

CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minutes

(2)

To note.

A.S.C. 5.
T



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 January 1983

Dear John,

You may find helpful a summary of recent exchanges in New York resulting from the General Assembly's adoption in November of the Latin American-sponsored Resolution (No 37/9) on the Falkland Islands.

On 16 December, the Secretary-General, as he is required to do, wrote to the United Kingdom and Argentine delegations formally transmitting the text of Resolution 37/9. Sr Perez de Cuellar's letter took up operative Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Resolution by confirming his readiness to extend to the two Governments 'whatever assistance they may require in the search for a peaceful solution' to the Falklands question.

Sir John Thomson recommended that, although we were not obliged to reply, we should do so. The Argentines were sure to, and he saw merit in taking the opportunity to re-state our position on the Resolution: he advised that delay, too, might be interpreted as indicating an imminent change in our policy. The Argentines duly replied on 23 December, accepting 'with pleasure' the Secretary-General's renewed mission of good offices. Their letter also included a reference to previous exchanges about a cessation of hostilities.

Mr Pym has approved the terms of a reply, which our Mission are delivering. It acknowledges the Secretary-General's letter and goes on to recall that we voted against Resolution 37/9 and that we remain opposed to it for the reasons given by Sir J Thomson during the debate in the General Assembly. Finally, the letter observes that there is no sign that the Argentine Government is willing to declare a definitive end to hostilities and expresses disappointment that they are not prepared to renounce the use of force. We have also asked Sir J Thomson to take an opportunity to remind the Secretary-General's office orally that we do not accept that the mandate which he received under Security Council Resolution 505 is still valid, since that resolution was addressed to a situation that no longer exists (the Secretary-General in his letter refers to the interim report he made in May in response to that Resolution).

/The Argentines

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL



The Argentines wrote again to the Secretary-General on 30 December, asking that their reply to his letter of 16 December be circulated as a document of the UN General Assembly. They also seem to have made the text available to the press. This is inconsistent with the normal practice that dealings with the Secretary-General about his good offices should be in confidence. The Secretary-General's staff have indicated that there is no intention to publish Perez de Cuellar's letter. Our present thinking is that we should not take the initiative to ask him to circulate our reply; we are considering how best to deal with enquiries that may be prompted by the Argentines' circulation of theirs.

The Secretary-General has also received from the Argentine delegation a letter dated 3 January which re-states the Argentine claim to the Falkland Islands, complains about the protection zone, lists the various General Assembly Resolutions, states the need for negotiations to end the 'anachronistic colonial situation' and expresses the hope that the British Government will co-operate with the Secretary-General's mission of good offices. We are now considering whether we should reply to this letter in due course, if only to re-state our rejection of the Argentine claim to sovereignty, and are awaiting considered advice from Sir J Thomson.

Yours ever
J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

HL

Arg

6 January 1983

Thank you for your letter of 5 January about the recent exchanges in New York arising from the General Assembly's adoption in November of a Resolution on the Falkland Islands. The Prime Minister has noted the content of your letter.

JOHN COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

So