.

He will probably
have to discuss it
with the

Port Stanley Commissioner
MB



4. ODO(SA)(FE) also considered the question of publication of the unclassified version of the report which is expected to be ready by 13 August. Preliminary inquiry by the Secretary of the Shackleton Committee has established that it will take a minimum of two weeks and possibly three from the delivery of the text to HMSO before printing can be completed and copies can be put on sale to the public. An additional constraint on early publication is the need for copies to be available in the Falkland Islands: it was thought (I am sure rightly) that there would be public criticism both in the Falkland Islands and here if the report was published in London without being simultaneously available to the Falkland Islanders. Since Port Stanley airfield will be closed for reconstruction work for three weeks from about 7 August, there is no way in which copies of the unclassified report can be got to the Falklands before the first week in September. This being so, ODO(SA)(FE) took the view that it would probably be best to defer publication until after the Ministerial discussion on 6 September. Pressure for publication during August is in any case likely to be limited; and it may be easier to protect the sensitive parts of the report from Press interest over the next four weeks if publication is deferred until the end of that period.

5. q If this is agreeable to the Prime Minister, it will mean that Ministers can consider the public line which the Government should take on the report at their meeting on 6 September and that publication can take place shortly thereafter.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of the letters 'R' and 'A' in a stylized, cursive font.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

6 August 1982