

10



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

29 December 1986

Dear Charles

*52.
Per type.*

In your letter of 11 December, you requested advice on the letter to the Prime Minister of the same date from Mr Tam Dalyell MP.

The call on the Prime Minister by Sr Rossell de la Lama and Mr Edward du Cann MP on 26 April 1982, at which Mexico was offered as a venue for talks, was followed on 6 May by a message from President Portillo of Mexico reporting Galtieri's alleged readiness for a face to face meeting with the Prime Minister in Cancun (Mexico City telno 366 of 1982). The Prime Minister's reply of 12 May (FCO telno 374 to Mexico City) referred to the need, acknowledged by the Mexicans, not to cut across efforts towards a solution then under way in New York, and suggested that no publicity should be given to their exchanges or to President Portillo's initiative with Galtieri. President Portillo agreed that these matters should remain strictly confidential (Mexico City telno 391). Copies of references are attached.

A reply on the lines of the first option put forward in the third paragraph of your letter appears to run the risk of afterwards seeming disingenuous if, perhaps in response to further publicity generated by Mr Dalyell, information about the subsequent course of the Portillo initiative were to leak from Lonrho (our files show that Mr du Cann and Mr Rowland were aware in general terms of what took place). And the Mexicans might hold the Government responsible for any embarrassment.

/Your



/ Your alternative suggestion avoids these potential difficulties. I accordingly attach a draft reply to Mr Dalyell. If there are further leaks, the Government could consider a statement in response to them, perhaps in consultation with the Mexican Government, that it was setting aside the rule of confidentiality in order to set the record straight. Any Mexican embarrassment would be attributable to the source of the leaks rather than the Government.

The only press report we have seen so far on this issue was in the "Morning Star" on 13 December.

John [unclear]

R N Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing St

DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

DEPARTMENT

TEL. NO:

ASTAKP
Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Mr Tam Dalyell MP

House of Commons

LONDON SW1A 0AA

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

Thank you for your letter of 11 December with an enclosed copy of an article in the December 1986 Business Magazine.

I am sure you will understand that it is not ^{our} ~~the~~ practice to comment on private and confidential meetings.

Enclosures flag(s)