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From the Private Secretary

26 October 1982

Possible Visit to the Falkland Islands by the Prime Minister

You will have seen John Holmes' letter of 22 October about the possibility of the Prime Minister visiting the Falkland Islands for the 150th anniversary celebrations.

I think that the Prime Minister will wish to make a decision about this visit in the next week or two. But it would be helpful if further advice could be provided.

In particular, I am sure that Mrs. Thatcher would welcome the views of your Secretary of State in the light of his own visit to the Islands. Does Mr Nott consider that a visit by the Prime Minister in February is desirable? Furthermore, does he wish to offer views on the question of transport, which is to some extent dealt with in John Holmes' letter?

At an earlier stage, reference was made to the Ministry of Defence mounting a reinforcement exercise at the time of the anniversary celebrations. Is this still planned, what would it involve and does it have any implications for a possible visit by the Prime Minister?

Finally, we should give thought to the question of possible Argentine attitudes to a visit by the Prime Minister. It would be helpful if Richard Hatfield, to whom I am copying this letter, could arrange for a JIC assessment of any threat which might arise from that quarter during a visit by the Prime Minister.

It would be most helpful if advice on these various points could reach me by 5 November so that the Prime Minister can consider the matter over the weekend of 6/7 November.

I am copying this letter to John Holmes, in addition to Richard Hatfield.

to be received  
on 5/11/82  
via JIC  
do NOT chase

A. J. COLES

Richard Mottram Esq  
Ministry of Defence.

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