



FCS/84/294

HOME SECRETARY

Prime Minister

This follows naturally from the PES decisions.

CJP
12/xi

The Charging of Fees for Entry Certificates for
Commonwealth Citizens

1. We have again been looking into the question of introducing a fee for the issue of an Entry Certificate to Commonwealth citizens. It is costing us more than £7½ million for Entry Clearance services in Commonwealth countries and in the present economic climate we can no longer justify giving the service without charge. I therefore propose to introduce a charge of £10 for Entry Certificates as from 1 January next in line with the visa fee which rises from £6 to £10 from that date.

2. In arriving at this decision I have taken into account the many practical and political problems involved. I am aware that it will have some effect on our relations with Commonwealth countries, but I think it is a justifiable move and will be accepted as being so. I have taken into account possible problems involving Commonwealth minorities living in the United Kingdom and their reactions. I realise that they will not be pleased, but it is these very communities who have benefited from the free services hitherto provided and I do not accept that a small charge of £10 added to the very large sums of travelling expenses will be of any significance to any would-be immigrants or travellers. Furthermore, I feel that if it became generally known that we are spending such large sums of money on Commonwealth immigration without charging any fees there might be indignant reactions from other sections of the public/



3. You are only too well aware of the financial pressures on FCO programmes following the PES settlement. Severe political difficulties will be caused by cuts in the aid programme, as well as in BBC and British Council spending. We shall also have to close a number of overseas posts to offset the increased costs of the fall in sterling and higher overseas inflation. The extra receipts we anticipate from Entry Certificates would help keep at least some of these posts open.

4. The Chief Secretary invited me - at No 10 as well as in MISC 106 - to consider the scope for raising revenue along these lines, explicitly to limit the effect upon my programmes of the decision not to increase my combined base lines. It is, of course, essential that we should be allowed to retain, for the benefit of my programmes, the modest revenue that will accrue from such a difficult but, in my view, inescapable decision.

5. I am sending copies of this minute to the Prime Minister and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

12 November 1984

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cc: ATO
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13/11

FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY

FEES FOR ENTRY CERTIFICATES FOR COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS

Thank you for your minute of 12 November proposing that a charge of £10 should be introduced for entry certificates for Commonwealth citizens.

As you know this does present problems for us. But I well realise the difficulties which have led you to it. Accordingly, as my Private Secretary has told your office, I am prepared to agree to the proposal on the basis that it will bring all those seeking entry clearance, whether foreign or Commonwealth, into line if this is necessary to accommodate the recent public expenditure decisions. In doing so I must, however, emphasise the difficulties that this will cause David Waddington and myself in our dealings with the ethnic minorities. That people seeking entry into the United Kingdom will not only have to take the time and trouble to obtain entry certificate but also pay for the requirement will undoubtedly create a sense of grievance. But as you say, the main points are that a £10 fee is a small premium to add to the expense of travel halfway around the world; and that those who require visas, like many from Pakistan, already pay a fee.

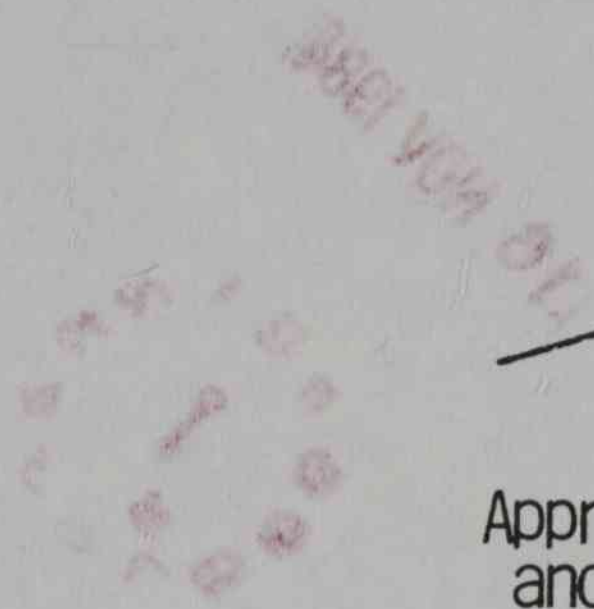
I am concerned about certificates issued to visitors to facilitate entry on arrival. It is to be hoped that the imposition of a fee will not discourage those who now accept our advice to obtain entry clearance in advance. (If this were the result it would add to the burden of the Immigration Service at our ports, as well as disappointing your revenue expectations).

I note that you will have to close some overseas posts. This is, of course, a matter for you and I understand the reasons. I expect that this will inevitably involve posts engaged, among other functions, in entry clearance work. I would not oppose that, but would hope that this will not affect the places where the delays in dealing with entry certificates are already a matter of controversy. I should be grateful for the opportunity to comment on the immigration implications when you have formulated proposals.

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I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and to the
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Nigel Partridge

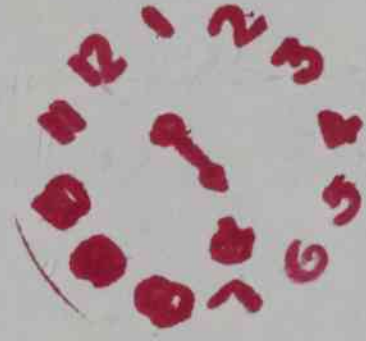


16 November 1984

Approved by the Home Secretary
and signed in his absence

Immigration : Ruber #2.

16 NOV 1984





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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

13 November 1984

Charging of Fees for Interim Certificates
for Commonwealth Citizens

The Prime Minister has noted the Foreign Secretary's minute of 12 November on this subject to the Home Secretary.

I am copying this letter to Hugh Taylor (Home Office) and David Peretz (HM Treasury).

(C.D. POWELL)

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL



Geo
CDP
21/11

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary
Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AL

28 November 1984

Attn Geoffrey

THE CHARGING OF FEES FOR ENTRY CERTIFICATES FOR COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS

Your minute of 12 November to the Home Secretary refers.

This is simply to confirm that you may retain as Appropriations in Aid, the receipts arising from the introduction of the £10 charge for entry certificates (£1.6m in a full year) and also, incidentally, the extra receipts from the increase in visa fees (£2.4m in a full year).

I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary.

Yours truly
Min

PETER REES

IMMIGRATION: Rules: Pg 2

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