



Gibraltar  
file 15

Mol

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 April 1982

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letters of 24 and 30 March and to reply on her behalf.

Mrs Thatcher has considered carefully your request but feels that a meeting would not be useful at the present time. She has therefore asked me to respond in this letter to some of the points you have raised.

First, with regard to the possible effects of the Royal Naval dockyard closure, and the prospects for its transition to commercial operation starting in 1983, it is recognised that such a change must have a major impact for Gibraltar and that it is still too early to be sure of establishing a viable commercial enterprise. But to set up such an enterprise as quickly as possible could well be the best way of offsetting the economic and employment effects of the Navy's withdrawal from the dockyard. You will know that the Gibraltar Government is currently investigating the commercial possibilities with a number of firms. We believe that it would be in Gibraltar's interests to encourage potential operators in as positive a manner as possible. To suggest that HM Government's decision to close the dockyard can be reversed or deferred would be both wrong and liable to discourage interested firms.

The decision to close the RN dockyard was taken for operational reasons - there is no longer any military requirement for it - and there is a pressing need for this to be implemented to achieve savings that can be diverted to priority defence tasks. You correctly describe March 1983 as the target date for closure. But if commercial operation proposals acceptable to both the Gibraltar and UK Governments emerge within the timescale set for the current investigation, and if it would assist the transition to commercial management, then some flexibility about the date of closure in 1983 would be possible. If a viable commercial enterprise is established, the Navy is prepared also to continue to give some naval work to the dockyard in its first years of commercial operation, subject always to negotiation of satisfactory terms. Such an arrangement could have a similar effect to your Union's proposals for continued RN management of the dockyard. But given that the longer term future of the dockyard would clearly depend upon its commercial dimension, the continuation of naval management, which is not well suited for this, could only hinder the process of transition and put more jobs ultimately at risk. As to your points about wages,

/ conditions

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conditions of service and training, these cannot be addressed in any detail until the current investigations by the Gibraltar Government are complete and more is known about firms' proposals.

You asked for assurances about the future status of our Moroccan employees in Gibraltar. I can confirm that there is no question of their employment being affected by the prospective changes in the relationship between Gibraltar and Spain. Furthermore, in the event of a state of redundancy being declared in the dockyard all our employees would be entitled to redundancy compensation under the terms of the existing agreements although, as you are probably aware, local trade union representatives are currently refusing to discuss the management offer to extend the redundancy provisions of the local pension scheme to those employees who opted not to join when it was instituted. Selecting the workers needed for a commercial ship repair facility will be the responsibility of any future commercial operator. Clearly, however, any ex-Dockyard workers, whether Moroccan or not, will have the advantage of direct work experience in the dockyard. As to your more general enquiry about the situation of Moroccans following reopening of the border, you may recall that the Governor of Gibraltar stated publicly at the beginning of this year that Gibraltar does not discriminate unfairly against anyone and that the Gibraltar Moroccan community had nothing to fear in relation to the reopening of the border with Spain.

You also raised the question of Gibraltar's transport industry and the possibility of competition from the port of Algeciras. Of course, there must be this possibility, but Gibraltar could respond with competition of its own. Although some of the initial effects of opening the border after years of restriction could be difficult, there is every reason to believe that in the longer term the change will be beneficial to the Rock's economy, just as the border closure was not. This should apply in respect of tourism, and in other fields.

Finally, the Ministry of Defence is examining with the Gibraltar authorities possible future arrangements for the continued military operation of the airfield in such a way as to achieve defence economies whilst providing a service that meets civil as well as military needs. It is too early to say what effect such arrangements could have on the balance of military and civil posts, but your proposal has been noted.

I hope that you will find the points in this letter helpful in your consideration of the matters which you raised. You may be sure that the consideration promised in the June 1981 Defence White Paper is taking place, in close consultation with the Gibraltar Government. UK Ministers have recently discussed this matter with Sir Joshua Hassan, the Chief Minister for Gibraltar, and other elected representatives of the people of Gibraltar. These discussions were attended by Mr. Bossano, who is a member of your Union and who also attended your meeting with the Minister for the Armed Forces in January. It is evident that whilst the current investigations by the Gibraltar Government of commercial possibilities for the

/ dockyard

dockyard are continuing, it is difficult to address in any detail many of the points which you raised. Meanwhile, you may be assured that the Prime Minister and her Ministerial colleagues have taken full note of the representations which you have made.

A. J. COLES

A.H. Kitson, Esq.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1  
Telephone 01-~~930 7022~~ 218 6169

MO 5/16

5th April 1982

*Dear John,*

*Type letter H.*

*M 15/4.*

GIBRALTAR

Further to your letters of 25th and 31st March, I attach a draft letter which you may care to send to the TGWU Deputy General Secretary on the Prime Minister's behalf.

You will see that this draft tries to dissuade the TGWU from pursuing the idea of a meeting with the Prime Minister any further. If the delegation were to be received this could lead to similar requests from the union for the Prime Minister to receive deputations on the future of Chatham and Portsmouth. The Minister of State for the Armed Forces has already met TGWU officials to discuss both Gibraltar and Chatham, and undertaken to meet a further group on the rundown of the Portsmouth dockyard. Furthermore, the FCO see potential difficulties if any meeting covering the effects of the border reopening takes place before 20th April. Also, as the draft notes, a number of the points raised about the dockyard's possible commercial future cannot be addressed meaningfully until we are much clearer about the outcome of the Gibraltar Government's current investigations, not due for completion until end May. Any meeting before then could only argue about alternative hypotheses, and would not be helpful at a time when FCO and Defence Ministers' firmness about the closure decision appears to have convinced Sir Joshua Hassan and other Gibraltar political interests that they must look positively and urgently at alternatives for the future. Finally if the Prime Minister were to see to Mr Kitson and his colleagues - who include Mr Bossano, the leader of the Gibraltar opposition - the Chief Minister could legitimately argue that the privilege of such a meeting should first of all have been extended to him.

*Yours ever,*

*Henry Pimper*

(D T PIPER)

A J Coles Esq

DRAFT

From: PS/Prime Minister  
To: Mr Alex Kitson of TGWU

GIBRALTAR

1. The Prime Minister <sup>has</sup> asked me to thank you for your letters of 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March, and to reply on her behalf.
2. <sup>Ms. Thatcher</sup> ~~The Prime Minister~~ has considered carefully your request for a meeting. <sup>but</sup> However ~~she~~ feels that ~~such~~ a meeting would not be useful at ~~this date~~. <sup>the present time.</sup> She has ~~asked me~~, therefore, <sup>asked me</sup> to respond in this letter to some of the points you have raised, ~~in order to clarify the background against which this decision was taken.~~
3. <sup>with</sup> First of ~~all~~, ~~in~~ regard to the possible effects of the Royal Navy dockyard closure, and the prospects for its transition to commercial operation starting <sup>in</sup> 1983, it is recognised that such a change must have a major impact for Gibraltar, and that it is still too early to be sure of establishing a viable commercial enterprise. But to set up such an enterprise as quickly as possible could well be the best way of offsetting the economic and employment effects of the Navy's withdrawal from the dockyard. You will know that the Gibraltar Government is currently investigating the commercial possibilities with a number of firms, ~~and we~~ believe that it would be in Gibraltar's interests to encourage potential operators in as positive a manner as possible. To suggest that HM Government's decision to close the dockyard can be reversed or deferred would be both wrong and liable to discourage interested firms.

4. The decision to close the RN dockyard was taken for operational reasons - there is no longer any military requirement for it - and there is a pressing need for this to be implemented to achieve savings that can be diverted to priority defence tasks. You correctly describe March 1983 as the target date for closure, but if commercial operation proposals acceptable to both the Gibraltar and UK Governments emerge within the timescale set for the current investigation, and if it would assist the transition to commercial management, then some flexibility about the date of closure in 1983 would be possible. If a viable commercial enterprise is established, the Navy is prepared also to continue to <sup>give</sup> put some naval work to the dockyard in its first years of commercial operation, subject always to negotiation of satisfactory terms. Such an arrangement could have a similar effect to your Union's proposals for continued RN management of the dockyard, but given that the longer term future of the dockyard would clearly depend upon its commercial dimension, the continuation of naval management, which is not well suited for this, could only hinder the process of transition, and put more jobs ultimately at risk. As to <sup>you</sup> the points which you also mention about wages, conditions of service and training, these cannot be addressed in any detail until the current investigations by the Gibraltar Government are complete and more is known about firms' proposals.

5. You asked for assurances about the future status of our Moroccan employees in Gibraltar. I can confirm that there is no question of their employment being affected by the prospective changes in the relationship between Gibraltar and Spain.

Furthermore, in the event of a state of redundancy being declared in the dockyard all our employees would be entitled to redundancy compensation under the terms of the existing agreements although, as you are probably aware, local <sup>Trade union</sup> ~~TU~~ representatives are currently refusing to discuss the management offer to extend the redundancy provisions of the local pension scheme to those employees who opted not to join when it was instituted. Selecting the workers needed for a commercial ship repair facility will be the responsibility of any future commercial operator. Clearly, however, any ex-Dockyard workers, whether Moroccan or not, will have the advantage of direct work experience in the dockyard. As to your more general enquiry about the situation of Moroccans following reopening of the border, you may recall that the Governor of Gibraltar stated publicly at the beginning of this year that Gibraltar does not discriminate unfairly against anyone, and that the Gibraltar Moroccan community had nothing to fear in relation to the reopening of the border with Spain.

67 You also raised the question of Gibraltar's transport industry ~~in relation to the prospective reopening of the border with Spain~~ and the possibility of competition from the port of Algeciras. Of course, there must be this possibility, but Gibraltar could respond with competition of its own. Although some of the initial effects of <sup>opening the</sup> ~~an open~~ border after years of restriction could be difficult, there is every reason to believe that in the longer term the change will be beneficial to the Rock's economy, just as the border closure was not. This should apply in respect of tourism, and in other fields.

7. Finally, the Ministry of Defence is examining with the Gibraltar authorities possible future arrangements for the continued military operation of the airfield in such a way as to achieve defence economies whilst providing a service that meets civil as well as military needs. It is too early to say what effect such arrangements could have on the balance of military and civil posts, but your proposal has been noted.

8. I hope that you will find the points in this letter ~~to be~~ helpful <sup>in</sup> to your consideration of the matters which you raised. You may be sure that the consideration promised in the June 1981 Defence White Paper is taking place, in close consultation with the Gibraltar Government, ~~and~~ UK Ministers have recently discussed this matter with Sir Joshua Hassan, the Chief Minister for Gibraltar, and other elected representatives of the people of Gibraltar. These discussions were attended by Mr Bossano, who is a member of your Union and who also attended your meeting with the Minister for the Armed Forces in January. It is evident that whilst the current investigations by the Gibraltar Government of commercial possibilities for the dockyard are continuing, it is difficult to address in any detail many of the points which you raised. Meanwhile you may be assured that the Prime Minister and her Ministerial colleagues have taken full note of the representations which you have made.

MJC  $\frac{16}{4}$



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Gibraltar

31 March 1982

CLOSURE OF GIBRALTAR DOCKYARD

Would you please refer to my letter of 25 March about Mr. Kitson's request for a meeting with the Prime Minister. He has now sent a further pressing letter (copy enclosed). I should be grateful for a draft reply to his letter of 24 March by close of play on 5 April.

BJH

A. J. COLES

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Derek Piper, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.

At pps?



# Transport and General Workers Union

TRANSPORT HOUSE · SMITH SQUARE · WESTMINSTER · LONDON S.W.1P 3JB.

OUR REF AK/JS

TELEPHONE 01-828 7788 TELEGRAMS TRANSUNION LONDON SW1 TELEX No 919009

YOUR REF

231

March 30, 1982

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

Dear Prime Minister,

GIBRALTAR

I was surprised to receive your acknowledgement of March 25 in which you say that I will receive a "substantive reply" as soon as possible.

I would respectfully point out that the purpose of outlining our proposals was to form a basis for discussions with you, which we have repeatedly been requesting and do so again now.

Perhaps, therefore, you will let us know when it will be convenient for you to receive our deputation.

Yours sincerely,

A. H. Kitson  
Deputy General Secretary



Gibraltar JR  
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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

25 March 1982

CLOSURE OF GIBRALTAR DOCKYARD

You wrote to me on 19 February.

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I enclose a copy of a further letter which the Prime Minister has received from Mr. Kitson. I should be grateful for your advice on whether the Prime Minister should now agree to receive a deputation from the TGWU and other organisations with membership in Gibraltar, together with a draft reply to Mr. Kitson's letter for my signature.

I am copying this letter and its enclosure to John Holmes (FCO).

A. J. COLES

Derek Piper, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.



JR

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

25 March 1982

Thank you for your letter of 24 March to the Prime Minister. This is being considered and you will receive a substantive reply as soon as possible.

A. J. COLES

A.H. Kitson, Esq.



OUR REF AK/JS

TELEPHONE 01-828 7788 TELEGRAMS TRANSUNION LONDON SW1 TELEX No 919009

YOUR REF

March 24, 1982

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

Dear Prime Minister,

GIBRALTAR

Thank you for your letter of February 22. Our views and the items we would like to discuss with you are outlined below. We now feel that a meeting with you is imperative in view of the time-scale and would urgently request you to agree to see a deputation from our Union and the other organisations with membership in Gibraltar.

Naval Dockyard

The effect of the closure of the naval dockyard would be to create a pool of unemployment which could not be carried by the Gibraltar economy unless there were substantial increases in taxation of all other workers to provide unemployment benefit, or aid from the UK Government.

The loss of parity of wages with the UK which would flow from the closure would immediately reflect through the rest of the public and private sectors of the economy on the Rock having a drastic effect.

Our proposal is that the Royal Navy should continue to operate the dockyard under the Ministry of Defence and should any commercial work become available that this could be carried out in the dockyard to offset some of the cost of keeping it open.

The cost to the Government of keeping the dockyard open is £10 millions per year, or the equivalent of three frigate refits. The cost of closure without a viable alternative will be much greater.

You propose to close the dockyard by March 1983. This target date is quite impractical in our view. We feel that it would be impossible to find a viable alternative and make it operational within that time-scale, particularly as there would be a long period of very difficult negotiations relating to the wages and conditions of our Gibraltar membership which we would be seeking to protect.

With regard to the closure and the proposal in the Report on Commercialisation, this would involve a period of retraining for the necessary skills and would add further to the cost of the operation at a time when the Government is drastically cutting back the training services in the UK.

#### Moroccan Labour

You have given assurances to the Spanish Government on non-discrimination against Spanish workers. We would seek from you assurances for the protection of the Moroccan workers who have served Gibraltar and the UK over the past 15 years that their jobs will not be sacrificed in order to give work to the Spaniards when the border opens on April 20.

Further, as the immigration control is still a UK responsibility and Moroccans are required to leave Gibraltar after a period of unemployment, how do you see their situation with the border open and the dockyard closed?

Since January 1, 1982, our organisation has been informed of some 300 redundancies in the building industry in Gibraltar, which is a sign of the lack of employment within the private sector with a 25% cut-back in building projects. Most of the redundancies fall upon Moroccan workers who, although they pay taxes, receive no redundancy payment whatsoever.

#### Transport Industry

Our members are concerned that with the opening of the border companies importing direct into Gibraltar at present will be more attracted to using containers through the port of Algeciras, thereby undermining the port of Gibraltar and the small transport industry which exists.

Gibraltar Airport

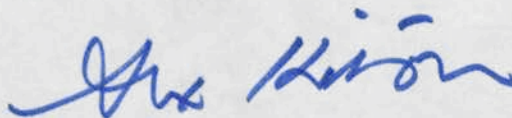
Although the airport is under Ministry of Defence control, and we are happy to see it continue, we would seek to develop the airport commercially and in doing so we believe that the jobs at present carried out by servicemen, i.e. involving drivers, firemen, air traffic control, could be more effectively carried out by civilians. We estimate this would show a saving in defence expenditure of approximately £1½ millions and at the same time would provide more employment for the civilian population.

Tourism

With the opening of the border it is not unreasonable to assume that tourism will expand. We feel that the UK Government has a positive responsibility to encourage this development in order to contribute to the future stability of the Gibraltar economy.

In conclusion I would refer to your statement (Defence White Paper "The Way Forward") that "consideration will be given to alternative ways of fulfilling the Government's obligation to support the economy of Gibraltar if it is decided that the dockyard work there cannot be kept up indefinitely". This is why we wish to meet you to discuss the points we have outlined and others which develop from them.

Yours sincerely,



A. H. Kitson  
Deputy General Secretary

25 MAR 1982



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

22 February 1982

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 11 February about the closure of Gibraltar Dockyard. She was glad that you found your meeting with the Minister of State for the Armed Forces informative and notes that there are some points which you still wish to discuss.

In your letter you raise questions related to proposals to reopen the Gibraltar/Spanish border on 20 April and to discussions with the Spanish Government. Clearly the possible lifting of border restrictions must be taken into account in the current consultations between HMG and the Gibraltar Government on ways to support and sustain the Rock's economy following the closure of the naval dockyard. But it would be helpful if before the possibility of a meeting with the Prime Minister or with Ministers with direct responsibility for these matters is considered further, you could clarify the particular points which you wish to discuss relating to the assurances given to the Spanish Government, which were described in the Lord Privy Seal's statement in Parliament on 19 January.

As the same time it would be helpful if you could describe in some detail your proposal for an alternative to the dockyard closures. I understand that in broad terms you envisage that the Royal Navy will continue to operate the dockyard until such time as it attracts sufficient commercial work to become an independent enterprise. As you will already know, the possibilities for commercial operation are being examined, and the Ministry of Defence expects to be able to provide some continuing work to the dockyard in the first years of such an operation to assist its introduction. Ministers expect to discuss these possibilities with the Gibraltar Government in a few weeks' time.

A. J. COLES

A.H. Kitson, Esq.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
 MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1  
 Telephone 01-~~938 7022~~ 218 6169

MO 5/16

19th February 1982

*Agreed*  
*ms*

*Prime Minister*

*Agree that you should not receive*  
*Mr. Kitson and that we should avoid*  
*any commitment to other Ministers to see*  
*him, at least to the time being?*

*A.S.C. 19/2*

*Dear Tom,*

CLOSURE OF GIBRALTAR DOCKYARD

Thank you for your letter of 15th February enclosing a copy of a further one to the Prime Minister from Mr Kitson of the Transport and General Workers Union about the effects locally of the closure of Gibraltar Dockyard, and asking for a meeting with the Prime Minister. We recommend that the Prime Minister does not commit herself or any of her Ministers to seeing Mr Kitson and his colleagues at this point, and a draft reply is attached for your consideration.

The meeting Mr Kitson had with the Minister of State for the Armed Forces on 28th January was used by the Trade Union representatives largely as an occasion to stress their strong opposition to the dockyard closure and their scepticism about its future as a commercial operation. They showed little inclination to take into account the Ministry of Defence's willingness to considering putting naval work to such an operation in its first years to assist its introduction, and they pressed for a guarantee of no closure and no redundancies until such times as commercial success was fully assured. No such guarantee was given - the Overseas Development Agency's Consultants Report and the Gibraltar Government's discussions with firms suggest that it is very unlikely that any commercial operation could employ all of the current dockyard workforce. But Mr Blaker encouraged the trades union representatives to take a positive approach to the examination of commercialisation possibilities, and he reaffirmed HMG's intention to assist in this and in identifying other ways to support Gibraltar's economy.

Mr Blaker closed the meeting with the hope that a constructive dialogue could be maintained with the trades unions; but clearly their representatives continue to be deeply suspicious, especially against the background of the announcement of negotiations with Spain for implementation of the Lisbon Agreement. The decision to close the Naval dockyard in 1983 took into account the real possibility that the border might be reopened in the same year, and it was recognised that this would have short-term adverse effects on the

John Coles Esq

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Rock's economy. But this juxtaposition worries all of the Gibraltar interests, and the Chief Minister, Sir Joshua Hassan, is likely to return to it when he visits the Lord Privy Seal in March, with Gibraltar opposition leaders as well, and to press for reconsideration of the dockyard decision.

It would be especially difficult to discuss the linkage between the Lisbon Agreement negotiations and the dockyard's future with the TU representatives at just about the time when discussions are to take place with Gibraltar Ministers, and when the preparations for discussions with Spain will be reaching an increasingly delicate stage. Mr Kitson's letter is far from precise as to what particular aspects he and his colleagues wish to discuss, or what exactly they propose as alternatives to dockyard closure. His reference to assurances given to Spain most likely relates to the question of equality for Spanish workers in Gibraltar, and the worry this causes on the Rock that Moroccans and some Gibraltarians could be displaced. However, this point is also a sensitive one for the Spaniards, who are concerned to secure equality with EC nations as opposed to non-EC nationals. There seems to us to be no merit in agreeing to an early meeting between the delegation and the Prime Minister or any other Minister. It would seem quite appropriate to ask for some amplification before the possibility of a meeting is considered further. If it takes Mr Kitson some time to provide this, it may allow progress to be made in discussions with the Gibraltar and Spanish Governments. We shall then have the option of answering Mr Kitson's detailed points in writing, or agreeing to a meeting if this seems appropriate at the time.

The terms of the draft reply for you to send on the Prime Minister's behalf have been agreed with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and I am, therefore, sending a copy of this letter, and of Mr Kitson's of 11th February, to John Holmes.

*Yours sincerely*

*Alley Piper*

(D T PIPER)

Please type as letter from me.  
A.J.C. 22/2

DRAFT LETTER FROM No 10 TO THE TGWU DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 11<sup>th</sup> February about the closure of Gibraltar Dockyard. ~~The Prime Minister~~ <sup>he</sup> was glad that you found your meeting with the Minister of State for the Armed Forces informative, and notes that there are some points which you still wish to discuss.

In your letter you raise questions related to proposals to reopen the Gibraltar/Spanish border on 20<sup>th</sup> April and to discussions with the Spanish Government. Clearly the possible lifting of border restrictions must be taken into account in the current consultations between HMG and the Gibraltar Government on ways to support and sustain the Rock's economy following the closure of the naval dockyard. But it would be helpful if before the possibility of a meeting with the Prime Minister or with Ministers with direct responsibility for these matters is considered further, you could clarify the particular points which you wish to discuss related <sup>ing</sup> to the assurances given to the Spanish Government, which were described in the Lord Privy Seal's statement in Parliament on 19<sup>th</sup> January.

At the same time it would be helpful ~~to the Prime Minister~~ if you could describe in some detail your <sup>proposal for an alternative</sup> alternative proposal to the dockyard closures, which <sup>I understand that</sup> is understood in broad terms <sup>you envisage</sup> to be a ~~continuation of Royal Navy operation of~~ <sup>that the Royal Navy will continue to operate</sup> the dockyard until such time as it attracts sufficient commercial work to become an independent enterprise. As you will already know, the possibilities

for commercial operation are being examined, and the Ministry of Defence expects to be able to provide some continuing work to the dockyard in the first years of such an operation to assist its introduction. Ministers ~~here~~ expect to discuss these possibilities with the Gibraltar Government in a few weeks time.

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Mr. KITSON

15 February 1982

Closure of Gibraltar Dockyard

I enclose a copy of a further letter from Mr. Kitson, Deputy General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union. Following his recent meeting with Mr. Peter Blaker he reiterates his wish for a meeting with the Prime Minister. I should be grateful if you could let me have advice and a draft reply for my signature by 19 February.

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JOHN COLES

David Omand, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.

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PPS  
Transport  
and General  
Workers Union



TRANSPORT HOUSE · SMITH SQUARE · WESTMINSTER · LONDON S.W.1P 3JB.

OUR REF AK/MBM/EM

TELEPHONE 01-828 7788 TELEGRAMS TRANSUNION LONDON SW1 TELEX No 919009

YOUR REF

February 11, 1982

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

cf?

Dear Prime Minister,

Closure of Gibraltar Dockyard

Further to my letter to you dated December 9, 1981, I have taken up your invitation and had a meeting at the Ministry of Defence with Mr. P. Blaker, MP, together with a deputation of our people from Gibraltar.

We had a very informative discussion but I have to inform you that the situation remains unsatisfactory inasmuch as Mr. Blaker was unable to deal with some of our problems as they did not relate to his particular responsibilities.

The problems we wish to continue to discuss with you are as follows:

- 1) The effect on the Gibraltarians and their employment situation when the Border opens on April 20 and the assurances which have been given to the Spanish Government by you.
- 2) In conjunction with the above, the effect on the Gibraltar economy of the closure of the dockyard coupled with the assurances which you have given the Spanish Government at a time when unemployment has been created.
- 3) We would wish to discuss with you our alternative to the above which we have put to Mr. Blaker and which has been made public.

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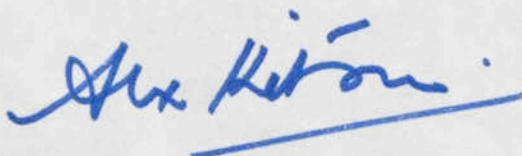


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It is, therefore, necessary that once again we request a meeting with you, at which we would be accompanied by representatives from our Union in Gibraltar.

I am requesting this meeting on behalf of all organisations concerned.

Yours sincerely,



A. H. Kitson  
Deputy General Secretary