



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

12 March 1981

*Mr Hoskins,*

*Ls. Rnd*

*hs Rnd*

~~Xerox copy to Iran~~  
~~via return to N.A.~~

Dear Michael,

Iranian Embassy Premises at 16 Princes Gate

John Hoskins wrote to the Department of the Environment on 24 February about the Royal College of General Practitioners, who apparently have an interest in acquiring the Iranian Embassy premises at 16 Princes Gate. He enclosed correspondence from Mr Ancrum Evans of Rutherfords, the firm which manages investments for the RCGP. As Mr Evans raised a number of questions about the premises, mainly of a political nature, we agreed with the DOE to answer the main points in his letter.

Mr Evans seeks to enlist Government support for the RCGP's schemes. As far as we are concerned, this is entirely a private scheme between the Iranian authorities as owners of the premises and the RCGP and we see no reason for Government involvement. In fact, in view of our current relations with the Iranian Government, formal backing by HMG for the plan could be counter-productive.

Mr Evans goes on to ask whether this Government has any financial liability to the Iranians for the damage done to the Embassy during the SAS seige of last year. You may assure him that the Government accepts no such liability.

Mr Evans finally asks if a dialogue could be established between the RCGP and the Iranians through an intermediary, since the RCGP consider that direct negotiations would be impractical. There are no political or any other reasons why RCGP should not approach the Iranians directly and our advice to them would be to go ahead, though they should be prepared for administrative delays owing to the present disruption of normal communications between various Iranian government departments involved, and the Iranian Embassy in London.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Paul Aley (Dept of the Environment).

*Yours ever,*  
*Francis Richards*

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON

(F N Richards)  
Private Secretary



10 DOWNING STREET

24 February 1981

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP  
Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON SW1

I enclose a copy of a letter from a cousin of mine, Ancrum Evans. His firm manages the investments of the Royal College of General Practitioners, referred to in the letter.

The letter is self-explanatory and I am sending a copy to Patrick Jenkin.

JOHN HOSKYNS



**RUTHERFORDS***Chartered Accountants*

8 ECCLESTON SQUARE, LONDON SW1V 1NP.

Telephone 01-834 3471

also at CLIFTON-ON-TEME

Ancrum F. Evans, T.D., Hon. F.R.C.G.P., F.C.A.

V.A.T. REG. NO. 249-3649-81

Telex 916270 (Ancrum G)

23rd February, 1981

Dear John,

Iranian Embassy, 16 Princes Gate  
Possible common interest to give assistance to Royal College  
of General Practitioners

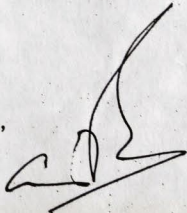
Further to my telephone call:-

1. No 17 is The Ethiopian Embassy.
2. No 14 and 15 are The Royal College of General Practitioners.
3. Royal College of General Practitioners would be interested in the reconstruction of 15 to provide a lecture hall for postgraduate medical course etc.
4. The Westminster City Council will require the property to be re-instated to some extent as it is a listed building.
5. The number of potential users is also very limited by planning considerations.
6. The Iranians are said to want a stupid price for the property as it stands £400,000.
7. The British Government may have a liability to the Iranians in respect of damage to the building (?).
8. It might suit the British Government to assist The Royal College and thus resolve the problem of an ongoing ruined building in Central London.
9. The Royal College as a National Charity and an important medical body would be a suitable beneficiary of any situation arising from a British Government commitment, if any.
10. In any event, The Royal College will have to find an Intermediary as it is presently considered that direct negotiations with the Iranians would be impractical.

## QUESTIONS

Is there any common interest?

Yours,



J. Hoskins, Esq.,  
10, Downing Street,  
London