



Prime Minister.

Agree that

- ① no-one at No. 10 should see these Argentines Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH
- ② they should be received in a routine way at the F.C.O.? 7 November, 1983

Dear John,

A.S.C. 2/4

Private Visitors from Argentina

You may have heard from Sir Anthony Parsons of an approach he has received from Dr Arnaldo Musich, an Argentine businessman who is also active politically. Sir A Parsons has indicated to Dr Musich's intermediaries in the City that a meeting with him would be inappropriate. The Foreign Secretary agrees with Sir A Parsons' response.

You should also know that another Argentine visitor of similar background, Dr Helbling, has asked through a separate City intermediary for a wide range of appointments, including Ministers here and, at No 10 Downing Street, Professor Alan Walters as well as Sir Anthony Parsons.

Sir Geoffrey does not think that any Minister should see Dr Helbling. He also considers that Helbling's request to see advisers to the Prime Minister should be turned down, on the lines of Sir A Parsons' reply to Dr Musich. Meetings at this level with the Argentine visitors, however private their status and however innocuous the content, could if word of them leaked generate speculation about a 'political dialogue'. Sir Geoffrey believes that we should take particular care to avoid this at a time when we are doing our best to dampen exaggerated expectations of changes in our policy following the elections in Argentina.

It would however be wrong to refuse to see these two visitors at any level in Whitehall. Both visitors have called at the FCO in the past. We have welcomed the restoration of democracy in Argentina, and continue to press for the normalisation of bilateral relations especially in the financial and commercial fields, in which the two visitors are active. Both have, in previous conversations, had interesting points to make about the situation in Argentina. They might now be able to offer some insights into the intentions of the incoming Radical Government.

The meetings in the FCO would be on the understanding that the conversations were wholly private and unofficial, and that nothing would be said to the press about them. Should the fact of the meetings nevertheless become public, we propose that there should be a coordinated public response. This should emphasise that the conversations had no official /initiative/status whatever: that they had been at the Argentine visitors' and that we were naturally prepared to listen to what they had

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to tell us about the situation in Argentina.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

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Private Secretary

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