

**SUBJECT**



JD  
C. Master

AM

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

18 January, 1982.

The Prime Minister invited the Ambassador of Algeria to call this afternoon. Mr. Denis Thatcher and I were present. Mr. Young provided interpretation.

The conversation was mostly of a general nature and related entirely to the operation mounted last week by the Algerian Government to find Mr. Mark Thatcher in the desert. The Prime Minister told the Ambassador that she had particularly wanted to express to him her thanks and those of her husband for everything which the Government of Algeria had done. She told the Ambassador that she had of course already written to the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Algeria. But she and her husband had been so impressed by the speed and effectiveness of the efforts made by the Algerian Authorities that she had wished to leave the Ambassador in no doubt of her gratitude.

The Ambassador said that his Government was extremely satisfied at the outcome. The Algerian Authorities had regarded the operation as a matter of duty; it was the tradition of Algeria that such assistance should be given in circumstances of this kind. The Ambassador also said that his Embassy had been deluged by telephone calls from journalists. He had the impression that they were mounting an "insidious" campaign against the Prime Minister. He wished to make it clear that the Government of Algeria did not wish to be associated with this in any way.

It was not clear precisely what the Ambassador was referring to, but I suppose that some journalists may have attempted to obtain sensational details about the episode, and might have tried to elicit information about the cost.

AJC

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