

To note.

MS 14/4.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 April 1982

h.a.  
MS 14/4.

Dear John,

MS

Gibraltar: Effect of the Falklands Crisis

The Falklands crisis has had consequences for our policy on Gibraltar. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would like to bring colleagues up to date on what has happened and on some of the implications for the future.

On 6 April the Spanish Foreign Minister proposed a postponement of the two events due to take place simultaneously on 20 April: the restoration of communications between Gibraltar and Spain, and the opening of negotiations between the two Foreign Ministers' aimed at overcoming all the differences between them on Gibraltar'. This phrase is quoted from the Lisbon agreement of 10 April 1980, of which the two events would (at last) constitute the implementation.

Perez-Llorca no doubt fears that, in present circumstances, it would be very difficult to imagine a meeting of minds and to present the meeting to Spanish public opinion as a major step forward in dealing with the Gibraltar problem; he is clearly right about this. If he does not want to proceed, we cannot force him to do so. In any case, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary could not easily have set aside two days as planned to talk to the Spaniards on 20/21 April. Mr Pym has therefore agreed to the Spanish suggestion of a postponement, although with regret for the disappointment this will cause in Gibraltar and with no great confidence that the Spaniards will be readier for talks on 25 June, the new date now agreed. He had agreed that officially the decision will be presented as a joint one.

We are watching the Spanish mood very carefully. Spain of course supports the Argentine claim to the Falkland Islands, and the Spanish press, while almost unanimously opposing the use of force in the case of Gibraltar, were jubilant at the Argentine invasion. There is however no sign of weakening of the intention of the Spanish Government to join NATO this year and the European Community later. The Spanish Foreign Minister has expressly confirmed that implementation of the Lisbon agreement remains his government's objective. But factors clearly exist, or could develop, which might affect Spanish policy, eg the course of events in the South Atlantic and in the accompanying diplomatic moves; the role which Gibraltar is necessarily playing in support of the British task force; the result of the trials of the right wing conspirators now in progress in Madrid; and regional elections in Andalucia on 20 May. All in all, the march of events looks more likely to damage than to improve the prospects for the progress which we had hoped for on the Gibraltar problem.

/One





One aspect of this is the way in which Gibraltar is used in support of the Falklands operation. We must, of course make full use of our facilities there, as necessary. This cannot be done without the fact becoming known. But if we are to get the Spaniards to stick to the agreement to open the frontier in June, it is in our interests not to inflame Spanish attitudes. From this point of view, therefore, we should avoid seeking - and, indeed, do what we can to avoid - publicity about Gibraltar's role in support of the task force.

Events in the Falklands, and the reaction to them in Spain, require a re-examination of whether there is an increased threat to the colony from Spain. This is being undertaken by the JIC. I understand that the Ministry of Defence are also expecting proposals on precautionary measures to reach them very soon from the Governor. If reinforcements are considered necessary it will be important, for the same reason of trying to get the Spaniards to stick to the revised date for opening the frontier, to ensure that the operation is carried out as inconspicuously as possible.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to Ministers in OD.

*Yours ever,*

(F N Richards)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing St



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JIC(82)(N) 31

COPY NO 2

8 April 1982

UK EYES A

CABINET  
JOINT INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE

THE SPANISH MILITARY THREAT TO GIBRALTAR

The attached Note was approved out of Committee on Thursday 8 April 1982.

*understand  
that our military  
capabilities on Gibraltar is being  
reviewed - urgently. We must take  
precautions, especially in view of  
para 5. Day!  
have an appreciation  
of our position quickly  
out.*

Signed A H R YORK

For Secretary  
Joint Intelligence Committee

Cabinet Office

8 April 1982

DISTRIBUTION

JIC (Note)

Telegraphed to - LIC Gibraltar, Governor Gibraltar, Madrid.

Sent by bag to - JIC Rep Washington, JIC Rep Canberra, BHC Ottawa, BHC Wellington, UK Del Nato, UK Mil Rep Brussels, UK Perm Rep EEC, UK Miss to UN New York, UK Miss UN Geneva, BEs Bonn, Lisbon, Paris, Rabat, Rome.

*Mr Cates*  
*010*  
*Gibraltar.*



CABINET OFFICE

With the compliments of

*A.S.C.* <sup>13.</sup>/<sub>4</sub>

*Mr Wade-Gery*

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
Telephone 01 233



SECRET



CABINET OFFICE  
70 WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2AS

01-XXXXXXXX 233 8378

8th April 1982

Ref: B06463

Dear David,

Gibraltar

During the course of yesterday morning's meeting of the Defence and Oversea Policy Committee's Sub-Committee on the South Atlantic and the Falkland Islands (OD(SA)(82) 1st Meeting) the Prime Minister asked whether all necessary precautions had been taken against a possible military attempt on Gibraltar. Your Secretary of State and the Chief of the Defence Staff replied in the affirmative, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary concurred. It was noted that the Governor was now back at his post.

2. The Prime Minister gave instructions that this point should be recorded. Since the subject matter lies outside the immediate purview of OD(SA) it did not seem appropriate to include it in the regular minutes. Hence this letter.

3. I am copying this letter for information to John Coles at No 10, John Holmes in the FCO (whose letter of 5th April to John Coles touched on the same subject) and David Wright.

*John Coles*

*R Wade-Gery*

R L WADE-GERY

D B Omand Esq.  
Ministry of Defence



16 April, 1982

GIBRALTAR: EFFECT OF THE FALKLANDS  
CRISIS

The Prime Minister has taken note of  
your letter of 8 April.

A. J. COLES

Francis Richards, Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Gibraltar



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RM

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

THE SPANISH MILITARY THREAT TO  
GIBRALTAR

B/HF  
The Prime Minister read with interest JIC(82)(N)31 on the Spanish Military Threat to Gibraltar. She has commented that she understands that our military capability to defend Gibraltar is being urgently reviewed. Mrs Thatcher considers that we must take precautions, especially in view of paragraph 5 of the assessment. She would be grateful if an appreciation of our own capability to defend Gibraltar against the Spanish Military Threat could be made available to her very quickly.

I am copying this minute to David Omand (Ministry of Defence) and Brian Fall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

A. J. COLES

14 April, 1982

SECRET





(2)

Prime Minister

I have acknowledged.

April 7, 1982

AM 14/4

h-a.

AM 15/4

Dear Clive,

The Spanish Ambassador button-holed me in the House of Commons to-day. He told me that he was very anxious that the Prime Minister shd. know herself that Spain's recent offer (as put to the British Ambassador in Madrid) to delay the beginning of the negotiations on Gibraltar from April 22 until June or even September denied entirely from a desire to be helpful, & to be able to talk in a serene atmosphere. He said that he was afraid the Andalusian regional elections, on May 23, might raise the issue.

I told him I wd. pass this message on in the way that I thought best. I am therefore sending you this letter & sending a copy to Anthony Acland.

Yours sincerely  
Hugh Thomas



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