



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

23 July 1982

Prime Minister 2/1

Yes *mb*

Content that ministers should
abstain if a vote is forced on the second
reading of Lord Bruce's Bill? *W*

Dear David,

As you know, on 13 July Lord Bruce of Donington introduced a Bill which seeks to confer British citizenship on the Falkland Islanders. The Bill is identical to the one introduced in the Commons by Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk, which it was agreed in correspondence should be blocked, and is open to the same objections. On 24 June the Lord President declined to make time available in the Commons for the Kilroy-Silk Bill. 23/7

We understand that Lord Bruce has accepted that there will be no time for a second reading before the second week of the Lords spill over. His intention is presumably to use a second reading debate in October to embarrass the Government.

It would seem inadvisable, subject to any comments the Lord President or the Leader of the Lords may have, to take opposition to the Bill to the point of a division on second reading in the Lords. An amendment to last session's British Nationality Bill to confer British citizenship on the Falkland Islanders was disagreed to only after a tied vote at Lords Report Stage and it is quite possible that Lord Bruce would win a division on second reading of his Bill.

On the other hand, to give Government support for the Bill would have much wider implications, eg. for the status of Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies in Hong Kong as well as for the future position of the Falkland Islanders themselves. In the circumstances it would seem best for the Government spokesman to explain the Government's reservations during second reading and suggest that the Bill should be withdrawn. In the event of a division, the Home Secretary thinks that Ministers present should abstain. Lord Bruce is unlikely to attempt to take the Bill further at that stage in the session. If he does it would not seem unreasonable to decline to give assistance to remedy the Bill's drafting deficiencies.

I am copying this letter to Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister and other Members of OD as well as Members of L, and to David Wright (Cabinet Office) and First Parliamentary Counsel.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Pallett.

MRS L PALLETT

D C R Heyhoe, Esq.



18
Immigration

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 July 1982

Dear David

The Prime Minister has seen the letter that Lesley Pallett sent to you on 23 July about the Bill introduced by Lord Bruce of Donnington. Subject to any comments the Lord President and the Leader of the Lords may have, the Prime Minister is content that Ministers should take the line suggested by the Home Secretary on Lord Bruce's Bill, and in particular that they should abstain if a vote is forced on Second Reading.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Lesley Pallett (Home Office), Michael Pownall (Chief Whip's Office, Lords), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever
Willie Rickett

David Heyhoe, Esq.,
Lord President's Office.

dl



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

Ch
2/7

30 July 1982

has been

FALKLAND ISLANDS (BRITISH CITIZENSHIP) (NO 2) BILL
LORD BRUCE OF DONNINGTON

Thank you for your letter of 23 July about the Falkland Islands (British Citizenship) (No 2) Bill introduced by Lord Bruce of Donnington. The Lord President has also seen the letter of 26 July to me from the Prime Minister's Private Secretary.

The Lord President is content with the line proposed in your letter for handling Lord Bruce's Bill in this Session. He agrees that no drafting assistance should be offered at this stage, but First Parliamentary Counsel, whose resources are heavily committed to the preparation of next Session's Bills, would appreciate the earliest possible warning of any change in this approach in relation either to the present Bill or any successor next Session. If Lord Bruce were to re-introduce his Bill in the next Session the Home Secretary would no doubt arrange for it to be considered in Legislation Committee in the usual way.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Your copy
done

D C R HEYHOE
Private Secretary

Mrs L Pallett
Private Secretary to the Secretary of
State for Home Affairs
Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AT

30 JUL 1982





*Immigration
Nationality
Bill*
wh
8/8

FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE
AND THE CHIEF WHIP

6 August 1982

Dear David,

FALKLAND ISLANDS (BRITISH CITIZENSHIP) (NO 2) BILL

I wrote to you about this Bill on 2 August.

I omitted to enclose with the letter an extract from the Lords Hansard for 29 July. I now enclose the said extract. Many apologies.

Copies of this go to the recipients as before.

*Yours ever
Michael*

M G POWNALL

D C R Heyhoe Esq



Wm
9/8
Immigration

FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE
AND THE CHIEF WHIP

2 August 1982

Dear David,

The Lord Privy Seal has seen the letter that Lesley Pallett sent to you on 23 July about Lord Bruce of Donington's Falkland Islands (British Citizenship) (No 2) Bill. She has also seen Willie Rickett's letter to you of 26 July on the same subject.

The Chief Whip (Lords) will do all he can to avoid having a Second Reading debate until the week beginning Monday 18 October at the earliest. Indeed if, but only if, Lord Bruce makes clear in advance his intention to pursue his Bill both this session and next, the Chief Whip will urge him to drop this session's Bill in favour of a Bill in November.

The Lord Privy Seal recognises that the Government face a very difficult situation on Lord Bruce's Bill. She has asked me to circulate with this letter copies of the exchange which took place on the floor of the House last week on an oral question by Lord Boyd-Carpenter. Bearing in mind the tied vote during the Report Stage of the British Nationality Bill last October, and the strength of feeling which now clearly exists, it is clear that, no matter how carefully the Second Reading of the Bill is handled, the Government are likely to suffer embarrassment or, if put to a vote, defeat.

In the circumstances, the Lord Privy Seal broadly agrees the line suggested by the Home Secretary. It seems very likely that Lord Bruce will not agree to withdraw his Bill on Second Reading. If the matter is pressed to a division, Lord Bruce will win regardless of whether Ministers abstain or vote against the Bill. The Lord Privy Seal suggests that if Lord Bruce does not withdraw, steps should be taken to ensure that there is no division and that the Bill receives a Second Reading on question (ie without a division but without unanimous assent). Lord Bruce may well pursue his Bill next session and seek to take it through all its stages in the Lords. If he did this at a relatively early stage in the new session, the Bill would arrive in the Commons well before the last Private Member's Bill days in that House. The Lord Privy Seal recognises that this could cause very considerable handling difficulties in the House of Commons.

D C R Heyhoe Esq



FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE
AND THE CHIEF WHIP

The Lord Privy Seal will inform colleagues if there are any further developments in the Lords during the recess.

Copies of this letter go to the recipients of Lesley Pallett's letter to you of 23 July.

*Yours ever
Michael Pownall*

M G POWNALL