



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 July 1982

Prime Minister

To be aware.

A.F.C. 16/7

X If this is correct - it is a desirable condition of the membership of the Commonwealth. I suggest we are very much in line with Mr. Campbell's suggestion.

Dear John,
Falklands

You wrote to me on 8 July about the suggestion in Sir A Parsons's telegram no 1082 that we should try to get the Commonwealth to agree to a text on the Falkland Islands which could be a counterweight to the traditional non-aligned language and could thus have a beneficial effect on the Non-Aligned Summit and the coming session of the General Assembly.

There is unfortunately no Commonwealth meeting between now and the General Assembly (or indeed during the course of the General Assembly) which could be used for this purpose. Such texts are normally only agreed at Head of Government level and the next CHGM is nearly 18 months away. Moreover, I fear that we could not count on such a meeting endorsing an entirely suitable text. There is a meeting of Finance Ministers in September but it is most unlikely that they would agree to issue a major political statement of the kind that Sir A Parsons had in mind.

We have considered the possibility of getting a special Falklands Committee set up on the analogy of the Commonwealth Belize Committee. But we would not be able to select the membership and it could not be relied upon to serve our purposes. It would be unlikely in any case to have the authority to issue an agreed Commonwealth text. There is a Commonwealth group at the UN, but the Permanent Representatives of Third World Commonwealth countries there give priority to their allegiance to the non-aligned. This group would also be most unlikely to agree to issue any text satisfactory to us. There is a small minority of Commonwealth countries, such as Grenada and Malta, which would be obstructive in any Commonwealth forum.

X !!!
 and India?

/We are



We are of course anxious to harness Commonwealth goodwill in our preparations for the Non-Aligned Summit and for the Assembly. You may now have seen our telegram no 162 to Belmopan (copy enclosed) in which we instructed posts in certain Caribbean Commonwealth countries to encourage their host governments to resist Latin American pressures within the Latin American Sub-Group of the Non-Aligned. We shall send appropriate instructions to Commonwealth posts in other regions as their countries get drawn into the drafting process.

Mr Ramphal has repeatedly offered to help, and is particularly well-placed to give advice on how we can best harness Commonwealth support. We are seeking his support and advice in our campaign. We are also taking a number of steps in the non-Commonwealth context to head off unacceptable results from non-aligned and UN debates.

Yours ever

J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

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