



Italy.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

? 11 12 December 1980

→ BF 12.12.80

Dear Paul,

ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

Thank you for your letter of 8 December 1980 recording the outcome of Mr. Hurd's meeting with Mr. Simon Young about relief for the Italian earthquake.

I have now been able to consult the Prime Minister, and she would like to pursue the possibility of the Royal Engineers giving assistance in the disaster area. I have asked David Omand for advice and I hope that we shall receive this before the weekend.

The Prime Minister also thought it would be a good idea to see whether the Lord Mayor would be ready to launch an appeal. I accordingly spoke to the Lord Mayor's Private Secretary yesterday but he told me that although the Lord Mayor had been considering at one stage whether to sponsor an appeal, he had in the last day or so come to the conclusion that there were already a large number of organisations trying to raise money for earthquake relief purposes and that there was no need for him to become involved directly. I gather that there was some consultation between the City Remembrancer and the FCO before the Lord Mayor reached his decision. As you may already know, the Corporation has sent £10,000 to the Italian Ambassador as a contribution to the cost of relief work.

The Prime Minister was glad to learn that you are pursuing urgently with the Red Cross the suggestion that the voluntary agencies should set up arrangements to coordinate their various activities.

I am sending copies of this letter to Brian Norbury (Ministry of Defence) and John Wiggins (HM Treasury).

Yours sincerely,

Alan Whittam.

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

PRIME MINISTER

ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

You saw John Hoskyns' minute of 4 December 1980 about the approach he had had from Simon Young about Italian earthquake relief, and you asked that the FCO should see whether there was anything else which this country could do to help, particularly since Mr. Young had reported that there was a feeling abroad in Italy that Britain didn't care.

The attached letter from the FCO reports the outcome of a meeting which Mr. Hurd had yesterday with Mr. Young. As you will see, the question of assistance from the Royal Engineers came up again, and the view now is that such help would be valuable in the reconstruction phase. The FCO, however, do not have the money or the expertise to set up a programme of assistance by the Royal Engineers and have suggested that if you wish to take the idea any further, we should pursue it directly with the Ministry of Defence. I have assumed that that is what you would want us to do and I have asked the MOD to let us have their advice urgently. I fear that their response will be the one which is usual in cases like this: they can, with some detriment to existing military tasks, provide assistance, including the heavy engineering equipment which the sappers will need if they are to be effective, but they do not regard the cost of such help as a proper charge to the defence budget, especially following the recent defence expenditure cuts, and they will expect someone else - ie the FCO or the Treasury - to foot the bill. The FCO have already said that they have not got the money; and the Treasury will be bound to resist the idea that the contingency reserve should find the cash. We will therefore be in the middle of an argument about who pays. I think that this is something which we shall need to resolve quickly and probably at Ministerial level if, as I am sure we should, we are to be seen to be giving the Italians the same kind of help as the French and German Armies are already providing.

/The FCO letter

The FCO letter also touches on the question of an appeal for funds by the Lord Mayor. This is in fact an idea which we here originally asked the FCO to consider, following an approach to us from the Lord Mayor's office. They had had a number of enquiries from the City and members of the public to see whether the Lord Mayor proposed to launch an appeal. They turned to us for guidance partly in case the Government had it in mind to launch a national appeal itself and partly because they did not want to move themselves without the Government's blessing. The general view is that this is not something which requires a Government inspired national appeal, but the FCO believe that it would be useful if the Lord Mayor were to sponsor an appeal, the main purpose of which would be to raise funds to buy British made prefabricated housing for use in longer term reconstruction work. Do you agree that I should pursue the question of an appeal for funds by the Lord Mayor with his office? *Yes MB*

The FCO are also pursuing directly with the Red Cross the suggestion that the voluntary agencies should establish arrangements to coordinate their activities.

SAW.

9 December 1980



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 December 1980

Dear Michael,

Italian Earthquake Relief

Mr Simon Young, who is taking an active interest in relief for the Italian earthquake, and about whom John Hoskyns sent a minute to the Prime Minister on 4 December, called on Mr Hurd this morning. I attach a record of the discussion.

You will see that there was some discussion of the possibility of Royal Engineers' assistance. I attach a copy of Rome telegram No. 663 which makes a case for such assistance. The Italians did not originally ask us for military or military-related aid of this kind (they did apparently ask neighbouring countries, including the French and the Germans). They have still put no request to us for military assistance but we assume that they would now welcome it if we were to offer. Our Embassy in Rome consider that such assistance would be particularly valuable in the re-construction phase. However, the FCO have neither the funds nor the expertise to plan and launch such an initiative and, if the Prime Minister wishes it to be pursued, you may wish to take the matter up directly with the Ministry of Defence. We shall of course remain ready to offer advice and to coordinate the overall UK official contribution through our Embassy in Rome.

Mr Hurd also discussed with Mr Young the question of an appeal by the Lord Mayor. Mr Hurd sees attractions in this idea, and if you agree, you may wish to approach the Lord Mayor's Office directly. Funds raised in this way would in our view best be used to buy British-made pre-fabricated housing units for reconstruction in the longer term.

/We



We are pursuing urgently with the Red Cross the suggestion that the voluntary agencies should set up their own Disaster Coordinating Committee to pull together the activities of the various organisations who wish to provide relief for the Italian disaster. Mr Young would be willing to help with this, and indeed with the Lord Mayor's appeal if the Lord Mayor would find this useful. He has plenty of ideas, contacts and energy.

I am sending copies of this letter to B Norbury (Ministry of Defence) and J Wiggins (Treasury).

Yours wsw
Paul

(P Lever)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing St



ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF: CALL BY MR SIMON YOUNG ON
MR HURD

1. Mr Simon Young, an ex-Director of John Murrays, called on Mr Hurd on the morning of 8 December, following an approach he had made to No 10 on 4 December. Mr Vereker (Western European Department) was also present.
2. Mr Young, who has been working on his own initiative for relief of the Italian earthquake, left a memorandum with Mr Hurd. He said that his interest in the problem had first been aroused as a result of a BBC broadcast he had heard saying that the Italians urgently needed caravans. He had got in touch with a holiday camp proprietor he knew, but had subsequently discovered that it was semi-permanent units rather than caravans which the Italians needed. He had then been in touch with the Italian Embassy, the Red Cross and other voluntary agencies, Mr John Campbell (HM Consul-General at Naples) and a number of possible sources of aid in the city and in banking. He had set up a number of professional study groups on prefabs, which would be reporting imminently. He had also been in touch with Princess Granita Bel Monte who lived in Salerno and had offered him help. He thought that the prefabs might be put into one or two small villages, building on the work already done by HCG in Solofra. But since these villages were up in the mountains, it would need special teams to get the prefabs up there, and he had therefore made some enquiries of contacts in the Royal Engineers. The response had been that they could do the job if the money was available.
3. Mr Hurd expressed appreciation of the amount of ground work Mr Young had done in such a short time. As always in these situations, the problem was one of coordination. It was not a function of the Government to coordinate the work of the voluntary agencies. The Government's own aid had been provided through the disaster relief organisation of the ODA. The Red Cross had been coordinating on an ad hoc basis, but a Disasters Emergency Committee had not been set up in this

/case;



case; it was not clear why. The Ambassador at Rome and the Consul-General at Naples were however in close touch with the Italian relief coordinator and with their needs. (Mr Hurd read Mr Young out part of Rome telegram no. 656). It would be useful if the voluntary agencies would now set up a Disasters Emergency Committee. The Red Cross could take the lead in promoting this and it could include the representatives of other organisations such as the Round Table and indeed Mr Simon Young himself.

4. Mr Young asked about the idea of an appeal by the Lord Mayor. He suggested that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York might also be brought in to such an appeal. Mr Hurd thought that it would be useful if the Lord Mayor was encouraged to make such an appeal quickly: it would tap greater sources of funds than the voluntary organisations could reach. Mr Vereker said that the Red Cross, Save the Children and Help the Aged were among those which had issued appeals for cash so far.

5. On the Royal Engineers, Mr Hurd said that at an earlier stage the Italians had not asked us for this kind of help (although they had asked others) but they now thought that a need might exist, and a joint Anglo-Italian view of this possibility was expected shortly. If it was favourable, a proposal might be put to the Prime Minister.

6. Mr Young explained his idea about the sending of a fact-finding mission to Italy. He said he thought this would be important 'to ensure British control of the administration of the aid at all stages'. Mr Hurd expressed reservations about this idea. It would be important not to appear to be trespassing on the responsibilities of the Italian relief coordinator or of the local Italian authorities. We would put the idea to Rome and let Mr Young know the response.



7. Summarising the discussion, Mr Hurd said that we would:

- (a) encourage the setting up by the voluntary organisations of a Coordinating Committee;
- (b) suggest to No 10 that an appeal for funds by the Lord Mayor be encouraged;
- (c) if appropriate, consider the possibility of Royal Engineers' assistance;
- (d) consult the Embassy in Rome about Mr Young's fact-finding mission proposal.

8 December 1980

Distribution:

Private Secretary
PS/Mr Hurd
PS/Mr Blaker
PS/LPS
PS/PUS
Chief Clerk
Mr Bullard
Mr Fergusson
Mr Adams
Mr P Moberly
WED
Defence Dept
ECD(I)
ERD
News Dept
Mr J Hards, Disaster Unit, ODA
Colonel P Harwood, DS6, MOD

DWF F 025/05

LIC NR 555/05

OO FCO (DESKBY 051830Z)

DOB 051830Z

GR 440

RESTRICTED

DESKBY 051830Z

FM ROME 051730Z DEC 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 663 OF 5 DECEMBER 1980

TELECON VEREKER/TOMKYS: EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

1. IT IS HARD TO STRIKE AN EXACT BALANCE BETWEEN RELIEF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MAJOR DONORS. IN PARTICULAR, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT BRITISH PRIVATE DONORS WILL EVENTUALLY PROVE TO HAVE DONE ESPECIALLY WELL.

(No reply for Wes)

2. ON OFFICIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, THE GREAT MERIT OF OUR AID WAS THAT THE TENTS, BLANKETS AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES WERE FLOWN OUT PROMPTLY AND REACHED THEIR DESTINATION. THIS IS KNOWN HERE AND APPRECIATED.

3. IN CASH VALUE TERMS SOME OTHER OFFICIAL CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE BEEN GREATER. ACCORDING TO THE ITALIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS THE US GOVERNMENT HAVE PROVIDED DOLLARS 50 MILLION IN ADDITION TO A FIELD HOSPITAL, AIR TRANSPORT, HELICOPTERS, 2000 TENTS AND 2000 BLANKETS. THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT HAVE PROVIDED A FIELD HOSPITAL, 11,000 BLANKETS AND 2,000 TENTS. FRANCE HAS SENT ROUGHLY COMPARABLE QUANTITY OF TENTS AND BLANKETS AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES.

4. THE SECTOR IN WHICH OUR EFFORT LOOKS INADEQUATE IS IN MILITARY TRANSPORT AND SUPPORT. THE US HAVE PROVIDED, IN ADDITION TO 6 HELICOPTERS AND 30 FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT, THE SERVICES OF NEARLY

ADVANCE COPY

PS (6)
P S LPS (3)

Mr Bullard
Mr Injensen

~~Had Wes~~

Had EC (1)

Ho to DR.

RC)

TRANSPORT AND SUPPORT. THE US HAVE PROVIDED, IN ADDITION TO 6 HELICOPTERS AND 30 FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT, THE SERVICES OF NEARLY 2000 MILITARY PERSONNEL. THE FRG HAVDE SENT AN ENGINEER BATTALION OF 1200 MEN WITH HEAVY ENGINEERING BULLDOZER AND EARTH MOVING EQUIPMENT AND A MEDICAL TEAM. FRANCE HAS SENT AN ENGINEER BATTALION WITH HEAVY EQUIPMENT AND A SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM, PLUS DOGS AND A MEDICAL TEAM. A BATTALION OF SWISS ENGINEERS IS DUE AND THERE ARE OTHER TEAMS FROM AUSTRIA AND YUGOSLAVIA.

5. THE ITALIANS WERE NOT READY TO ACCEPT ALL THESE TEAMS AT ONCE (COMPARE OUR OFFER OF FIREMEN) BUT THEY ARE NOW HEAVILY ENGAGED (AND GETTING MUCH FAVOURABLE PUBLICITY). THE ONLY BRITISH FORCES WHO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO WORK IN THE AREA ARE THE VOLUNTEERS FROM THE NATO ESTABLISHMENTS IN NAPLES. DURING THE PHASE OF RECONSTRUCTION, PARTICULARLY WITH PREFABRICATED BUILDINGS AND THE NEED TO PREPARE SITES, A ROYAL ENGINEER UNIT WOULD BE INVALUABLE AND COULD BE ENGAGED IN ESTABLISHING SETTLEMENTS HOUSED IN BRITISH (PRIVATELY) FUNDED UNITS. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT BRITISH PRIVATE CHARITIES WILL MAKE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION ON THESE LINES AND I SUBMIT THAT IF AT ALL POSSIBLE THE ROYAL ENGINEERS SHOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP SEE THAT BRITISH BUILT HOMES ARE PROPERLY ERECTED WITH ADEQUATE SITE PREPARATION.

6. MY DEFENCE ATTACHE WILL VISIT SOLOFRA AND SERINO NEXT WEEK, WHEN I WILL REPORT AGAIN.

ARCULUS

NNNN

VTA

MR. WHITMORE *ms
5x*

c.c. Mr. Alexander
Mr. Hoskyns

Italian Earthquake Disaster

I have been in touch with the Foreign Office, following your conversation with the Lord Mayor's Office about a possible Lord Mayor's appeal. I have also taken account of Mr. Hoskyns' minute to the Prime Minister of 4 December.

The Foreign Office believe that there is a useful role for a Lord Mayor's appeal. The short term immediate relief needs are now more or less met. Italy is looking for two forms of longer term assistance: cash support for the reconstruction programme, and assistance with prefabricated accommodation for the medium term. If the Lord Mayor were to launch an appeal to raise cash with which prefabricated homes can be provided, this could well fill a gap in present arrangements. Before the Lord Mayor takes this any further, his office should consult three British charities which have already appealed for cash, to make sure that a Lord Mayor's appeal would be complementary and not competitive. These are "Help the Aged", the Save the Children Fund, and the Red Cross. The Lord Mayor's office should also talk to the Italian Embassy about their intentions. The contact is Mr. La Tella. There is no other single coordinating point in this country for assistance. The Foreign Office would of course be willing to provide more detailed advice to the Lord Mayor's Office if they do take this forward.

On the points raised by Mr. Hoskyns, the Foreign Office have themselves been in touch with Mr. Simon Young, and I understand that he will have a meeting with Mr. Hurd on Monday morning. Mr. Hoskyns can therefore be confident that the Foreign Office will have the full benefit of Mr. Young's knowledge of the situation.

The Prime Minister was particularly concerned about the report that the community in the earthquake area had the impression that the UK did not care. In performance terms, it is probably true that the efforts by France, Germany and the USA

/ are

are more visible. We put in £215,000 worth of immediate assistance. The other countries came in a little later with para-military help, which is therefore high profile. We have discussed with the Italians possible assistance from the Royal Engineers, or firemen, but the Italians already have 10,000 troops and firemen in the area, and do not need more. Some of the other countries have provided larger amounts in immediate assistance. We are obviously not in a competitive game, but the suggestions made above for a Lord Mayor's appeal might help to demonstrate British concern.

The Foreign Office have been unable to identify the meeting to which Mr. Hoskyns refers in his minute. But this will presumably be clarified when Mr. Young sees Mr. Hurd.

On a matter like this, I wonder if it might be helpful if Mr. Hoskyns were to discuss it with the relevant Private Secretary - Mr. Alexander in this case - before circulating a minute to other Cabinet Ministers. I understand that the Foreign Office were a little taken aback by the form in which this came to them, although it has obviously been helpful for them to be put in touch with Mr. Young.

MJA

5 December, 1980.

PRIME MINISTER

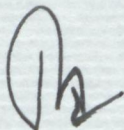
ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

*Michael - 'X' is very
disheartening. Would the T.O. say
there is anything else we can do. MS.*

1. I was telephoned this evening by a friend, Simon Young, who has recently retired from a Directorship of John Murray, the publishers. Since last Saturday, he has been working on his own initiative finding sources of voluntary aid for Italian earthquake relief.
2. He has found that there are many small individual initiatives, together with a lot of latent voluntary assistance, but no-one pulling all the bits and pieces together. He has been talking to Maybray-King at Help the Aged; the British Red Cross, putting them in touch with the Red Cross at Salerno; the Rotarians; BBC; Barclays Bank International (with a lot of Italian business); the Italian Embassy. Actual assistance includes free vaccination of drivers taking relief supplies, through to provision of caravans by Rotarians etc. The City is ready to help with financial "float" etc, but is still waiting for the call.
3. Simon Young understands that the real situation in the disaster area is worse than the Italian Government has revealed. The Italian Embassy here gets its information from Italian newspapers rather than from its own Government. There is a feeling that Britain doesn't care - "Despite the fact that the Queen and the Prime Minister have both recently been in the country". The Italian Government is trying to persuade survivors to move to hotels. But they insist on staying put. The men fear that if they leave they will be unable to reclaim their land (they are farmers), bulldozers will move in and they will lose all possessions, be unable to recover bodies of relatives etc. They can't send women and children to hotels because the women are completely unemancipated in Southern Italy and would not move without their husbands. Caravans, portable cabins and containers which themselves can be used as temporary buildings seem to be the most urgent need.
4. Simon Young feels that some formal co-ordination is needed and that the first step is that the Government should send a fact-finding mission as soon as possible, as a preliminary to co-ordinated

voluntary effort and provision of float funds from the financial community, whether UK or international. Should such a preliminary step be proposed or announced at the biannual meeting of Ministers at Brussels? What sort of collaboration is possible - or already planned - between FCO and MOD?

5. I do not know how Simon Young's account (he has been working non-stop on information-gathering for the past week) relates to any Government action now in hand, because this is right outside my territory. Simon Young is contactable tomorrow in London. I understand that he knows Douglas Hurd.
6. I am copying this minute to the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence and Sir Robert Armstrong.



JOHN HOSKYNS