



Prime Minister

The Islanders want to have their own government office in London which they will finance. This seems the best arrangement.

Agree?

Dear John,

A.J.C. 27/10

Falkland Islands Government Office (FIGO)

At the OD(FAF) meeting on 6 September, the sub-committee invited the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to examine the possibility of the functions of the proposed Falkland Islands Government Office being discharged by the FCO and to make revised proposals to that effect.

When the FCO's report on the setting up of a FIGO was submitted in August (my letter to you of 31 August refers), it was not expected that the Falkland Islands Government would be in a position to make more than a token contribution to the annual running costs. Two subsequent developments have changed the situation. Firstly, it emerged that the Islands Executive Council had decided in principle on 25 August to establish a FIGO in London and to appoint an ex-Islander, Mr Adrian Monck, as its head, earmarking two supporting staff at the same time. Secondly, the Chairman of the Falkland Islands Committee in London has informed the Civil Commissioner that due to financial and administrative difficulties, the Falkland Islands Office will be closed down on 13 November.

Following discussions with Mr Onslow during his recent visit to the Islands, the Joint Councils decided on 8 October to meet all the costs involved in setting up and running a FIGO in London. This decision is expected to be confirmed at the next meeting of the ExCo and the necessary funds voted at the next meeting of the Standing Finance Committee.

Any dependent territory may establish its own office in London provided it can pay the costs involved, and, as the report referred to above explained, most have already done so. With the imminent demise of the privately-funded Falkland Islands Office, the early establishment of a FIGO to represent the interests of the Falkland Islands Government and to provide a focal point for those in Britain interested in the Islands has become more pressing. The Civil Commissioner is aware of ministerial concern that a FIGO should not be mis-used by lobbyists and has stressed that the proposed Office will be responsible to the Falkland Islands Government.

In these circumstances we see no point in considering

/further

I just don't see how they can afford it.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 October 1982

I really think we should give them a 75% subsidy

attached

P+28



further how the FCO might discharge the functions of the proposed office. The Islanders are clear that they should have their own office, staffed and paid for by themselves and representing their Government's interests. I think we can only accept their decision.

If Ministers agree in the context of the Shackleton Study that a Falkland Islands Development Agency (FIDA) should be established by the Falkland Islands Government (and this is being considered separately), the cost of any tasks undertaken by FIGO in London on behalf of FIDA in Port Stanley could be reimbursed by the latter from its promotional budget.

I am copying this to the Private Secretaries to the other members of OD(FAF) and to Sir R Armstrong.

*Yours ever*  
*John Holmes*

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

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28 October 1982

Falkland Islands Government Office

The Prime Minister saw overnight your letter of 26 October in which you explained that the Falkland Islands Executive Council has decided in principle to establish a Falkland Islands Government Office in London and to pay for it themselves. The Prime Minister has commented: "I just do not see how they can afford it. I really think that we should give them a 75% subsidy."

I should be grateful if you could consider this point and, in consultation with the Treasury, supply advice.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the members of OD(FAF) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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