



## 10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

26 April, 1982.

Falkland Islands: Call on the Prime Minister by  
Senor Rossell de la Lama

Thank you for your letter of 23 April. Mr. Edward Du Cann brought Senor Rossell de la Lama (the Governor of Hidalgo Province in Mexico) to call on the Prime Minister this morning.

After a short discussion on the Cancun Conference, Mr. Du Cann explained that the Governor, whose English was not perfect, had asked him to speak on his behalf. They wished to regard the meeting as an informal one between friends, though, said Mr. Du Cann, Senor de la Lama was in London with the knowledge and full approval of the President. The President of Mexico wanted to offer his help in the Falklands dispute. But he did not wish to cut across Mr. Haig's efforts, nor was he offering himself as a mediator. His purpose was rather to offer a venue in Mexico for discussion if this seemed appropriate at any time. Mexico understood Argentina's emotional commitment to the Falkland Islands, but they had more understanding for the UK's legal case on the islands and the position we had adopted at the UN.

The Prime Minister said that she was glad to know that a venue for discussion could be provided in Mexico if this were needed. The fact was that if Argentina withdrew its forces in conformity with UN Security Council Resolution 502 and then, following British withdrawal, there was a demilitarised zone, perhaps guaranteed by the United States, we could consider negotiations.

Senor de la Lama undertook to report the Prime Minister's comments to the President of Mexico.

Although there was some discussion of other aspects of the situation, the above records the only substantial part of the conversation.

I should be grateful if the contents of this letter could be carefully protected because Senor de la Lama was most anxious that knowledge of his visit here should be restricted.

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I am sending copies of this letter to David Omand (Ministry of Defence), John Halliday (Home Office), Keith Long (Office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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POINTS TO MAKE

1. Pleased to receive emissary of President Lopez Portillo (important to give both names). Recall interesting visit to Mexico 21-25 October 1981 for Cancun Conference and signature of Memorandum of Understanding for the Sicartsa project (see page 2 of Background for Sicartsa project).
2. Grateful for message from President Lopez Portillo received by the Mexican Embassy in London on 20 April 1982. Note that Mexican Government has condemned use of force as a means of solving international controversies and subscribes to the United Nations Security Council Resolution no. 502.
3. We are heartened by the strong international support for the UK's position. Particularly appreciate Mexico's helpful attitude.   
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Mexican Foreign Ministry.
4. We regard implementation of SCR 502 as the key to the solution of the problem. Mr Pym's visit to Washington an attempt to pursue to the limit our efforts to settle the crisis by diplomatic means.
5. We are aware of course that certain Latin American countries thinking of their own claims against neighbouring countries have been influenced in their attitudes to the Falklands crisis.
6. We shall continue to count on the valuable support of our friends in Latin America particularly Mexico and shall study the results of any vote at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the OAS being held on Monday, 26 April 1982.
7. What way forward does Mexico see?

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ESSENTIAL FACTS

MEXICAN ATTITUDE TO FALKLANDS DISPUTE

1. Mexico has issued a statement supporting the territorial claim of the Argentinians over the Falklands but condemns the latter's use of force and stress that the United Nations Security Council Resolution must be respected. The statement draws attention to the bad precedents for American territorial disputes of the Argentine action. (Not to be quoted.) The Mexican Foreign Minister told the French Ambassador that there would be no change in his Government's position if the UK had to resort to force and that Mexico would not join a call for sanctions against Britain.
2. On 22 April the Mexican press reported that Alejandro Sobarzo, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, said that Mexico would oppose the application of the Rio Treaty in the event of an attack by Britain since this would go against a resolution of the United Nations. HM Ambassador at Mexico City has inferred from a conversation with the Mexican Deputy Foreign Minister that Mexico would not impose sanctions on Britain even if a two-thirds majority at the OAS were to vote for such sanctions.
3. At the time of the signature of the Rio Treaty the Mexican delegation made the following special declaration:

'The Delegation of Mexico continues to believe that, except in the case of legitimate defence, the collective measures referred to in Article 8 cannot be applied in an obligatory form, given their coercive nature, without the authorisation of the Security Council of the United Nations'.
4. The press are generally sympathetic to the UK although there is a public lack of awareness of the legalities of the UK position.

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SICARTSA

5. The Sicartsa II project was won by Davy Loewy against the opposition of three major competitors with an attractive British financial package. It is for a steel plate mill worth £330 m. to be situated on the pacific coast. It represents a major new project for Sidermex, the Mexican State Steel Corporation. Its success has already had beneficial effects on the attitude of the Mexican official arrangement towards Britain and has conferred a new position in Mexico on which the UK may build.

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ROSSELL DE LA LAMA, ARQ. GUILLERMO

Governor of Hidalgo 1981-7.

Born Pachuca 1925. Graduated in Architecture from UNAM and thereafter lectured at the National School of Architecture and the School of Municipal Engineering. Ministry of Public Works, 1952-57. Director of Council of Economic and Social Planning in López Mateos' presidential campaign (López Portillo was a member of the Council), 1957. Adviser to President of PRI National Executive Committee, 1957-63. Head of Administration and then Deputy Minister, Ministry of National Resources (again with López Portillo), 1958-64. Founder member of IEPES. Member of IEPES council which worked on López Portillo's political programme, 1975-76. Senator for State of Hidalgo, 1976. Appointed Minister of Tourism in December 1976. Resigned in August 1980 to stand for the Governorship of Hidalgo, and was replaced as Minister of Tourism by Rosa Luz Alegria (qv).

His premature nomination as PRI candidate for Hidalgo is said to have arisen from President López Portillo's desire to remove him from the Cabinet, either because he was dissatisfied with his performance or to create a vacancy for his mistress, Rosa Luz Alegria, or both.

Has designed many buildings in Mexico and abroad. His links with the President go back to the fifties. Of Spanish (Catalan) parentage.

Pachuca, Sr Rossell de la lama's birthplace, is the capital of Hidalgo State of which he is Governor. It has an ancient history of silver mining, the Aztecs having mined there before the advent of the Spaniards and the State now accounts for 10% of Mexico's silver production. Some Cornish miners settled in the State in the 19th century. Pachuca is only 27 kilometers from Mexico City.