

(1)



10 DOWNING STREET
Prime Minister

This recommends:

(i) that you should NOT see Fraga at least until after the restrictions on Gibraltar have been lifted and you have met Gonzalez ^{officially};

(ii) that the question of a possible merger ~~with~~ between the EDG and the Alianza Popular be deferred until the second half of next year and no irreversible commitments given in the meantime.

Agree?

C.D.P

No need to restrict ourselves in any way

MR ALISON

Thank you: I attach a letter which - if you approve - I'll send to Sir A. Plumb. We could simply copy it to G. Howe. MA

EDG AND ALIANZA POPULAR

14/12

This subject seems to stray indiscriminately between us!

The Prime Minister has seen Geoffrey Howe's minute of 12 December. Her views as conveyed partly orally partly in writing (attached) are.

(i) she agrees not to see Fraga at least until after the restrictions on Gibraltar have been lifted, which should be mid-February. She does not regard whether or not she sees Gonzalez before Fraga as relevant.

(ii) she does not see any need to restrict the developing contacts between the EDG and the Alianza Popular

Will you write to Henry Plumb on her behalf? And shall I reply to Geoffrey Howe.

e.d.p.

13 December, 1984



10 DOWNING STREET

IN CONFIDENCE

17th December 1984

Dear Henry,

You will remember that when you came to see the Prime Minister on 7th December, one of the topics you touched on briefly was the way in which links between the EDG and the Alianza Popular might develop. A meeting at some point between the Prime Minister and Senor Fraga is clearly profoundly relevant to all this.

The view here is that the Prime Minister should not be in too much of a hurry to meet Senor Fraga. The essential point is that the restrictions on Gibraltar, following our recent Agreement with Spain, should first have been lifted as part of the implication of that Agreement. This is not likely to happen until mid-or late February. It is therefore sometime after that date that we should be considering a meeting with Senor Fraga and the Prime Minister; and at that time we will have to weigh quite carefully the sensitivities of such a meeting in the light of the state of relations between the United Kingdom and Senor Gonzales' Government in Spain.

Yours ever
Michael

MICHAEL ALISON

Sir Henry Plumb DL MEP

Top Copy: Political Office

Conservative and Unionist Party, GB
● Det konservative folkeparti, DK
Ulster Unionist Party, N. Ireland



EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC GROUP
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Chairman

Sir Henry Plumb, DL, MEP
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19th December, 1984

The Rt. Hon. Michael Alison, MP
10 Downing Street
London S.W.1.

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your letter of 17th December. I quite understand the reasoning which has led you to conclude that the Prime Minister should not see Señor Fraga until after the restrictions upon the inhabitants of Gibraltar have been lifted.

Gibraltar is indeed the issue on which there is a risk of disharmony between the Alianza Popular and ourselves and I very much hope that the excellent progress which Geoffrey Howe has been making will be sustained, thus removing the potential bone of contention. If all goes well in February with the agreed lifting of restrictions and the Prime Minister then feels it opportune to meet Señor Fraga, I would look on such a meeting as an important further step on the path of cooperation between British Conservatives and the Alianza, reflecting the relationship which already exists within the Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Constitutionally, of course, we in the Group cannot take a formal decision on the Alianza's joining us until after Spain has come into the Community, but in the meantime we will move forward cautiously in our dealings with the Alianza, on the working assumption that they will in fact apply to join us after Spanish accession. The careful development of informal links at this stage is essential if we are to keep open the option of broadening our membership in this way.

Perhaps we could be in touch again about this matter in the latter half of February; it might be useful if I could have the opportunity of putting in a brief to the Prime Minister on EDG-Alianza relations before any meeting with Señor Fraga.

Yours ever,

Henry

HENRY PLUMB

Top Copy: Political Office

Plumb

(F)

24th December, 1984

I am writing to acknowledge your letter of 19th December to Mr. Alison which arrived just as he was leaving for his Christmas holiday.

I will of course put it before him when he returns to the office.

Amanda Colvin
Political Office

Sir Henry Plumb DL MEP

Top Copy: Political Office. *jc*

PLUMB



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 February 1985

S Sherbourne Esq
Political Secretary to PM
No 10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Stephen,

EDG AND ALIANZA POPULAR

I have talked to your office several times about the prospect of getting a copy of the letter from Michael Allison to Henry Plumb on the above subject. So far as I can see, however, there has still been no result. We do not have a copy of the last and definitive letter. It would be most helpful to have a copy of this so that we know what steer has been given to the EDG. Could you possibly send me a copy of this? Alternatively, if there is any difficulty about obtaining it, could you let me know so that I can follow-up as appropriate.

✓
Copy of 17/12
Sent to John
Houston 6/2

Yours
J Houston

J Houston

P.S. Sorry to keep on pestering you, but we do need to know!
JH

Top copy: Political Office

Conservative and Unionist Party, GB
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MA
This must be
for you
DP
- 19/12

7th December, 1984

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London S.W.1.

Dear Prime Minister,

This is just a brief note to thank you for our meeting this morning. I was grateful to have the opportunity of discussing the current topics which concern the European Parliament and the European Democratic Group. I shall of course pass on to my colleagues the general outline of our discussion and I know they will be encouraged by the sympathetic interest you take in our affairs.

There is one question we discussed on which I should like to make some further observations. I understand from our conversation that you still have reservations about the forming of a joint group in the European Parliament with Senor Fraga's Alianza Popular. As I mentioned to you, we have gone some way down the road towards welcoming Senor Fraga as a possible ally in the European Parliament: we have not finally committed ourselves, but it is clear that Senor Fraga regards us as his most natural associates in the European Parliament.

I believe you intend to discuss the Alianza Popular and the relationship of the Conservative Party to it with Geoffrey Howe. Although the European Democratic Group is not going to be called upon to make a final decision in the matter immediately, our exchanges with the Alianza Popular continue. I have recently been to Spain and Senor Fraga has come to London, where I met him. If the scale or frequency of these contacts were to be reduced, it would obviously act as a discouraging signal to Senor Fraga, and could lead to his seeking other allies within the Parliament. I should therefore be grateful for the earliest possible indication of the outcome of your consultation with Geoffrey Howe concerning Fraga. I remain of the view that if we intend to broaden the face of the European Democratic Group, the Alianza Popular is the only significant ally on offer.

I hope we may, in any case, have an opportunity to discuss this matter further in due course.

I look forward to receiving you as the Group's guest in February.

Yours ever,
Henry.

HENRY PLUMB