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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

I think we have made
our point.

5 May 1983

A.S.C. 5/5.

Dear John,

Grenada

In your letter of 27 April you said that the Prime Minister wished us to ask why the Commonwealth Secretary-General had considered it necessary to circulate a message from the People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada, seeking assistance in the prevention of aggression by the United States.

We are not of course in any way responsible for the actions of the Commonwealth Secretary General, but we have pursued this with the Secretariat (Mr Ramphal is at present away sick). Hugh Craft, a senior Australian member of his staff, has told us that, normally speaking, Mr Ramphal would feel bound to circulate in this way a message of substance addressed to him by a member Government. He recalled that the Government of Lesotho had used this channel recently to express their concern about aggression from South Africa; and that Mr Ramphal had himself used it on our behalf during the Falklands conflict (and, according to Craft, had been privately criticised by some member Governments for doing so). We pointed out that the Grenadan message was different in a number of ways; most important, it accused the United States Government of aggressive intent without producing a shred of evidence. Craft took note, and undertook to report the conversation to Mr Ramphal.

We have therefore registered the point with the Commonwealth Secretariat. Given that Mr Ramphal was so helpful to us over the Falklands, Mr Pym does not think that it would be helpful to pursue it further with him. He is also doubtful of the wisdom of circulating a reply to the Government of Grenada's message. Mr Onslow has told the Grenadan High Commissioner that we regard his Government's allegations as fanciful. To do more would, in Mr Pym's view, risk investing the message with more importance than it deserves. It would also go one step further in involving the Secretary-General in an exchange of controversial messages between Heads of Government.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

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