



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL

7 January 1983

Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter of 6 January. Of course, I should gladly discuss with you, on a Privy Counsellor basis, the arrangements for publishing and debating the Franks Report. It may be helpful if I set out my present ideas which we can then discuss if, after considering them, you wish to do so.

The advice I have received indicates that some amendments to the report are unavoidable, on grounds of national security, before publication. My intention is that such amendments should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary; and that they should not detract in any way from the sense and substance of the report. Lord Franks is, of course, being consulted, in accordance with the undertaking in my statement on 6 July.

When the text is ready for publication, it will be printed with the aim of publishing it early in the week of Parliament's return and debating it in the following week on a date which, I suggest, should be discussed through the usual channels. Since the debate will follow so soon after publication, I envisage that substantive comment will be deferred until the debate, when Members of Parliament will have had time to study the report.

I quite understand that you, as Leader of the Opposition, should want the opportunity to study the report before publication.

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I hope to be able to make it available on Privy Counsellor terms to you and to the former Prime Ministers whose periods of Administration are covered by the review, rather more than twenty-four hours before publication. If you wished during that period or subsequently to have an explanation of the way in which the published version differs from the original and of the reasons for the amendments, I should be glad to arrange that.

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Yours sincerely

Ray and Sheldrake

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG BA

I attach a copy of a letter from Mr Foot and a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, which incorporates suggestions made by the Prime Minister.

Are you content with it ?

F.R.B.

AS amended.

7 January 1983

RWA 7;



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

From:
Michael Foot MP

6 January 1983

Dear Prime Minister

The Falklands Report

I note that you have now received the Report of this Enquiry.

As the Enquiry was set up following discussions on Privy Councillor terms, I would welcome a discussion with you on the same basis about how it ought to be presented to the House and debated.

I should also welcome a copy of the Report, again on Privy Councillor terms, well in advance of publication so that I could study it carefully before it is published. I think the case for this is re-enforced by the fact that it covers a period of at least two Labour administrations, and I believe I ought to have an opportunity to study it and to make any enquiries that are necessary well before publication.

Michael Foot

MICHAEL FOOT

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, M.P.

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

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The advice I have received indicates that some amendments to the report are unavoidable on grounds of national security before publication. My intention is that such amendments should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary; ~~to protect intelligence sources and the lives and liberties of agents;~~ and that they should not detract in any material way from the sense and substance of the report. Lord Franks is, of course, being consulted, ^{in time in}

accordance with the undertaking

~~When the text is ready for publication, it will be printed with the aim of publishing it early in the week of Parliament's return and debating it in the following week on a date which, I suggest, should be discussed through the usual channels. Since the debate will follow so soon, I envisage ^{after} that publication will be a largely formal event and that substantive comment will be deferred until the debate, when ^{Members of} Parliament will have had a chance ^{time} to study the report.~~ ^{I envisage} Nevertheless I quite understand that you, as Leader of the Opposition, should want the opportunity to study the report before publication, and I hope to be able to make it available on Privy Council^{se}llor terms to you and to the former Prime Ministers whose periods of Administration are covered by the review rather more than twenty-four hours before publication.

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If you wished during that period or subsequently to have an explanation of the way in which the published version differs from the original and of the reasons for the amendments, I should be glad to arrange that.

The Right Honourable Michael Foot MP

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HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Michael Foot

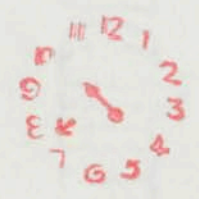
MICHAEL FOOT

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, M.P.



LONDON W1C 0PH
UNITED KINGDOM

7 JAN 1983



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

I attach for your information, and that of the other recipients of this minute, copies of an exchange of letters between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition about the handling of the Franks Report.

I am copying this minute and the enclosures to John Halliday (Home Office), Brian Fall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office).

F.E.R.B.

7 January 1983

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