NEW FILE COVER

SECRET

Part 1

MT

CONFIDENTIAL FILING

INTERNAL SITUATION

VISITS OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

UK/BELIZE RELATIONS

S 3009

BELIZE

DECEMBER 1979

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
~~9/4/93~~							
~~9.6.93~~							
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PREM 19/4012

HMSO Dd8953031 6/88 C60 GP2265 CCN13412 (3932)

NEW FILE COVER

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PREM 19/4012

HMSO Dd8953031 6/88 C60 GP2265 CCN13412 (3932)

PART 1 ends:-

FCO to RL - 29.10.93.

PART 2. begins:-

PM to PM Belize - 2.11.93.

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

Dft. to type pse
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29 October 1993

Dear Robbie,

Prime Minister's Meeting with the Prime Minister of Belize

In your letter of 22 October – with RL? you asked if we would consider whether we could offer the Prime Minister of Belize some reassurance that in the event of a future threat to the security of Belize, the UK would provide some practical help. I enclose a draft letter to Mr Esquivel, agreed by MOD Ministers.

Esquivel is probably motivated more by domestic political considerations than concern about a Guatemalan threat. But in making clear that we are not prepared to issue a new public statement nor offer Belize a defence guarantee, we can reassure him privately that, in the event of a future crisis, we would be ready to play an appropriate part in any collective response. Esquivel may well make public the contents of the Prime Minister's letter.

While unauthorised low level incursions on both sides of the undefined Belize/Guatemala border are common (and often accidental), we consider it unlikely that the Guatemalan government would sanction military action against Belize. Political uncertainty is likely to continue in Guatemala and there are many threats to President de Leon Carpio's position. If his government fell, it is unlikely, in view of the international pressure that would be brought to bear (not least from the US), that the Guatemalan military would return to power.

I am copying this letter to John Pitt-Brooks (MOD) and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Stephen.

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

file
MD/Dalton

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

28 October 1993

As you know, I suggested brief courtesy calls on the Prime Minister by the new High Commissioners of Belize and Barbados at 1245 on Monday 22 and Monday 28 November respectively.

I should be most grateful if the Belizian call could now be brought forward to 1145 on Monday 22 November. (No change to the Barbados call.)

No doubt you will let me know if there is a problem.

MISS SANDRA PHILLIPS

Maurice Dalton, Esq., L.V.O.,
Protocol Department,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

F/Esquivel. CK

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

27 October 1993

Dear Stephen,

BELIZE

As I mentioned on the telephone, Tom Arnold MP called me on the evening of 26 October to report on a meeting with Prime Minister Esquivel of Belize. I believe that Mr. Arnold is an officer of a relevant Parliamentary group.

Esquivel had described his exchange with the Prime Minister at Limassol. He had said that he was due to fly home on 27 October, but would readily delay his departure if there was a chance of making further progress on the Memorandum of Understanding. Tom Arnold had formed the impression that Esquivel was nervous of returning home without a successful outcome to his negotiations.

I told Mr. Arnold of the action we were initiating to follow up the Limassol conversation. Esquivel had not indicated to the Prime Minister that he would be seeking further meetings in London this week, and I did not expect that we would be ready to say anything more to him as soon as 27 October.

Mr. Arnold decided to advise Esquivel not to delay his departure from the UK. He will let me know if there are any further developments.

I hope that we can move with reasonable speed to put forward the Prime Minster's response to Esquivel, though I appreciate that the most important thing is to devise a careful form of words.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Pitt-Brooke (Ministry of Defence) and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,
Roderic

RODERIC LYNE

J. S. Smith, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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OF 201625Z OCTOBER 93
INFO IMMEDIATE BELMOPAN, GUATEMALA CITY

FROM LAD

FOLLOWING FOR BRITISH DELEGATION

FCO TELNO 131 TO BELMOPAN: VISIT TO UK BY PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

1. PLEASE PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO PRIME MINISTER ESQUIVEL OF BELIZE FROM MR HEATHCOAT-AMORY:

DEAR PRIME MINISTER

I WAS PLEASED THAT WE WERE ABLE TO HAVE TALKS AND LUNCH IN LONDON ON 19 OCTOBER. DURING OUR DISCUSSION YOU ASKED IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE A CLEARER STATEMENT OF ITS POSITION ABOUT THE ROLE WE WOULD PLAY IN RESPONSE TO ANY FUTURE THREAT TO BELIZE.

I HAVE NOW HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON OUR DISCUSSION AND, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, HAVE DEC1DED THAT WE WOULD NOT WISH TO DEPART FROM THE TEXT OF THE JOINT STATEMENT WHICH YOU AGREED WITH JEREMY HANLEY ON 23 SEPTEMBER 1N BELIZE.

I HAVE ALSO CONSIDERED WITH MY COLLEAGUES YOUR REQUEST THAT WE SHOULD INCLUDE IN THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO BE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS A REFERENCE TO THE UK'S POSITION IN THE EVENT OF A FUTURE THREAT TO BELIZE. WE HAVE AGREED THAT, SINCE THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED TO DEAL SOLELY WITH THE PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF BRITISH FORCES IN BELIZE, IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO INCLUDE SUCH A REFERENCE.

THE JOINT STATEMENT OF 23 SEPTEMBER MAKES CLEAR THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL WILLINGLY RESPOND TO ANY REQUEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE MAY MAKE IN THE FUTURE FOR CONSULTATIONS ON BELIZE'S SECURITY. IT ALSO REITERATES THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS FULLY PREPARED TO PLAY ITS PART IN CONSULTATIONS WHICH WOULD LEAD TO AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE SHOULD THE SECURITY OF BELIZE BE THREATENED IN THE FUTURE. THIS WORDING ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S POSITION FOLLOWING THE END OF THE DEFENCE COMMITMENT, AND MAKES CLEAR OUR CONTINUING INTEREST IN BELIZE'S PROSPERITY AND SECURITY.

I HOPE YOU ENJOYED YOUR VISIT TO LONDON. I ENJOYED OUR TALKS AND HOPE TO MEET YOU AGAIN SOON.

YOURS EVER

DAVID HEATHCOAT-AMORY

2. THERE WILL BE NO/NO SIGNED ORIGINAL.
3. THE BELIZEAN DELEGATION ARE LIKELY TO RAISE THIS ISSUE IN LIMASSOL. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT ESQUIVEL AND BARROW MIGHT DO SO IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE PR1ME MINISTER. FOLLOWING IS A LINE TO TAKE AGREED WITH MOD:

- UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERNS. BELIEVE HOWEVER THAT THE JOINT STATEMENT OF 23 SEPTEMBER CLEARLY STATES OUR POSITION.

- DO NOT SEE THE NEED TO DEPART FROM LANGUAGE THAT WAS AGREED AFTER DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS IN BELIZE.

- (IF PRESSED) NOT PREPARED TO REVISE OUR AGREED POSITION. HAPPY HOWEVER TO AGREE WITH YOU THE LANGUAGE OF ANY STATEMENT YOU MAY WISH TO ISSUE AS A RESULT OF YOUR VISIT.

BACKGROUND (CONFIDENTIAL)
4. THE 23 SEPTEMBER JOINT STATEMENT WHICH MR HANLEY (MINISTER FOR THE ARMED FORCES) PERSONALLY NEGOTIATED WITH ESQUIVEL IN BELIZE ACCURATELY REFLECTS OUR POSITION. WHILE WE HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT WE STAND READY TO BE CONSULTED ABOUT BELIZE'S FUTURE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS WE WOULD NOT WISH TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO A COURSE OF ACTION UNTIL THE NATURE OF ANY POSSIBLE THREAT TO BELIZE BECAME APPARENT.

5. THE BELIZE GOVERNMENT ARE UNDER CONSIDERABLE DOMESTIC PRESSURE TO SHOW THAT THEY ARE TAKING A FIRM LINE WITH US ON DEFENCE ISSUES. THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS PARTY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR HMG TO ACCEPT A STRONGER BRITISH COMMITMENT. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE STICK TO THE POSITION OUTLINED IN THE 23 SEPTEMBER STATEMENT.

HURD

OCMIAN 7896

NNNN

copy to FCO
& file.
MJL 23/11

SUBJECT MASTER

Filed on:

Please Quote:

FA/P/53/93(52)

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan,
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

28th September, 1993

Rt. Hon. John Major MP
Prime Minister
United Kingdom of Great Britain
& Northern Ireland
10 Downing Street
London SWI
England

Dear Prime Minister,

This letter will be presented to you by Dr. Ursula Barrow, who has been appointed by the Government of Belize to be High Commissioner of Belize to the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland to replace Mr. Robert Leslie, who has retired from the Belize Public Service.

It gives me great pleasure to commend Dr. Barrow to you. I am confident that her previous experience and abilities befit her in full measure for the important duties which she is about to undertake, and I know that she, for her part, will strive successfully to maintain and foster those close and friendly relations so long existing between us which we value and wish to see continued.

On behalf of the Government of Belize, I ask you to place full trust and credence in Dr. Barrow, and to afford her all possible assistance in the fulfilment of this important assignment.

Your good friend,

MANUEL ESQUIVEL
PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

ME/gsb

CC/S

CONFIDENTIAL

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 071-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 6/20/3M

21 September 1993

1. cc Press
[please make sure Gus or Christine are aware, though may be released after PM back here on 23rd?].

2. File.

Dear Alex

When announcing our plans for the Belize Garrison in May, we indicated that responsibility for the defence of Belize would transfer to the Belize Defence Force at a date to be announced in due course. Although this date, 31 December, had been agreed with the Belize Government, we agreed to a request from the then Prime Minister, Mr Price, not to announce it pending the general election in Belize. Subsequently, Mr Price lost the election.

The present Prime Minister of Belize, Mr Esquivel, has been informed of our plans for the garrison. He understands and accepts these. Mr Esquivel has suggested that a joint statement be issued at the end of Mr Hanley's current visit to Belize. This statement would include the timing of the handover of defence responsibility. Accordingly, Mr Hanley intends to propose the attached draft which has been approved by the Defence Secretary and the Foreign Office, as the basis for an announcement. We expect the Belizeans will wish to add to the text a reference to their plans for the Belize Defence Force. It is our intention to release the joint statement here and in Belize on 23 September. The Labour and Liberal Democrat parties' defence spokesmen and the House of Commons Defence Committee will be given an advance copy on the same day.

This latest announcement simply updates the one made in May, which attracted only limited media interest. We have of course prepared the usual supplementary defensive press line, in consultation with the Foreign Office.

I am copying this letter to Dickie Stagg, Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Yours ever

Peter

(P RYAN)
Private Secretary

Alex Allan Esq
10 Downing Street

DRAFT STATEMENT OF TRANSFER OF DEFENCE RESPONSIBILITIES

On 13 May 1993, the British and Belize Governments announced the evolution of the British military presence in Belize. They have now agreed that, as part of this evolution, the Belize Defence Force will assume responsibility for the defence of Belize on 1 January 1994. This will enable the phased reduction of British Forces from January 1994 to proceed as previously announced.

By October 1994, all elements of British Forces apart from the resident training team will have left. The training team will consist of around 100 personnel (including locally employed civilians) who will be based at Airport Camp. We envisage that there will be regular company strength (about 120 men) deployments into Belize for the purposes of jungle training. This training will normally take place at the Baldy Beacon and Mountain Pine Ridge training areas. There will be joint training exercises with the BDF from time to time.

As previously announced, in addition to a continuing military training presence in Belize, the British Government will maintain its programme of assistance with the development of the Belize Defence Force, and stands ready to play a part in any consultations that the Belize authorities may request on Belize's future security. During talks [today], between Prime Minister Esquivel and Mr Jeremy Hanley, British Minister of State for the Armed Forces, the British Government and Belize Governments re-

affirmed their mutual interest in Belize's future prosperity and security. The British Government reiterated that it was fully prepared to play its part in any consultations on an appropriate response should the security of Belize be threatened in the future.

DAS

CONFIDENTIAL

file

bc RJB

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

15 September 1993

Dear John,

BELIZE

The Prime Minister is content with the proposed approach to the Americans described in your letter of 10 September.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of OPD, Pauline Neville-Jones and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Roderic.

RODERIC LYNE

John Pitt-Brooke, Esq.
Ministry of Defence

CONFIDENTIAL

Gen

cc/ls

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 071-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

Prime Minister

Content?

Rmjl.

MO 6/20/3J

10 September 1993

Dear Rodric,

will act if absolutely necessary

BELIZE

You wrote to me on 5 April agreeing that we could begin the progressive reduction of our military presence in Belize. In that letter you also said that the Prime Minister hoped that we would be able to work with the Americans in contingency planning against the possibility that a fresh crisis might arise with Guatemala. Jeremy Hanley will be visiting Belize and Washington later this month to carry this work forward. This letter is to set out the ground which Mr Hanley will be covering, and in particular our approach to contingency planning.

It will be difficult to draw the Americans into detailed discussions of their possible military response to any threat to Belize's future security. Detailed planning, including the possibility of a British contribution to a military response by the international community, can really only begin once the nature of any crisis is known.

We propose, therefore, to initiate a broad dialogue with the Americans drawing on the following:

- our mutual interest in seeing relations between Belize and Guatemala continue to improve and our respective programmes of assistance to Belize in general and the Belize Defence Force in particular.

- the effective international response to the crises that arose as a result of ex-President Serrano's Autogolpe.

R M J Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

- the continuing British military training presence in Belize, which is a clear sign of our continuing interest (although it does not signify a formal continuation of the defence commitment.)

- our ability to deploy Harrier GR7s to Belize (an exercise is underway now), and that we will consider carrying out such deployments in future.

As part of this dialogue we propose that Mr Hanley asks the Americans whether they see a need for, or have made, any contingency plans (military or otherwise) to deal with a future deterioration in the relationship between Belize and Guatemala. He would also suggest the idea of informal consultations amongst our respective military staffs to increase understanding about assets available in the region and possible scenarios.

If asked by the Americans whether the UK has plans to react militarily should the security of Belize be threatened, we would make it clear that the UK would be fully prepared to play its part in any consultations on an appropriate response. Whilst we would of course not rule out UK involvement in any international military effort, we would see any further request from Belize to maintain their security as being a matter for the international community. Obviously, diplomatic and political pressure must be our first recourse in attempting to prevent or reverse any use of force, and we would stress the need for a dialogue, in keeping with the Prime Minister's suggestion.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of members of OPD, to Melanie Leech and to Pauline Neville-Jones.

Yours

(J S PITT-BROOKE)
Private Secretary

BSL128 : Rels.

CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

To note.

MCA 12/8

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

12 August 1993

Dear Mark,

New Belizean High Commissioner

We have been informed that the Government of Belize propose to appoint Dr Ursula Barrow, at present Assistant Director of the Political Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat, to be the Belizean High Commissioner to London in succession to Mr Bobby Leslie. I enclose a brief curriculum vitae.

As you will be aware, it is not the practice between Commonwealth countries of which Her Majesty is Queen to seek formal agreement to the appointment of a High Commissioner. We would be grateful, however, if the Prime Minister would agree to our informing the Government of Belize that the British Government will be glad to welcome Dr Barrow in London and look forward to continuing with her the happy association they enjoyed with her predecessor.

I am copying this letter to Sir Robert Fellowes.

Yours ever,

Charlie

(C R V Stagg)
Private Secretary

Mark Adams Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

URSULA M BARROW, MA LLM PhD

Belizean High Commissioner-designate to London.

Assistant Director, Political Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat since 1992.

Born 1955. Studied Geography at Newnham College Cambridge from 1974-77 when she obtained an MA. Studied for her PhD at Newnham College from 1985-1988 and 1990-1991. Obtained LLM (International Law) from Jesus College Cambridge in 1992.

Worked as an Economist at the Belizean Ministry of Finance and Economic Development in 1978. Joined a US firm as an Urban/Economic Planning Consultant and Marketing Director in 1979. Counsellor and Deputy High Commissioner, Belize High Commission London, 1988. Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Belize to the UN in New York, 1989.

She was appointed as Ambassador to the UN by the previous United Democratic Party government only to lose her job quickly when the incoming Peoples United Party government replaced her with a political appointee of their own.

Unmarried. Said to be intelligent and sociable. Hobbies include fencing, equestrian sports, tennis, swimming, antiques.

A distant (perhaps second cousin) relation of Belizean Foreign Minister Dean Barrow.

EAm

file

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

2 July 1993

Dear George,

I have just heard of your narrow defeat in the general election. I am told that the election was a remarkable exercise in democracy, which in itself testifies to the profound influence you have had in the first years of the history of Belize as an independent state.

As you lay down the burdens of office, may I pay tribute to your outstanding record of leadership and service to your country over three decades, first as Chief Minister and then as Prime Minister? You have been one of the senior figures in the Commonwealth, and a good friend to the United Kingdom, as to our other Commonwealth partners.

It was a pleasure to see you here in London on your latest visit, and I send you my warmest good wishes for the future.

Yours Ever,
John

The Right Honourable George Price

SECRET

Jp02057

10

Prime Minister

Actually very close!

MR LYNE

cc Sir Robin Butler

Belize/Guatemala: Uncertainties remain.

The new Guatemalan government has clarified its position on Belize. On 28 June, Foreign Minister Fajardo said that de Leon's government would respect former President Serrano's decision to recognise Belize, work to improve bilateral relations and seek a solution to the outstanding territorial dispute.

2. But a policy of recognition and rapprochement with Belize is not widely supported in Guatemala. The constitutionality of Serrano's actions is again being challenged in the courts.

de Leon will be swayed by the popular mood when formulating his long-term Belize policy.

3. The bilateral relationship could be complicated by the outcome of the 30 June general election in Belize. The opposition have threatened to annul the territorial concessions which facilitated Serrano's decision to recognize Belize in 1991. The Guatemalans would regard this as a provocative move. Initial results suggest that the opposition have narrowly won the election.

4. Comment. The improvement in Belize/Guatemala relations was made possible by the personal commitment of Serrano and Prime Minister Price of Belize to achieving a lasting solution. Serrano is now out of office. Price ~~might shortly~~ has follow him. Whilst Fajardo's statement is reassuring, it is uncertain how Guatemala's Belize policy will develop. An opposition victory in the Belize election would add to this uncertainty.

Rodric Braithwaite

RODRIC BRAITHWAITE

1 July 1993

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c/c PS/No.10

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DIST ?

Prime Minister
Your message to Esquivel has gone.
Letter to Price follows.
Rotna

MODUK FOR ACDS(O), SEC(O)(C) AND DI (ROW)

SIC ACA
BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

SUMMARY
1. AFTER THE MOTHER OF ALL CLIFF-HANGERS THE OPPOSITION COALITION OF THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY (UDP) AND THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR BELIZEAN RIGHTS (NABR) HAVE BEEN DECLARED THE WINNER BY 16 SEATS TO 13. PRICE AND ESQUIVEL WILL HAVE SHORT HANDOVER CEREMONY TOMORROW WHEN ESQUIVEL WILL BE SWORN IN AS PRIME MINISTER.

2. THE MARGIN OF VOTES IN 5 SEATS WAS IN SINGLE FIGURES AND IN DOUBLE FIGURES IN A FURTHER 4 SEATS.

3. POLLING DAY PASSED OFF PEACEFULLY. BELIZEANS DAZED AND NOW DIGESTING THE UNEXPECTED RESULT WHICH ALL IN ALL IS GOOD FOR PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY HERE.

DETAIL
4. POLLING STATIONS CLOSED AT 1800 LOCAL YESTERDAY AND ALL RESULTS INCLUDING THE REMOTER DISTRICTS WERE EXPECTED TO BE IN BY AROUND 0300 IN ACCORDANCE WITH USUAL FORM. HOWEVER IT SOON BECAME APPARENT THAT THE OUTCOME WAS GOING TO BE CLOSE. AN EXTRAORDINARY SERIES OF CLIFF-HANGING RESULTS STARTED TO COME IN REQUIRING MANY RE-COUNTS, IN 2 CASES UP TO 5 IN ALL. BY 0630 THIS MORNING THE ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER WAS ABLE TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE UDP/NABR HAD WON WHEN THEY ACHIEVED 15 SEATS. THE FINAL RESULT CAME IN EARLY THIS AFTERNOON GIVING THE UDP/NABR A WORKING MAJORITY OF 16-13. THEY MADE 7 GAINS SCATTERED AROUND THE COUNTRY BUT INCLUDING 2 IN BELIZE CITY AND 2 IN THE FAR SOUTH. THE PUP MADE 2 GAINS IN THE NORTH AND ALSO CAPTURED THE NEWLY CREATED 29TH CONSTITUENCY.

5. BOTH PARTY LEADERS ONLY RETAINED THEIR BELIZE CITY CONSTITUENCIES (WHICH HAD BEEN SPECIALLY TARGETED BY THE OPPOSITION IN EACH CASE) BY NARROW MAJORITIES COLON 81 IN PRICE'S CASE, 35 IN ESQUIVEL'S. THE UDP GAINED 2 SEATS IN BELIZE CITY, ONE BY A MARGIN OF ONLY ONE VOTE AFTER SEVERAL RECOUNTS. THE UDP GAINED TOLEDO EAST AFTER FIVE RECOUNTS BY 4 VOTES AND RETAINED CONTROL OF ORANGE WALK NORTH BY 5 VOTES. THE PUP GAINED COROZAL SOUTH-WEST BY 3 VOTES AND BELIZE RURAL NORTH BY 4 VOTES. THERE WERE SEVERAL OTHER VERY CLOSE RESULTS WITH LOW DOUBLE FIGURE MARGINS. BY COMPARISON IN 1989 WHICH WAS ALSO A VERY CLOSE RESULT THERE WERE ONLY FIVE MAJORITIES IN DOUBLE FIGURES THE LOWEST BEING ELEVEN.

6. SIX MINISTERS LOST THEIR SEATS COLON MICHAEL ESPAT, THEODORE ARANDA, GUADALUPE PECH, CARLOS DIAZ, REMIJIO MONTEJO AND DANIEL SILVA. THE SEAT PREVIOUSLY HELD BY THE ONLY PUP BACK-BENCHER STANLEY USHER (ELECTED ON THE UDP TICKET IN 1989 HE HAD CROSSED THE FLOOR AND FAILED TO BE RE-SELECTED) WAS ALSO WON BY THE UDP.

7. THERE WERE WIDE DIFFERENCES IN TURNOUT. THIS WAS LOWEST IN BELIZE CITY ITSELF WHERE TURNOUT RANGED BETWEEN 56.1 PER CENT AND 71.6 PERCENT. IT WAS HIGHEST IN THE NORTHERN CONSTITUENCIES WHERE THE TURNOUT IN THE MAJORITY OF SEATS WAS WELL OVER 80 PER CENT THE HIGHEST BEING 88.3 PER CENT. THE HIGH LEVEL OF INTEREST UP THERE SEEMS TO BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO A COMBINATION OF VERY ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING BY BOTH SIDES PLUS THE EFFECT OF THE CONTROVERSY OVER 'ALIEN VOTERS' FROM CENTRAL AMERICA (MAINLY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS) WHICH EMERGED TOWARDS THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN AND MAY HAVE BOOMERANGED ON THE PUP BY ENCOURAGING UDP SUPPORTERS IN THE TOWNS TO TURN OUT.

8. POLLING DAY PASSED OFF PEACEFULLY (WET WEATHER IN THE SOUTH MAY HAVE HELPED) WITH NO UGLY INCIDENTS. THE VOTING PROCESS AND COUNTING WAS ADMIRABLY AND IMPECCABLY SUPERVISED BY THE ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER AND HIS STAFF.

9. TWO TV STATIONS IN BELIZE CITY AND THREE RADIO STATIONS PROVIDED COVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT. COMMENTATORS SEEMED TO BE BROADLY IN AGREEMENT THAT THE MAIN FACTOR BEHIND THE RESULT (APART FROM LUCK, SEE NEXT PARA) WAS FLOATING VOTER DISENCHANTMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT FOR HAVING TOO MANY MEMBERS WHO DID NOT CARE ABOUT ORDINARY PEOPLE ENOUGH AND SEEMED TO BE MORE INTERESTED IN ENRICHING THEMSELVES. THE RESULT FOLLOWED THE PATTERN OF THE PREVIOUS TWO GENERAL ELECTIONS SINCE INDEPENDENCE WHICH HAVE BOTH RESULTED IN DEFEAT FOR THE PARTY HOLDING POWER, SUGGESTING THAT BELIZEANS ARE RELUCTANT TO ALLOW THEIR

POLITICIANS TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE TERM OF OFFICE IN ORDER TO STOP THEM BECOMING TOO CORRUPT AND ARROGANT. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE MINISTERS WHO LOST THEIR SEATS WERE THE MOST INEFFECTIVE AND/OR CORRUPT ONES. THE HEAVYWEIGHT MINISTERS ALL SURVIVED AND WILL FORM A POWERFUL OPPOSITION TO THE INCOMING GOVERNMENT. SOME COMMENTATORS ALSO REGRETTED THAT THE TWO PARTY LEADERS MANAGED TO RETAIN THEIR SEATS MAKING THE POINT THAT IF THEY HAD LOST THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO INTRODUCE YOUNGER AND MORE VIGOROUS LEADERSHIP ON BOTH SIDES.

10. LUCK CERTAINLY SMILED ON THE UDP/NABR. FOR EXAMPE, IF 7 VOTERS HAD VOTED THE OPPOSITE WAY IN 3 PARTICULAR CONSTITUENCIES THE OVERALL RESULT WOULD HAVE BEEN EXACTLY REVERSED WITH THE PUP CONTINUING IN OFFICE WITH A WORKING MAJORITY.

11. IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC STATEMENTS AFTER VICTORY ESQUIVEL SAID THAT THE RESULTS SHOWED THAT PARTY ALLEGIANCE HAD BECOME LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE PERFORMANCE OF INVIDIDUAL MINISTERS IN OFFICE. HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE 'OLDER AND WISER' THAN WHEN THEY HAD LAST BEEN IN GOVERNMENT AND, HE FELT, MORE CAPABLE OF GOVERNING WELL AND SERVING THE PEOPLE. EVERY BELIZEAN WAS HOPING AND SEEKING FOR SOME IMPROVEMENT IN HIS LIVING CONDITIONS AND HE HOPED THAT THIS WAS WHAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES COULD OFFER.

12. MOST BELIZEANS HAD BEEN EXPECTING THE GOVERNMENT TO WIN AND HAVE BEEN DAZED BY THE EXTRAORDINARY SERIES OF VERY CLOSE RESULTS. THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN QUIET TODAY AND THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN LITTLE OF THE USUAL VICTORY PARADES AND OTHER SUCH MANIFESTATIONS NORMALLY MOUNTED BY THE WINNING SIDE. BOTH THE CAMPAIGN AND THE POLL HAVE DEMONSTRATED THE DEEP ATTACHMENT HERE TO PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND VIGOROUS PUBLIC DEBATE AND THE RESULT ALL IN ALL IS A HEALTHY ONE.

MACKILLIGIN

YYYY

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PLANNERS	MR KERBY

ADDITIONAL 3

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FILE ECL

SUBJECT MASTER ✓ FCO MOD

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

Filed on:

THE PRIME MINISTER

1 July 1993

Dear George,

Thank you for your letter of 31 May about the future of the British military presence in Belize. I was glad to be able to discuss your concerns when you called on me on 10 June. I hope you found your separate discussions with Malcolm Rifkind and David Heathcoat-Amory useful.

I understand Belizean concerns over developments in Guatemala and I hope that the election of Ramiro de Leon Carpio as President will signal an end to the recent upheaval. The new Guatemalan government have now reaffirmed their predecessors' policy on Belize, and we hope that progress towards improved relations will continue. As Malcolm Rifkind has already told you, we aim to exercise GR7 Harriers in Belize in September to show our support for Belize.

Thank you for agreeing that we can retain a resident military training team in Belize. I am glad that our military links will continue. Our commitment to the development of the Belize Defence Force will also continue, as will our programme of bilateral aid.

JK

I was touched by your kind words about our special relationship. I hope that it will be possible to arrange for a Harrier aircraft to remain in Belize as a symbol of the close friendship our two countries enjoy. We are finalising the details.

Yours Sincerely,
John Major

The Right Honourable George Price

Prime Minister

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 June 1993

Agree to C. Prentice, FCO.

Dear Roderic,

Belize: General Election

The general election takes place today. Our High Commissioner in Belmopan will report the result overnight.

It seems likely that George Price will be re-elected as Prime Minister. Even if Price is not elected, we recommend that the Prime Minister should send a short message of congratulation to the winner. A message delivered soon after the announcement of the election result would be much appreciated in Belize. I enclose alternative texts, which our High Commissioner could deliver on 1 July.

Yours ever,

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

UNCLASSIFIED DESKBY

ZCZC
UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO
TO DESKBY 011530Z BELMOPAN
TELNO
OF 301728Z JUNE 93

FROM LAD

BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION

1. Please pass the following message from the Prime Minister to George Price.

BEGINS
Dear George

Many congratulations on your election victory. Once again the people of Belize have shown their commitment to parliamentary democracy.

I know from our ~~brief~~ meeting on 10 June that you will continue to work tirelessly for the prosperity and security of Belize.

With best wishes. John

ENDS

2.

LAD C J DIX 2478

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PS/MR HEATHCOAT-AMORY
SIR J COLES
MR BEAMISH

ADDITIONAL
MOD SEC (O) (C)

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UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO
TO DESKBY 011530Z BELMOPAN
TELNO
OF 301731Z JUNE 93

FROM LAD

BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION

1. Please pass the following message from the Prime Minister to Esquivel.

BEGINS
Dear Mr Esquivel

Many congratulations on your election victory. Once again the people of Belize have shown their commitment to parliamentary democracy.

I wish you every success and look forward to working with you in the future.

Yours sincerely. John Major

ENDS

LAD C J DIX 2478

2. There will be no signed original.

HURD

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NEWS D
PS/MR HEATHCOAT-AMORY
SIR J COLES
MR BEAMISH

ADDITIONAL
MOD SEC (O) (C)

NNNN

RESTRICTED

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Letter to type pm.

Thm. 29/6

29 June 1993

Dear Roderic,

BELIZE: LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

Mr Price has replied to the Prime Minister's letter of 30 April, which informed him of our plans for the Belize garrison. A copy of the letter was enclosed with my letter of 9 June about Mr Price's call on the Prime Minister on 10 June. // I now enclose the original and a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, agreed with the MoD.

Mr Price's response is helpful and measured. He has accepted, without complaint, the main elements of our policy. His main concerns were that we should announce an early exercise in Belize involving GR7 Harriers to underline our political support for Belize in view of the recent upheavals in Guatemala, and reaffirm our readiness to help with Belize's future security needs. Mr Price's discussions on 10 June and / the press release issued by MoD the following day (copy enclosed) have, we hope, sufficiently addressed his needs in the run-up to the Belizean elections on 30 June.

We understand that MOD hope to be able to respond positively to the request that a Harrier be left in Belize as a momento, although some logistical problems need to be worked out first.

I am copying this letter to John Pitt-Brooke (MOD).

Yours ever,

Stephen.

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

Please Quote: 10/8/93

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan,
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

14 June 1993

His Excellency
The Right Honourable John Major
No.10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA
England, United Kingdom

Dear Prime Minister

I am most grateful to you and your government for receiving me on June 10, 1993, and for your assurance that Britain will not leave Belize on its own and also for the statement issued by the Foreign Office on the same day.

The unexpected events in Guatemala need careful watching as they continue to unfold in relation to Belize's security.

The future may indicate the need either for a further declaration of support with appropriate action or slowing the process of evolving the British military presence to a training facility.

I would wish that the consultation continue. Kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely

George Price

(GEORGE PRICE)
Prime Minister

THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY

UDP

RT. HON. MANUEL ESQUIVEL
Party Leader

19 KING STREET, BELIZE CITY,
BELIZE, CENTRAL AMERICA.
PHONE: 02-72576

May 18, 1993.

The Rt. Hon. John Major
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, England.

Dear Prime Minister:

The recent decision of your Government to terminate the United Kingdom's defense agreements with Belize has been received with grave misgivings and disappointment by the people of Belize.

As Leader of the Opposition in Belize, I am seeking support from members of Parliament and the British press for a review of your Government's position on this question.

As I am sure you know, the impact of the British withdrawal goes beyond our very real security concerns. While our national security is uppermost in the minds of all Belizeans, the loss of foreign exchange, the loss of hundreds of jobs, and the loss of unique emergency services provided by British forces in Belize will clearly affect the quality of life here. Britain's reduced presence in Belize will also cause shifts in the spheres of influence impacting on Belize which may be of concern to the United Kingdom in political and trade terms. For these reasons and more, my party is compelled to pursue this matter with a view to securing a greater level of committment from the British Government than that contained in the Parliamentary statement of May 13, 1993.

Sincerely,

Rt. Hon. Manuel Esquivel
Leader of the Opposition, Belize.

RESTRICTED

SUBJECT MASTER File

Filed on:

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

10 June 1993

Dear Stephen,

CALL BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE: THURSDAY 10 JUNE, 1015-1030

Mr. George Price called at Downing Street this morning for a photocall with the Prime Minister and a conversation of slightly under 15 minutes. The High Commissioner for Belize, Mr. Heathcoat-Amory and Sir John Coles were present.

Mr. Price hoped that the Government would arrange for the new mark of Harrier aircraft to visit Belize for exercises. He said that he was also seeking an assurance that, should Belize be threatened, Britain would respond to its security needs. He hoped that he would be able to return to Belize with agreement on these points and to use them to refute the attacks which were being made on him by the Opposition. The Prime Minister anticipated that Mr. Heathcoat-Amory and the Defence Secretary would be able to offer Mr. Price good news on the Harriers. Mr. Heathcoat-Amory stressed that we were not abandoning Belize; there would be a training facility. The future situation would obviously depend on events in Guatemala. Mr. Price stressed that it was important for the Harriers to come at an early date. Sir John Coles said that we had an early sortie in mind. We would also be putting out a statement at the end of Mr. Price's visit which would recognise his security concerns. He quoted from the statement made to the House of Commons on 13 May by Mr. Garel-Jones. Mr. Price expressed appreciation, but said that it would be helpful if we were able to go a little further.

The Prime Minister sought Mr. Price's advice on the new President of Guatemala. Both Britain and Belize should press him to reaffirm Guatemala's existing policy on Belize. Mr. Price said that he did not know Ramiro De Leon Carpio personally. He had previously opposed recognition of Belize on technical grounds. However, Mr. Price had now heard from his own

representative in Guatemala that the new President now acknowledged the status of Belize. Sir John Coles said that the Americans seemed to have had assurances to this effect from President De Leon Carpio. The Prime Minister commented that an assurance to the United States should be a bankable asset for Belize. Mr. Price hoped that the Guatemalan President could be persuaded to make a public statement.

After brief exchanges about the election campaign in Belize and the improving economic situation in the UK, the meeting ended as Cabinet was assembling.

Comment

So far as I could judge, the meeting exactly met the requirements of both sides. George Price, for whom the Prime Minister has warm feelings, got his photocall, and a chance to make his points to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was able to underline our continuing concern for Belize, but without sacrificing more than 15 minutes from his diary. I hope we shall be able to repeat this formula with one or two other foreign visitors.

I am copying this letter to John Pitt-Brooke (Ministry of Defence) and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Roderic

RODERIC LYNE

J.S. Smith, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

cc RB
b/p
Persc

CONFIDENTIAL

9 June 1993

Dear Roderic,

CALL BY BELIZEAN PRIME MINISTER, 10 JUNE AT 1015

George Price will be grateful to the Prime Minister for sparing a few minutes of his time on Thursday morning. Price's visit to London, arranged at short notice, is closely linked to the campaign for the general election to be held in Belize on 30 June, almost certainly the last campaign the 75 year old Price will fight. In an aide memoire given to our High Commissioner, Price has asked specifically for:

- an announcement now of a decision to deploy the new GR7 Harriers to Belize on exercise;

- a clear assurance that Britain is sensitive to Belize's security concerns; that it will keep the situation in Guatemala under constant review; and that, in the unlikely event of a military threat developing in the future, we will stand ready to act in response to Belize's security needs.

He also no doubt hopes that photographs of himself with the Prime Minister will help his campaign.

We should not get drawn into Belize's domestic politics, but there are reasons to give what help we can to Price. We announced in the House of Commons on 13 May (copy enclosed) our plans to reduce the garrison in Belize over the next 15 months. Price's measured response (his reply of 31 May to the Prime Minister's letter of 30 April is also enclosed) contrasts sharply with the scare tactics being used by the opposition, who have been exploiting developments in Guatemala and suggesting that the Belize government itself requested the ~~evolution~~ reduction of the British garrison. The Opposition may seek to make mischief out of Price's meeting with the Prime Minister during the election campaign, but Price needs our support. Price will face a tough fight in the election campaign: our High Commissioner in Belmopan expects he will win, but the result is not a foregone conclusion.

Foreign &
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Recent events in Guatemala have lent credence to claims by the Belizean opposition that it is premature to base policy on any assumption that the neighbour will remain stable. The immediate outcome in Guatemala is better than we had feared, with the election as President of the former human rights procurator Ramiro de Leon Carpio. The road to real stability there is likely to be a long one. However, relations with Belize were not an issue in the recent crisis. We judge it unlikely that the Guatemalan government will change policy towards Belize, and we are pressing them for a public statement about their good-neighbourly intentions. We continue to see no basis for changing our plans on the garrison.

The call on the Prime Minister will be Mr Price's first meeting of the day. He will be accompanied by the Belizean High Commissioner in London, Bobby Leslie. He will immediately afterwards have a further half hour with Mr Heathcoat-Amory (who will also accompany him to No 10) and will have a meeting in the afternoon at the MOD, with Mr Rifkind, Mr Hanley and the Chief of the Defence Staff. The MOD meeting in particular will allow more detailed discussion of the concerns set out in Mr Price's letter, particularly on future deployment of the GR7 Harriers to Belize. In view of the events in Guatemala, MOD have agreed that an exercise deployment of GR7s (which have now replaced the older GR3s with the RAF) should go to Belize for a short period, probably in September, to underline our political support for Belize. On the wider assurance requested, we do not wish to enter into as open-ended a commitment as the Belizeans want, and would prefer to stick to the formula of the 13 May announcement.

The Prime Minister might take the following line with Mr Price:

- Glad to have this opportunity for a chat, but sorry that there is not more time.

- Much appreciate constructive attitude on the garrison, set out in your letter of 31 May. Will provide a formal reply shortly, but believe that your meeting at MOD this afternoon will allow discussion of your specific concerns. In particular should have good news for you on Harrier deployment.

- (If raised) Recognise your security concerns as set out in aide memoire. Reaffirm our readiness to play a part in any consultations the Belize authorities may request on Belize's future security. The statement we plan to make after your calls today will make this clear.

- Understand Belizean concerns over recent developments in Guatemala. Clear that stability in Guatemala not to be taken for granted. But believe that Belize was not an issue in recent crisis. Encourage you to get Guatemalans to reaffirm policy on Belize. Hope that election of De Leon Carpio as President will point the country in a more positive direction.

- Look forward to seeing you (election permitting!) at CHOGM in Cyprus in October.

I am copying this letter to John Pitt-Brooke (MOD).

Yours ever,

Stephen.

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

CALL BY BELIZEAN PRIME MINISTER, 10 JUNE

POINTS TO MAKE

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Please Quote: 10/8/93

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan,
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

31 May 1993

His Excellency
The Right Honourable John Major
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA
England, United Kingdom

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 1993 about the future of the British military presence in Belize. We do appreciate the support we have had and we value your interest in this important matter of mutual concern.

It should not come as a surprise that we are disappointed that you have decided to make fundamental changes in the defence arrangements between our countries. These new arrangements are becoming increasingly difficult for the Belizean people to understand in the light of recent developments in

Guatemala. Furthermore I am sure you appreciate that there is a need to improve the capability of the Belize Defence Force and to step up our economic cooperation programmes in order to better cushion the likely economic impact of the evolution.

Your decision to phase the reduction of the Garrison over a period of time is most helpful in this new situation. Indeed we are further assured by your decision to accept our offer of maintaining a training presence. There are, however, important reasons why we hope you will be able to accept the presentational adjustments regarding the Harrier withdrawal and transfer of defence responsibility which I discussed with the British High Commissioner and Air Vice Marshall Baldwin. They will have reported to your Government the sensitive issues involved. Furthermore it would give the Belizean people more confidence in this delicate period if you would see it fit to reinforce the Garrison with an early exercise deployment of the new Harriers.

We shall review the current development plans for our forces so that they can take on the responsibility for the defence of Belize at the turn of this year. As you may imagine this is a daunting prospect and we therefore welcome your continued support for both their training and, hopefully, for the provision of equipment and financial support to enable us to accelerate the expansion process. In particular new communications equipment is the highest amongst a number of urgent priorities. The details of our requests have been recently discussed with Brigadier Leask and my Military Adviser, Lt. Col. Bradley.

Belizeans knew that this day would arrive, and we understand that, with your many defence responsibilities, difficult decisions have to be made. The Belizean people will always be grateful for the United Kingdom's help, and we greatly value the special relationship between our countries. Should, Belize be threatened again, I feel confident that we can turn to you for help. Your forces will always be welcome in Belize.

Finally, I have what may seem an unusual request. The Belizean people have always had a very high regard for the Harriers. Therefore I am asking whether one could be left behind as a memento to this contribution to the defence of Belize.

I would like to conclude by thanking you personally for your understanding and concern for Belize and hope that this will continue for many years to come.

Sincerely,

George Price

Mr. Parry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to his answer of 14 April, *Official Report*, column 578, what measures Her Majesty's Government are taking to combat international terrorism sponsored by Iran.

Mr. Douglas Hogg: We shall continue our efforts, both through bilateral co-operation and international forums, to combat all forms of state support for international terrorism. We and our European partners made clear our concern about Iran's behaviour in this area at the Edinburgh summit in December 1992.

Belize

Sir Thomas Arnold: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if it is his policy to guarantee the frontier of Belize with Guatemala; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Garel-Jones: Our policy is to contribute all we can to the continuing improvement in relations between Belize and Guatemala and to encourage a full and final settlement of the border dispute between the two countries.

Mr. Tredinnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the latest situation regarding the Belize garrison; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Garel-Jones: The British garrison has been deployed in Belize since 1948. The Central American region, of which Belize forms a part, has recently seen a welcome transformation in its political and security circumstances. The civil wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador are over: peace talks are in progress in Guatemala's 30-year domestic conflict: and progress towards regional integration is gathering speed. Central America's major neighbours, the Group of 3—Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela—are playing a part in this process, as is the United States. So is Britain, with its EC partners, through the San José dialogue between the EC and Central America.

In 1991 Guatemala recognised Belize as a sovereign and independent state; diplomatic relations were subsequently established and much progress has been made since then towards a normal bilateral relationship. The time has now come for the British military presence in Belize to evolve, to reflect the improvements in the regional political and security picture and in the very welcome and encouraging developments in Belize/Guatemala relations. Accordingly, over the next year or so, the garrison will be gradually reduced. At the request of and with the agreement of the Government of Belize, the British military presence will take the form of a training operation for United Kingdom troops. The formal responsibility for the defence of Belize will pass from British Forces to the Belize defence force at a date to be announced in due course. Britain stands ready to play a part in any consultations that the Belize authorities may request on Belize's future security.

The British troop presence in Belize is of long standing. Her Majesty's Government welcome the developments in Belize's bilateral and regional relationships which permit this evolution of the British troop presence. Her Majesty's Government have assisted since Belizean independence in 1981 with the development of the Belize defence force—BDF—through the provision of loan service personnel, equipment, training and advice. We will maintain our programme of assistance to the BDF to sustain and improve the force's capability. Belize will of course also continue to be a beneficiary under Britain's bilateral aid programme.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the health situation in relation to marasmus, kwashiokor, and malaria in Iraq; and what response he has made to the latest Harvard study of the medical situation in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, a copy of which has been sent to him.

Mr. Douglas Hogg *[holding answer 12 May 1993]:* We are aware of reports that the general standard of health in Iraq continues to decline as a result of the failure of the Government of Iraq to use their existing resources for the benefit of those in need in Iraq. I have not seen a copy of any recent Harvard study.

HEALTH

Abortions

Mrs. Bridget Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of NHS abortions is provided through agency arrangements, *(a)* nationally and *(b)* for each district health authority;

(2) which district health authorities have agency arrangements for the provision of NHS abortions.

Mr. Sackville: The information will be placed in the Library. For reasons of confidentiality, statistics for district health authorities are presented by DHA of woman's usual residence, not by DHA of termination.

Agency arrangements for provision of national health service abortions are agreed between individual DHAs and the private sector. They are set up to provide for the needs of the DHA's resident population. Central receipt of the notification of dates when agency arrangements come into effect, and when they are dissolved, can be subject to delay and therefore the figures should be interpreted with caution.

AZT

Mr. Galloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library a list of all the fully completed research on the effects of AZT on patients with either ARC or AIDS distinguishing the research that shows conclusively that AZT is of benefit in such cases.

Dr. Mawhinney: The Licensing Authority receives reports of fully completed research as part of a licensing application. The information relating to licensing applications is confidential in accordance with section 118 of the Medicines Act 1968. However, most of the extensive research has been published in the scientific literature and copies will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Galloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what grounds the drug AZT was given fast-track licensing by the Committee on the Safety of Medicines; and if she will make a statement.

Dr. Mawhinney: The licence application for Retrovir (AZT) was given fast-track status by the Licensing

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH GEORGE PRICE, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE, 1015 TO 1025 THURSDAY 10 JUNE

Background

This is a photo opportunity, plus a few minutes chat. The briefing is therefore very short. The aim is to give Price a boost before his election campaign as he is being helpful over the reduction of our garrison.

David Heathcoat-Amory and Sir John Coles will attend, and will take Price off to a meeting at the Foreign Office when you have to break off for Cabinet.

Conversation points and line to take

- I was keen not to miss the chance of a quick chat. Sorry that Cabinet makes this such a short meeting.

- Prospects for your election campaign (general election on 30 June)? Understand it is now 32 years since you first took office, as First Minister. A remarkable record of service to your country.

- **Garrison**: many thanks for your letter of 31 May, and for the understanding you have shown of our decision.

- I shall of course send a formal reply shortly.

- In the meantime, you will be able to discuss your specific concerns when you see Malcolm Rifkind, Jeremy Hanley and Sir Peter Harding this afternoon.

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- I shall of course send a formal reply shortly.

- In the meantime, you will be able to discuss your specific concerns when you see Malcolm Rifkind, Jeremy Hanley and Sir Peter Harding this afternoon.

- I do not wish to steal their thunder, but I believe that they may have good news on your request for a decision to deploy Harriers to Belize on exercise.

- **[if raised]**: I recognise the security concerns you set out in your aide memoire. Do please discuss them in more detail with David Heathcoat-Amory and with MOD. As you know, we are ready to play a part in any consultations your Government might request on the future security of Belize. We shall make this clear in the statement to be issued at the end of your visit.

- **[if raised]**: I understand that the recent abrupt change of leader in Guatemala is bound to cause concern in Belize. We should obviously not be complacent about Guatemala. But Belize was evidently not an issue in the recent internal crisis there.
- I hope that the election of Ramiro De Leon Carpio as President will point Guatemala in a more positive direction. I believe he was a human rights procurator. How do you view him?

- We should both press Guatemala to reaffirm its policy on Belize.

Farewell note

Not for me to anticipate democratic process in Belize on 30 June, but I much look forward to seeing you if you come to the Commonwealth Meeting in Cyprus in October. This would give us the chance of a longer chat.

RMJL.

RODERIC LYNE

9 June 1993

k:\foreign\price.kk

P.A.
S. 8/6

~~Duty Clerk~~
Assume * is automatic?

cc Christina Laidlaw
~~Sandra~~ Philips

copy to ~~Sandra~~ Philips.

PM has agreed, as you see. I have told FCO. For diary + photocall arrangements pse.

PRIME MINISTER

— Yes, gratefully you could arrange. S 8/6

note your to manage
MCS 8/6

REQUEST FOR PHOTO OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE ON THURSDAY 10 JUNE

RML 8/6

George
~~Charles~~ Price has invited himself over from Belize this week, mainly to help his chances in the 30 June election. He is very keen to have a photo opportunity here - though his substantive talks will be with the Foreign Office and MOD.

It is in our interests to grant his request because he is being cooperative over the run-down of the British garrison in Belize (the Opposition, on the other hand, are criticising our plans).

The best way of handling this might be to invite Price in from 1015 to 1025 (accompanied by Mr. Heathcoat-Amory). With the Cabinet gathering, it would be obvious to Price why the meeting could not be extended beyond a photograph at the front door and a quick cup of coffee in the Cabinet Room. He could shake a few Cabinet hands on his way to the front door.

The alternative would be to hold the meeting at 5 pm. But we would have a less obvious reason for keeping it to ten minutes - and therefore a risk that it would encroach on speech preparation time.

Do you agree to a photo opportunity and cup of coffee ~~for~~ from 1015 to 1025? *

Roderic

RODERIC LYNE
7 June 1993
k:\foreign\price.kk

RESTRICTED covering CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 June 1993

Dear Roderic,

BELIZE: REQUEST FOR CALL BY PRIME MINISTER PRICE

We announced on 13 May our plans for the evolution of the British garrison in Belize. Prime Minister Price reacted moderately and sensibly. Since then, however, the political situation in Guatemala has become unstable; and Mr Price has called a general election on 30 June. The security of Belize is likely to be a significant issue in the election campaign.

On 3 June Mr Price requested early talks in London with FCO and MOD Ministers. He explained that there was widespread anxiety in Belize about events in Guatemala and that the Opposition party were determined to exploit the situation for electoral purposes. He needed to make a positive move to counter these tactics. Hence his request for consultation in London.

Given his constructive approach to our garrison plans, it is much in our interests to meet his request for talks. (The Opposition in Belize is taking a critical line on the garrison reduction plans, and if elected could create difficulties). We expect to be able at those talks to tell Price that we can meet his request for an exercise deployment of Harriers later this year (the 4 Harriers in Belize will leave over the next few weeks); and we can take the opportunity to reinforce Price in his moderate approach on the garrison.

Prime Minister Price has indicated that he attaches great value to a short call on the Prime Minister, no more than a photo-opportunity. He was disappointed not to be able to see the Prime Minister on his visit to the UK in October. An important element in his request is the election campaign: again it is in our interests to meet him on this.

Appointments for Mr Price are being arranged on Thursday 10 June with Mr Hanley at 2.30 pm and with Mr Heathcoat-Amory at 3.30pm. We hope it will be possible for Mr Price to call briefly on the Prime Minister at some point that day. Mr Heathcoat-Amory would be available to escort Mr Price across to No 10 and to take him away after the call.

RESTRICTED covering CONFIDENTIAL

I take this opportunity to enclose an assessment agreed with Cabinet Office of the latest situation in Guatemala. It is too early to assess what the outcome will be and hence what the implications are for Belize. There is as yet no reason to modify our plans to reduce the garrison but we shall keep the situation under close review. I also enclose a copy of Prime Minister Price's reply of 31 May to the Prime Minister's letter, informing him of our plans for the garrison. We shall submit a reply after Mr Price's visit.

Yours ever,

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

GUATEMALA: SITREP 4 JUNE

1. On 25 May, President Serrano partly suspended Guatemala's constitution and dissolved Congress, claiming his actions to be in response to drugs trafficking, street violence, corruption in political and judicial institutions, and the failure of talks with the URNG guerrillas. Although Serrano consulted senior army officers, the decision to act appears to have been his own.

2. Internal opposition to Serrano's actions quickly gained momentum: the judiciary, Congress, the Church, trade unions and business leaders all demanded his resignation. Over the weekend of 29/30 May, the military joined the calls for his removal. Athough Serrano refused to resign, he was, in effect, removed from power on 1 June.

3. The Constitutional Court ruled on 2 June that both Serrano and Vice-President Espina had acted unconstitutionally. Serrano, under pressure from the military, left Guatemala later that day and is now in El Salvador. Following Serrano's departure, Vice-President Espina attempted to take over as President: it is not clear whether he has gained the support of Congress.

4. Whilst the military appear genuinely determined not to take a high profile in the long term, they are leading current efforts to resolve the constitutional crisis. There are indications of a split developing in the military, with Defence Minister General Garcia Samayoa and the High Command supporting a return to constitutional order while the

Presidential Chief of Staff, General Ortega, with the support of the most reactionary elements of the army and the traditional private sector, may be hoping to install Espina as a puppet President.

5. Comment. Serrano and his opponents were responding to domestic considerations. But a number of those Guatemalans who were most vociferous in calling for Serrano's removal also led the opposition to his recognition of Belize. A new government might change his policy of cooperation and dialogue with Belize. In this atmosphere of confusion and uncertainty the threat of military action against Belize has marginally increased. The prospect of an incursion, however, remains low.

LATIN AMERICA DEPARTMENT
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

4 June 1993

Quote 10/8/93

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

31 May 1993

His Excellency
The Right Honourable John Major
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA
England, United Kingdom

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 1993 about the future of the British military presence in Belize. We do appreciate the support we have had and we value your interest in this important matter of mutual concern.

It should not come as a surprise that we are disappointed that you have decided to make fundamental changes in the defence arrangements between our countries. These new arrangements are becoming increasingly difficult for the Belizean people to understand in the light of recent developments in

Guatemala. Furthermore I am sure you appreciate that there is a need to improve the capability of the Belize Defence Force and to step up our economic cooperation programmes in order to better cushion the likely economic impact of the situation.

Your decision to phase the reduction of the Garrison over a period of time is most helpful in this new situation. Indeed we are further assured by your decision to accept our offer of maintaining a training presence. There are, however, important reasons why we hope you will be able to accept the presentational adjustments regarding the Harrier withdrawal and transfer of defence responsibility which I discussed with the British High Commissioner and Air Vice Marshall Baldwin. They will have reported to your Government the sensitive issues involved. Furthermore it would give the Belizean people more confidence in this delicate period if you would see it fit to reinforce the Garrison with an early exercise deployment of the new Harriers.

We shall review the current development plans for our forces so that they can take on the responsibility for the defence of Belize at the turn of this year. As you may imagine this is a daunting prospect and we therefore welcome your continued support for both their training and, hopefully, for the provision of equipment and financial support to enable us to accelerate the expansion process. In particular new communications equipment is the highest amongst a number of urgent priorities. The details of our requests have been recently discussed with Brigadier Leask and my Military Adviser, Lt. Col. Bradley.

Belizeans knew that this day would arrive, and we understand that, with your many defence responsibilities, difficult decisions have to be made. The Belizean people will always be grateful for the United Kingdom's help, and we greatly value the special relationship between our countries. Should, Belize be threatened again, I feel confident that we can turn to you for help. Your forces will always be welcome in Belize.

Finally, I have what may seem an unusual request. The Belizean people have always had a very high regard for the Harriers. Therefore I am asking whether one could be left behind as a memento to this contribution to the defence of Belize.

I would like to conclude by thanking you personally for your understanding and concern for Belize and hope that this will continue for many years to come.

Sincerely

George Price

copy to Sandra Phillips.

cc Christina Laidlaw
Sandra Phillips

PM has agreed, as you see. I have told FCO. For diary + photocall arrangements pse.

RML.
8/6

PRIME MINISTER

REQUEST FOR PHOTO OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE ON THURSDAY 10 JUNE

George ~~Charles~~ Price has invited himself over from Belize this week, mainly to help his chances in the 30 June election. He is very keen to have a photo opportunity here - though his substantive talks will be with the Foreign Office and MOD.

It is in our interests to grant his request because he is being cooperative over the run-down of the British garrison in Belize (the Opposition, on the other hand, are criticising our plans).

The best way of handling this might be to invite Price in from 1015 to 1025 (accompanied by Mr. Heathcoat-Amory). With the Cabinet gathering, it would be obvious to Price why the meeting could not be extended beyond a photograph at the front door and a quick cup of coffee in the Cabinet Room. He could shake a few Cabinet hands on his way to the front door.

The alternative would be to hold the meeting at 5 pm. But we would have a less obvious reason for keeping it to ten minutes - and therefore a risk that it would encroach on speech preparation time.

Do you agree to a photo opportunity and cup of coffee ~~for~~ from 1015 to 1025?

Roderic

RODERIC LYNE
7 June 1993
k:\foreign\price.kk

RESTRICTED covering CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 June 1993

Dear Roderic,

BELIZE: REQUEST FOR CALL BY PRIME MINISTER PRICE

We announced on 13 May our plans for the evolution of the British garrison in Belize. Prime Minister Price reacted moderately and sensibly. Since then, however, the political situation in Guatemala has become unstable; and Mr Price has called a general election on 30 June. The security of Belize is likely to be a significant issue in the election campaign.

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RESTRICTED covering CONFIDENTIAL

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Yours ever,

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

GUATEMALA: SITREP 4 JUNE

1. On 25 May, President Serrano partly suspended Guatemala's constitution and dissolved Congress, claiming his actions to be in response to drugs trafficking, street violence, corruption in political and judicial institutions, and the failure of talks with the URNG guerrillas. Although Serrano consulted senior army officers, the decision to act appears to have been his own.

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Presidential Chief of Staff, General Ortega, with the support of the most reactionary elements of the army and the traditional private sector, may be hoping to install Espina as a puppet President.

5. Comment. Serrano and his opponents were responding to domestic considerations. But a number of those Guatemalans who were most vociferous in calling for Serrano's removal also led the opposition to his recognition of Belize. A new government might change his policy of cooperation and dialogue with Belize. In this atmosphere of confusion and uncertainty the threat of military action against Belize has marginally increased. The prospect of an incursion, however, remains low.

LATIN AMERICA DEPARTMENT
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

4 June 1993

I-93 TUE 18:37 BRITISH COMMISSION P.03

Belmopan 10/8/93

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

31 May 1993

His Excellency
The Right Honourable John Major
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA
England, United Kingdom

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 1993 about the future of the British military presence in Belize. We do appreciate the support we have had and we value your interest in this important matter of mutual concern.

It should not come as a surprise that we are disappointed that you have decided to make fundamental changes in the defence arrangements between our countries. These new arrangements are becoming increasingly difficult for the Belizean people to understand in the light of recent developments in

Guatemala. Furthermore I am sure you appreciate that there is a need to improve the capability of the Belize Defence Force and to step up our economic cooperation programmes in order to better cushion the likely economic impact of the evacuation.

Your decision to phase the reduction of the Garrison over a period of time is most helpful in this new situation. Indeed we are further assured by your decision to accept our offer of maintaining a training presence. There are, however, important reasons why we hope you will be able to accept the presentational adjustments regarding the Harrier withdrawal and transfer of defence responsibility which I discussed with the British High Commissioner and Air Vice Marshall Baldwin. They will have reported to your Government the sensitive issues involved. Furthermore it would give the Belizean people more confidence in this delicate period if you would see it fit to reinforce the Garrison with an early exercise deployment of the new Harriers.

We shall review the current development plans for our forces so that they can take on the responsibility for the defence of Belize at the turn of this year. As you may imagine this is a daunting prospect and we therefore welcome your continued support for both their training and, hopefully, for the provision of equipment and financial support to enable us to accelerate the expansion process. In particular new communications equipment is the highest amongst a number of urgent priorities. The details of our requests have been recently discussed with Brigadier Leask and my Military Adviser, Lt. Col. Bradley.

Belizeans knew that this day would arrive, and we understand that, with your many defence responsibilities, difficult decisions have to be made. The Belizean people will always be grateful for the United Kingdom's help, and we greatly value the special relationship between our countries. Should Belize be threatened again, I feel confident that we can turn to you for help. Your forces will always be welcome in Belize.

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I would like to conclude by thanking you personally for your understanding and concern for Belize and hope that this will continue for many years to come.

Sincerely

George Price

SUBJECT ✓
MASTER

Filed on:

Please Quote: 10/8/93

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan,
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

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Sincerely.

George Price

NB I checked the date with Loy - see last para. Rog

SUBJECT MASTER file EAM

Filed on: cc OPD + NIO GO

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

30 April 1993

Dear George,

In my letter of 4 December 1991, I reaffirmed our commitment to maintain the British garrison in Belize for as long as it was needed, but also noted that our aim was to reduce our military presence as and when circumstances permitted. You will be aware that the future of the garrison has been under review. This process was close to completion before we received your Foreign Minister's letter of 2 April to Douglas Hurd. We have carefully considered the points Mr Musa made, but we have concluded that the main findings of the review must stand. The purpose of this letter is to let you know what they are.

Like you, we have been heartened by the progress made in relations between Belize and Guatemala. Guatemalan recognition of Belize in 1991 as a sovereign and independent state and the subsequent establishment of diplomatic relations between your two countries, were substantial achievements. We have been impressed by your efforts to maintain progress towards complete normalisation of relations. The Guatemalan claim remains in existence, Guatemala no longer threatens Belize militarily and, despite domestic difficulties, President Serrano's Government appears genuine in its wish to see a peaceful resolution of this long-running dispute. Although this may be a long process, we remain ready to do what we can to help.

It was against this background that we felt that the time had come to reassess our military role in Belize. We have concluded that there is scope for our military presence to evolve to match the new political circumstances. We recognise that a rapid change in force levels could be unsettling domestically in Belize and have therefore decided that reductions should be phased over a period of rather more than one year. We hope this will allow you maximum flexibility in presenting the changes to the Belizean people.

The only garrison change planned for 1993 will be withdrawal of the Harriers in June. As you know, we have been considering the future of these aircraft for some time. Harriers could of course be deployed from the United Kingdom if necessary, but the aircraft in Belize are old and increasingly expensive to operate. We have concluded that, given the much reduced threat, we can no longer maintain them in Belize.

We plan to make a start on reducing the garrison in January 1994, but intend to maintain a significant military presence, around half the present force level, through to September of next year. After September 1994, and with your agreement, we would propose to leave in place a training facility for British forces which would deploy from the United Kingdom to train in Belize. Our commitment to assist with the development of the Belize Defence Force will stand.

Once implementation of these changes begins next year, the arrangements under which the United Kingdom provides assistance to the defence of Belize will come to an end. However, I must emphasise that, should the security of Belize once again come under threat, we would stand ready to be consulted and to play a part in discussions with other countries on Belize's future security.

Finally, in deciding the level of our bilateral aid to Belize, we shall take into account the implications of the evolution of the garrison in addition of course to the joint road project with Guatemala, which I understand has reached the project identification stage. I hope that these measures will help to maintain the momentum of Belize's economic development.

I hope you find this outline of our plans useful and timely. These changes do not in any way represent a lessening of our political support for Belize or our concern for your country's future security and prosperity. We shall maintain our military links and consult you fully as detailed plans for the changes take shape. Co-ordination between our officials will also be needed on the timing of a public announcement. We would hope to do this in the United Kingdom in about ten days time by means of an answer to a Parliamentary question.

Yours sincerely

John M.

The Right Honourable George Price

CONFIDENTIAL

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 071-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 6/20/3G

27 April 1993

Dear Roderic

attached

BELIZE: BRITISH GARRISON

The Secretary of State was grateful for sight of the Foreign Secretary's minute of 26th April. He is entirely content with the draft letter from the Prime Minister, subject to one amendment in the third paragraph. The Defence Secretary believes that it would be appropriate to delete the proposed reference to pressures on the defence budget. Though there will obviously be financial advantage to the Government from reducing our commitment in Belize, it is not for this reason that we are doing so. Accordingly, the third paragraph of the Prime Minister's letter might better read as follows:

> "It was against this background that we felt that the time had come .....".

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretaries of other members of OPD, of the Northern Ireland Secretary, and of Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever

Peter

(P RYAN)
Private Secretary

R M J Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

Recycled Paper

Belize: Defs
CC79

CC 23

PM/93/023

PRIME MINISTER

Belize: British Garrison

1. Your Private Secretary's letter of 5 April to John Pitt-Brooke at the Ministry of Defence confirmed your agreement to the phased reduction of our military presence in Belize and your readiness to write to the Prime Minister of Belize, George Price, at the appropriate time. I believe Mr Price should be given early notice of our plans, not least to end the uncertainty created by recent speculation in the press about the garrison's future. I enclose a draft letter, drawn up by officials here and in MOD, for your signature.

2. Mr Price will not be surprised by our plans for the evolution of our military presence, but they will make a considerable impact on the domestic political scene in Belize. I have recently received a letter from the Belizean Foreign Minister making clear his government's concern over recent reports that we intend to withdraw the garrison. Careful presentation is therefore essential to gain Mr Price's understanding and to help him defend the changes to the Belizean public. We propose that your letter should be delivered by the British High Commissioner in Belmopan who will be accompanied by a senior MOD official. They will be fully briefed to explain certain measures designed to underline our continued political support for Belize and commitment to assisting with the development of the Belize Defence Force.

and a doctor with tranquillisers"

3. We need to keep the Americans and, to a lesser extent, the Mexicans and Guatemalans informed of our plans. Once Mr Price has been informed of the changes, but before any public announcement is made (probably through an inspired PQ), we will ask our Embassies in those countries to brief their host governments. Malcolm Rifkind mentioned the issue during his visit to Washington last week. We will need later to give the Americans the fuller picture and to float their possible involvement in contingency planning.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to other members of OPD, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and Sir Robin Butler.

Stephen Smith.
for DOUGLAS HURD

(Approved by the Foreign Secretary and signed by Private Secretary in his absence abroad)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
26 April 1993

Draft from the Prime Minister

Type for signature for PM

The Right Honourable George Price
Prime Minister of Belize

In my letter of 4 December 1991, I reaffirmed our commitment to maintain the British garrison in Belize for as long as it was needed, but also noted that our aim was to reduce our military presence as and when circumstances permitted. You will be aware that the future of the garrison has been under review. This process was close to completion before we received your Foreign Minister's letter of 2 April to Douglas Hurd. We have carefully considered the points Mr Musa made, but we have concluded that the main findings of the review must stand. The purpose of this letter is to let you know what they are.

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It was against this background, and the increasing pressures on our defence resources, that we felt that the time had come to reassess our military role in Belize. We have concluded that there is scope for our military presence to evolve to match the new political circumstances. We recognise that a rapid change in

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Once implementation of these changes begins next year, the arrangements under which the UK provides assistance to the defence of Belize will come to an end. However, I must emphasize that, ~~we would of course be open to consultation~~ should the security of Belize once again come under threat, we would ~~and would be happy~~ show ready to be consulted and to play a part in discussions with other countries on Belize's future security.

Finally, in deciding the level of our bilateral aid to Belize, we shall take into account the implications of the evolution of the garrison in addition of course to the joint road project with Guatemala, which I understand has reached the project identification stage. I hope that these measures will help to maintain the momentum of Belize's economic development.

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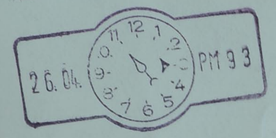
Belize, Mil Sit, 1993



CF papers.

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

cc/RB
CIKO
Scan

16 April 1993

To type for
Mrs.
Up

Dear Roderic,

keep on file

Belize: Letter from the Commonwealth Secretary-General

Thank you for your letter of 8 April. We agree that the Prime Minister should respond to Chief Anyaoku in friendly terms without going into detail about our plans for the Belize garrison. I enclose a draft along these lines which also covers the Secretary-General's remark about bananas.

Yours ever,

Stephen.

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO

His Excellency Chief Emeka Anyaoku
Office of the Commonwealth Secretary-General
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
LONDON SW1Y 5HX

Thank you for your letter of 8 April about your recent visit to the Caribbean. I appreciate your comments on the issue of bananas. The negotiations within the Community were long and difficult. Even after we reached agreement last year on the future arrangements, there was considerable difficulty in settling the legal text. We were determined to see that the EC Member States were fully aware of the importance of bananas to the Caribbean region. I am glad that the Community was able, in the end, to agree on measures which should ensure the future of that industry.

I am grateful also for your interest in the matter of the British Garrison in Belize. The Belizean Foreign Minister has ~~also~~ recently written to Douglas Hurd. I can assure you that in seeking to balance the conflicting pressures on this problem, we will remain fully conscious of the concerns expressed by Mr Price and his Foreign Minister.

Belize Rels

File
Gl Anyaoku. 8M

CCRB

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

8 April 1993

From the Private Secretary

LETTER FROM COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY-GENERAL

I attach Chief Anyaoku's letter of today's date to the Prime Minister. As you will see, George Price, typically, has got at Anyaoku, and is lobbying to pre-empt the run down of the British defence commitment to Belize which has been the subject of separate correspondence.

I should be grateful for a short and friendly reply to the Secretary General, covering also his remark about bananas. I assume that you will not wish the Prime Minister to go into the intricacies of our Belize policy. I should be grateful if the draft could reach me by 16 April.

RODERIC LYNE

Christopher Prentice Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

00

CBB

OFFICE OF THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY-GENERAL
MARLBOROUGH HOUSE · PALL MALL · LONDON SW1Y 5HX

8 April 1993

Dear Prime Minister,

Having recently returned from the Caribbean where I attended a meeting of Caricom Heads of Government, I am writing to convey to you two of their most pressing concerns on which they requested my intercession.

The meeting devoted considerable attention to a discussion of the possible crisis facing the region's banana industry. All present expressed warmest appreciation for the commendable role your Government has played in seeking to ensure favourable terms for Caricom bananas in the EC market.

Another matter which was followed up in some detail during my visit to Belize later that week was the question of the possible withdrawal of British troops from Belize. Prime Minister George Price and his Foreign Minister were very explicit in their concern and explained at length the importance attached by their Government and the people of Belize to the continued British military presence there. They both strongly emphasised that the maintenance of the garrison had a multiplier effect: in enhancing perceptions on both sides of the border that negotiations were still necessary as long as Guatemala's territorial claim was not relinquished; in strengthening the negotiating position of Belize in Joint Commission discussions; in calming recurrent fears within the country that the Guatemalan intention to claim and occupy the territory of Belize remained undiminished (as evidenced in a recent border conflict over logging incursions), and in improving bilateral relations with other Central American capitals, thereby contributing to the political stability of the region.

Prime Minister Price was gravely troubled that the implications and impact of any proposed reduction in strength - such as removal of the Harriers which have tremendous symbolic as well as practical value - or a complete withdrawal of British forces from Belize before the matter of the claim was finally settled would be severe. Indeed, he feared that such a step could play into the hands of dissident groups unhappy with reconciliatory attempts of both governments and even precipitate a reversal of the gains so far made.

....2/-

In requesting me to convey these observations to you, they stressed the very high priority accorded to this matter by the Government of Belize. In agreeing to intercede in what might otherwise be regarded as a bilateral matter, I was mindful of the long history of Commonwealth interest and concern expressed in many Communiques of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings. I trust, therefore, that you will allow me to join my voice with that of the Government of Belize in seeking to encourage a sympathetic and favourable consideration of Belize's predicament by the British Government.

With deep respect
Yours Sincerely
Emeka.

Emeka Anyaoku

The Rt. Hon. John Major M.P.
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
10 Downing Street
London

9(AB)

PPS | Belize, MF

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

5 April 1993

Dear John

BELIZE

The Prime Minister has seen the minutes by the Defence Secretary (18 March and 1 April), the Foreign Secretary (30 March), and the Northern Ireland Secretary (26 March).

The Prime Minister agrees that we should now initiate the progressive reduction of our military presence in Belize. He is content that the details should be resolved between MoD and the FCO, on the lines set out in the correspondence under reference. He will be ready to write to George Price at the appropriate time.

The Prime Minister has asked me to make two points:

(a) he notes that the Foreign Secretary's minute refers to periodic visits by Harriers to show that we could re-deploy quickly. The Prime Minister assumes that contingency plans for a possible re-deployment, should a fresh crisis arise with Guatemala, will be developed in parallel with the reduction of armed forces. He hopes that we shall be able to draw the Americans into this contingency planning, with a view to a substantial American role should the circumstances ever arise;

(b) as the Defence Secretary says, we shall need to prepare the ground carefully for presentation of the decision within Belize, in the region and in Washington. The Prime Minister would like the Ministry of Defence also to prepare the ground with interested parties in the UK. At the appropriate time, and ahead of an announcement he assumes that that the Defence Secretary will wish to explain our reasoning to selected Members of Parliament, including members of the Defence Select

Committee, and to try to enlist their support. The Foreign Secretary can presumably advise on the best way to approach friends of Belize and of George Price in the UK. A similar operation might be conducted with sections of the press.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of OPD, and to Jonathan Rodell (Northern Ireland Office) and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

Yours
Alex

pp **RODERIC LYNE**

John Pitt-Brooke, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence

Pat Cooper Force will complain
C + C CHOGM
8(A-D)

Contact / letter is fine
(army I've typed it +
it will need retyping !!)
z.4.

PRIME MINISTER

BELIZE

The attached exchange of correspondence between the Defence and Foreign Secretaries reveals a large area of agreement between them on a plan for the progressive run-down of our military presence in Belize, beginning with the withdrawal of Harriers next month and continuing until the last elements of the garrison are taken out in (or before) September 1994. Our formal defence commitment to Belize would end in September 1994. However, the plans envisage that the defence relationship would continue for a while thereafter, as we would have a small military presence there helping to train the Belize defence force. There are one or two details on which the two departments have yet to reach final agreement, but they do not strike me as crucial. Sir Patrick Mayhew has weighed in heavily in support of withdrawal, arguing that our need for troops in Norther Ireland must take priority.

The proposals seem sensible to me, and I hope that you will not need to go into the fine print. However, there is no guarantee that this will be plain sailing. George Price has been an excitable character over the years, and an aggressive lobbyist. It is conceivable that he will turn up on your door-step crying "foul"; and that he will try to stir up trouble among MPs. Given our other pre-occupations, I doubt if he would get very far with the latter, unless the Guatemalans showed signs of doing something silly.

We of course cannot exclude the risk that lunatics in Guatemala may try to have a go at Belize. For the time being, we should maintain as a deterrent the ability to re-deploy the Harriers against this contingency. But if I was a loony Guatemalan, I would bide my time until the last Brit was safely out of the way -

i.e. another two to five years, depending on whether our military trainers constitute a visible deterrent.

Do you agree that I should express your views in terms of the attached letter?

It will be a relief finally to be rid of this anomaly. At least with Hong Kong, we can show a profit on the decision of our forefathers to burden us with the Colony. Belize continues to be a heavy net loss, with no prospect of any useful return for all the dosh we have spent there. It is a matter of charity and of honour. Honour is surely almost satisfied by now.

Roderic Lyne

RODERIC LYNE
3 April 1993
foreign\belize2.sr

GR
Please type for Rodric
Signature: I'll sign pp him.
AC

SECRET UK EYES A

LETTER FROM RODERIC LYNE TO JOHN PITT-BROOKE

BELIZE

The Prime Minister has seen the minutes by the Defence Secretary ~~'s minutes of~~ (18 March and 1 April), the Foreign Secretary ~~'s reply of~~ (30 March), and the Northern Ireland Secretary ~~'s letter of~~ (26 March).

The Prime Minister agrees that we should now initiate the progressive reduction of our military presence in Belize. He is content that the details should be resolved between MoD and the FCO, on the lines set out in the correspondence under reference. He will be ready to write to George Price at the appropriate time.

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SECRET UK EYES A

Defence Secretary will wish to explain our reasoning to selected Members of Parliament, including members of the Defence Select Committee, and to try to enlist their support. The Foreign Secretary can presumably advise on the best way to approach friends of Belize and of George Price in the UK. A similar operation might be conducted with sections of the press.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of OPD, and to Jonathan Rodell (Northern Ireland Office) and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

foreign\belize.sr

CCBB

FA (A-B)

FCS/93/067

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

BELIZE: UK DEFENCE COMMITMENT

1. Thank you for your minute of 18 March.

2. I agree with your proposal that the garrison be reduced. I also agree with most of your timetable for the evolution of our presence in Belize. Given the demands you are facing, I am grateful for your willingness to maintain the garrison into 1994 (even though the Harriers will earlier be withdrawn from service). I fully endorse your emphasis on the need for good intelligence cover over this period. The agencies concerned will wish to consider how this need can best be met.

3. There are a number of detailed, but important points which, if you can accept them, will help in presenting this decision to the Government of Belize, the United States and other interested governments and parliamentary and public opinion here. They concern:

(a) The limiting of the residual training presence to 3 years. If this became known to the Belizeans, it would negate our wish to present the change as "evolution" rather than "withdrawal". Even for internal purposes, I would much prefer a formula by which the MOD-funded British training presence would be "subject to periodic review". Ideally it should retain the title of British Forces Belize, under CBF.

(b) Nature of training presence. It is important presentationally that the presence be more than token. I hope that the trainee through-put would be sufficient to demonstrate publicly our continued support. I hope you will also be able to arrange for periodic visits by Harriers to show that we can redeploy quickly.

(c) Significant financial savings will accrue to MOD from the wind-down and presumably offer some flexibility in relation to the transition . I am glad that you are ready to continue helping the development of the Belize Defence Force. We look to MOD to put together and to fund a substantial package of increased assistance to the BDF as part of the "evolution". The continued availability of helicopters will be an important component of this. I agree that officials should draw up the necessary plans for this and other aspects of the future support package. Price needs to sell our "evolution" to his electorate.

(d) Date for formal ending of defence commitment. While I can see the operational reasons for choosing 31 December 1993, I am concerned that this will leave the Belizeans in something of a vacuum: the BDF will not by then be in a position to assume its new role. My preference would be to postpone the formal ending of the commitment until the bulk of our troops are withdrawn in September 1994. In any case I believe we should state that, in the event of a renewed threat to Belize, we would consult the Belize Government on what action might be needed.

(e)

(f) West Indies Guard Ship (WIGS). We look forward to consultation on WIGS in due course. We are counting on continued visits by WIGS to Belize (despite the garrison evolution) in order to show continuing UK interest in and political support for Belize. We regard WIGS activities in the Caribbean, eg to safeguard the security of the DTs and in support of regional stability and anti-drugs measures, as much more than tasks undertaken on an opportunity basis.

4. I recognise that we now need to tie up the details quickly. I suggest that our officials meet in the next few days to do this. We would then, if you agree, submit, in liaison with you, a draft letter from the Prime Minister to Mr Price, to be delivered jointly by BHC Belmopan and ACDS(O) in April. Given the two months' notice which should I think decently be given to Mr Price to prepare his public opinion (not least because of his angry reaction to the recent leak in the "Daily Telegraph"), the Harriers would then be withdrawn from service in June, the rest of the programme to follow as discussed above. While I am content to proceed on the basis outlined, we cannot predict how Mr Price will react to these, for him, major political changes. I think therefore that without wishing to enter into negotiations with him we ought to be ready within the overall framework to contemplate the possibility of adjustments that might make a big difference to him. Before talking to the Belizeans we shall need to consider how and when to present our decisions to Parliament and to the Americans and Guatemalans.

5. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, other members of OPD, the Northern Ireland Secretary and Sir Robin Butler.

DH

(DOUGLAS HURD)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
30 March 1993

BELIZE : RMS Dec 79.
to MoD (FCS/93/067)

SECRET

CC B/3
7(a-c)

B/E when FCO reply

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
WHITEHALL
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

The Rt Hon Douglas Hurd CBE MP
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Downing Street
London SW1A 2AL

16 March 1993

Dear Douglas:

BELIZE: UK DEFENCE COMMITMENT

Malcolm Rifkind copied to me his minute of 18 March recommending a progressive phasing out of our military presence in Belize, leading to the full withdrawal of the Garrison no later than the end of September 1994.

While I do not have any direct responsibility for Belize, I do of course have a central interest in ensuring the continuing presence in Northern Ireland of the military resources necessary to support the police in defeating terrorism - and, by defeating it in the Province, to help eradicate it throughout the UK and prevent any future atrocities such as we have seen in Warrington.

As you know, NI Committee decided last July to maintain a reinforced Army presence in Northern Ireland. The Committee is due to review this issue again on 15 April, and I have no wish to anticipate that discussion. But it is worth saying that the professional judgement of the Chief Constable and the General Officer Commanding is that the capacity to maintain twelve major units in Northern Ireland has decisively enhanced our ability to combat terrorism proactively and with increasing effectiveness. While the terrorist threat - shown recently, for example, in PIRA's use of the MK 15 mortar, and the growing attacks, including the use of explosives, by "loyalist"

SECRET

b

groups - remains very high, the cutting edge now lies with the security forces, building on the strength and stability of the Army presence which has been available for the last year.

If there were any conflict of priorities between the commitment to Belize and to Northern Ireland, I believe that we would find it hard indeed to explain to public opinion in the Province - and, I suspect, more widely in the UK - why our commitment to defend Belize against a threat which has shown few if any signs of materializing, should take priority over the defence of UK citizens who are regularly subjected to actual, and deadly, terrorist attacks. The position must surely be, as Malcolm said in replying to Jim Molyneaux in the House on 3 February, that

> "... the first obligation of Her Majesty's Armed Forces is the protection of United Kingdom territory and United Kingdom citizens. Only when we are satisfied that we have discharged that obligation fully can we consider other commitments in other parts of the world."

I am also conscious that the next six months will be crucial to the success of the Talks process, which we have been laboriously pursuing since 1990 and which does offer a real long-term prospect of peace. Against the high level of threat which currently exists, any reduction in force levels - particularly in order to maintain a foreign commitment - would have a major effect on Unionist confidence, and this would inevitably play through into their flexibility in the Talks. Even nationalist opinion, and the Irish, might well take an unhelpful message from such a redeployment, at a time when the threat from loyalists is at its highest for some years, and we are pressing the Dublin authorities to increase the resources <u>they</u> commit to cross-border security co-operation.

c

To minimize Army overstretch, it is clearly important to save on existing commitments wherever possible. I see no scope to economize on manpower in Northern Ireland for the time being. Belize is, however, a commitment which it <u>does</u> seem possible to shed and I therefore very much hope that you will agree that our presence there should be reduced on the lines that Malcolm is proposing.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, the other members of OPD, and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever

Patrick

B/F when FCO reply, or in 2 weeks

Rm

C-PB

6(a-d)

SECRET
UK EYES A

SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 6/20/3

FOREIGN SECRETARY

BELIZE: UK DEFENCE COMMITMENT

When Belize became independent in 1981, we agreed to keep the Garrison there to deter Guatemalan aggression. We are committed to maintaining this presence as long as it is needed and we have assured Belize (and the US) that we would not withdraw in a way which might cause instability. It has always been our aim, however, to withdraw from this commitment as soon as we can. I believe that the considerable progress which Belize and Guatemala have made in resolving their differences provides that opportunity, and that we should now make our move. We pay a high price for maintaining the Garrison, especially the Harriers. The financial pressures on the Defence Programme are such that I can no longer cover the costs. That, however, is not the only problem. We also face considerable problems in meeting our manpower requirements arising from the commitments in Northern Ireland and Bosnia. Recent discussions about the possibility of increasing our commitment in former Yugoslavia have highlighted the need to make savings in existing commitments wherever we can, and Belize is a very good example of where such savings have to be made.

2. In his letter to Mr Price on 4 December 1991, the Prime Minister promised we would not spring any surprises but made clear that we wished to reduce our military presence in Belize as and when circumstances permitted and that withdrawal of the Harriers was being considered. This message was reinforced during Sir John Coles' recent visit. Mr Price knows he cannot count on the Garrison remaining beyond the end of this year.

UK EYES A
SECRET

3. There is no provision in the Defence Programme for the Belize Garrison beyond March 1994, or for the Harriers after this month. A decision on the Harriers is urgent because the aircraft in Belize are now obsolete and we cannot maintain them except at disproportionate cost (to extend them for another year would cost about £20M, £15M if we were to deploy the newer GR7 version). The Chiefs of Staff consider that in the present financial conditions, and in view of the very low threat, this additional cost could not be justified. They are concerned, however, about leaving any significant gap between the removal of Harriers and the ending of our defence commitment, since without air support the chances of a successful defence of Belize would be greatly reduced. To avoid this period of (admittedly very small) military risk, they have proposed advancing the withdrawal of the Garrison to September 1993 and extending the Harriers to the same date, with broadly neutral financial consequences.

Roughly equals NFZ Enforcement?

4. Our officials have discussed this suggestion. I understand that you agree that the time has come for the British presence in Belize to be reduced; that you see no political reason to delay withdrawal of Harriers beyond March 1993; but that you would prefer us to leave a significant number of ground troops in Belize until after the Belize elections which could be as late as September 1994. In recognition of your views, I would be prepared to stage the withdrawal, leaving a significant presence in place until September 1994, but scaling down during January-March 1994 in order to reduce any additional costs involved to a minimum. We would, of course, consult you about the detail and the way this is presented. If the Belizean elections were to be held before September 1994 we should reconsider the phasing.

5. On this basis, I therefore propose the following plan for reducing our presence:

a. May 1993 - Withdraw Harriers from Belize.

c

b. 31 December 1993 - UK defence commitment ends.

c. January/March 1994 - Further reductions to about half our present force levels; these reductions to be established in the light of military tasks.

d. By end September 1994 - Withdraw remaining elements of the Garrison.

Thereafter, I am prepared to leave a residual UK training presence in Belize for a period of three years. I am also ready to continue helping the development of the Belize Defence Force.

6. These proposals would involve a small degree of risk.

7. If you and colleagues agree with my proposals, we shall need to consult Mr Price quickly about our plans and on the timing of an announcement. We shall need to prepare the ground carefully for presentation within Belize, in the region and in Washington. We will want to stress the evolution of the military presence, including the removal of Harriers, and describe the further military (and civil) support which we propose to provide in future. I suggest officials should be asked to draw up the necessary plans for this.

8. Finally, I know you will be concerned about the possible implications for the West Indies Guardship (WIGS) which, in addition to its military role in support of the Belize Garrison, also undertakes a range of other tasks on an opportunity basis in the Caribbean. The future of the WIGS is not included in our Belize review, but will be considered separately in due course. We will be consulting you at the appropriate time.

9. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Prime Minister, other members of OPD, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and to Sir Robin Butler.

MR.

Ministry of Defence
18 March 1993

(M R)

File

MRM

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 November 1992

Dear Stephen,

VISIT BY THE RT. HON. GEORGE PRICE, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

Thank you for your letter of 12 November.

The Prime Minister has signed the draft letter to Mr. Price which you submitted. I should be grateful if you could arrange for it to be delivered.

Yours,

Stephen

J. S. WALL

Stephen Smith, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

SM

file

fl/george.slh
cc FCO

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 November 1992

Dear George,

Thank you for your letter of 26 October about your recent visit to Britain. I was looking forward to meeting you again and am sorry that pressure of other business prevented this. This is not what I would have wished and I was grateful to you for your understanding. I was glad to hear that your talks with Malcolm Rifkind, John Gummer and Tristan Garel-Jones went well.

As you know, we are using our Presidency to work for satisfactory Community-wide measures on bananas which will fully meet Lome commitments. But, if we are unable to reach agreement by the end of the year, I can assure you that we are well aware of the need for interim measures to ensure continued market access for ACP producers.

Yours sincerely,

John Major

SUBJECT MASTER

Filed on:

The Right Honourable George Price

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T251/92

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

12 November 1992

Dear Stephen,

VISIT BY THE RT HON GEORGE PRICE, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

Mr Price has written to the Prime Minister to thank him for the attention he received from ministers during his recent visit to the UK. He also asks for the Prime Minister's support on the question of access for Belizean bananas to the EC post-1992.

Mr Price was obviously disappointed that his call on the Prime Minister had to be cancelled at short notice. Nonetheless, the visit appears to have gone well. A short reply from the Prime Minister would be well received. I enclose a draft.

Yours ever,

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

J S Wall Esq CMG LVO
10 Downing Street

Draft letter from the Prime Minister

TO: The Right Honourable George Price

Thank you for your letter of 26 October about your recent visit to Britain. I was looking forward to meeting you again and am sorry that pressure of other business prevented this. I was glad to hear that your talks with Malcolm Rifkind, John Gummer and Tristan Garel-Jones went well.

As you know, we are using our Presidency to work for satisfactory Community-wide measures on bananas which will fully meet Lomé commitments. But, if we are unable to reach agreement by the end of the year, I can assure you that we are well aware of the need for interim measures to ensure continued market access for ACP producers.

This is not what I would have wished and I was grateful to you for your understanding.

MT

Please Quote:

Office of the Prime Minister
Belmopan,
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

October 26, 1992

The Right Honourable John Major MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

I have had a good visit to London this last week, and I am most grateful for the time spared by your Ministers in what was a busy week for your Government.

I quite understand that you were unable to see me. You had, judging by the television, many more pressing issues, and I sincerely hope that the problems will subside.

I had in particular a most encouraging meeting with your Minister of Defence, and I am most grateful for your continued support with your Garrison in Belize whilst we are trying to negotiate a settlement with Guatemala. With your Deputy Foreign Minister we discussed new initiatives to hopefully help speed up the series of settlement stages.

I also had a meaningful discussion with your Minister of Agriculture over the "banana" issue. I hope I can count on you supporting the Lome agreement and our proposed increased export of bananas to match the large investment we were advised to make in Belize. It means a great deal to my economy. During my time in Europe I had the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister of Ireland, and hopefully enlist his support in the European Community.

Finally I would like to once again thank you for your Government's support, and look forward to seeing you in Cyprus next year.

George Price

(GEORGE PRICE)
Prime Minister

MAFF

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HH
01-270 8709/8667

From the Minister's Private Office

1/cx PS/FCO
-1 file
21 October 1992

J S Wall Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

Dear Stephen,

My Minister met with the Prime Minister of Belize, the Rt Hon George Price, and his delegation on 20 October. The meeting was on the subject of the proposals for the EC banana regime, but at the end Prime Minister Price raised the subject of the UK Armed Forces' presence in Belize.

He said that a continued UK presence after the end of 1992 was necessary to Belize for three reasons. First, Belize is in the middle of negotiations on its dispute with Guatemala, and a UK withdrawal would considerably weaken its position. Secondly, a withdrawal would leave Belize unable to prevent forces involved in the Guatemalan civil war crossing into her territory and using it as a base. Thirdly, Belize is continuing to build up the strength of her own defence forces but at present would be unable to defend herself. My Minister had some sympathy with these points.

Prime Minister Price is due to see the Secretary of State for Defence this week and I am copying this letter to John Pitt-Brooke in his office.

Yours,

David Barnes

David Barnes
Private Secretary

RESTRICTED

f — \Price.SLH

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

12 October 1992

VISIT BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE PRICE, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

Thank you for your letter of 9 October about the visit of Prime Minister Price.

The Prime Minister will see Mr. Price for half an hour at 1145 hours on Tuesday 20 October. I should be grateful to know who will be present. I should also be grateful for a brief to reach me on Monday 19 October.

J. S. WALL

J. S. Smith, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

RESTRICTED

CDB

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

RESTRICTED

9 October 1992

OK

Prime Minister ①

He is a good friend of this country. Agree to see him for 1/2 an hour on 20 October?

Dear Stephen,

VISIT BY THE RT HON GEORGE PRICE, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

Stephen 9/10

Mr Price plans to visit the UK and Europe from 19 to 23 October. He has requested a call on the Prime Minister, at any time that week, to discuss matters relating to our Presidency of the EC and in particular Belizean concerns over the EC banana regime post-1992. Mr Price last met the Prime Minister in the margins of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Harare

The Foreign Secretary supports this request. Withdrawal of the British garrison in Belize (which costs £10 million a year to maintain) is a major policy goal. A settlement of the long-running (since 1821) territorial dispute between Guatemala and Belize would make this easier to achieve. Encouraging progress was made last year, and it seemed possible that a full and final settlement could be achieved by mid-1993. However, momentum has faltered following a challenge to President Serrano's actions in the Guatemalan Constitutional Court. The court has yet to rule (we expect favourably). Once it does, we hope the settlement process will get back on track. But there are disturbing signs that the two sides may wish to go slow. Concern in Belize that the issue could feature in the general election campaign due at the latest by September 1994 may also slow things down.

Mr Price's visit will allow us to underline that we cannot delay action on the garrison indefinitely. The Foreign Secretary will be in Germany. We therefore propose that Mr Price should hold substantive discussions with Mr Garel-Jones. But the Prime Minister might reinforce the message at the highest level that, while the Belizeans can count on our continued support, the garrison will not remain forever, and that it is in Belize's own interests to achieve an early resolution of the dispute with Guatemala.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

If the Prime Minister agrees, Mr Garel-Jones might escort Mr Price to and from Number 10, for a brief photocall and meeting.

Yours ever,

Stephen Smith

(J S Smith)
Private Secretary

Stephen Wall Esq
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

Belize : relations Dec 79.

WITH

THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE

PRIVATE SECRETARY

Amended version

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, WHITEHALL

Telephone: 071-21 89000
071-21 82111/3

Belize : relations D

cc PD

7B(a-b)

MO 6/20/3J

SECRETARY OF STATE

FOREIGN SECRETARY

BELIZE: UK DEFENCE COMMITMENT

I was most grateful for your minute of 30 March and for your agreement to the main thrust of the proposals set out in my earlier minute.

2. I entirely agree with you that we must do everything possible to help in presenting the decision in a way which will make it acceptable. To this end, I also agree that our officials should get together very quickly to look at the various points you raised with a view to reaching a detailed position which we can then reflect in the presentation of the case.

3. For the most part, I believe it should be possible to reach an agreed position on the issues in your letter without too much difficulty. But there are one or two points where I should make it clear now that I would find it difficult to proceed in precisely the way you set out. In particular:

a. You are concerned that ending the defence commitment in December 1993 will leave a vacuum because the BDF will not be ready to take on their new responsibilities. As explained in the earlier discussions between our officials, we cannot sustain a UK defence commitment to defend Belize once we begin the reductions. Delay in ending our commitment would therefore mean delay in our withdrawal plans, which would be unacceptable for all the reasons I set out earlier. This means we must find different ways of providing assurance, without committing us to the deployment of forces. I am happy to accept your

suggestion to offer an undertaking to consult Belize in the event of any renewed threat from Guatemala.

b. As you know, the BDF have never been intended to replace the British garrison as the force which defends against external attack; rather, their responsibilities would largely be concerned with internal security. Having said this, we fully realise the importance of preparing the BDF for this role, and we already have this in hand.

c. I would not wish to give you any false hopes about the extent to which we are able to fund a substantial package of additional help to the BDF from savings made through reduction of the garrison. As we have discussed in a different context, I need those savings to contribute to the reductions in the defence budget which I have to find, year on year. However, I am of course ready to continue military assistance to Belize, particularly in supporting the development of the BDF.

d. Finally, I understand your concern about not limiting the residual training presence to three years. At the same time, I hope you will understand that I would have great difficulty in appearing to promise an open-ended commitment. I believe it should be possible for our officials to work out an acceptable formula.

4. I do not believe there is anything here which should stand in the way of proceeding as in my earlier minute. I suggest our officials proceed as soon as possible.

5. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Prime Minister, other members of OPD, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and to Sir Robin Butler.

MR

(M R)

Ministry of Defence
1 April 1993

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

5 October 1992

I attach a copy of a letter received from Mr Robert Leslie, the Belize High Commissioner, and should be grateful for advice to reach this office as soon as possible.

J. S. WALL

Stephen Smith Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

2 October 1992

Thank you for your letter of 30 September.

This is receiving attention and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

J. S. WALL

His Excellency Mr. Robert Leslie

rec'd by fax

BELIZE HIGH COMMISSION

10 Harcourt House
19A Cavendish Square
London W1M 9AD
Tel: 071-499 9728
Fax: 071-491-4139

Ref: BHC/102/92(11)

30 September 1992

The Private Secretary
Office of the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London

For the attention of Mr. S. Wall

Dear Private Secretary,

I have the honour to inform you that the Prime Minister of Belize, the Rt. Hon. George Price, proposes to be in the United Kingdom and Europe during the week of October 19 - 23, 1992.

Mr. Price would very much like to use the opportunity of his visit to the United Kingdom to meet with the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. John Major, to discuss matters relating to the United Kingdom Presidency of the European Community affecting Belize and the Caribbean, with particular reference to the continued access of bananas in the European market.

The Prime Minister has also asked for meetings with the Foreign Secretary and the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

I shall greatly appreciate your kindness to bring to the attention of Prime Minister Major the wish of Prime Minister Price for a short meeting at any convenient time or place during the week of October 19 - 23.

I shall also be grateful if you will convey to the Prime Minister the assurance of my highest regard.

Sincerely,

Robert Leslie

ROBERT LESLIE
HIGH COMMISSIONER

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T300191

file

MJ

SUBJECT
MASTER
CPS
FILED ON:

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 December 1991

Dear George,

When we met in the margins of the Retreat at Victoria Falls during the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting we discussed the future of the British Garrison in Belize. I promised to let you have a considered reply to the points you raised in our discussion and in the letter you gave me.

I understand your concern that the Garrison should stay at least until a final settlement of the territorial dispute with Guatemala is achieved. As I explained when we met, rapid withdrawal of the Garrison is not in the forefront of our minds; we want to see a secure and lasting settlement of this long-running dispute and we are prepared to play our part. We stand by our public commitment to maintain the Garrison for as long as it is needed.

You will, however, know that our aim is to reduce our military presence in Belize as and when circumstances permit. The new climate in relations between yourselves and the Guatemalans may allow us to make some reductions. But this should in no way affect our ability to help in the defence of Belize. As with all our military commitments, the structure of the Garrison is kept under review. No decisions have been made yet and we will not spring any surprises on you.

We spoke about the Harriers, and I confirmed that we were considering withdrawing them some time next year. I

KW

know that these aircraft are a particularly visible part of our presence in Belize and we will, of course, take the political implications into account in reaching a final decision on their future. We have not yet taken a decision: I will ensure that you are given advance notice when we do. There are, however, good arguments for withdrawing them. If we needed Harriers in Belize we could rapidly deploy aircraft based elsewhere. Further, the Harriers now in Belize are obsolescent; they will become increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain and it would be very expensive to replace them with the up-to-date version.

In your letter you express the hope that we will leave a residual Garrison in Belize after a settlement. If it appears, in the circumstances prevailing at the time, that it would be right to retain a small British military presence, for example to make use of the excellent training facilities in Belize, then we would be prepared to consider this. In any event, we remain committed to helping with the training of the Belize Defence Force.

I note from recent reports that some difficult questions were posed at your public meetings to explain developments in relations with Guatemala and in particular the need for the maritime legislation now before the Belize Parliament. I realise that the long-running nature of the dispute will have led to a hardening of attitudes on both sides which will be difficult to change. But I hope that, having come this far down the road towards a settlement, you and your Opposition colleagues will persevere and ultimately prevail.

During our meeting you asked whether Belize might benefit from Trinidad terms. This initiative is designed to give enhanced debt relief to the poorest, most heavily indebted countries. Although the precise eligibility criteria have yet to be decided by the Paris Club, they would be similar to those which apply to Toronto terms.

These include a per capita income of less than $700. Since Belize does not fall within this category, I am afraid that you

would not qualify for consideration for debt relief on Trinidad terms.

In closing I would just like to say how much I enjoyed meeting you in Zimbabwe and to wish you every success in bringing the delicate negotiations that lie ahead to a satisfactory conclusion.

Yours Sincerely,
John Major

The Right Honourable George Price

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 November 1991

Dear Stephen,

Belize

Thank you for your letter of 20 October recording the Prime Minister's meeting with Prime Minister Price of Belize in the margins of the Retreat at Victoria Falls. As requested, I enclose a draft letter from the Prime Minister to Mr Price, prepared in consultation with the Ministry of Defence.

I am copying this letter to Simon Webb.

Yours ever

(S L Gass)
Private Secretary

Stephen Wall Esq CMG LVO
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

A/FSR/PRICE

CONFIDENTIAL

Draft letter from the Prime Minister

TO: The Right Honourable George Price MP
Prime Minister of Belize

When we met in the margins of the Retreat at Victoria Falls during the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting we discussed the future of the British Garrison in Belize. I promised to let you have a considered reply to the points you raised in our discussion and in the letter you gave me.

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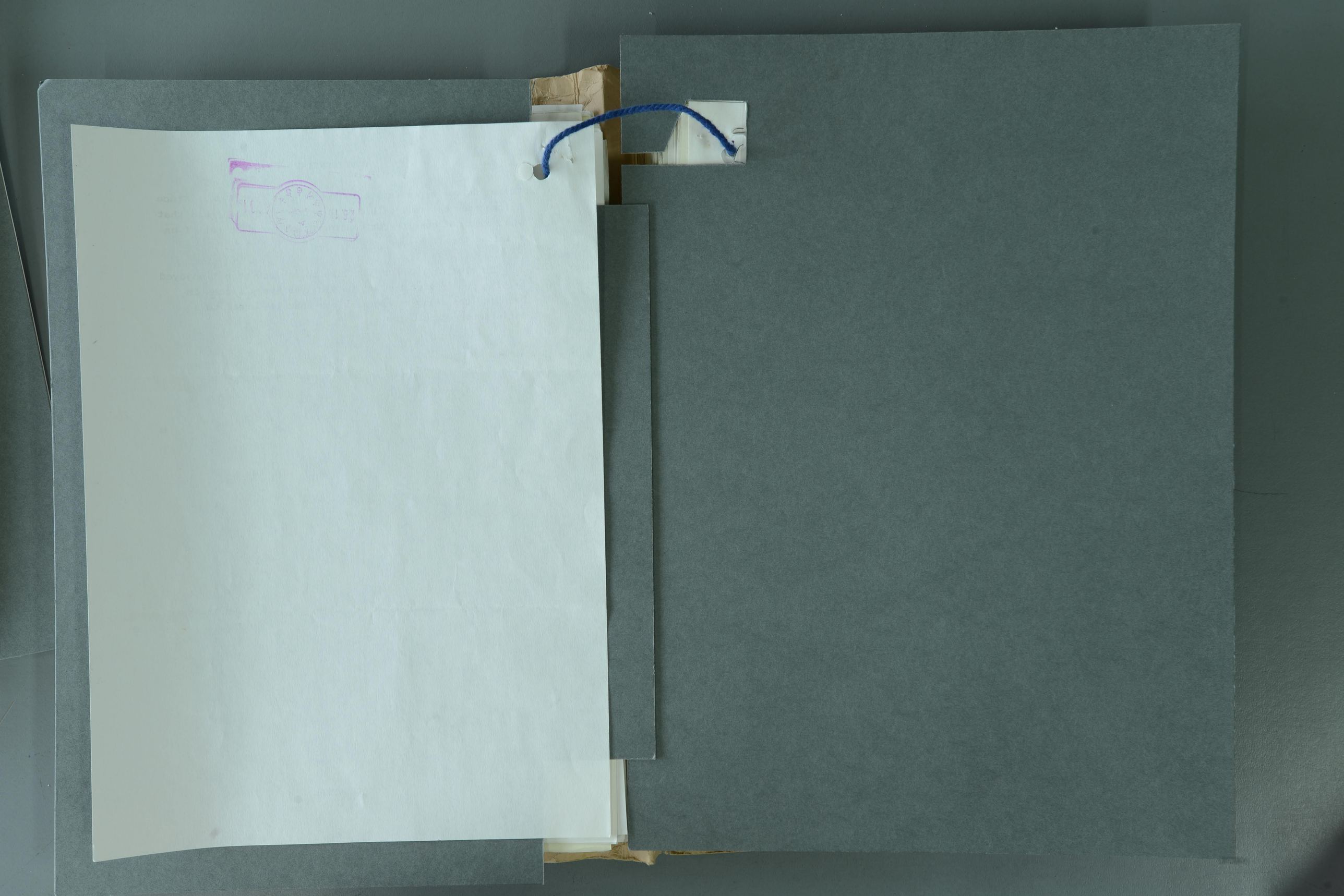

File
to
F: Belize

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

12 November 1991

Dear Simon,

BELIZE

I enclose a letter from the High Commissioner of Belize asking the Prime Minister to use his influence to secure a meeting for Prime Minister Price with Chancelor Kohl.

I should be grateful if Sir Christopher Mallaby could take this up in the first instance. I think that Christopher can certainly say that the Prime Minister would welcome it if Chancellor Kohl could see Mr. Price. If Christopher encounters sales resistance, I may need to go back to the Prime Minister to see whether he would wish to send a personal message to Chancellor Kohl on Mr. Price's behalf.

Yours,

Stephen

J.S. WALL

Simon Gass, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

cc PC

BELIZE HIGH COMMISSION

10 Harcourt House
19A Cavendish Square
London W1M 9AD
Tel: 071-499 9728
Fax: 071-491 4139

Ref: BHC/410

12 November 1991

The Private Secretary
Office of the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London

Dear Private Secretary,

I have the honour to inform that the Prime Minister of Belize, the Rt. Hon. George Price, proposes to be in Europe November 19-22 to attend the West India Committee's Europe/Caribbean Conference in Brussels. Mr. Price proposes to use the opportunity to visit Bonn on November 22 to lobby for Caribbean bananas with the German authorities. He has an appointment confirmed with Mr. Kittel, the Minister of State for Agriculture.

Prime Minister Price has asked whether Prime Minister Major could use his influence to secure a short meeting with Chancellor Kohl in Bonn on November 22, to allow him to take the case for Caribbean bananas to the highest level. We ask Mr. Major's intervention because efforts at our end have been unsuccessful.

I shall be grateful for any assistance we may receive in this effort from your office.

Sincerely,

Robert Leslie

ROBERT LESLIE
HIGH COMMISSIONER

SUBJECT
MASTER
OPS
FILED ON:

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T240B/91

10/8/91(31)

Anniversary of Independence
21 September, 1991
Belize, Central America

1) cc PS/FCO
1/ file

24 September 1991

The Rt. Hon. John Major
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

Very many thanks for your letter of 18 September 1991 with best wishes for our Tenth Anniversary Independence Celebration.

Your letter encourages us to keep on working so that the creation continues in a better Belize. We are most grateful for the help your government and people give.

Kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely

George Price

(GEORGE PRICE)
Prime Minister

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Independence Hill, Belmopan, Belize, Central America
Phones: (501) 8 22322 / 22167 Fax: (501) 8 22854 Telex: 102 Foreign Bz

BELIZE: Lat Sit
Dec 79

kk

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T236/91

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

SUBJECT
MASTER
OPS
FILED ON:

THE PRIME MINISTER

18 September 1991

Dear Prime Minister,

On this special day in the history of Belize it gives me particular pleasure to send warmest congratulations to the government and people of Belize from the government and people of the United Kingdom.

Belizeans can look back with great pride on the last ten years. The ideals of parliamentary democracy, respect for human rights, free speech and the rule of law have flourished. You have achieved a rate of economic growth among the highest in the whole Latin American and Caribbean region. You have developed important links with other countries in the area. The historic steps recently taken to normalise relations with your neighbour, Guatemala, after many years of difficulty have laid the foundations for the development of friendly relations based on mutual respect.

We have been pleased to help through our aid and military assistance programmes, through the presence of the British forces, and, most recently, by means of the financial contribution we have announced to the joint road development project with Guatemala.

We send our best wishes to all Belizeans for a happy and prosperous future and we look forward to the continuation of the warm friendship between our two countries.

Yours Sincerely,

The Right Honourable George Price

cc/

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

RESTRICTED

16 September 1991

Dear Stephen,

Belize: 10th Anniversary of Independence Celebrations

Belize celebrates its 10th Anniversary of Independence on 21 September. The Belizeans now have double cause for celebration. There has been rapid progress towards a settlement of their long-standing dispute with Guatemala - in accordance with steps agreed between the two countries, President Serrano publicly recognised the independence of Belize on 5 September; the two countries established diplomatic relations on 11 September and President Serrano is expected to attend the anniversary celebrations in Belmopan and sign an agreement to put the dispute to arbitration by the President of Venezuela. The latter is expected to endorse a solution pre-cooked between the two countries. They have already reached agreement on all aspects of the dispute except for a minor territorial issue, which is expected to be resolved without difficulty. Neither side sees any great urgency over arbitration which may take two years to complete.

When replying on 16 August to a letter from Prime Minister Price about funding for the Belize Defence Force, the Prime Minister took the opportunity to send, in anticipation, congratulations for Belize independence day; he also expressed the hope that there would be another reason for celebration in the shape of a settlement with Guatemala. In the circumstances, a further message - this time designed for publication - from the Prime Minister to Mr Price would be well received in Belize and give our close relations a useful fillip. I enclose a draft.

If the Prime Minister agrees, the signed original could be carried out by Mr Sydney Chapman MP, who will represent HMG at the Anniversary celebrations, for handing personally to Mr Price. Mr Chapman leaves for Belize on 18 September.

Yours ever,

(S L Gass)
Private Secretary

J S Wall Esq
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

Draft letter from the Prime Minister

to the Rt Hon George Price

On this special day in the history of Belize it gives me particular pleasure to send warmest congratulations to the government and people of Belize from the government and people of the United Kingdom.

Belizeans can look back with great pride and the last ten years. The ideals of parliamentary democracy, respect for human rights, free speech and the rule of law have flourished. You have achieved a rate of economic growth among the highest in the whole Latin American and Caribbean region. You have developed important links with other countries in the area. The historic steps recently taken to normalise relations with your neighbour, Guatemala, after many years of difficulty have laid the foundations for the development of friendly relations based on mutual respect.

We have been pleased to help through our aid and military assistance programmes, through the presence of the British forces, and, most recently, by means of the financial contribution we have announced to the joint road development project with Guatemala.

We send our best wishes to all Belizeans for a happy and prosperous future and we look forward to the continuation of the ~~excellent links~~ ~~which exist~~ between our two countries.

warm friendship

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 August 1991

Dear Simon,

BELIZE:
LETTER FROM THE BELIZEAN PRIME MINISTER

Christopher Prentice sent me on 2 August a draft reply for the Prime Minister to the letter he had had from Prime Minister Price of Belize.

I enclose the Prime Minister's reply to Mr. Price and would be grateful if you could arrange for it to be delivered.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Simon Webb (Ministry of Defence) and to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours,
Stephen
(J. S. WALL)

S. L. Gass, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T215/91

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

SUBJECT
MASTER
OPS
FILED ON:

File

cc FCO
MOD
CO

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 August 1991

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 10 July. I recall with pleasure our meeting in Kuala Lumpur and look forward to seeing you again in Harare in October.

Belize's tenth anniversary of independence on 21 September will be a proud and important day for all Belizeans - in anticipation, I send my warm congratulations. I also hope that before too long you may have another reason for celebration, in the shape of a settlement with Guatemala.

I am delighted that during the past ten years we have been able to make a contribution to Belize's development as an independent country, not least by helping to establish the Belize Defence Force (BDF). We welcome your Government's intention to introduce a forward management plan for the BDF. We shall continue to do our best to support the BDF. I am glad to be able to assure you that we have already earmarked funding for the BDF under the defence aid programme for the next three years (this, rather than five years, is the normal horizon for the United Kingdom's overall spending plans). The level of assistance will as usual have to be determined annually, in the light of your needs and the financial resources which we have available.

Yours sincerely,

John Major

The Rt. Hon. George Price

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

CONFIDENTIAL

2 August 1991

Dear Stephen,

Belize : Letter from Belizean Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 22 July enclosing a letter of 10 July to the Prime Minister from Prime Minister Price of Belize. I enclose a draft reply.

The Belize Defence Force (BDF), total manpower some 700, is heavily dependent on external financial support. Set up at independence in 1981 with the help of a defence aid package of £6 million from FCO funds, the BDF will have received by March 1992 a further £2.22 million spread over the last five years. The MOD, through the Defence Policy Fund, also help fund British Loan Service Personnel in command and advisory posts. Mr Price is now seeking an assurance from the Prime Minister that defence aid for Belize will continue for a further five years from March 1992.

The continued viability of the BDF is an essential element in our policy towards Belize, the more so if the day comes when the British Garrison can be withdrawn. We would expect defence aid for Belize to continue over the period specified by Mr Price and possibly beyond, particularly if there are reductions in, or withdrawal of, the Garrison in Belize which effectively carries the BDF in its prime role of external defence. Sums ranging from £400,000 to £450,000, which should adequately cover BDF requirements, have already been written into PES baselines for the period 1992/93 to 1994/95. But there is, of course, no provision for the two years beyond the present PES period: we would not wish to give any commitment beyond 1994/95.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Simon Webb (MOD) and to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Christopher Prentice.

(C N R Prentice)
Private Secretary

J S Wall Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

CONFIDENTIAL

2 August 1991

Dear Stephen,

Belize : Letter from Belizean Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of ~~22 July~~ 1 Aug enclosing a letter of 10 July to the Prime Minister from Prime Minister Price of Belize. I enclose a draft reply.

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I am copying this letter and enclosure to Simon Webb (MOD) and to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Christopher Prentice.

(C N R Prentice)
Private Secretary

J S Wall Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

A type

Draft letter from the Prime Minister to:

The Rt Hon George Price
Prime Minister of Belize

Thank you for your letter of 10 July. I recall with pleasure our meeting in Kuala Lumpur and look forward to seeing you again in Harare in October.

Belize's tenth anniversary of independence on 21 September will be a proud and important day for all Belizeans - in anticipation, I send my warm congratulations. I also hope that before too long you may have another reason for celebration, in the shape of a settlement with Guatemala.

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harmonise

BEL26: Int Sec, Dec 79

KK

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

22 July 1991

I attach a copy of a letter the Prime Minister has received from the Prime Minister of Belize.

I should be grateful if you could provide advice and a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach me by Monday 5 August please.

I am copying this letter to Bryan Wells (Ministry of Defence).

(J. S. WALL)

S. L. Gass, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 190/8/91

SUBJECT
MASTER
OPS
FILED ON:

FCO for advice/draft
PM to reply & draft
a MD

Please Quote: 10/8/91(25)

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan,
Cayo District, Belize,
Central America

10 July 1991

R20/7

The Rt. Hon. John Major
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW 1

Dear Prime Minister

I remember having had the honour of meeting you at the Commonwealth Conference in Kuala Lumpur some years ago. I take this opportunity of welcoming you to your office and hope to have the privilege of meeting with you in Harare later this year.

I am most grateful for the assistance and support given by the United Kingdom Government to the development of Belize; and particularly happy with the continued military presence which is providing a stable platform from which we can continue to negotiate a settlement with Guatemala.

You will be aware that we are also the grateful recipients of defence aid and military training assistance. This financial support has made it possible to develop my own forces into a small but effective force which can play an important role in the defence of this country, alongside your Forces.

The current five year aid programme is due to end in March 1992 and hence I am seeking your assurance that this support will be extended for another five years so that the development of my Forces can continue. Without this assurance I will have great difficulty in implementing a proposed five year management plan along the lines of your own Ministry of Defence long-term costings.

Once again I am most grateful for your Government's assistance in developing this small country, which celebrates its tenth year of independence in September this year.

Kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely

George Price

(GEORGE PRICE)
Prime Minister

MEETING RECORD

SUBJECT cc MASTER

RESTRICTED

TLO
DAS

cc PC
PB

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 May 1991

Dear Simon,

CALL BY HIGH COMMISSIONER OF BELIZE

Thank you for your letter of 3 May containing briefing for the call on the Prime Minister by the new High Commissioner of Belize.

Mr Leslie came in this morning and gave the Prime Minister the enclosed letter from Premier Price.

The High Commissioner said he would be in London for two years. He was very happy with the state of Anglo-Belize relations and would want to keep the flag flying. Mr Price had told him to stress how happy Belize was with the continuing commitment of British forces in Belize.

Mr Leslie said he had spoken to his Foreign Minister the previous evening. The Foreign Minister had heard from President Serrano of Guatemala that he hoped to have a meeting with Belize as soon as possible. The High Commissioner was optimistic that the Belize/Guatemala dispute would soon be settled on the basis of the draft Treaty which had been prepared.

The Prime Minister asked about the mechanism for approving the Treaty. The High Commissioner said there were some difficulties because, in Guatemala, the Treaty had to be approved by a two-thirds majority in Congress. But both sides had agreed to hold a national referendum first. This should ease the problem.

The Prime Minister asked what was in the Treaty for Guatemala. Mr Leslie said that the Treaty would allow Guatemala access to the high seas through waters which Belize might claim. In practice, Belize might extend her territorial limits from three to twelve miles. In return for that, Guatemala would drop her claim to Belize. The Guatemalans would, of course, want aid from the British Government. The Prime Minister confirmed that we would be ready to offer £22.5 million in grant aid shared between Guatemala and Belize. The High Commissioner said that, having been involved in the negotiations with Guatemala from the outset, he would return home for the crucial meetings.

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The Prime Minister said that the High Commissioner made Belize sound like a problem-free zone. The High Commissioner said that this was largely true. Belize's relations with Mexico were good, her relations with Venezuela were improving (the President of Venezuela had paid a recent visit) and Belize was doing well in Caricom. But, he added, Belize's continued success depended upon the help she received, including the continued presence of British troops.

The Prime Minister referred to Mr Garel-Jones' forthcoming visit to Guatemala and said that he would press the Guatemalans on the need for an early agreement with Belize.

Yours,

Stephen

J. S. WALL

Simon Gass, Esq.
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 May 1991

Prime Minister

Peter Stephen,

Call by New High Commissioner for Belize

The Prime Minister has agreed to see the new High Commissioner for Belize at 11.15 am on Tuesday 7 May. I enclose a personality note.

Our objectives are to encourage the Belizeans to keep the Belize/ Guatemala settlement process moving. Mr Leslie will present a letter of introduction from his Prime Minister. His objectives are likely to be to reassure us on this score and to suggest that we and others take suitable opportunites to press Guatemala on the issue.

Belize

Belize is about the same size as Wales and has a population of around 240,000. It achieved self-government in 1963 and independence on 21 September 1981. A Belizean-born Governor-General represents Her Majesty The Queen as Head of State. The country has two main political parties. The left of centre People's United Party (lead by Prime Minister George Price) defeated the right of centre United Democratic Party at the last general election in September 1989.

Belize's economy is predominantly orientated towards agriculture, particularly sugar, citrus and bananas on which it depends for its foreign exchange earnings. Remittances from abroad, tourism, and local spending by British Forces are also important. Economic performance in 1990/91 was good with GDP up by over 9%, inflation at 5%, the overall balance of payments in surplus and a reduced trade deficit.

UK/Belize

There is considerable affection for the UK in Belize and relations are warm. The Belizeans firmly support retaining close links with Britain and the presence of the British garrison. It was agreed at independence that the latter, presently some 1500 strong and supported by a flight of four Harriers, should remain for a period to assist with the

/exeternal

external defence of Belize against a potential Guatemalan threat. No date has been set for the removal of the garrison and the Belizean Government have been assured in confidence that it will not be withdrawn in such a way as to cause instability.

Our aid (framework of around £5 million this year) is highly valued. It is targeted at education projects to improve the quality of public sector management and to support initiatives related to environmental conservation.

Mr Garel-Jones plans to visit Guatemala and Belize from 23 to 30 May.

Belize/Guatemala Dispute

In May 1988 Belize and Guatemala announced the establishment of a Joint Commission, with the additional participation of the UK, with the goal of preparing a draft Treaty providing for an honourable solution to the two countries' territorial dispute. The Joint Commission has met five times, most recently in July 1990 when encouraging progress was made. The issue was effectively on hold pending elections in Guatemala in January.

Newly elected President Serrano has publicly stated his wish for a rapid settlement. He proposed dates for a preliminary meeting with Prime Minister Price in April to discuss the issue and possibly to fix dates for the next Joint Commission meeting. The Belizeans could not manage the dates and have suggested that Serrano should try again for May. We shall have a clearer idea of Guatemalan intentions on a settlement if and when a Serrano/Price meeting takes place. At present, prospects for an early settlement do not look encouraging. President Serrano's priority is to resolve the guerrilla war in Guatemala. Moreover, his Foreign Minister, wary that taking responsibility for a settlement might harm his own Presidential prospects, has made clear that he is unhappy with previous settlement negotiations.

Ministers have agreed that in the event of a settlement the UK would be ready to offer a package of £22.5 in grant aid to be shared between Guatemala (£15m) and Belize (£7.5m) as our contribution to joint development. The Belizeans are aware of this, as indeed they are of Guatemalan thinking on the issue, on which we keep them fully briefed.

The Prime Minister might:

- remark on Mr Leslie's active role in Belize's negotiations towards a settlement of this dispute with Guatemala;

/- confirm

- confirm our wish to work closely with him and draw on his expertise;

- reassure him that we will continue to press the Guatemalans at every opportunity on the settlement issue. Mr Garel-Jones would raise the issue during his planned visit to Guatemala (and Belize) at the end of this month;

- seek his views on the prospects for maintaining a bi-partisan approach on the issue in Belize.

Yours ever,

(S L Gass)
Private Secretary

Stephen Wall Esq CMG LVO
10 Downing Street

BIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT ANTHONY LESLIE

Assumed functions of Belizean High Commissioner to the UK on 5 April 1991.

Born Belize City on 16 August 1942.

After schooling in Belize, he studied journalism at the Polytechnic of Central London and returned to be editor of the Belize Times from 1965-67 and, briefly, news editor of Radio Belize. From 1967-70, he took a course in political studies at Kalamazoo College in Michigan. He joined the civil service in 1970 and rose rapidly. He was Secretary of the Cabinet (1978-79), Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health (1979-80) and Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1981 - at the time of independence). He served in the United States - as Permanet Representative to the United Nations (1982-85) and Chargé d'Affaires in Washington (1982-83) - before returning to be Permanent Secretary, Foreign Affairs again from 1985 until now.

He has been a regular member of the Belize Delegation in talks on the border dispute with Guatemala and will return to Belize for further talks as necessary. He visited London with his Foreign Minister last November and met Mr Hurd, Mr King, Mr Garel-Jones and a number of FCO officials.

Friendly, articulate and sophisticated, but he can be rather vain.

Married (Bernadette) in 1982: two children, a son of 10 and a daughter of 6, who will be going to school in the UK.

Economy,
Basis of Agreement

PRIME MINISTER

BELIZE

There are only three points you need to bear in mind about Belize:

(i) the long gap between self-government (1963) and independence from Britain (1981) was due to Guatemala's territorial claims against Belize and their threat to invade the country if Belize was moved to independence without their agreement;

(ii) since Independence the threat from Guatemala has diminished and talks between Belize and Guatemala have continued intermittently;

(iii) the Belizans still feel under threat from Guatemala: hence our continued military presence (1500 men and 4 Harriers). We have told the Belize government that we will not withdraw the garrison "in such a way as to cause instability".

The new High Commissioner (Robert Leslie) was Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1985 - 1991 and has played a key role in the negotiations with Guatemala, so you may wish to ask him about the talks and say that we hope to draw on his expertise. Tristan Garel-Jones is visiting Belize and Guatemala later this month and will press the Guatemalans on the settlement issue.

Stephen

J. S. WALL

4 May 1991

c:\foreign\belize (kk)

P.a.
SP 25/4

Stephen
To be aware.
S 24/4

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

23 April 1991

His Excellency
Mr Robert A Leslie
Belize High Commission
10 Harcourt House
19A Cavendish Square
LONDON
W1M 9AD

Dear Robbie

Further to my letter of 18 April, and my secretary's conversation with Miss Locke yesterday, I am writing to confirm that it has been necessary to postpone Your Excellency's call on the Prime Minister which was scheduled for Tuesday 30 April.

This call will now take place on Tuesday 7 May and the Prime Minister looks forward to receiving you at 10 Downing Street at 11.15 am, in order to present the letter of introduction from the Prime Minister of Belize.

Yours ever
Stanley Martin

S W F Martin
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

Bcc: Miss Sandra Phillips (10 Downing St)
Mr Hall, Private Office
Mr West, LAD - could briefing please be sent to No 10 by the evening of 6 May. *

Stephen

This may have to change, but at least it's in theory. Briefing appears to be in hand.

S 11/4

pa. SP 11/4

R 11/4

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 April 1991

His Excellency
Mr Robert A Leslie
Belize High Commission
10 Harcourt House
19A Cavendish Square
LONDON
W1M 9AD

My dear High Commissioner

I am writing, in confirmation of my telephone conversation with you this morning, to say that the Prime Minister looks forward to receiving you at 10 Downing Street at 9.45 am on Tuesday 30 April, in order to present the letter of introduction from the Prime Minister of Belize.

Yours sincerely

Stanley Martin

S W F Martin
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

Bcc: Miss Sandra Phillips (10 Downing St)
Mr Simon Hall, Private Office
Mr Mike Hall (LAD - could updated briefing please be sent to No 10 by the evening of 29 April).

With the compliments of

STANLEY MARTIN
First Assistant Marshal
of the Diplomatic Corps

G.R. p.a.
Chairs
amount
provincial
Dept approach.
5/4

Send

Arrow early prompt

A 7/4

PROTOCOL DEPARTMENT
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
LONDON SW1A 2AF

R914

FROM: S W F Martin
Protocol Department

DATE: 8 April 1991

cc: Private Secretary
PS/Mrs Chalker
PS/Mr Garel-Jones
PS(10 Downing St)
PS/PUS
PA/Sir J Coles
PA/Mr Beamish
PA/Mr Hervey
PA/Mr Murray
PA/Mr Stitt
Mr Almond, Protocol
Mr Jardine, "

Mr Murray
LAD

1. The new High Commissioner for Belize, Mr Robert A Leslie, arrived in London on 5 April and assumed his functions immediately.

2. An appointment with the Prime Minister to present the Letter of Introduction will be arranged in due course. An audience of Her Majesty The Queen will also be arranged in due course.

3. Appointments for the High Commissioner to pay his initial calls at the FCO have been made as follows:

	Date	Time
Assistant Under Secretary (Mr Beamish)	Thur 11 Apr	11.30 am
Vice Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps	11 Apr	12.15 pm
Head of CCD	11 Apr	4.00 pm
Permanent Under Secretary	11 Apr	4.30 pm
Secretary of State	Wed 24 Apr	10.30 am
Head of LAD	Thur 25 Apr	11.00 am
Deputy Under Secretary (Sir J Coles)	25 Apr	11.30 am
Minister of State (Mr Garel-Jones)	Wed 1 May	3.30 pm

4. For these calls would you please prepare a **biography** of the new High Commissioner (drawing as necessary on my letter of 5 April to the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, copied to you) and a **short brief** on our relations with Belize. This brief **MUST** include:

i) the details requested by the Secretary of State (as set out in the attached Private Secretary minute)

ii) the name of **our** High Commissioner, date of his appointment, and (if known) anticipated date of departure;

The biography and brief should be given the following distribution:

Top copy on blue paper to:

Mr Martin - to forward to the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps for Her Majesty The Queen. This copy should have the date and 'Foreign and Commonwealth Office' typed at the bottom.
Private Secretary (10 Downing St)

Other copies on white paper to:

Private Secretary - for the Secretary of State
APS to Secretary of State
PS/Minister of State (Mr Garel-Jones)
PS/PUS
DUS (Sir J Coles)
AUS (Mr Beamish)
Vice Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps
Head of LAD
Head of CCD
3 copies to Protocol Department for Mr Martin (to arrive before first courtesy call please).

5. I shall escort the High Commissioner on all his courtesy calls except the ones on the Secretary of State and Mr Garel-Jones. Mr Almond will escort to Mr Garel-Jones (in my absence on leave).

6. Mr Leslie is a neat, trim-looking, bespectacled man of 48, with black curly hair. He is friendly and talkative.

S W F Martin
Protocol Department

SUBJECT CODE
MATTER

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T111A/91

PRIME MINISTER
BELIZE

MY REF: FA/P/02/91

4 April 1991

Rt. Hon. John Major M.P.
Prime Minister
First Lord of the Treasury
10 Downing Street
London S.W. 1
England

Dear Prime Minister,

This letter will be presented to you by Mr. Robert Leslie, who has been appointed by the Government of Belize to be High Commissioner to the United Kingdom to succeed Sir Edney Cain, on completion of his tour of duty.

It gives me great pleasure to commend Mr. Robert Leslie to you. I am confident that his previous experience and proven abilities befit him in full measure for the important duties which he is about to undertake. I know that he, for his part, will strive successfully to maintain and foster those close and friendly relations so long existing between us which we value and wish to see continued.

On behalf of the Government of Belize, I ask you to place full trust and credence in Mr. Robert Leslie, and to afford him all possible assistance in the fulfillment of this important assignment.

With best wishes and kindest regards.

George Price

GEORGE PRICE
PRIME MINISTER

GP/gsb

FILE KK

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

5 February 1991

BELIZE: NEW HIGH COMMISSIONER TO LONDON

Thank you for your letter about the proposed appointment of Mr. Robert Leslie to be Belizean High Commissioner in London. The Prime Minister would certainly be content for us to inform the Belizean government of our acceptance of this appointment.

I am copying this letter to Sir Robert Fellowes and to the First Assistant Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps.

(C. D. POWELL)

Simon Gass, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

MRM

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 February 1991

Prime Minister
Content?
CDP.

Dear Charles,

Belize : New High Commissioner to London

We have been informed that the Belizean Government propose to appoint Mr Robert Leslie, at present Permanent Secretary, Belizean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belmopan to be Belizean High Commissioner in London in succession to Sir Edney Cain. I enclose a brief curriculum vitae.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary welcomes this appointment. As you will be aware, it is not the practice between Commonwealth countries of which Her Majesty is Queen to seek formal agreement to the appointment of a High Commissioner. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would be grateful, however, if the Prime Minister would agree to our informing the Belizean Government that the British Government will be glad to welcome Mr Leslie in London and look forward to continuing with him the happy association which they enjoyed with his predecessor.

I am copying this letter to Sir Robert Fellowes and to the First Assistant Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps.

Yours ever,

Stephen Gass

(S L Gass)
Private Secretary

Sir Charles Powell KCMG
10 Downing Street

ROBERT ANTHONY LESLIE

CURRICULUM VITAE

DATE OF BIRTH	-	16 AUGUST 1942
MARITAL STATUS	-	MARRIED
WIFE'S NAME	-	BERNADETTE MERCEDES
CHILDREN	-	IDELSO IMAN (10) LEILA ELIZABETH (6)
EDUCATION	-	ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE (BELIZE) POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE (LONDON) KALAMAZOO COLLEGE (MICHIGAN, U.S.A.)
EMPLOYMENT	-	EDITOR, THE BELIZE TIMES (1965/67)
	-	NEWS EDITOR, RADIO BELIZE (1967)
	-	ADMIN. OFFICER, ESTABLISHMENT (1970/71)
	-	ADMIN. OFFICER, LANDS DEPT. (1971/73)
	-	CONTROLLER OF SUPPLIES (TRADE) (1973/75)
		ADMIN. OFFICER, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT (1975/77)
	-	SECRETARY OF THE CABINET (1978/79)
	-	PERMANENT SECRETARY, HEALTH, HOUSING AND CO-OPERATIVES (1979/1980)
	-	PERMANENT SECRETARY, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1981)
	-	MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES (AD TITULO), EMBASSY OF BELIZE, WASHINGTON, D.C. (1982/83)
	-	AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BELIZE TO THE UNITED NATIONS (1982/85)
	-	PERMANENT SECRETARY, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1985 - 1991).
DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY		
	-	ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO INTERNATIONALIZE BELIZE'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE.
	-	MEMBER, BELIZE/GUATEMALA JOINT COMMISSION TO NEGOTIATE DRAFT TREATY TO SETTLE LAND AND MARITIME BOUNDARIES
EX-OFICIO	-	MEMBER, BELIZE TOURIST BOARD (1973/1975) MEMBER, FISHERIES ADVISORY BOARD (1979) MEMBER, JOINT STAFFS RELATIONS COUNCIL
HOME ADDRESS	-	21 NARGUSTA STREET, BELMOPAN, BELIZE (TELEPHONE 501-82-2370)

file

KW

CC FCO

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

17 January 1991

Dear Prime Minister,

This letter will be presented to you by Mr David Patrick Robert MacKilligin, who has been appointed by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to be their High Commissioner in Belize.

I am confident that Mr MacKilligin is eminently fitted, both by his personal qualities and by his experience of affairs of State, for the charge with which he has been entrusted, and that his appointment will serve to maintain the relations of close friendship which so happily exist between us.

In this confidence I commend Mr MacKilligin to you and, on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, ask you to afford him all possible help in the fulfilment of his important mission.

Yours sincerely,
John Major

The Right Honourable George Price MP

SRW.

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

17 December 1990

APPOINTMENT OF HIGH COMMISSIONER IN BELIZE

Thank you for your letter of 13 December.

I enclose a letter which the Prime Minister has signed to the Prime Minister of Belize for Mr. MacKilligin to take with him on his appointment as High Commissioner.

(CHARLES POWELL)

J.S. Wall, Esq., L.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 December 1990

Dear Charles,

Appointment of High Commissioner in Belize

I enclose the draft of a letter from Mr MacKilligin to take with him on his appointment as High Commissioner in Belize. It follows the normal lines. If the Prime Minister agrees, I should be grateful if you would arrange for it to be signed and returned to us.

Mr MacKilligin is expected to leave for Belize towards the end of January. It would be useful if the letter could be dated shortly before the new High Commissioner's departure from the United Kingdom: 17 January would be suitable.

Yours,

Stephen Wall

(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

DRAFT: ~~minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note~~

DSR 11
(Revised 2/90)

Draft/Final 1 +

Reference:

Your Reference:

FROM: Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

BUILDING: ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret ☐
Secret ☐
Confidential ☐
Restricted ☐
Unclassified ☑

PRIVACY MARKING

.....

In Confidence

CAVEAT

.....

Enclosures

flag(s).....

TO:

The Right Honourable George Price, MP
Prime Minister of
BELIZE

Copies to:

SUBJECT:

/Dear Prime Minister/

This letter will be presented to you by Mr David Patrick Robert MacKilligin, who has been appointed by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to be their High Commissioner in Belize.

I am confident that Mr MacKilligin is eminently fitted, both by his personal qualities and by his experience of affairs of State, for the charge with which he has been entrusted, and that his appointment will serve to maintain the relations of close friendship which so happily exist between us.

In this confidence I commend Mr MacKilligin to you and, on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, ask you to afford him all possible help in the fulfilment of his important mission.

/Ending handwritten/

CH

The Right Honourable George Price, MP.

Stock No. C002A

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 December 1990

Dear High Commissioner,

Thank you for your kind message of congratulations on my appointment as Prime Minister. I would be grateful if you would pass on my appreciation to your Prime Minister, the Rt Hon George Price, and Foreign Minister, the Hon Said Musa.

I too look forward to the continuation of the excellent relations that exist between our two Governments and peoples.

Yours sincerely
John Major

His Excellency Sir Edney Cain KB

BELIZE HIGH COMMISSION
200 Sutherland Avenue,
London W9 1RX
Tel. 01-266 3485
Fax. 01-266 3486
TLX. 265451 (MONREF G) MAG 32032
TLX. 265871 (MONREF G) MAG 32032

28 November 1990

Dear Prime Minister

The Prime Minister of Belize, the Right Honourable George Price and the Foreign Minister, the Honourable Said Musa have asked me to convey their warmest congratulations on your appointment as Prime Minister in Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. Please allow me respectfully to add my own.

We look forward to continued excellent relations between our two governments and peoples, and wish for you and Mrs. Major a happy and successful tenure in office.

Yours sincerely

(Sir Edney Cain)
High Commissioner

The Right Honourable John Major MP
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Subject filed on BELIZE: Internal Situation December 1979

14

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MDLOAN 9859

cc Master
OPS

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. 163 B/89

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RECEIVED 11 SEP 8
DESK OFFICER
INDEX | EA | PM

TOP COPY
Q DIST ?

RESTRICTED
FM FCO
TO PRIORITY BELMOPAN
TELNO 139
OF 071934Z SEPTEMBER 89

BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION

1. PLEASE CONVEY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO MR GEORGE PRICE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER.
BEGINS
I EXTEND MY WARM CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU ON YOUR VICTORY IN MONDAY'S GENERAL ELECTION, AND I VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU AGAIN AT CHOGM IN KUALA LUMPUR NEXT MONTH. ENDS

MAJOR

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION 40

MAIN 36

MINIMAL
MCAD
PROTOCOL
NEWS
INFO

ADDITIONAL 4

NO 10,

NNNN

(2)

E.R.

PRIME MINISTER

BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION

You may not have noticed that M. Esquivel was defeated in the Belize General Election by the more left-wing George Price. He was of course Prime Minister from 1965-84 and pursued some fairly barmy policies. He is said to be more realistic now, and is of course firmly committed to the British Garrison as was Esquivel.

You will see Mr. Price at CHOGM. I have sent a brief message of congratulations in your name.

CDP

Charles Powell

7 September 1989

MJ1AEO

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 September 1989

BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION

Thank you for your letter of 6 September about the result of the Belize General Election. I am sure it would be right for the Prime Minister to send a message and the text enclosed with your letter can issue.

Charles Powell

Bob Peirce Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

cc/c

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 September 1989

Dear Charles

Belize General Election: Message from the Prime Minister

George Price's left-of-centre People's United Party (PUP) won the general election held in Belize on 4 September by a narrow margin. The PUP won 15 of the 28 seats contested, the remaining 13 being won by the United Democratic Party (UDP) which had held power since 1984.

The defeat of Manuel Esquivel's right-of-centre UDP is unwelcome. He had pursued sensible and responsible economic policies, encouraging foreign investment and keeping a tight check on government expenditure. But the policy differences between the two main parties are not great. Although still arguing for more expenditure on health and education, the PUP seems to have learnt from the mistakes it made in government before its defeat in 1984. The PUP's very small majority will also exercise a restraining influence. Changes in foreign policy are likely to be minimal. Both parties firmly support retaining close links with Britain and the presence of the British garrison.

George Price has been a leading Belize politician since 1950 when he helped to found the PUP. He was appointed Premier in 1965 when Belize achieved internal self-government and served continuously as Prime Minister until his defeat in the 1984 general election. The Prime Minister met Mr Price at the CHOGM meetings of 1981 and 1983.

We recommend that the Prime Minister send a brief message of congratulations to Mr Price, as in the enclosed draft telegram.

Yours ever

Bob Peirce

(R N Peirce)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

OUT TELEGRAM

Classification	Caveat	Precedence
RESTRICTED		PRIORITY

ZCZC
TC
CAVEAT
FM
TO
TELNO
OF
AND TO

ZCZC
RESTRICTED

FM FCO
TO PRIORITY BELMOPAN
TELNO

BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION

1. Please convey the following message to Mr George Price from the Prime Minister.

BEGINS

I extend my warm congratulations to you on your victory in Monday's General Election, and I very much look forward to meeting you again at CHOGM in Kuala Lumpur next month. ENDS

MAJOR

YYYY
LIMITED
MCAD
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NEWS
INFORMATION

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ADDITIONAL
No 10
NNNN

YYYY
MAIN
ADDITIONAL
NNNN

		Catchword:	
File number LC8AAL	Dept MCAD	Drafted by (Block capitals) A L S COLTMAN	Telephone no 2469
Authorised for despatch by:	Initials	Date/time	
For COD use only	Comcen reference	Telegram number	Processed by

YFBF

PRIME MINISTER

BELIZE HIGH COMMISSIONER

You are to receive the new High Commissioner for Belize for a courtesy call tomorrow.

I am told that Sir Edney Cain is painfully shy, and could hardly be coaxed into saying a word at his first meeting with the Foreign Secretary. The only subject he knows about is finance (he rose from being a messenger in the Education Department to Governor of the Central Bank and Financial Secretary to the Belize Government). You might try to engage him on the subject of the situation in the markets.

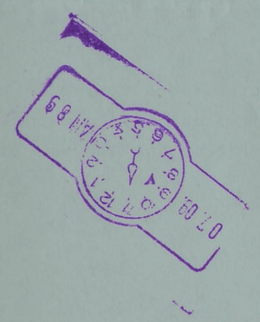
A short brief and biographical note are attached.

CDP

Charles Powell

5 November 1987

MJ2BNI



PRIME MINISTER

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A short brief and biographical note are attached.

CDP

Charles Powell

5 November 1987

MJ2BNI

COVERING SECRET

Copies
Blue

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 November 1987

CDP.

Dear Charles,

Call on the Prime Minister by the New Belizean High Commissioner, Sir Edney Cain, on 6 November at 10.00am

I attach as requested updated briefing material for the call on the Prime Minister by Sir Edney Cain, the Belizean High Commissioner, tomorrow at 10.00am. As I told you, he paid an uneventful call on the Foreign Secretary yesterday.

Yours ever,

Tony Galsworthy

pp. (R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/No 10 Downing Street

COVERING SECRET

COVERING SECRET

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 November 1987

Dear Charles,

Call on the Prime Minister by the New Belizean High Commissioner, Sir Edney Cain, on 6 November at 10.00am

I attach as requested updated briefing material for the call on the Prime Minister by Sir Edney Cain, the Belizean High Commissioner, tomorrow at 10.00am. As I told you, he paid an uneventful call on the Foreign Secretary yesterday.

Yours ever,

pp. (R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/No 10 Downing Street

COVERING SECRET

COVERING SECRET

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY THE NEW BELIZEAN HIGH COMMISSIONER, SIR EDNEY CAIN, 6 NOVEMBER AT 10:00 AM

POINTS TO MAKE

- Congratulations on your new appointment. Welcome you as representative of fellow Commonwealth member. Aware of your past distinguished service to Belize.

- Belize/UK relations excellent. Visit by Mr Patten to Belize in September demonstrates continuing UK interest and commitment.

- Drugs Have welcomed Belize campaign to counter drug trafficking. We shall continue to help and encourage US to do so. Know your Government seized of dangers and need to maintain your campaign.

- Storm Damage to British Trees Much appreciate your Prime Minister's concern over storm damage to trees in Britain, and your offer to send seedlings from Belize.

- Hope Belize will continue to do what it can to pursue contacts with Guatemalans.

- British Garrison (If raised) Garrison will remain for appropriate period.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
5 November 1987

JO4ADR

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY THE NEW BELIZEAN HIGH COMMISSIONER, SIR EDNEY CAIN, 6 NOVEMBER AT 10:00 AM

BACKGROUND

Belize/UK Relations

1. The long historical links between the UK and Belize and our shared membership of the Commonwealth contribute to the very warm relations that we enjoy with Belize. In 1981, Belize became an independent realm within the Commonwealth. It is a parliamentary democracy. In the first post-independence elections in December 1984, the United Democratic Party (UDP) led by Mr Manuel Esquivel defeated the People's United Party (PUP) which had held power for 20 years. These elections and the subsequent transfer of power were agreed by all observers to be a model of democracy and respect for the wishes of the people. Although the UDP is to the right of the PUP there have been no significant changes in policy.

Visits and Representation

2. HM The Queen visited Belize in October 1985. Mr Esquivel made a successful official visit to the UK in July 1985. Lady Young visited Belize several times most recently in October 1985. Mr Raison, the Minister for Overseas Development, visited in September 1985 and Mr Patten in September this year. Recent visitors from Belize have included Mr Thompson, the Deputy Prime

Minister and Mr Barrow, the Foreign Minister in 1986 and Mr Dean Lindo, the Minister of Agriculture in July this year. Our acting High Commissioner in Belmopan is Dermot Flanagan. The new High Commissioner, Mr Peter Thomson, will arrive in Belmopan on 11 November.

Belize/Guatemala

3. Guatemala, Belize's neighbour to the west, maintains a territorial claim against Belize dating back to the last centrury and is the only country that refuses to recognise Belize as an independent state. Since Belize became independent in 1981 the Guatemalans have pursued their claim at periodic exploratory talks, which the UK has attended as observers at the invitation of both parties. The UK position is that we are willing to attend future talks in an observer role and to do what we can to assist both sides to reach a settlement. The most recent talks were held in Miami on 29 April 1987. UK officials attended as observers. The talks were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere but the two sides were far apart. We are encouraging both sides to look to joint economic development as the way to create the right climate for a settlement.

4. The Guatemalan Vice President Sr Carpio has recently suggested that Belize/Guatemala discussions take place in the margins of the Miami Conference on the Caribbean in December. The Belizean Foreign Minister Mr Dean Barrow is likely to attend the Miami Conference in order to meet Sr Caprio.

SECRET

The Garrison

5. It was agreed at independence that a British garrison should remain in Belize to assist with external defence and with the training of the Belize Defence Force. The Prime Minister told Mr Esquivel during his visit to the UK in July 1985 that the British garrison would remain for an appropriate period. For internal planning purposes it was decided in 1984 that the garrison would remain on the basis of a two-year rolling period of notice.

Aid

6. Britain maintains a sizeable aid programme to Belize, including training and technical co-operation amounting to almost £3 million a year. In 1985 a £7.5 million loan agreement was signed for disbursement over 5 years.

Economy

7. The Belize economy (and foreign exchange earnings) are dependent on agricultural products, particularly sugar, citrus and bananas. It is currently doing well though recent US global cuts in sugar import quotas will hurt. Belize exports to the UK in 1986 were around £18 million; UK exports to Belize are around £8 million pa.

Bananas

8. Belize sells all its bananas to the UK Prime Minister Esquivel asked the Foreign Secretary at CHOGM if HMG would consider 'traditional supplier' status for Belize (as Jamaica and Windward Islands have). As ACP state, Belize already has tariff and quota free access to UK market and 20% tariff advantage over dollar area bananas. The change proposed would benefit Fyffes rather than Belize. No change is contemplated.

Drugs

9. In early 1986 the drugs problem in Belize appeared to pose a future threat to internal security. The Belize Government's firm action and US assistance have greatly improved the situation. HMG are also providing assistance including a new Police Adviser (arrives early November).

Storm Damage to British Trees

10. The Belizean Prime Minister, Rt Hon Manuel Esquivel, has asked the Belizean High Commissioner to express his concern about tree losses during the storms of 16 October and has offered to send seedlings of indigenous Belizean trees. The FCO are in touch with Kew Gardens to follow up this offer.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
5 November 1987

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

HIGH COMMISSIONER OF BELIZE,
SIR HENRY EDNEY CONRAD CAIN OBE

Born 2 December 1924 in Belize. His father was Superintendent of the Treasury. He was educated at St George's and St Michael's College, Belize, and Balham and Tooting College of Commerce. He was awarded the MBE in 1965, OBE in 1975 and KB in 1986. He is a member of the Association of Certified Accountants.

Sir Edney joined government service as a messenger in the Education Department in 1940. He became a Clerk and in 1953 he obtained an attachment to the Audit Department in Liverpool. He took correspondence courses at his own expense and in 1961 qualified as a certified accountant. Thereafter he rose steadily through the administration: 1961 Assistant Accountant General; 1963 Accountant General. In 1976 he became the first Managing Director of the Monetary Authority of Belize and in 1982 the first Governor of the Central Bank of Belize. From 1983-85 he was Belize's first resident Ambassador to the US. In 1985 he was appointed Financial Secretary to the Belize Government. As Belize's most senior public official, he was responsible, under the Prime Minister, for managing the country's financial affairs.

Sir Edney is a short, dark-skinned, bespectacled man of 62, with receding greying curly hair and a pronounced limp. He is a quiet and reserved person whose outward appearance (he is slightly crippled) belies his ability and strength of character. He is highly regarded in Belize as a man of great integrity, an active member of the Methodist Church and writer of poetry.

His wife (Leoni, nee Locke) is a pleasant and cheerful lady who is a social asset.

JO7AAH

Charles Powell
cc

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 October 1987

His Excellency Sir Edney Cain OBE
Belize High Commission
15 Thayer Street
LONDON
W1

Dear High Commissioner,

I am writing, in confirmation of my secretary's conversation with Mr Woodye today, to say that the Prime Minister looks forward to your calling on her at 10 Downing Street at 10.00 am on Friday 6 November in order to present to her the letter of introduction from the Prime Minister of Belize, the Rt Hon Manuel Esquivel.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Jasper

J S Jasper
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

Bcc: Miss Tessa Gaisman (10 Downing St)
Miss Phillips (Private Office)
Mr Cullen (MCAD) - could updated briefing please reach No 10 by the evening of Thursday 5 November.

SUBJECT CC MASTER OPS

C.C. FCO

COI

6/XI

PS 6/11

PRIME MINISTER'S SECRET MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T188A1/87

PRIME MINISTER
BELIZE

21st October, 1987

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, PC,MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1
England

Dear Prime Minister,

This letter will be presented to you by Sir Edney Cain, who has been appointed by the Government of Belize to be High Commissioner of Belize to the United Kingdom to replace Mr. Denton Belisle, who has completed his tour of duty, and has been assigned other duties in Belize.

It gives me great pleasure to commend Sir Edney Cain to you. I am confident that his previous experience and abilities befit him in full measure for the important duties which he is about to undertake, and I know that he, for his part, will strive successfully to maintain and foster those close and friendly relations so long existing between us which we value and wish to see continued.

On behalf of the Government of Belize, I ask you to place full trust and credence in Sir Edney Cain, and to afford him all possible assistance in the fulfillment of this important assignment.

Your good friend,

Manuel Esquivel

MANUEL ESQUIVEL
Prime Minister of Belize

CDP
ccPC

MR MARTIN,
PROTOCOL DEPT

CALLS BY THE BELIZEAN HIGH COMMISSIONER

1. As requested in your minute of 5 October, I attach biographical details of Sir Edney Cain OBE, and a short brief on our bilateral relations with Belize.

K Cullen.

K Cullen
Mexico and Central America Dept
K365 270 2644

7 October 1987

cc: PS
PS No 10
PS/Mr Eggar
PS/Mr Patten
PS/PUS
Mr Gillmore
Mr Fearn
Mr Harvey
Mr Coltman
Mr MaCann

CALLS OF SIR EDNEY CAIN OBE, THE NEW BELIZE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Belize/UK Relations

1. The long historical links between the UK and Belize and our shared membership of the Commonwealth contribute to the very warm relations that we enjoy with Belize. In 1981, Belize became an independent realm within the Commonwealth. It is a parliamentary democracy. In the first post-independence elections in December 1984, the United Democratic Party (UDP) led by Mr Manuel Esquivel defeated the People's United Party (PUP) which had held power for 20 years. These elections and the subsequent transfer of power were agreed by all observers to be a model of democracy and respect for the wishes of the people. Although the UDP is to the right of the PUP there have been no significant changes in policy.

Visits and Representation

2. HM The Queen visited Belize in October 1985. Mr Esquivel made a successful official visit to the UK in July 1985. Lady Young visited Belize several times most recently in October 1985. Mr Raison, the Minister for Overseas Development, visited in September 1985 and Mr Patten in September this year. Recent visitors from Belize have included Mr Thompson, the Deputy Prime Minister and Mr Barrow, the Foreign Minister in 1986 and Mr Dean Lindo, the Minister of Agriculture in July this year. Our acting High Commissioner in Belmopan is Dermot Flanagan. The previous High Commissioner, Mr John Crosby, has recently had to retire due to illness. His successor is expected to arrive about the end of October.

/3

Belize/Guatemala

3. Guatemala, Belize's neighbour to the west, maintains a territorial claim against Belize dating back to the last centrury and is the only country that refuses to recognise Belize as an independent state. Since Belize became independent in 1981 the Guatemalans have pursued their claim at periodic exploratory talks, which the UK has attended as observers at the invitation of both parties. The UK position is that we are willing to attend future talks in an observer role and to do what we can to assist both sides to reach a settlement. The most recent talks were held in Miami on 29 April 1987. UK officials attended as observers. The talks were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere but the two sides were far apart. We are encouraging both sides to look to joint economic development as the way to create the right climate for a settlement.

The Garrison

4. It was agreed at independence that a British garrison should remain in Belize to assist with external defence and with the training of the Belize Defence Force. The Prime Minister told Mr Esquivel during his visit to the UK in July 1985 that the British garrison would remain for an appropriate period. Mr Esquivel publicly expressed his satisfaction with this assurance.

Aid

5. Britain maintains a sizeable aid programme to Belize, including training and technical co-operation amounting to almost £3 million a year. In 1985 a £7.5 million loan agreement was signed for disbursement over 5 years.

Economy

6. The Belize economy (and foreign exchange earnings) are dependent on agricultural products, particularly sugar, citrus and bananas. It is currently doing well though recent US global cuts in sugar import quotas will hurt. Belize exports to the UK in 1986 were around £18 million; UK exports to Belize are around £8 million pa.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
7 OCTOBER 1987

JO4ADR

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 October 1987

His Excellency
Sir Edney Cain OBE
Belize High Commission
15 Thayer Street
LONDON
W1

I am writing, in confirmation of what I told Mr Woodye yesterday, to say that the Prime Minister looks forward to your calling on her at 10 Downing Street at 2.30 pm on Wednesday 21 October in order to present to her the letter of introduction from the Prime Minister of Belize, the Rt Hon Manuel Esquivel.

S W F Martin
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

bcc: Miss Tessa Gaisman (10 Downing St)
Miss Phillips (Private Office)
Miss Croll (MCAD) - could updated briefing
please reach NO 10 by the evening of Tuesday 20 October.

010

CM

With the compliments of 3/X

PROTOCOL DEPARTMENT

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
LONDON, SW1A 2AH

FROM: S W F Martin
Protocol Department

DATE: 5 October 1987

cc: Private Secretary
Private Secretary, No 10
PS/Mr Eggar
PS/Mr Patten
PS/PUS
PA/Mr Gillmore
PA/Mr Fearn
PA/Mr Hervey
PA/Mr Coltman
PA/Mr Macan

Mr Coltman
MCAD

1. The new High Commissioner for Belize, Sir Edney Cain OBE, arrived in London on Wednesday 30 September and assumed his functions immediately.

2. An appointment with the Prime Minister to present the Letter of Introduction will be arranged in due course and is likely to take place in November. An audience of Her Majesty The Queen will also be arranged and is likely to take place in November.

3. In due course you should arrange for the appropriate FCO Minister to give a lunch in honour of the High Commissioner. Protocol Department should be kept informed of this.

4. Appointments for the High Commissioner to pay his initial calls at the FCO have been made as follows:

	Date	Time
Head of CCD (Mr Macan)	Fri 9 Oct	10.30 am
Head of MCAD	9 Oct	11.00 am
Deputy Under Secretary (Mr Gillmore)	9 Oct	11.30 am
Vice Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps	9 Oct	12.15 pm
Secretary of State	Wed 4 Nov	3.15 pm
Parliamentary Under Secretary (Mr Eggar)	Thur 12 Nov	11.00 am
Assistant Under Secretary (Mr Fearn)	12 Nov	11.30 am
Permanent Under Secretary	12 Nov	12.00 pm

5. For these calls would you please prepare a biography of the High Commissioner (drawing as necessary on my letter of 30 September to the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, copied to you) and a short brief on our relations with Belize (including the name of our High Commissioner). They should be given the following distribution:

Top copy on blue paper to:

Protocol Department - to forward to the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps for Her Majesty The Queen. This copy should have the date and 'Foreign and Commonwealth Office' typed at the bottom.

Private Secretary (10 Downing Street)

Other copies on white paper to:

Private Secretary - for the Secretary of State
APS to Secretary of State
Mr Eggar
PUS
DUS (Mr Gillmore)

/AUS...

AUS (Mr Fearn)
AUS/ODA
Vice Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps
Head of MCAD
Head of CCD
5 copies to Protocol Department for Mr Martin

6. Sir Edney Cain is a short, dark-skinned, bespectacled man of 62, with receding greying curly hair and a pronounced limp. He speaks very softly.

S W F Martin

5 October 1987

S W F Martin
Protocol Department

CONFIDENTIAL

file DASAHJ
CCPC

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 May 1987

BELIZE: BRITISH FORCES' ASSISTANCE

Thank you for your letter of 5 May about problems arising from the involvement of British Service personnel in anti-drug operations conducted by the Belize Security Forces. The Prime Minister agrees that British Forces may be used to train a cadre of the Belize defence force to use the runway cratering kits, and supervise their operations for a period of up to six months thereafter. She also agrees that Loan Service Personnel should have a role in anti-drug operations where this is an unavoidable part of their duties.

I am copying this letter to Robert Culshaw (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

C D POWELL

David Ball, Esq.
Ministry of Defence

CONFIDENTIAL

cc PC

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
2111/3
Telephone 01-218 ..... (Direct Dialling)
01-218 9000 (Switchboard)

MO 5

6th May 1987

CDP
6/5

Dear Charles

cc PM?

BELIZE : BRITISH FORCES ASSISTANCE

I must apologise that a mistake found its way into my letter to you of yesterday. In the final paragraph, third line, 'British Defence Force' should read 'Belize Defence Force'. I apologise for any confusion this may have caused.

Yours ever

David Ball

(D C J BALL)
Private Secretary

Charles Powell Esq
No 10 Downing Street

CDPL
(1)

Prime Minister

Agree:
- that our forces supervise use by the Belize Defence Force of runway cratering kits for use against illegal landing strips?
- that the 15 British Loan Service Personnel with the Belize Defence Force should be allowed to give such assistance with anti-drug operations (this would not apply to British forces)?

Yes

CDP 6/5

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-~~930 7022~~ 218 2111/3

MO 5E

May 1987

BELIZE: BRITISH FORCES' ASSISTANCE

In his letter of 20th August 1986 to Colin Budd, Tim Flesher recorded the Prime Minister's support for Lady Young's view that we should help train the Belizeans in the skills required for anti-drug operations. But your letter of 23rd September made it clear that we should avoid direct assistance from British Forces in support of anti-drug operations by the Belize Security Forces. I am writing to let you know of a number of issues arising from these decisions that we and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been considering.

The first is the question of the 200 runway cratering kits that the Government gave to Belize in 1985, following the visit to London by Prime Minister Esquivel, to help them destroy illegal airstrips used by drug traffickers. Until last September, the equipment was used by the Belize Defence Force with assistance and close supervision by two to three members of the British garrison. The Belize authorities now wish to resume operations. The equipment is potentially dangerous and inefficient if not used by trained personnel. The Defence Secretary believes that we should continue to encourage the Belize Government to take effective action against drugs, including the cratering of illegal landing strips, but that we should not leave them without the expertise to carry out the job safely and efficiently. He therefore proposes that British forces should train a cadre of the Belize defence force to use the runway cratering kits. This would take about two weeks but would have to be followed by a period of four to six months during which British garrison forces would need to be available to supervise the operations. I understand that this proposal is supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary; I should be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister is content for British personnel to be involved in this way.

Charles Powell Esq
No 10 Downing Street

CDPL
(1)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-~~930 7022~~ 218 2111/3

Prime Minister

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- that our forces supervise use by the Belize Defence Force of runway cratering kits for use against illegal landing strips?
- that the 15 British Loan Service Personnel with the Belize Defence Force should be allowed to give such assistance with anti-drug operations (this would not apply to British forces)?

Yes

CDP 6/5

MO 5E

5th May 1987

BELIZE: BRITISH FORCES' ASSISTANCE

In his letter of 20th August 1986 to Colin Budd, Tim Flesher recorded the Prime Minister's support for Lady Young's view that we should help train the Belizeans in the skills required for anti-drug operations. But your letter of 23rd September made it clear that we should avoid direct assistance from British Forces in support of anti-drug operations by the Belize Security Forces. I am writing to let you know of a number of issues arising from these decisions that we and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been considering.

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Charles Powell Esq
No 10 Downing Street

The second is a separate but related issue. Fifteen members of HM Forces, who are not part of the British garrison, serve the Belize Government as Loan Service Personnel (LSP) in the ~~British~~ Belize Defence Force. The LSP occupy senior posts, including that of the Commanding Officer. Withdrawal of the LSP is planned by 1994 although their function should be changed to an advisory one by 1990. Because of their position in the Belize Defence Force, the LSP cannot help but have some role in anti-drug operations. The Commandant Belize Defence Force plans and directs the operations, while LSP officers from the Royal Air Force provide air cover (with Belize Defence Force Defender aircraft) for the US Drug Enforcement Agency's spraying aircraft. The three LSP in the Belize Maritime Wing may come into contact with drug traffickers along rivers and coastline. The Defence Secretary feels that to restrict these LSP activities would seriously undermine the efforts of the Belize Government to counter the drug problem. It would also weaken the pressure we have been putting on Belize to tackle the problem. He would therefore recommend that there should be some relaxation of the directive against direct assistance by British Forces in the case of those members of HM Forces serving the Belize Government as Loan Service Personnel; he would be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister is content with this.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Robert Culshaw in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Yours sincerely

David Ball

(D C J BALL)
Private Secretary

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I am sending a copy of this letter to Robert Culshaw in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Yours sincerely

David Ball

(D C J BALL)
Private Secretary

BELGE: Relations Dec 79

The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PREM 19 PIECE/ITEM 4012 (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details: Folio 4 Letter from Powell to Budd dated 23 September 1986	X
CLOSED UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	8/2/18 CWayland
MISSING AT TRANSFER	
NUMBER NOT USED	
MISSING (TNA USE ONLY)	
DOCUMENT PUT IN PLACE (TNA USE ONLY)	

Instructions for completion of Dummy Card

Use black or blue pen to complete form.

Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

Enter the department and series,
eg. HO 405, J 82.

Enter the piece and item references, .
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

Enter extract details if it is an extract rather than a whole piece.
This should be an indication of what the extract is,
eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.
Do not enter details of why the extract is sensitive.

If closed under the FOI Act, enter the FOI exemption numbers applying to the closure, eg. 27(1), 40(2).

Sign and date next to the reason why the record is not available to the public ie. Closed under FOI exemption; Retained under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958; Temporarily retained; Missing at transfer or Number not used.

The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PREM 19 PIECE/ITEM 4012 (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details: Folio 3 letter from Younger to Howe dated 23 September 1986	X
CLOSED UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
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MISSING (TNA USE ONLY)	
DOCUMENT PUT IN PLACE (TNA USE ONLY)	

Instructions for completion of Dummy Card

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Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

Enter the department and series,
eg. HO 405, J 82.

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eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

Enter extract details if it is an extract rather than a whole piece.
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SECRET

(2) fe ve cfc

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

20 August 1986

The Prime Minister has seen Lady Young's letter to the Secretary of State for Defence of 15 August about British forces assistance to Belize. She has commented that we must be very careful not to take on any responsibility for controlling the drug traffic. That must be a matter for the Government of Belize. Nevertheless, she supports the proposal in Lady Young's letter that we should help to train the Belizeans in the skills required.

I am sending a copy of this letter to John Howe (Ministry of Defence).

(TIM FLESHER)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

SECRET

SECRET

MCAP 15/8.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

2.

From The Minister of State

We must be very careful not to take any responsibility for conducting the war in Belize. Belize for the Belize people. But you will be in touch. PM

15 August 1986

Dear Secretary of State,

BELIZE: BRITISH FORCES ASSISTANCE

You will have seen the recent JIC paper (WSI 31 of 1 August) which assessed that the threat to internal stability in Belize from the increasing drug trade and related corruption is growing, and that unless effective measures are taken and outside assistance provided, the internal security situation could deteriorate to a point at which the Belize Government could be forced to ask HMG for emergency assistance from British troops. You will also have seen the letter from No 10 of 2 August reporting the Prime Minister's strong view that British troops should not get involved in dealing with drug-related violence in Belize; and that she would wish to be consulted before any decision were taken to agree to a request of that nature.

It is therefore important for us to ensure that steps are taken to prevent a situation developing in which the Belize Government are driven to ask for emergency assistance from British forces to restore internal order. To this end we have been urging the Belizeans to take effective action to deal with the problems they currently face. They have taken some measures and are planning to set up a Drugs Squad. But, as the JIC assessment makes clear, the Belizeans lack the expertise and resources to take effective action without assistance. Our officials have been considering with your Department and others how best this might be provided. US help is also being sought.

/One

The Rt Hon George Younger TD MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall

SECRET

bcc PS
10 Downing Street

SECRET

Temporarily retained

SECRET

SECRET

Temporarily retained

Yours Sincerely

David Hannay

Baroness Young

[Approved by Lady Young
and signed in her absence]

SECRET

file

SECRET

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

2 August 1986

Dear John,

BELIZE

The Prime Minister has noted the JIC's assessment of the threats to the security of Belize in the weekly survey of intelligence issues on 31 July. She sees that the JIC consider there is a possibility that the British government will receive a request from Belize for emergency assistance from British forces to deal with drug related violence. The Prime Minister's strong feeling is that we should not get involved in such circumstances. She would not wish any decision to be taken to agree a request from the Belize government of this nature without herself being consulted.

I am copying this letter to Tony Galsworthy (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

(CHARLES POWELL)

John Howe, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

cc PC
CBHop

Prime Minister
Young & shy, with two sons.
You will want to urge the Belize to go on spraying the marijuana crop.
We have just given a substantial slice of aid. The garrison will remain "for an appropriate period"
CDP 13/5.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

13 May 1986

Call on the Prime Minister by the High Commissioner for Belize: 14 May

I attach a brief and personality notes for the Prime Minister for her meeting with Mr Denton Belisle, the new Belize High Commissioner. The purpose of Mr Belisle's call is to present his Letter of Introduction.

Mr Belisle has no particular topic to raise with the Prime Minister. He saw Sir Geoffrey Howe on 8 April; the discussion was friendly and revealed no bilateral problems.

Yours ever

Robin Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER OF HE MR DENTON BELISLE, THE NEW BELIZE HIGH COMMISSIONER: 14 MAY 1986

Our Objectives

(a) To welcome Mr Belisle as representative of fellow Commonwealth member.

(b) To urge Belizeans to continue their campaign against drug problems.

Arguments

(a) Will continue to assist with defence and development.

(b) Important to press ahead with spraying of marijuana crops which I understand has been successful. There would be public concern here if British forces were involved in incidents with drug producers or traffickers.

His Objectives

Mr Belisle has apparently no instructions to raise any particular topic. He may raise the following subjects:

(a) increased British aid for Belize;

(b) the British defence commitment to Belize;

(c) plans to resume UK/Guatemala relations.

Your Response

(a) Last year a new aid loan agreement was signed with Belize for £7.5 million. We will continue our aid to Belize at around present level but an increase would be difficult due to constraints on public expenditure.

/(b)

(b) I agreed with your Prime Minister (Mr Esquivel) last year that "for an appropriate period" is the best formula for the maintenance of the garrison. We shall also continue to assist with training the Belize Defence Force.

(c) Can assure you that normalisation of relations with Guatemala would not affect Belizean interests. Belize Government will be kept informed of developments on this.

BACKGROUND

1. Mr Belisle has been in London since August 1985 but was appointed High Commissioner on 10 March 1986. The Prime Minister has not previously met him.

2. The Prime Minister met Mr Esquivel, Prime Minister of Belize, in July 1985 in London and at CHOGM. Mr Esquivel's centre-right Government elected in December 1984. Economy in difficulties: affected by low sugar prices.

3. British garrison in Belize for "appropriate period": size kept under review. British loan service personnel and financial assistance provided to assist and train Belize Defence Force. Threat from Guatemala reduced but no sign of Belize/Guatemala settlement.

4. The Prime Minister told Mr Esquivel in July of concern about drugs and the risk that British Forces could be involved in incidents with drug traffickers. Aerial spraying of marijuana has been initiated with considerable success and illegal airfields destroyed with some logistic assistance from British Forces.

5. Belize Government kept informed of our plans to re-establish diplomatic relations with Guatemala. Agreement anticipated on 8 May not achieved: difficult to predict when Guatemala will agree.

FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
9 May 1986

CH3ABG

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

DENTON BELISLE
BELIZE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Born 1948 in Crooked Tree Village, Belize.

Mr Belisle was educated in Belize and at the University of the West Indies where he received a BSc (Honours) degree in Agriculture. He later pursued post-graduate studies in International Economics with Reference to Agriculture at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1972-73.

Mr Belisle entered the Belize Ministry of Agriculture in 1970. In 1978 he moved to the Development Finance Corporation as a Project Officer and in 1981 was made an Investment Promotion Officer. In 1983 Mr Belisle undertook a Training attachment in Industrial Promotion Techniques at the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation. He followed this in March 1984 with a spell as Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative at the Belize Mission to the UN. He returned to Belize in September 1984 to become Head of the Economics Division of the Development Finance Division.

In April 1985 Mr Belisle was posted to Washington as Counsellor and Charge d'Affaires at the Belize Embassy. In August 1985 he came to London as Counsellor and Acting High Commissioner. In January 1986 the Belize Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed the appointment of Mr Belisle as High Commissioner in London.

Shy but friendly. Probably finds the London diplomatic scene rather overpowering.

Mr Belisle is married (Barrette Johnissa) with two sons. He speaks English and Spanish. His hobbies are reading and tennis.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

9 April 1986

His Excellency Mr Denton Belisle
Belize High Commission
15 Thayer Street
LONDON
W1

My dear Denton,

I am writing, in confirmation of our telephone conversation today, to say that the Prime Minister looks forward to your calling on her at 10 Downing Street at 9.00 am on Wednesday 14 May in order to present to her the letter of introduction from your Prime Minister, Mr Manuel Esquivel.

BF11

Yours ever

Stanley Martin

S W F Martin
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

cc.

Bcc: Mrs Ryder, 10 Downing St
Miss Phillips, Private Office
Mr Joy (MCAD). Could briefing please reach No 10 by the evening of Tuesday 13 May.

E.R.

Caroline
This is not an occ — we have to do it. But arrangements are made through FCO protocol.
CR

1. MR. POWELL
~~2. PRIME MINISTER~~

HIGH COMMISSIONER OF BELIZE

The new High Commissioner of Belize would like to pay you a courtesy call to present his credentials.

Content for me to find him 15 minutes?

CR.
BF

CDP.
Wed 14 May at 0900.
CR.
9/4

CAROLINE RYDER
8 April 1986

Pl. copy
to FCO
CDP
14/5.

PRIME MINISTER
BELIZE

FA/P/29/86(42)

25th March, 1986

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, PC, MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SWI
England

Dear Prime Minister,

This letter will be presented to you by Mr. Denton Belisle, who has been appointed by the Government of Belize to be High Commissioner of Belize to the United Kingdom to replace Mr. Rudolph Castillo, who has retired from the Belize Public Service.

It gives me great pleasure to commend Mr. Belisle to you. I am confident that his previous experience and abilities befit him in full measure for the important duties which he is about to undertake, and I know that he, for his part, will strive successfully to maintain and foster those close and friendly relations so long existing between us which we value and wish to see continued.

On behalf of the Government of Belize, I ask you to place full trust and credence in Mr. Belisle, and to afford him all possible assistance in the fulfilment of this important assignment.

Your good friend,

Manuel Esquivel

MANUEL ESQUIVEL
Prime Minister of Belize

cc PK

CW 18/3.

FROM: S W F Martin
Protocol Department

DATE: 17 March 1986

Mr Joy, MCAD

1. The Acting High Commissioner for Belize, Mr Denton Belisle, assumed his functions as High Commissioner on 10 March when I called on him at the Chancery.

2. An appointment with the Prime Minister to present the Letter of Introduction will be arranged in due course. An audience of Her Majesty The Queen has been arranged for 12.40pm on Tuesday 20 May.

3. In due course, you should arrange for the appropriate FCO Minister to give a lunch in honour of the High Commissioner.

4. Appointments for the High Commissioner to pay his initial calls at the FCO have been made as follows:

	Date	Time
1. Head of Commonwealth Co-ordination Department (Mr David Le Breton)	Mon 24 March	10.30am
2. Minister of State (Lady Young)	Mon 24 March	3.00pm
3. Deputy Under Secretary (Sir Wm Harding)	Mon 24 March	11.30am
4. Vice Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps	Weds 26 March	10.30am
5. Assistant Under Secretary (Mr D C Thomas)	Weds 26 March	10.30am
6. Secretary of State	Tues 8 April	3.00pm
7. Permanent Under Secretary	Tues 15 April	12 Noon

5. For these calls would you please prepare a biography of the High Commissioner and a short brief on our relations with Belize. They should be given the following distribution:

Top copies on blue paper to:

Protocol Department - to forward to the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps for Her Majesty The Queen. This copy should have the date and 'Foreign and Commonwealth Office ' typed at the bottom.

Private Secretary (10 Downing Street)

/Other

Other copies to:

PRIVATE SECRETARY - FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE
APS to Secretary of State
Minister of State (Lady Young)
Permanent Under Secretary
Deputy Under Secretary (Sir Wm Harding)
Assistant Under Secretary (Mr D C Thomas)
Assistant Under Secretary (ODA)
Vice Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps
Head of Mex. and Cen. America Department
Head of Commonwealth Co-ordination Department
4 copies to Protocol Department for Mr Martin

6. As you know, Mr Belisle is a tall, thin, rather sad-faced man who wears tinted spectacles. He is 38 this week. He is friendly enough but in a very shy way and has told me that he finds the London diplomatic scene, even on the Commonwealth net, rather overpowering.

Sue Martin

S W F Martin
Protocol Department

cc: PS/PA of those in paragraph 4
PS/Minister for Overseas Development
PS (10 Downing Street)

CONFIDENTIAL File 9A

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 February 1986

APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW BELIZE HIGH COMMISSIONER IN LONDON

Thank you for your letter of 24 February about the appointment of Mr. Denton Belisle as High Commissioner for Belize in London.

The Prime Minister agrees to our informing the Belize Government that we welcome this appointment.

(Charles Powell)

R. N. Culshaw, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

CCPC
①

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister
Agree to this appointment?
CDP
24/1.

24 February 1986

Yes

Dear Charles,

Appointment of the new Belize High Commissioner in London

We have been informed that the Belizean Government propose to appoint Mr Denton Belisle, at present Acting Belize High Commissioner in London, to be substantive High Commissioner for Belize in London in succession to Mr Rudolf Castillo. I enclose a curriculum vitae.

The Foreign Secretary welcomes this appointment. As you are aware, it is not the practice between Commonwealth countries of which Her Majesty is Queen to seek formal agreement to the appointment of a High Commissioner. The Foreign Secretary would be grateful, however, if the Prime Minister would agree to our informing the Belize Government that the British Government welcome the appointment of Mr Belisle in London and look forward to continuing with him the happy association which they enjoyed with his predecessor.

Yours ever

Robert Culshaw

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No.10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

DENTON BELISLE, BELIZE HIGH COMMISSIONER

CURRICULUM VITAE

Born 10 March 1948, Crooked Tree Village, Belize.

Educated at St Johns College, Belize, and at the University of the West Indies where he received a BSc (Honours) degree in Agriculture. Pursued postgraduate studies in International Economics with Reference to Agriculture at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1972-73.

Entered the public service in 1970:

1970 - 78:	Agricultural Officer, Ministry of Agriculture.
1978 - 80:	Project Officer (Agriculture), Development Finance Corporation.
1981 - 84:	Investment Promotion Officer.
1983 - 84:	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, New York. Training attachment in Industrial Promotion Techniques.
March - Sept 1984:	Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative, Belize Mission to the United Nations.
1984 - 85:	Head, Economics Division, Development Finance Corporation.
April - August 1985:	Counsellor and Chargé d'Affaires, Belize Embassy in the United States.
August 1985:	Counsellor/Acting High Commissioner, Belize High Commission in London.

Mr Belisle is married (Barrette Johnissa) with two sons. He speaks English and Spanish. His hobbies are reading and tennis.

CH1ACD

SUBJECT ~~OPS~~ SUBJECT
cc Master, OPS.
~~OPS Sec~~

file

ECL

cc FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

31 December 1985

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 243/85

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your kind letter of 16 December which reached me shortly after Christmas. I send you my congratulations on your successful first year of office and my warm best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

The Hon. Manuel Esquivel

ECL

SUBJECT
cc Master
Ops.

PRIME MINISTER
BELIZE

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 234 A/85

10/8/85(93)

16 December 1985

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher P.C.
Prime Minister
No.10 Downing Street
London, S.W.1

Dear Prime Minister

As we come to the end of 1985, I also come to the end of my first year in office.

Looking back over the year, I recall many important events and wonderful experiences. Among those I treasure most is the opportunity I had to meet with you and exchange ideas on matters that concern our two countries. I hope and pray that 1986 will be a year for further strengthening the bonds we have formed. My best wishes to you and your family, and I pray for your continued success and progress.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely

Manuel Esquivel

(MANUEL ESQUIVEL)
Prime Minister

subject a master

ELBALF file

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

31 July 1985

Dear Peter,

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE ON WEDNESDAY, 31 JULY, 1985, AT 1445

The Prime Minister held a brief meeting with the Prime Minister of Belize this afternoon. Mr. Esquivel was accompanied by his Foreign Minister and by the Belize High Commissioner in London. The Chief of the Defence Staff and Mr. Crosby were also present.

Belizian Economy

The Prime Minister asked Mr. Esquivel to give her an account of the situation in Belize. Mr. Esquivel said that his Government had been faced with some unpleasant decisions. Some 20 per cent of the national budget was being used to clear off arrears of debt. He hoped that this would be completed by September. The general economic situation was made worse by the very low world price of sugar. Tate and Lyle had closed one of its two factories in Belize with a loss of some 600 jobs. Nonetheless he felt that he was making progress in restoring the economy to better shape.

Relations with Guatamala

The Prime Minister enquired about Belize's relations with Guatamala and the prospects for a negotiated settlement of the territorial issue. Mr. Esquivel said that his Government was encouraged and optimistic. Elections would be held in Guatamala by the end of the year which should lead to a civilian Government by late January 1986. The Guatamalans had changed their constitution in order to make it possible for the Government to negotiate a settlement with Belize. He hoped that serious negotiations could start next year. The Prime Minister commented that there had never previously been a stable Government in Guatamala with which it was possible to conduct negotiations. The Foreign Minister said that even if a settlement was reached, a third force would be needed to guarantee it.

In response to the Prime Minister's question, Mr. Esquivel said there had been no deliberate incursions of Guatemalan troops across the border.

British Garrison

Mr. Esquivel said that his Government was well content with current United Kingdom policy on the British garrison. He recognised that Britain was keen to withdraw the garrison: equally Belize was anxious to keep it. The formula that it should stay for "an appropriate period" seemed satisfactory to both sides. The Prime Minister said that Britain would certainly not let Belize down. The only problem was whether Guatamala would be prepared to negotiate a settlement while British troops were in Belize. They might not like the idea that they were negotiating under duress. Mr. Esquivel said that, in his judgment, it was more likely that they would be reluctant to settle for fear that British troops would leave as a consequence. He added that the presence of British troops in Belize and their role there was a useful antidote in Latin America to the British military presence in the Falkland Islands.

Drugs

The Prime Minister said that she was very concerned about the problem with drugs in general. We were doing everything possible in this country to deal with it including legislation to confiscate the assets of those involved in drug trafficking. She feared that, unless the problem was brought under strict control in Belize, it could have implications for the continued presence of our garrison. Were British patrols to become involved in incidents with drug producers or traffickers in circumstances where it appeared the Belizian Government was not doing everything possible to eradicate drugs, there would be pressure in Britain to withdraw the troops. Mr. Esquivel said that his Government also considered drugs a very serious problem. They were making progress in dealing with it. A number of arrests had been made and some light aircraft involved in the transport of drugs had been captured. He had sought increased assistance from the British garrison, for instance help with their radar systems for tracking the movement of illegal aircraft and provision of explosives to destroy airfields. A problem had arisen over aerial spraying of the marijuana crop, in particular with the use of paraquat. The Americans had very recently proposed the substitution of glyphosate which had apparently been used successfully in Colombia. His Government was prepared to expect American help with this. In reply to a further question from the Prime Minister, Mr. Esquivel said that he had encouraged the Mexican Government to introduce patrols along their border to combat drug smuggling.

Belize Defence Force

The Chief of the Defence Staff said that force levels for the BDF had been set in 1981 and in general targets were being met. But the force would have to take on progressively more tasks and it was important to proceed with the establishment of a third company. The main problems were financial. A team from the Ministry of Defence would be giving the Belize Government further

advice.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

The Prime Minister asked how Mr. Esquivel saw the prospects for CHOGM. Mr. Esquivel said that he had not yet given much thought to this. He was awaiting the report on the security of small states from the Commonwealth Secretariat. The Prime Minister said that the problem of Southern Africa would inevitably be a major issue at CHOGM but should not be allowed to dominate the meeting to the exclusion of other subjects. It would be important to leave time for adequate discussion of international economic pronblems. Mr. Esquivel said that Belize would support sanctions against South Africa while hoping that they could be introduced in such a manner as not to damage the economies of the United Kingdom and the United States. He had noted, at the recent meeting of the International Democratic Union in Washington, the point had been made that majority rule was not practicable in South Africa.

The Prime Minister and Mr. Esquivel had some brief discussion of Belize's relations with Mexico and with Latin America. Mr. Esquivel said that Belize had useful contacts with Mexico but only minimal relations with Latin America. The Prime Minister commented on the difficult situation which was emerging over international debt following the inaugural speech of the new President of Peru.

The meeting ended at 1530.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

Yours sincerely,

(Charles Powell)

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

30 July 1985

Dear Charles,

Call on the Prime Minister by The Hon Manuel Esquivel, Prime Minister of Belize: 31 July

I enclose briefing for the Prime Minister's use at this meeting.

We agreed that Mr John Crosby, our High Commissioner to Belize would also attend the meeting.

I am copying this letter and the briefing to Richard Mottram (MOD).

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

CALL BY THE HON MANUEL ESQUIVEL, THE PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE, ON THE PRIME MINISTER, WEDNESDAY 31 JULY at 1445.

OUR OBJECTIVES

To establish a good working relationship with the new Prime Minister and Government of Belize which is essential to British interests because of our special defence relationship and in particular:-

(a) obtain confirmation that Belize will continue to work constructively for an early negotiated settlement of the Belize/Guatemala territorial issue;

(b) make it clear that it remains our wish to withdraw the British garrison as soon as we safely can, but in the meantime give an assurance that the garrison will remain for an appropriate period to assist in defence against external aggression.

(c) obtain confirmation that Belize will not undertake any action which could increase the threat to British forces nor accept the introduction of other forces without British agreement;

(d) reaffirm that we shall continue to assist Belize to build up her defence capability;

(e) stress importance of combatting drug trade in Belize;

(f) To exchange views with Mr Esquivel on the prospects for CHOGM, and in particular impress upon him:

(i) the need to avoid a rift in the Commonwealth over Southern Africa;

(ii) the importance of the Prime Minister's proposed improvements to the style and format of future CHOGM's;

(iii) the value of the Commonwealth association, despite the financial constraints against any major new Commonwealth initiative.

/Arguments

Arguments

(a) i) Welcome your commitment to seek earliest possible negotiated settlement with Guatemala. Best means of ensuring long term security of Belize.

ii) Signs of greater realism in Guatemala. Negotiations imply some concessions. Hope compromise can be reached on maritime boundaries on the kind of lines which your Government have proposed.

iii) Most important to restart negotiations with new Guatemalan Government as soon as possible. We must both give thought to seeking US help in persuading Guatemalans to accept reasonable compromise when the time comes.

(b) i) British garrison cannot stay indefinitely. There can be no open ended commitment. Present formula that it will stay for "an appropriate period" best protection for Belize.

ii) No question of precipitate withdrawal in a manner which would cause instability. We will honour our commitment to assist with external defence of Belize.

(c) Presence of British garrison makes it even more important that there must be close understanding and cooperation between us. We welcomed the assurance given by Mr Barrow in January that Belize would not undertake any action which could increase the threat from Guatemala or otherwise cause instability nor accept the introduction of any other forces without British agreement.

(d) i) We shall continue to assist with enhancement of the Belize Defence Force. Know its future is under review and that financial implications pose problems. Important we know your plans in order to assist. Our military experts very ready to provide advice on how best to achieve what Belize itself wants.

/ii)

ii) We would all welcome Belizeanisation of Belize Defence Force as soon as possible. Know you recognize need for officers in Command positions to be capable and well trained and have agreed that next Commandant should be British to allow time for further training of Belize officers. What timetable do you envisage?

(e) i) Very concerned about serious problem of drug trafficking. Adequate measures for dealing with it essential. Danger that British troops could get caught up in the problem or clash with traffickers. Such incidents could turn British public opinion against presence of Belize garrison.

ii) Britain cannot get involved in what is an internal security problem. But ready to help where we can.

(f) i) Southern Africa; concerned that African issues will dominate CHOGM discussions. We remain opposed to sanctions but are considering what else might be done to put effective pressure on South African Government. A call for sanctions at CHOGM would be divisive and weaken the Commonwealth. We hope that Mr Ramphal will play a moderating role, and that there will be a strong lead from the Chair to steer the Commonwealth through this explosive subject;

ii) CHOGM Style and Format; still anxious to secure structural improvement to future CHOGMs as outlined at Bridgetown Commonwealth Senior Officials Meeting last December. We are mainly advocating changes which have already been endorsed by Commonwealth governments, but also keen to get a definite role for those Foreign Ministers who attend. Cannot allow discussion to drag over to another CHOGM;

iii) Small states; we are awaiting sight of the Commonwealth Secretariat's report on small states and reserve our position until we have studied it. We already do a lot for small states. Developed Commonwealth countries are now hard-pressed financially.

/TACTICAL ARGUMENTS

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/TACTICAL ARGUMENTS

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(d), early finalisation of the Belize Defence Force Review will mean that we can discuss possible future assistance with others who may be interested in making a contribution, e.g. the USA and perhaps some Commonwealth countries.

(e), there is an increasingly strong anti-drug lobby in the US Congress, who are seeking to link US assistance to the anti-drug record of recipient countries. It is important that Belize should not attract the unfavourable attention of this lobby.

(f), lengthy discussion of Southern African problems would preclude adequate discussion of other important subjects. Belize (and other Caribbean neighbours) will want the security aspects of the small states study and economic affairs to be given proper attention.

HIS OBJECTIVES

(a) To seek a more extensive British commitment to maintain our garrison in Belize.

(b) To discuss relations with Guatemala.

(c) To seek increased British aid for Belize.

(d) Mr Esquivel is unlikely to raise any substantive Commonwealth views on this occasion.

YOUR REPONSE

(a) The formula "for an appropriate period" is, in our view, preferable to a fixed period agreement which might lead the Guatemalans to defer a settlement until the expiry of that period.

/(b)

TACTICAL ARGUMENTS

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YOUR REPONSE

(a) The formula "for an appropriate period" is, in our view, preferable to a fixed period agreement which might lead the Guatemalans to defer a settlement until the expiry of that period.

/(b)

(b) The clause on Belize in the new Guatemalan Constitution appears to offer greater flexibility. Views? Prospects for a settlement?

(c) Pleased that the UK and Belize have signed a new aid/loan agreement for £7.5m during your visit. Can assure you that we shall continue our aid to Belize at around present levels. But increase difficult. Need to keep public expenditure within limits.

(d) The Commonwealth has a valuable role to play in world affairs and it will be important to make the most of the opportunities CHOGM offers and avoid division and diversion.

DH1AAH

BACKGROUND

1. The Prime Minister has not previously had a formal meeting with Mr Esquivel but she will have met him at the IDU meeting in Washington. Mr Esquivel took office in December 1984 following General Elections on 14 December.

Belize/Guatemala

2. Further exploratory talks between representatives of the new government of Belize, Guatemala and UK observers took place in New York on 12 February. The atmosphere was cordial. Belize put forward constructive proposals to meet Guatemala's main practical needs and emphasized her wish for an early settlement. The Guatemalans merely undertook to study them. On 18 February General Mejia, the Head of State of Guatemala, announced that the definitive solution to the Belize/Guatemala dispute should be left until after the return to democratic rule in Guatemala, scheduled for January 1986. The clause on Belize in the new Guatemalan Constitution passed on 28 May 1985 appears to give the Guatemalan Government greater room for manoeuvre in selling an agreement within Guatemala. It goes some way to recognizing the existence of a separate Belizean nationality. However there is no sign that the Guatemalans are willing to abandon their demand for some of Belize's territory or that Belize is willing to relinquish territory.

British Garrison

3. The new Belize government have said publicly that they wish to obtain a UK commitment to maintain a garrison which goes further than the present formula "for an appropriate period" but in January Mr Barrow the Foreign Minister accepted that Belize would not obtain an open ended commitment.

4. We agreed at Independence in September 1981 that the garrison would stay for up to nine months but this was extended a number of times. In May 1984 the Prime Minister agreed that our planning should be based on the assumption that the garrison will remain in Belize for at least 2 years. The current planning assumption for the garrison is a rolling 2 years notice-to-leave.

5. In January the Secretary of State explained to Mr Barrow that our long term objective was stability without a British presence and that Britain could not undertake an indefinite commitment. He made it clear that we would not withdraw in a manner likely to create instability in the area. He sought and obtained from the Belizeans an assurance that they would not undertake any action which could lead to instability, nor accept the introduction of other forces without British agreement. The Secretary of State also made it clear that British forces would not be involved in internal security matters. Mr Barrow accepted these arguments and gave the assurances requested but it would be useful to confirm this understanding with Mr Esquivel who is also Minister of Defence.

Belize Defence Force (BDF)

5. The BDF in its present form was based on a plan prepared in 1981. This allows for 3 regular and 3 volunteer army companies, air and force HQ defence platoons, and maritime and air wings. The present establishment is about 520 regulars and 290 volunteers. Britain is assisting the BDF by the provision of 14 UK service personnel involved in command and training positions and by training of Belizeans in the UK. Part of the Independence aid package was earmarked for the purchase of equipment for the BDF. The US also provide some financial assistance for equipment and training.

6. We need to establish that the Belize Government see the role and future of the force in the same way as we do in order to assist them to obtain practical support in establishing a viable force on a respectable footing. The major problem is finance: Belize already spends 11 per cent of its budget on the present very modest force but the establishment of a third company is essential to meet operational and training needs. A review of the BDF has been proposed to consider the BDF's future role and establishment and to take account of the limited capacity of the Belize budget to maintain a defence force. A draft review paper was submitted to Mr Esquivel some months ago. Whilst good relations exist between the British loan service personnel and the Belizeans the Belize government want to achieve "Belizeanisation", particularly in the senior positions, sooner than the Ministry of Defence consider advisable. Mr Esquivel will be calling on the Secretary of State

/for

for Defence and the Chief of the Defence Staff to discuss the future of the BDF in more detail.

Aid/Economy

7. The main justification for our Capital Aid programme is political. Our political objective is to retain stability in a region suffering from serious conflict. The Americans, who regard their national interests to be at stake in Central America, attach great importance to our contribution to the stability of Belize and our active involvement there offsets possible American pressure for more British assistance to other countries in the region. The Belize economy is in a poor state. It is dependent on the agricultural sector, particularly sugar, for its exports earnings and the slump in sugar prices has severely affected her economic performance. The Government has sought IMF assistance and is attempting to resolve the economic situation by controlling public expenditure and attracting more private investment to Belize. With the support of ODA and CDC and private investment the Belize Government is promoting diversification from sugar into other crops. The ODA envisage that aid to Belize will continue at the same level as in recent years. A new aid loan agreement of £7.5 million is to be signed on 29 July. Capital aid disbursements total about £2.8 million a year and technical cooperation is provided.

Drugs

8. The cultivation of marijuana as the sugar slump has deepened has become a serious problem in Belize. Aerial spraying to destroy the marijuana crop was suspended by the PUP Government in 1984 because of electoral considerations. The UDP exploited the issue but now in Government are urgently having to consider re-starting aerial spraying. However they are insisting that the public must be reassured first that such spraying is safe. They also insisted that paraquat aerial spraying in Belize can only be started when the USA itself re-introduces such spraying. The US Administration are meanwhile pressing the Belizeans to agree to a US financed spraying operation. Due to US problems with paraquat, the Americans are now suggesting aerial spraying with Glyphosate. Neither paraquat nor

/Glyphosate

Glyphosate is cleared for aerial application in the UK. Lady Young has been stressing to the Belize Government for almost a year that we share their concern about the increasing drug problem and has urged them to take adequate measures to destroy the marijuana crops. The Chief of Defence Staff visited Belize in late June and identified the drug trade as one of the major problems facing Belize. He has now asked his officials to consider what assistance, short of directly committing British troops, the British Garrison in Belize can give to assist the Belize authorities in combatting the drug problem but the form of assistance has not been decided and will not be discussed at this stage with the Belizeans. Any requests for assistance from Belize will me met by an undertaking to consider them. Besides marijuana there have been one or two cases of cocaine smuggling via Belize.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)

9. Mr Esquivel is one of the newest Commonwealth Head of Government and this will be his first CHOGM. He will therefore be open to influence by one of the most experienced and senior Commonwealth leaders.

10. The CHOGM will be held from 16 - 22 October. The Commonwealth Secretariat have not yet issued a formal Agenda but Mr Ramphal has indicated in his circular letter to Heads of Government dated 12 June 1985 that security, the special needs of small states, South Africa, international economic issues and functional cooperation are likely to be the main topics for discussion. Sir Lynden Pindling has told the PM that he will be putting the international drug problem forward as an agenda item. We welcome this.

Small States

11. The report of the Commonwealth Secretary General's Consultative Group on the special needs of small states has not yet been circulated but we have heard that there may not be great resource implications; possibly a need for widening the present Australian assistance to some small states with the funding of a Joint Services

/Office

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/Office

Office at New York; a desk at the Commonwealth Secretariat; and a statement on collective security to the UN Secretary General. We will await sight of the full report before committing ourselves to any further assistance to small states. On specific defence matters we believe that regional co-operation involving other Commonwealth members and allies is one way of tackling this problem. Prevention is better and cheaper than cure. We are consulting with the old Commonwealth members through missions in their capitals and in London to see if we can coordinate a joint line before Nassau.

Africa Political

12. As things stand, we look like being isolated in our opposition to calls for economic sanctions against South Africa though we believe that some of the African states are also less than happy with the idea (eg Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe).

13. We believe the Commonwealth Secretary-General has a moderating role to play in the run up to and at the CHOGM but he is in favour of a full and frank discussion and of effective measures against Pretoria (he personally advocates sanctions of some sort). We hope that Mr Esquivel shares our view that too divisive a meeting at Nassau will harm the Commonwealth and that he will seek to influence Mr Ramphal and other Commonwealth countries accordingly.

Economic

14. International economic issues (North/South dialogue, GATT and debt) must be major themes. With the coming of the rains and the prospect of a better harvest in some areas of Africa, drought is unlikely to be as major an issue but the Africans will want to know what the international community will be doing to help them with their longer term developmental and economic problems.

/15.

Office at New York; a desk at the Commonwealth Secretariat; and a statement on collective security to the UN Secretary General. We will await sight of the full report before committing ourselves to any further assistance to small states. On specific defence matters we believe that regional co-operation involving other Commonwealth members and allies is one way of tackling this problem. Prevention is better and cheaper than cure. We are consulting with the old Commonwealth members through missions in their capitals and in London to see if we can coordinate a joint line before Nassau.

Africa Political

12. As things stand, we look like being isolated in our opposition to calls for economic sanctions against South Africa though we believe that some of the African states are also less than happy with the idea (eg Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe).

13. We believe the Commonwealth Secretary-General has a moderating role to play in the run up to and at the CHOGM but he is in favour of a full and frank discussion and of effective measures against Pretoria (he personally advocates sanctions of some sort). We hope that Mr Esquivel shares our view that too divisive a meeting at Nassau will harm the Commonwealth and that he will seek to influence Mr Ramphal and other Commonwealth countries accordingly.

Economic

14. International economic issues (North/South dialogue, GATT and debt) must be major themes. With the coming of the rains and the prospect of a better harvest in some areas of Africa, drought is unlikely to be as major an issue but the Africans will want to know what the international community will be doing to help them with their longer term developmental and economic problems.

/15.

Aid

14. Due to its relative prosperity, Barbados does not receive UK capital aid. Our aid programme, which is run mainly for political reasons, consists entirely of Technical Co-operation. It has most recently concentrated upon the provision of expertise for governmental or parastatal organisations such as the Post Office, Customs, Police, Teacher Training College and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. Forecast expenditure on Technical Co-operation in the current financial year is £301,000.

Air Services

15. The Prime Minister will recall her recent discussions with Prime Minister Compton (St Lucia) and Prime Minister Chambers (Trinidad and Tobago). We cannot force the eastern Caribbean countries to approach the matter collectively, but through bilateral discussions with Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, St Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago we not only ensured equality of treatment but also tried to create an environment in which the eastern Caribbean states can choose the way forward either individually or collectively, whichever their own best interests. Offers already made represent

/Commonwealth

CHOGM venue

15. Prime Minister, Sir Lynden Pindling has so far survived criticism following revelations of high-level drugs related corruption. The Opposition party, Freedom National Movement, have announced that they will continue anti-Government protests throughout CHOGM. Such protests, so far have been peaceful and well-ordered. There has been no indication that any demonstrations during CHOGM need cause alarm.

CHOGM Style and Format

16. The Prime Minister's six objectives are:-

(a) to reduce the length of future CHOGMs to 4-5 days;

(b) to encourage further progress towards a briefer and more representative communiqué;

(c) to shorten the retreat to the evening and a day;

(d) to secure proper facilities for official back-up during the retreat;

(e) to stress that we are not willing to see the Commonwealth become another talking shop for the non-aligned;

(f) to secure a defined role for Foreign Ministers, who might take from the Heads of Government some of the burden of drafting and approving the communiqué.

Press Line

The Prime Ministers had a useful exchange of views on the prospects for the CHOGM to be held in the Bahamas in October later this year.

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PRESS LINE

VISIT OF MR MANUEL ESQUIVEL, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE AND MINISTER OF FINANCE AND DEFENCE; 29 JULY - 3 AUGUST

1. The Prime Minister of Belize accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs called on the Prime Minister on 31 July during the course of his visit to the UK at the invitation of the Prime Minister. They had a useful exchange mainly on bilateral matters but also discussed the prospects for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to be held in the Bahamas in October.

2. The Prime Minsiter confirmed that the British garrison would remain in Belize for an appropriate period and that Britain would maintain its substantial aid programme to Belize.

3. Both sides expressed their wish to see an early negotiated settlement of the dispute between Belize and Guatemala.

4. (If asked) The Prime Minister confirmed that British officials would continue to attend future talks which may be arranged, as observers, if both sides wished them to do so.

5. (If asked) No date arranged for next talks between Belize and Guatemala.

CH1AAD

VISIT OF MR MANUEL ESQUIVEL, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE: 29 JULY - 3 AUGUST

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Internal

1. In the General Election held on 14 December 1984 Mr Esquivel's United Democratic Party won 21 seats in the newly expanded 28 seat Assembly, defeating the People's United Party led by Mr Price who had been Prime Minister since Belize attained internal self-government in 1964. Belize's first General Election since Independence in 1981 was strongly but fairly contested. It was the first General Election not dominated by the issues of Independence and the British Garrison. The popularity of the UDP was re-affirmed in the town board elections of 27 March in which it won control of five of the seven town boards.

2. The UDP's 1984 election campaign concentrated on attacking the economic record of Price's Government. In 1984 the Belizean economy suffered from external factors but the UDP also accused Price of not doing enough to attract foreign investors and of inefficiency and mismanagement in the public sector. The UDP also claimed that two left wing PUP Ministers (who were rumoured to have Cuban links) would introduce radical socialism if they won the election. However, the result is probably more indicative of a country-wide desire for a change after 20 years of PUP rule.

3. The UDP is not ideologically homogeneous, but generally right of centre. Some internal disagreements have already surfaced. Despite their inexperience, the UDP Ministers are generally effective and responsible. They are pursuing policies which are not radically different from their predecessors. However, Esquivel has placed greater emphasis on building up a strong and competitive private sector and attracting foreign investment while maintaining "local control of the commanding heights of the economy". His declared priorities are the modernization of agriculture, assistance to small businesses, promotion of export orientated industries, fisheries and tourism, and reduced taxes on key developmental sectors.

4. The new Government will benefit from an agreement with the IMF negotiated by their predecessors for the disbursement of about 15m Belize dollars (7.5m US). The IMF terms envisage the clearing up of public sector debts by September 1985 and the new Government seems determined to meet all existing commitments. A programme soft loan for US dollars 14 million over the period until August 1986 has been signed with US Aid.

External

5. Esquivel has said he will maintain Belize's independent and non-aligned stance, while preserving the traditional close relationship with Britain. He has also stressed the importance of close economic ties with the US. Belize is a member of CARICOM and has developed good but not very substantial relations with most of its Caribbean neighbours. Belize also maintains fairly good relations with Cental American countries, but does not have diplomatic relations with Guatemala, Nicaragua or Cuba. Esquivel's decision to send a senior official to represent Belize at the inauguration of Ortega was criticized by his right wing. Esquivel has said that Belize will continue membership of all international organisations to which she presently belongs. Accession to the Organisation of American states is blocked by the dispute with Guatemala.

Security

6. The UDP manifesto describes the British commitment to retain the garrison in Belize for an "appropriate period" as "undesirable and dangerous". Prime Minister Esquivel has promised to seek a strengthened British commitment for the garrison to remain until either the Guatemalan claim is settled or alternative defence arrangements are put in place. He has indicated that the envisaged alternative would be to secure US guarantees, but that he would prefer to avoid having US troops in Belize, because of the danger of becoming involved in the Central American imbroglio. He is committed to pursuing the negotiating process with Guatemala. Talks between the Belizeans and Guatemalans on the Belize/Guatemala territorial issue were held in New York on 12 February at official

/level

level. The UK attended the talks as observers at the invitation of both parties. The talks were held in a relaxed and cordial atmosphere but little progress was made. However, both sides left open the possibility of further talks. On 21 February General Mejia, the Guatemalan President, stated that the definitive solution to the dispute should be a decision for a legally constituted Government.

MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA DEPARTMENT

22 July 1985

CH1AAA

HON MANUEL AMADEO ESQUIVEL

Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Defence since 17 December 1984. Leader of the United Democratic Party (UDP).

Born Belize City 2 May 1940.

Educated at St John's College, Belize City and at Bristol University where he was a British Council scholar and graduated as a BSc and obtained a Certificate in Education. Subsequently taught Mathematics and Chemistry at St John's College.

First became involved in politics when he joined the Liberal Party, which merged into the UDP in 1974. Elected to the Belize City Council in 1975 and served two terms. Elected Chairman of the UDP in 1979. He stood unsuccessfully against Mr Price in the Freetown Division at the 1979 General Election but was appointed Senator. He succeeded Dr Ted Aranda as Leader of the UDP in January 1983, and undertook a vigorous campaign to revitalise the party, culminating in victory for the UDP at the General Election in December 1984. Mr Esquivel was elected as Representative for Caribbean Shores Division at that election.

A mature man of moderate views, he has gained wide respect in and outside the UDP and must take much of the credit for the UDP's election victory. As a light skinned, Catholic former Liberal, he has given the UDP a broader appeal than it had under his predecessors. Has made a good start as Prime Minister.

Married to Kathleen Georgina Levy, a former British Catholic volunteer teacher who now teaches Science at Wesley College Belize. She took out Belizean nationality in 1984. They have three children.

WP No. LT3AGB

HON DEAN BARROW

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SINCE 17 DECEMBER 1984

Born 1951

Graduated LLB at University of the West Indies (Barbados) in 1973 and went on to a diploma in legal education at the Norman Manley School of Law in Jamaica in 1975. Went into legal practice with Dean Lindo (who is his uncle). Studied for two years at Miami University where he obtained a Master Degree in Law in May 1981 and Master of Arts (International Studies) in 1982. In 1983 he became Legal Counsel to the United Democratic Party (UDP) and later that year became Shadow Foreign Minister for the UDP. He stood successfully in the Queen's Square Division at the 1984 General Election.

Young, friendly, intelligent and articulate, he is sensible on international questions, including relations with Guatemala.

Married Lois Young, also an Attorney, who studied law at Kings College, London. She was a PUP supporter before they were married and is an independent minded and articulate person. They have three children.

MACACI

CASTILLO, Rudolph ('Rudy') MBE

High Commissioner to London since 28 April 1983. (Formerly Secretary to the Cabinet/Chief of Protocol.)

Born Belize City 28 December 1927. Educated St John's College, Belize City; took courses at BBC (1952) and Central Office of Information (1959). A Roman Catholic (his brother is a 'Monsignor'); speaks Spanish.

Taught at St John's College (for 7 years). Joined colonial government service and became a radio announcer; Senior Announcer, 1954; Assistant Programme Organiser 1956; Information Officer, 1957; Chief Information Officer, 1962; also worked as correspondent for Reuters and the Daily Telegraph. Interest: photography.

Mr Castillo had an important role as general factotum to the last Prime Minister, George Price, a job which he appeared to do with great efficiency. After independence in 1981 he took on an additional role of Chief of Protocol. Probably not a man of great influence.

Married, wife's name Gwendolyn; seven children.

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE

Mr Esquivel was at the IDU meeting in Washington and you probably spoke to him there.

The meeting will also be attended by CDS - who visited Belize in late June - and by our High Commissioner.

You will want to use the meeting to encourage him to work constructively for an early negotiated settlement of the Belize/Guatemala territorial problem. The signs from Guatemala are a bit more favourable (but not much). As regards the British Garrison you will want to make clear that it cannot remain indefinitely, though there is no question of a precipitate withdrawal. We should stick to the formula "for an appropriate period". You should stress to him that we look to Belize not to undertake any action which would increase the threat to British forces. We shall continue to help Belize to build up her defence capability. You might ask CDS to say something on this.

You will want to let him know of your serious concern about drug trafficking. We look to the Belizeans to take proper measures to destroy the marijuana crop and to stop cocaine smuggling through the country. There is a risk that British troops could be caught up in a clash with drug traffickers.

If there is time you might raise the prospects for CHOGM and the need not to let South Africa dominate the whole meeting.

A new aid loan agreement of £7.5 million was signed yesterday.

I have slipped a copy of CDS' note on his visit to Belize in the back of the folder.

I attach a card.

C.D.P.

30 July 1985

MJ2AWD

FILE CONFIDENTIAL

DCA (58) bcPc

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

5 June 1985

VISIT TO THE UK BY THE BELIZE PRIME MINISTER

Thank you for your letter of 31 May about the proposed visit of Mr. Esquivel in the week beginning 29 July.

BF

The Prime Minister could see Mr. Esquivel from 1445 to 1530 on Wednesday 31 July.

(Charles Powell)

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CST

10 DOWNING STREET

CDP

CR

14.45 - 15.45
on Monday
29 July

CR

Could you kindly
find a date &
time as early as
possible in the
week of 29 July.

CDP

010

CC PC

(1)

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

31 May 1985

Prime Minister
Agree to see Mr. Esquivel?
CDP 1/6

Yes

Dear Charles,

Visit to the UK by the Belize Prime Minister

The Belize elections of 14 December 1984 resulted in a transfer of power from Mr George Price's People's United Party (PUP), which had been in office since internal self-government in 1964, to the United Democratic Party (UDP). Shortly after assuming office Mr Esquivel, the new Prime Minister, indicated that he would welcome an early opportunity for discussions with British Ministers and we have indicated to him that he would be welcome in London this year. We now understand that he intends to visit Britain in July and that he would be available for talks in the week beginning 29 July.

The Foreign Secretary believes that such talks would be useful, in particular before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October. Mr Esquivel has publicly emphasized the importance which his Government attaches to good relations with the UK and he will no doubt wish to discuss our defence relationship. The visit would also be a useful opportunity to encourage the Belize Government in their intention to show flexibility in seeking a settlement to their dispute with Guatemala.

Sir Geoffrey Howe accordingly hopes that the Prime Minister could find time to see Mr Esquivel. I should be grateful if you could let me know whether this would be convenient.

Yours ever,

Len Appleyard

(L V Appleyard)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 6 A/85

CC MASTER SUBJECT
OPS

Prime Minister
CDP
35/1

Please Quote 10/8/85(78)

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan,
Cayo District Belize
Central America

15 January 1985

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher P.C.
Prime Minister
No.10 Downing Street
London, S.W.1

Dear Prime Minister

I have the honour on behalf of the new Government and people of Belize to express my sincere thanks for your very kind message of congratulations on our party's victory in the recent elections and on my appointment as Prime Minister of Belize.

I also welcome your expression of desire of continued friendship and cooperation and I wish to give assurances that my Government looks forward to strengthening and deepening of the good relations that exist between our two countries. At the same time I extend best wishes for your personal well being and happiness.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest regards.

Sincerely

(MANUEL ESQUIVEL)
Prime Minister

GRS 380
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

FM BELMOPAN 042210Z JAN 85
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 3 OF 4 JANUARY 1985
AND TO INFO ROUTINE WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, MEXICO CITY, KINGSTON, BIS GUATEMALA CITY

UK/BELIZE

1. AT THE NAMING CEREMONY ON 4 JANUARY OF MERLIN HOUSE, THE NEW BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIDENCE IN BELMOPAN, PRIME MINISTER ESQUIVEL SPOKE ON THE FUTURE OF BELIZEAN RELATIONS WITH THE UK AND ALSO ON THE GUATEMALA QUESTION.

2. MR ESQUIVEL REFERRED TO THE LONG HISTORY OF CO-OPERATION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND BELIZE CULMINATING IN TODAY'S QUOTE DIGNIFIED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO SOVEREIGN STATES UNQUOTE. HE SAID THAT THE NEW RESIDENCE, TOGETHER WITH THE NEW CHANCERY IN BELMOPAN SIGNALLED BRITISH RECOGNITION OF BELIZEAN SOVEREIGNTY AS WELL AS BRITAIN'S COMMITMENT TO CONTINUED ECONOMIC AND SECURITY COOPERATION FOR WHICH HE EXPRESSED THANKS.

3. HE EMPHASISED THAT INDEPENDENT BELIZE WELCOMED THE PRESENCE OF BRITISH TROOPS ON BELIZEAN SOIL. BELIZE WOULD SEEK A STRENGTHENED BRITISH COMMITMENT FOR THE GARRISON TO REMAIN UNTIL EITHER THE GUATEMALAN CLAIM WAS SETTLED OR ALTERNATIVE DEFENCE AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN PUT IN PLACE. HE RECOGNISED THAT SUCH A COMMITMENT WOULD REQUIRE AN EQUALLY SOLEMN COMMITMENT ON THE BELIZEAN SIDE. QUOTE OUR COMMITMENT WOULD BE TO PURSUE, ACTIVELY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY, GOOD FAITH NEGOTIATIONS WITH GUATEMALA IN ORDER TO FIND AN HONOURABLE, JUST AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. NONE OF US WANT BRITISH TROOPS TO REMAIN IN BELIZE IN PERPETUITY. SUCH A SITUATION WOULD BE IN THE INTEREST NEITHER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM NOR BELIZE. I WOULD LIKE TO STATE QUITE CATEGORICALLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE IS PREPARED TO RESUME THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS WITH GUATEMALA. INDEED, WE WILL SEEK AN EARLY RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS. SUCH NEGOTIATIONS MUST HAVE FOR US AS THEIR PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE - THE RECOGNITION OF BELIZE'S SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. WE CANNOT HELP BUT FEEL THAT THE TIME IS RIGHT TO PRESS FOR A SOLUTION TO THE GUATEMALAN CLAIM IN CONDITIONS THAT WILL FREE BOTH OUR COUNTRIES TO GET ON WITH THE REAL BUSINESS OF PEACEFUL COOPERATION AND GOOD NEIGHBOURLINESS THAT SHOULD ORDER

CONFIDENTIAL

/RELATIONS

CONFIDENTIAL

RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES THAT SHARE A COMMON BORDER. WE ARE AWARE THAT TENTATIVE STEPS HAVE ALREADY BEEN TAKEN IN GUATEMALA INDICATING A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. SUCH STEPS OUGHT TO BE TRANSLATED INTO REAL TERMS BY RECOGNITION OF BELIZE'S DEMOCRATIC RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINE ITS OWN DESTINY AND PRESERVE ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WITHIN ITS EXISTING BORDERS UNQUOTE.

4. TEXT FOLLOWS BY BAG.

CROSBY

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PS/PUS
MR GOODALL
SIR C TICKELL
MR WESTON
MR D C THOMAS
SIR W HARDING
MR DEREK THOMAS

MR BRAITHWAITE
CABINET OFFICE
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00 PEKING
GRS 86
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FM FCO 181330Z DEC 84
TO IMMEDIATE PEKING
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1586 OF 18 DECEMBER
INFO IMMEDIATE BELMOPAN
FOLLOWING FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM PRIVATE OFFICE
BELIZE: GENERAL ELECTION
1. THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED FOR A DRAFT MESSAGE TO SEND TO MR PRICE.
BEGINS
I SEND YOU MY BEST WISHES AS YOU RELINQUISH THE POST OF PRIME MINISTER AFTER MANY YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO BELIZE, WHICH YOU SUCCESSFULLY STEERED TO INDEPENDENCE IN 1981. YOUR WISE COUNSELS WILL BE MUCH MISSED AT COMMONWEALTH MEETINGS. WITH WARM PERSONAL REGARDS.
ENDS

HOWE

NNNN

Agreed
CR.

Mr Butler
Mr Powell
Mr Appleyard
Mr Richards
Miss Beckwith

BELIZA/GUATEMALA
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FM FCO 181330Z DEC 84
TO IMMEDIATE PEKING
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1586 OF 18 DECEMBER
INFO IMMEDIATE BELMOPAN
FOLLOWING FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM PRIVATE OFFICE
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ENDS

HOWE

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SIR W HARDING

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

17 December, 1984.

Belize General Election

Thank you for your letter of 17 December enclosing a draft message from the Prime Minister to Mr. Esquivel.

This may issue. But the Prime Minister would also like to send a message to Mr. Price. I should be grateful for a draft.

Charles Powell

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

010

copy

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

17 December 1984

Prime Minister
Agree message?
CDP
17/xii

Dear Charles,

Belize General Election

The opposition United Democratic Party (UDP), led by Mr Manuel Esquivel, won a sweeping victory in the Belize general election on 14 December.

It is normal practice for the Prime Minister to send a message of congratulations to the Prime Minister in a Commonwealth country on appointment. I enclose a draft message. We propose that our High Commissioner should deliver the message once the new Prime Minister's appointment has been confirmed.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

OUT TELEGRAM

Classification and Caveats	Precedence/Deskby
UNCLASSIFIED	IMMEDIATE DESKBY

ZCZC	1	ZCZC
GRS	2	GRS
CLASS	3	UNCLASSIFIED
CAVEATS	4	
DESKBY	5	DESKBY 181600Z
FM FCO	6	FM FCO
PRE/ADD	7	TO IMMEDIATE BELMOPAN
TEL NO	8	TELEGRAM NO
	9	INFORMATION ROUTINE WASHINGTON
	10	BELIZE GENERAL ELECTION
	11	1. Please pass the following message from the Prime
	12	Minister to Mr Esquivel as soon as possible after the
	13	announcement of his appointment as Prime Minister.
	14	BEGINS
	15	Warm congratulations on your impressive election
	16	victory and on your appointment as Prime Minister of Belize.
	17	I send you and your new Government my best wishes and
	18	look forward to working closely with you. ENDS
	19	
	20	HOWE
	21	NNNN
///	22	
//	23	
/	24	
	25	

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
File number	Dept MCAD	Distribution MCAD Planning Staff PS PS/Lady Young Sir W Harding
Drafted by (Block capitals) PRIVATE SECRETARY		
Telephone number 233-4641		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

XY 48

Belize

RESTRICTED

hle ecu

cc PC.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

19 November 1984

Belize: Letter from Mr Price

Thank you for your letter of 19 November enclosing a draft letter from the Prime Minister to Mr Price.

Since the Prime Minister initiated this correspondence, I think that Mr Price might be allowed the privilege of closing it. I do not therefore think a further round necessary. But thank you all the same.

Charles Powell

P F Ricketts Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 November, 1984

Dear Charles,

Belize: Letter to the Prime Minister from the Prime Minister of Belize

Mr George Price wrote to the Prime Minister on 29 October to acknowledge the presentation by Mr John Crosby, our new High Commissioner at Belmopan, of his Letter of Introduction. In his letter (which was only received in London on 15 November) Mr Price underlines the importance he attaches to Belize's relationship with the UK and his gratitude to the Prime Minister for continuing British help to the people of Belize.

I enclose a draft reply which the Prime Minister may wish to send to Mr Price.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

DSR 11 (Revised)

RESTRICTED

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret
Secret
Confidential
Restricted
Unclassified

TO:

The Rt Hon George Price PC
Office of the Prime Minister
BELMOPAN

Your Reference

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

SUBJECT:

Thank you for your kind letter of 29 October.

You may be sure that the British Government will continue to help in whatever way we can to promote the security and wellbeing of the people of Belize.

I am confident that the close and friendly relations between our two Governments will continue to be reflected in a cordial relationship between yourself and John Crosby.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

RESTRICTED

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL MESSAGE SERIAL No. T172/84

12 October 1984

cc MASTER OPS

Dear Prime Minister,

This letter will be presented to you by Mr. John Michael Crosby, M.V.O., who has been appointed by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to be their High Commissioner in Belize.

I am confident that Mr. Crosby is eminently fitted, both by his personal qualities and by his experience of affairs of State, for the charge with which he has been entrusted, and that his appointment will serve to maintain the relations of close friendship which so happily exist between us.

In this confidence I commend Mr. Crosby to you and, on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, ask you to afford him all possible help in the fulfilment of his important mission.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

The Right Honourable George Price, P.C.

TOP COPY to
NAPTS.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 September, 1984

Dear Charles,

Appointment of High Commissioner to Belize

I enclose the draft of a letter for Mr Crosby to take with him on his appointment as High Commissioner in Belize. It follows the normal lines. If the Prime Minister agrees, I would be grateful if you could arrange for it to be signed and returned to me.

Mr Crosby is expected to leave for Belize around 20 October. It would be useful if the letter could bear a date shortly before the new High Commissioner's departure from the United Kingdom: 12 October would be suitable.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION ~~minute/letter/telegram/despatch/note~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

~~Top Secret~~
Secret
Confidential
~~Restricted~~
Unclassified

TO:

The Right Honourable George Price
BELIZE

Your Reference

Blind Copies to:

Miss P Jones,
Protocol Department

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

M. type for PM and delete 12 October

SUBJECT:

~~Dear Prime Minister~~

This letter will be presented to you by Mr John Michael Crosby, MVO, who has been appointed by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to be their High Commissioner in Belize.

I am confident that Mr Crosby is eminently fitted, both by his personal qualities and by his experience of affairs of State, for the charge with which he has been entrusted, and that his appointment will serve to maintain the relations of close friendship which so happily exist between us.

In this confidence I commend Mr Crosby to you and, on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, ask you to afford him all possible help in the fulfilment of his important mission.

The Right Honourable George Price.

MT

Enclosures—flag(s).....

FILE

SUBJECT

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T2184
Subject Belize: Int Situation Dec 79

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

3 January 1984

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for the memorandum on the Hillbank project which you gave me in New Delhi. I was most interested to read more about this scheme which is obviously both imaginative and ambitious and I am glad to hear that British companies have shown great interest in it. At first sight the project would seem to offer potential benefits to the economy of your country, both directly by providing Belize with a new and independent source of power, and indirectly by developing the infra-structure so necessary for future investment and expansion. Officials in the various British government departments concerned were glad to have the opportunity to discuss the project with your Ministers, Mr. Musa and Mr. Hunter, when they were in London last month. I am also grateful to you for keeping the High Commissioner at Belmopan in close touch about it.

Any project on this scale of course requires full and careful evaluation. I understand that consideration is currently being given to the best way of making more detailed studies of this scheme and we shall follow the progress made with great interest.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

The Right Honourable George Price, PC

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

29 December 1983

GR

Pse type letter

Dear John,

Belize: Hillbank Project

You wrote to me on 16 December about a memorandum on the Hillbank project which the Prime Minister of Belize, Mr George Price, gave the Prime Minister during CHOGM. Mr Price asked for the Prime Minister's reactions.

We have known about the Hillbank project for some time. The Belize Attorney-General and Minister of Works came to London to talk to British companies about it last month. While they were here they also had discussions with the DTI and ODA officials about it.

As Mr Price's memorandum indicates, the scheme would involve a wood-burning power station linked to a national grid network, a pulp and paper mill, access roads and a housing settlement. This in turn could lead to agricultural development involving foreign investment.

The Belize Government are clearly keen on this project. They are also under some commercial pressure from the Belizean and British companies who are interested in it. Apart from the possible economic benefits, the project would also have political appeal for Mr Price. As he points out in his memorandum, Belize's present electricity supply system is inadequate. Recurrent load shedding and blackouts were undoubtedly a factor in the comfortable victory of the opposition UDP in the Belize City Council elections on 14 December.

From our point of view there is much to be said politically for stimulating the Belizean economy and attracting foreign investment. If the scheme went ahead British companies would stand to gain substantially from it.

/On the other

On the other hand, the scheme is undoubtedly extremely ambitious for a country the size of Belize. Financing it would pose considerable problems. The World Bank are not at all keen. It is by no means certain that the foreign investment element could be attracted. There could also be serious adverse ecological consequences, especially if the project is not carefully planned from the outset.

Mr Price is obviously looking for a financial contribution from HMG. When he was in London last month on his way to CHOGM he told the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary that he hoped that a grant element could be included in any financial package.

At the moment DTI and ODA are urgently considering the best way forward. The British companies involved (NEI and Balfour Beatty) have suggested a desk study by the consultants Merz and McLellan but this would not be sufficiently comprehensive in itself to enable a decision to be made on the possibility of UK financial support. ODA are considering whether the Development Division at Barbados might carry out a pre-feasibility visit to Hillbank which could give a clearer idea of what is likely to be involved. A full-scale feasibility study would entail considerable expense, possibly in the region of £1 - 2 million. ATP funding might be considered for this, but departments concerned would need much more information before they could form a view on that.

At this stage, therefore, we, ODA and DTI believe that the Prime Minister should respond to Mr Price in cautious and non-committal terms. I attach a draft letter which has been cleared with ODA and DTI.

I am copying this to Michael Power (ODA) and Jonathan Rees (DTI).

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

Belize : Int. S.T
12/79

PSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret
Secret
Confidential
Restricted
Unclassified

TO:

The Rt Hon
George Price
Prime Minister of Belize

Your Reference

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

SUBJECT:

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Enclosures—flag(s).....

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/consideration

consideration is currently being given to the best way of making more detailed studies of this scheme and we shall follow the progress made with great interest.

FILE

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 December 1983

Belize

I enclose a copy of a memorandum which the Prime Minister of Belize gave to Mrs. Thatcher in New Delhi during CHOGM.

I am sorry that this has reached you so late - the document was mislaid.

Mr. Price asked the Prime Minister for her reactions and I am sure that Mrs. Thatcher would like to write to him about the project as quickly as possible. If possible, therefore, could you let me have a draft letter before the Christmas holidays.

A. J. COLES

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

NR

10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

BELIZE

You gave me the attached document the other day. Are you able to tell me who gave it to you and whether you were particularly asked to take any action? If so, I will then follow it up.

A.J.C.

28 November 1983

MY REF:

FROM: ATTORNEY GENERAL

TO: RT. HON. PRIME MINISTER

SUBJECT: AIDE MEMOIRE

DATE: 15TH NOVEMBER, 1983

ATTACHED PLEASE FIND AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE BELIZE HILLBANK PROJECT.

1. (1) THE PROPOSAL IS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 60 MW. WOOD BURNING POWER STATION, (DENDRO-THERMAL PLANT).

(2) AN ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION SYSTEM LINKING THE HILLBANK AREA (WHERE THE STATION WILL BE SITED) WITH THE CAPITAL, BELMOPAN, AND WITH ORANGE WALK TOWN AND LADYVILLE WHICH WITH THE UPGRADING OF THE EXISTING SYSTEM, WILL HAVE THE EFFECT OF SUPPLYING THE COROZAL, ORANGE WALK, BELIZE AND CAYO DISTRICTS, INCLUDING THE RURAL AREAS WITH ELECTRICITY, IN REALITY OVER 90% OF BELIZE' NEEDS.

(3) CONSTRUCTION OF 96 MILES OF ROAD WITH SIX RIVER BRIDGES BETWEEN HILLBANK AND BELMOPAN, HILLBANK AND SAN FELIPE AND BELIZE CITY.

(4) PROVISION OF A TOWNSHIP IN THE HILLBANK AREA WITH APPROXIMATELY 400 FAMILY DWELLINGS.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

BELIZE ESTATE & PRODUCE CO. LTD., NOW WHOLLY OWNED BY NATIONALS HAS SOME 700,000 ACRES OF LAND IN NORTH WESTERN BELIZE.

FEASIBILITY STUDIES SHOW THAT THE TIMBER ON THIS LAND IS SUITABLE FOR SUPPLYING AN ADEQUATE SOURCE OF BIOMASS FOR A " DENDRO-THERMAL " POWER PLANT, AND A PULP AND PAPER MILL. THE LAND IS SUITED TO AGRIGULTURAL AND RANCH DEVELOPMENT. IT IS PLANNED TOO THAT FAST GROWING SPECIES OF TREES WILL BE PLANTED TO ENSURE A RENEWABLE SUPPLY OF BIOMASS. THERE ARE NO APPARENT ECOLOGICAL ILL - EFFECTS.

3. BELIZE SUFFERS A TREMENDOUS STRAIN ON FOREIGN EXCHANGE IN ITS FUEL BILL - $44 MILLION PER ANNUM - $10 MILLION OF WHICH IS FOR THE B.E.B. IN ADDITION, THE PRESENT SOURCE OF SUPPLY (DIESEL GENERATORS) IS PLAGUED WITH MECHANICAL DIFFICULTIES. A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT OF THIS NATURE, THOUGH LARGE IN SCOPE, WOULD HAVE TREMENDOUS LONG TERM BENEFICIAL EFFECTS ON OUR ECONOMY.

The Belize Electricity Board

(A) SAVINGS IN FOREIGH EXCHANGE (FUEL BILL);

(B) GENERATING ENERGY FOR AGRO-INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT;

(C) OPENING UP THIS LARGE AREA OF LAND FOR LIVESTOCK AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

4. THE PROJECT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN BY A GROUP OF BRITISH COMPANIES NEI PROJECTS LTD., BALFOUR BEATTY, PAULING AND BARCLAYS BANK.

5. FINANCING:

(1) ESTIMATED COSTS

POWER STATION.....	US$84 MILLION
WOODYARD.....	US$22.5 MILLION
ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION SYSTEM..	US$35.5 MILLION
ROADS AND BRIDGES.....	US$34.5 MILLION
TOWNSHIP.....	US$4.74 MILLION
TOTAL	US$181.25 MILLION

(2) IN VIEW OF THE SIZE OF THE PROJECT IN RELATION TO OUR NATIONAL BUDGET AND THE LIKELY REQUIREMENT FOR BELIZE GOVERNMENT GUARANTEES AGAINST A MAJOR PROPORTION OF THE VALUE OF EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEES OR OTHER COMMERCIAL BANK LOANS, IT IS VITAL TO OBTAIN UK GOVERNMENT'S DIRECT GRANT OR SOFT LOAN FINANCING TO COVER A CONSIDERABLE PROPORTION OF THE VALUE OF THE UK GOODS AND SERVICES.

(3) BARCLAYS BANK IS ORGANIZING ECGD SUPPORT FOR PROJECT FINANCING.

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE HAS EXPRESSED MUCH INTEREST AND DISCUSSIONS HAVE ALSO BEEN HELD WITH O.D.A.

(4) O.D.A. SHOULD BE ASKED ON A " SPECIAL BASIS" TO ASSIST WITH -

(I) THE TRANSMISSION SYSTEM
(II) THE ROADS & BRIDGES
(III) THE TOWNSHIP
(IV) A PORTION OF THE POWER STATION, IF NECESSARY.

(5) THE PROJECT IS SOUND IN ALL KNOWN RESPECTS, AND THIS APPRAISAL SHOULD BE CONFIRMED IN EARLY DECEMBER BY AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATION NOW BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE CONSULTING FIRM OF MERZ AND MCLELLAN WHO WERE APPOINTED BY THE UK DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

BELIZE

THE HILLBANK PROJECT

AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 The Project

The Belize Estates and Produce Company (BEC) owns a large tract of land extending to over 700,000 acres in north-western Belize. A very high proportion of this land is sub-tropical forest or jungle. It has been established that the timber/biomass growing, or which can be grown, on this land is very suitable for supplying a dendro-thermal power plant and an adjacent integrated pulp and paper mill sited at Hillbank. Further, the land cleared of timber/biomass is considered to be highly productive for agricultural, horticultural and afforestation purposes.

It is proposed to supply electrical power from the dendro-thermal plant to the Belize electrical utility, the Belize Electricity Board (BEB) and also to the pulp and paper mill. The BEB supply currently consists of a number of isolated systems, the generation for each of which is based on oil engines. As part of the project it is proposed to construct a high voltage grid interconnecting Hillbank with the capital, Belmopan, and Orange Walk and the latter two locations with Ladyville; also to establish interconnections from Orange Walk to Corozal and San Felipe; also to upgrade the connections between Belmopan and Benque Viejo as well as between Ladyville and Belize City.

The project also involves the upgrading of portions of the Belize City to Hillbank Road and construction of a new rerouted section of this road; also construction of new roads interconnecting Hillbank with Belmopan and San Felipe, as well as upgrade of the San Felipe to Orange Walk road.

Included in the equipping of the project is the wood procurement equipment for operation in the forest lands; also the woodyard, located at the power-station/mill site, to be used for wood inventorying purposes and from which wood will be supplied in suitable form to the powerstation, to the pulp and paper mill and to a sawmill. The sawmill is not included in the project and will be constructed and operated as a separate entity.

It is intended that housing and other community facilities should be constructed at Hillbank for operatives who will be employed on the project works, estimated initially as around 400, together with their families.

2.0 Project Sponsorship

BEC is the focal point and initiator of the project. It intends to supply the land for siting of the pulp and paper mill; to construct, own and operate the dendro-thermal powerstation and to procure and supply the necessary supplies of wood to the pulp and paper mill and to the powerstation. While proposals for ownership and operation of the pulp and paper mill are not yet finalised, it is understood that current plans propose that this will vest in a company formed by predominantly North American paper interests and in which BEC will have equity participation. It is proposed that BEC will provide steam and electricity supplies to the pulp and paper mill and electricity to BEB.

Cont'd/ 2

The Government of Belize, as confirmed to us in discussions with the Prime Minister and a number of his Ministers, is firmly committed to the project and will construct, own, operate and maintain the electricity transmission/distribution network and the roads, respectively through the BEB and the Ministry of Works.

3.0 Project Rationale

The known natural resources of Belize are mainly limited to agricultural and forest products. The former are limited by the acreage available to agriculture and the latter by the remoteness of some of the major timber reserves and the constraints imposed by infrastructure to transport forest products to the coast.

As mentioned above, the major proportion of electricity generation in Belize is by oil engine and all fuel for this purpose is imported. All electricity transmission/distribution is restricted to the relatively few main areas of population and the lack of interconnection between these areas is a constraint on the reliability and economics of electricity supply.

Effective implementation of this project will result in the following benefits to the economy of Belize and to the quality of life for Belizeans:-

3.1 Utilization of an indigenous resource (wood/biomass) to replace oil imports for electricity generation with major benefit to Belize balance of payments.

3.2 Utilization of an indigenous resource (wood/biomass) in the production of pulp for paper making, resulting in a very major new industry and exports of considerable value, with consequent major benefit to Belize balance of payments.

3.3 Clearance of large new tracts of land, much of which is considered to have prime agricultural, horticultural and afforestation potential, adding in a major way to exports of agricultural and forest products and to the provision of a renewable resource for operation of the pulp and paper mill.

3.4 Considerable reduction in the cost of electricity generation, permitting in the longer term a reduction in electricity tariffs with benefit to consumers and which will in turn act as an inducement to the siting of new industries in Belize, particularly those associated with agroindustry and forest products.

3.5 Eventual elimination of the current US $1.5 million government annual subsidy to BEB.

3.6 The reliability of electricity supply will be materially improved by interconnection of the presently isolated systems. This in turn will improve the efficiency of commerce and industry and the quality of life by the virtual elimination of electricity supply interruptions, which are currently accepted as daily occurences.

3.7 The construction of a national grid, the major portion of which is included in the project, will permit extensive rural electrification. This in turn will assist in opening up major portions of the country

Cont'd/ 3

to development in addition to improving the quality of life for isolated communities.

3.8 The construction of the roads included in the project, in addition to providing essential infrastructure for the project, will be of general benefit to the country by providing improved communication between the capital and the north as well as providing better access to some remote areas and communities.

3.9 Construction of the roads in the project may, in addition, be of strategic military importance.

It is believed that a study of the economics of the project will show that a quantum jump in the economy of Belize of a major nature is to be expected from effective implementation of the project.

4.0 The Opportunity for British Industry

Discussions have taken place over some years between representatives of of British Industry and various parties in Belize towards realisation of the project. These have become much more specific during the last six months following a clearer definition of the project, resulting from acquisition of BEC by Bowen and Bowen Co Ltd.

The latter company has received specific proposals from Canadian and American interests to construct the pulp and paper mill. They have received a further proposal from the U.S.A. from the John Deere Co and another from an international G.E. /SADE grouping, respectively for the supply of wood procurement equipment and for the construction of the electricity transmission/distribution system.

The project developers have approached British Industry to submit a proposal for the construction of the powerstation and roads. They have also stated that inclusion in the proposal of the construction of the transmission/distribution system and for the on-site housing will be welcomed.

Following intercompany discussions between NEI, Balfour Beatty, Pauling and Barclays International, and a mission of their representatives to Belize in September 1983 to study the project, these companies have agreed to form a grouping, led by NEI Projects Ltd., to prepare a proposal, backed by a suitable financing package, to construct the above stated elements of the project.

5.0 The Elements of the Project

5.1 The Dendro-Thermal Power Station

The proposed generating capacity of the power station has been tentatively set at 45 m.w., with a further 15 m.w. of standby capacity, to cover with a high degree of reliability the supply of a 15 m.w. block of power to BEB and approximately 21 m.w. to the pulp and paper mill. The remaining 9 m.w. approximately will be available for local supply and for powerstation/woodyard auxiliary equipment. The proposed powerstation site would appear to be well situated local to adequate supplies of wood for the life of the plant

Cont'd/ ...4

and to good quality water for cooling/make-up purposes.

It is proposed that the construction and equipping of the woodyard should be included in this portion of the project.

5.2 The Pulp and Paper Mill

Whilst at this time not finalised, current proposals cover the construction of an integrated pulp and paper mill with an output of 220 tons per day of coated magazine stock. These proposals include for financing of the mill largely from Canadian sources. The Canadians are also proposing to supply all the machinery for the mill, its operating management and to guarantee markets for the product during the initial three years of mill operation.

Consideration is being given to basing the pulping process on the use of kenaf, which has been proved to grow well at Hillbank. Stock manufactured from this process is considered to be ideally suited to the production of high grade magazine paper for which it is said there is a high and growing demand.

5.3 The Transmission/Distribution System

A very detailed and comprehensive proposal has been prepared by an international grouping of GE/SADE, covering construction of the 115 k.v. transmission system and an associated 22 k.v. distribution system. This is backed by a favourable financing package with US/Colombian/Spanish/Brazilian elements to cover sourcing of goods and services in those countries.

This proposal includes the construction of the necessary substations, and is based on transmission lines carried on reinforced concrete transmission towers manufactured in Belize. This element of the project will have a 27% local content.

5.4 Roadworks

The construction of some 96 miles of highway with six river bridges are included in the project. The Belize City to Hillbank road requires to be upgraded with re-routing of the section nearest Hillbank to eliminate detour of about 12 miles.

6.0 The Project Budget

Initial estimates for the cost of the various project elements with sourcing are as follows:

Element	U.K.	Local	Third Country	TOTAL
Power Station	72	12	-----	84
Woodyard	18	4.5	-----	22.5
Roads & Bridges	30	4.5	-----	34.5

Cont'd/ 5

Element		U.K.	Local	Third Country	TOTAL
Transmission System		30	5.5	-----	35.5
Township		4.5	0.25	-----	4.75
Sub-Total		154.5	26.75	-----	181.25
Wood Procurement Equipment		-----	-----	US 20	20.0
Pulp & Paper Mill		-----	-----	CAM 68	68.0
Sub-Total		-----	-----	88	88.0
Totals	US $	154.5	26.75	88	269.25

7.0 Project Financing

It is recognised that raising the long-term financing which is required presents problems, on account of the project budgetted value relative to the size of the Belize economy and to the probable requirement for Belizean government guarantees against a major proportion of the value of export credit guarantees of other commercial bank loans.

For this reason it is considered that it will be necessary to seek U.K. government direct grants or soft loan financing to cover a considerable proportion of the value of U.K. goods and services to be supplied in the construction of the project.

Discussions have been initiated and are continuing with Her Majesty's Government to this end. In addition, Barclays Bank International are co-ordinating the preparation of a Case 2 'national interest' submission to obtain ECGD support for project financing.

8.0 Project Schedule

A preliminary proposal has been submitted by the British Grouping to BEC on 8 November. It is intended that the fully detailed proposal should follow early in December. The client is anxious that design work should commence in January 1984 together with essential temporary roadwork to permit an early commencement of work on site with a view to having the powerstation foundations above grade by end-June 1984. This would ensure that work on the powerstation could continue during the six month rainy season which commences in mid-year, thereby advancing that part of the project by about nine months.

The Pulp and Paper Mill promoters are currently planning for mill start-up in the last quarter of 1985.

Cont'd/ 6

The British Grouping's preliminary proposal envisages completion of plant installation in 30 months.

9.0 Project Study and Report

The Department of Trade and Industry has asked the British Group to arrange for the appointment of Consulting Engineers to undertake an independent study and report on the project and of the suitability of the proposal prepared by the British Grouping for construction of the project. This assignment has been placed with Merz & McLellan. It has been agreed that D.T.I. will refund half of the cost of this study and report. The remaining half cost will be shared by members of the British Grouping.

10.0 Conclusion

The cost of this project represents a very large investment for an economy of the size of Belize. Notwithstanding this it is believed that the project as conceived is well thought out, is on the face of it extremely viable and will result in many benefits for Belize, not least of which should be a spectacular improvement in its balance of payments by a large increase in the value of its exports and in the virtual total substitution of oil imports for electricity generation by energy derived from indigenous renewable resources.

It is natural, therefore, that the government of Belize is strongly supporting this project and is lobbying H.M.G. at ministerial level to provide the necessary financial backing for it. It is considered likely that the Belizean Prime Minister will take the opportunity of raising the subject of support for the project with Mrs Thatcher during the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in New Delhi this month.

A D SPEIRS

8 November 1983

SUBJECT

✓ Master

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 June 1983

HIGH COMMISSIONER OF BELIZE

Mr. Castillo called on the Prime Minister this morning. He handed over a letter from Mr. Price, a copy of which I enclose. (18.4.83)

In response to a question by the Prime Minister, Mr. Castillo said that American aid, under the Caribbean Basin Initiative, was just beginning to reach Belize. The initial pledge had been 10 million US dollars for the public sector and a similar sum for the private sector. He understood that the Americans had now offered another 5 million US dollars to each for the current year.

The decline in value of the Mexican peso had hurt Belize considerably. In the past Mexican currency to the value of some £40 million annually had passed through Belize and the administrative charges deducted had been an important source of income. This had now been reduced as a result of the fall in value of the peso. The price of sugar had been low but was now rising. Tate and Lyle had been considering whether to sell its interests in Belize but were now having second thoughts. This would not have been welcomed. The Belizean Government had not wanted to extend the role of the public sector in sugar and bananas. But during the recession it had had difficulty in sustaining the private sector. The Caribbean Basin Initiative would probably give it just the margin of manoeuvre that it needed. The concession whereby citrus and citrus products would now enter the US free of tariffs was especially valuable.

As regards Belize's problem with Guatemala, Mr. Castillo said that Mr. Price would be holding talks with Mr. Whitbeck this weekend but without great hopes of progress.

J.E. Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

SUBJECT

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J.E. Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Prime Minister

This is a formal call on taking up his post in London. It need not take longer than 15 minutes.

A.J.C. 27/6

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 June 1983

Dear John,

Belize: Call on Prime Minister by Belize High Commissioner Mr Rudolph I Castillo MBE: 28 June 1983

I enclose a brief and biographical note for the call on the Prime Minister by the first Belizean High Commissioner to London, Mr Rudolph I Castillo MBE, on 28 June.

Yours ever

John Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
Number 10 Downing Street

UK/BELIZE RELATIONS

Background

1. Belize (formerly British Honduras), a Commonwealth Realm, attained independence on 21 September 1981, after 17 years of internal self government.

Bilateral Relations

2. Our relations with Belize are excellent, and the Prime Minister, Mr Price, looks to Britain for help and advice on a wide range of matters. We welcome the arrival of Belize's first High Commissioner to London, an appointment which we have been urging the Belizeans to make for some time. (In due course Mr Castillo will also be accredited to the European Community, and to France, West Germany and the Holy See).

British Garrison

3. We maintain a garrison to assist Belize against external aggression. At independence it was agreed that it would remain for an appropriate period, and this is still the case. The garrison comprises 1500 men, a flight of 4 Harriers, and a Rapier anti-aircraft missile system.

UK/Belize Aid

4. Aid programme runs at about £3.5 million a year. There are some 20 capital aid projects, heavily weighted towards infrastructure development, particularly road building. There are 24 aid personnel in post. Britain is also contributing £6 million towards the development of the Belize Defence Force.

CASTILLO, Rudolph ('Rudy') MBE

High Commissioner to London since 28 April 1983
(Formerly Secretary to the Cabinet/Chief of Protocol)

Born Belize City 28 December 1927, son of the late Justo Sabas Castillo. Educated St John's College, Belize City; took courses at BBC (1952) and Central Office of Information (1959). A Roman Catholic (his brother is a 'Monsignor');speaks Spanish.

Taught at St John's College (for 7 years). Joined colonial government service and became a radio announcer; Senior Announcer, 1954; Assistant Programme Organiser, 1956; Information Officer, 1957; Chief Information Officer, 1962; also worked as correspondent for Reuters and the Daily Telegraph. Interest: photography.

Mr Castillo had an important role as the Prime Minister's general factotum, a job which he appeared to do with great efficiency. After independence he took on an additional role of Chief of Protocol. Probably not a man of great influence despite his former key position.

Married, wife's name Gwendolyn; seven children. She is due to join him in London on 9 July.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 June 1983

please file
CS.

His Excellency
Mr Rudolph I Castillo MBE
High Commissioner for Belize
15 Thayer Street
London W1

My dear Rudy,

I am writing, in confirmation of our telephone conversation yesterday, to say that the Prime Minister looks forward to receiving you at 9.30 am on Tuesday 28 June at No 10 Downing Street in order that you can present to her the letter of introduction from your Prime Minister, the Right Hon George Price. This is, of course, the rearrangement of the call that had to be postponed because of the General Election.

Yours ever

Stanley Martin

S W F Martin
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

Blind copies:

Mr White (MCAD) - to provide updated briefing to No 10 by 27 June, please
Miss Caroline Stephens (10 Downing Street)
Mrs Walters (Private Office)

FCO have confirmed 28/6/83

10 DOWNING STREET

CF.

Have offered FCO. 930 on Tuesday 28 June for new time for Hgl Committee on Belize. FCO will confirm.

CP.

15/6.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 May 1983

His Excellency
Mr Rudolph I Castillo MBE
High Commissioner for Belize
c/o Goring Hotel
15 Beeston Place
London SW1

CF
GR
please file
CJ. 11/5.

My dear High Commissioner,

I am writing again, in confirmation of our telephone conversation this morning, to say that, in view of the impending General Election, the Prime Minister has had to cancel most of her engagement, including the call you were due to make on her on 17 May. As agreed with you this morning, I shall be in touch with you again after the Election about a new date for you to present your letter of introduction to the Prime Minister. I know you understand there may well be some delay.

Yours ever
Stanley Martin

S W F Martin
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

Blind copies:

Mr White (MCAD)
Mrs Walters (Private Office)
Miss Caroline Stephens (10 Downing Street)

Belize

Mr. Coles A.S.C. 'G'.

The Patrol Commander was an NCO from 2 Para. Further signals indicate that the Belize police view his action as necessary and justified in self defence.

B 10/5

GRS 140

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DESKBY 100930Z

FM BELMOPAN 100500Z MAY 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 167 OF 9 MAY 1983

FOR INFO WASHINGTON

BRITISH FORCES BELIZE: SHOOTING INCIDENT

1. JOINT 2 PARA/BDF ROUTINE PATROL ENCOUNTERED GROUP OF MARIJUANA GROWERS EARLIER TODAY (9 MAY) IN AREA APPROXIMATELY TEN MILES SOUTH EAST OF HOLDFAST CAMP, ONE OF WHOM POINTED A SHOOTGUN AT PATROL COMMANDER. HE WAS CHALLENGED, CONTINUED TO AIM SHOOT--GUN AND WAS THEN SHOT DEAD BY PATROL COMMANDER. VICTIM APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN BELIZEAN. HIS FOUR COMPANIONS WERE DETAINED. SEPARATE REPORT IS BEING SENT TO ACDS(C) MBY CBF.

2. I HAVE INFORMED PRIME MINISTER AND WILL SEE HIM TOMORROW MORNING TO CONSIDER PUBLICITY, AMONG OTHER MATTERS. SUGGEST NON VOLUNTEERED AT UK END UNTIL NEWS RELEASED HERE.

3. POLICE REPRESENTATIVE WILL BE TAKEN TO LOCATION OF INCIDENT BY HELICOPTER AT FIRST LIGHT TOMORROW 10 MAY.

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PS/MR ONSLOW
PS/PUS
MR GIFFARD
MR GILLMORE
MR URE

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 May 1983

His Excellency
Mr Rudolph I Castillo MBE
High Commissioner for Belize
c/o Goring Hotel
15 Beeston Place
London SW1

Caroline

AR 6/5

My dear High Commissioner,

I am writing, in confirmation of my telephone message, to say that the Prime Minister looks forward to receiving Your Excellency at 11 am on Tuesday 17 May at No 10 Downing Street in order that you can present to her the letter of introduction from your Prime Minister, the Right Hon George Price.

Yours sincerely

Stanley Martin

S W F Martin
Assistant Marshal of the
Diplomatic Corps

Blind copies:

Mr White (MCAD)
Miss Caroline Stephens (10 Downing Street)

Briefing will follow separately

10 DOWNING STREET

MR. COLES

Stanley Martin of the Foreign Office rang. The new High Commissioner of Belize would like to come and present his credentials to the Prime Minister. I told him to write, but I have given the High Commissioner 15 minutes on Tuesday 17 May.

C.S.

4 May 1983

PS/Mr Onslow

BELIZE : COURTESY CALL BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR RUDOLPH I CASTILLO MEB, HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR BELIZE : 5 MAY 1983

1. I submit a short background brief and biographical note for Mr Castillo's introductory calls at the FCO on Thursday 5 May, and for his call on the PUS on Monday 16 May.

2. An audience of Her Majesty The Queen, and calls on the Prime Minister and Secretary of State, are being arranged separately by Protocol and Conference Department. Copies of the brief and biographical note are being sent for these meetings to Buckingham Palace and No 10.

B O White

4 May 1983

cc:

PS
PS/Mr Raison (ODA)
PS/PUS
Mr Giffard
Mr Ure
Mr Browning (ODA)
The Hon Eustace Gibbs
Mr Goldsmith (CCD)

(PS/Downing St)

UK/BELIZE RELATIONS

Background

1. Belize (formerly British Honduras), a Commonwealth Realm, attained independence on 21 September 1981, after 17 years of internal self government.

Bilateral Relations

2. Our relations with Belize are excellent, and the Prime Minister, Mr Price, looks to Britain for help and advice on a wide range of matters. We welcome the arrival of Belize's first High Commissioner to London, an appointment which we have been urging the Belizeans to make for some time. (In due course Mr Castillo will also be accredited to the European Community, and to France, West Germany and the Holy See).

British Garrison

3. We maintain a garrison to assist Belize against external aggression. At independence it was agreed that it would remain for an appropriate period, and this is still the case. The garrison comprises 1500 men, a flight of 4 Harriers, and a Rapier anti-aircraft missile system.

UK/Belize Aid

4. Aid programme runs at about £3.5 million a year. There are some 20 capital aid projects, heavily weighted towards infrastructure development, particularly road building. There are 24 aid personnel in post. Britain is also contributing £6 million towards the development of the Belize Defence Force.

CASTILLO, Rudolph (''Rudy'') MBE

High Commissioner to London since 28 April 1983
(Formerly Secretary to the Cabinet/Chief of Protocol)

Born Belize City 28 December 1927, son of the late Justo Sabas Castillo. Educated St John's College, Belize City; took courses at BBC (1952) and Central Office of Information (1959). A Roman Catholic (his brother is a bishop); speaks Spanish.

Taught at St John's College (for 7 years). Joined colonial government service and became a radio announcer; Senior Announcer, 1954; Assistant Programme Organiser, 1956; Information Officer, 1957; Chief Information Officer, 1962; also worked as correspondent for Reuters and the Daily Telegraph. Interest: photography.

Mr Castillo had an important role as the Prime Minister's general factotum, a job which he appeared to do with great efficiency. After independence he took on an additional role of Chief of Protocol. Probably not a man of great influence despite his former key position.

Married, wife's name Gwendolyn; seven children.

SUBJECT

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T49B/83

Please Quote

Office Of The Prime Minister

Belmopan
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

Vcc OPS
Master

18th April, 1983

The Right Hon. Margaret Thatcher, PC, MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

This letter will be presented to you by Mr. Rudolph Castillo MBE who has been appointed by the Government of Belize to be the First High Commissioner of Belize to the United Kingdom.

It gives me great pleasure in commending Mr. Castillo to you. I am confident that his previous experience and abilities befit him in full measure for the important duties which he is about to undertake and I know that he, for his part, will strive successfully to maintain and foster those close and friendly relations so long existing between us which we value and wish to see continued.

Please Quote

Office Of The Prime Minister
Belmopan
Cayo District, Belize
Central America

The Right Hon. Margaret Thatcher, PC, MP
The Prime Minister

18th April 1983

On behalf of the Government of Belize I ask you to place full trust and credence in Mr. Castillo and to afford him all possible assistance in the fulfilment of this important assignment.

Your Good Friend

George Price

GEORGE PRICE
Prime Minister of Belize and
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

I have not been marking telegrams on this subject to you but thought you would wish to a summary of the present position.

Dear Michael,

12 December 1979

Belize

I promised to send you a report on Belize following the recent election.

There has been some tension. A close fight had been expected, with few prepared to predict the outcome. In fact the incumbent PUP of Premier Price won an overall majority of 2,264 votes, which translated into a 13-5 seat majority in the national assembly.

The opposition are disconcerted and angry (their leader and deputy leader both lost their seats). After a run of success in local government elections, they expected to gain power for the first time. Predictably, they have accused the Government of electoral fraud. We have no evidence that this is so. Unwilling to accept electoral defeat, the Opposition have launched a serious of protests and demonstrations and there have been some instances of violence.

The Governor believes that if this first delicate stage passes without major provocation or over-reaction, tempers will cool off and life return to normal.

Mr Price is likely to see his victory as a mandate to pursue his policy of early independence for Belize. There were some indications before the election that he was seeking support from radical governments in the area for his policy of independence backed by a multi-national defence guarantee.

Mr Price's aims and our own coincide to a very large degree. We both want early independence for Belize with withdrawal of our forces as soon as the situation is secure. The Guatemalans and the Americans prefer the status quo, with British troops on the eastern flank of Guatemala, in the currently volatile state of Central America as a whole. We have made clear to the Americans that this situation cannot go on for ever.

We think it important to keep the initiative on Belize in our own hands, in order to head off any disposition on Mr Price's part to intrigue behind our backs. We sought to arrange a meeting between him and Mr Ridley very shortly after the election, to learn of Mr Price's thinking and also to persuade him of the need first to try again for a negotiated settlement with Guatemala, which is something we have publicly committed ourselves to do. Mr Price has agreed in principle to a meeting but could not manage dates before Christmas; he wishes to come to London in January.

/We

We cannot be very optimistic about the outcome of further negotiations; the Guatemalans are as politically committed to their demand for at least token territorial cession as the Belizeans are to resisting it. Given the great (and still growing) support they enjoyed in the United Nations, there is no reason why the Belizeans should feel any need to compromise on the issue. The Guatemalans' increasing isolation might bring them to a more realistic assessment of the situation, but one cannot guarantee that their military class will react rationally to matters involving national prestige.

We are therefore giving preliminary consideration to the feasibility of a multi-national defence guarantee which might enable us to give Belize independence without Guatemalan acquiescence. Multilateral arrangements should enable us to reduce and eventually remove our garrison. It would, of course, be essential that no hostile governments should take part in any such arrangements. Our way forward would be clearer if the Americans could be persuaded to espouse the cause of early independence for Belize and help to persuade Guatemala of its inevitability. The US do not appear to realise how much their neutral (in effect, pro-Guatemalan) stance damages their credibility in the eyes, for instance, of those moderate Caribbean governments (such as Barbados) which are staunch advocates of Belizean independence.

The Prime Minister's visit to Washington offers an opportunity to try to persuade the Americans to take a broader view of the Belize question. The briefing has been prepared accordingly.

Yours ever

Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

M O' D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON