

GRS 430
CONFIDENTIAL
FROM PORT STANLEY 111305Z DEC 84
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 478 OF 11 DECEMBER

CONFIDENTIAL DOWNING ST.

*Falkland Island
Councillors continued to
object to proposals
for separate constitution
for the Dependencies.*

THE CONSTITUTION

1. JARROLD'S LETTER OF 23 NOVEMBER TO SMITH.
2. I HAVE FAILED TO PERSUADE ROWLANDS TO CHANGE THE LINE THAT HE TOOK WITH LADY YOUNG ON 19 NOVEMBER: NAMELY, THAT HE WOULD PREFER TO DEFER PROMULGATION OF THE NEW FALKLAND ISLANDS CONSTITUTION THAN TO ACCEPT A SEPARATE CONSTITUTION FOR THE DEPENDENCIES. I REHEARSED THE ARGUMENTS IN SIR WILLIAM HARDING'S LETTER TO ME OF 16 NOVEMBER BUT HE REMAINED UNCONVINCED. UNLESS THOMAS CAN BRING MORE CONVINCING ARGUMENT WITH HIM FOR THE JOINT COUNCILS MEETING ON 18 DECEMBER, I FEAR THAT ROWLANDS WILL NOT BE MOVED. *mt*
3. COUNCILLORS GOSS AND BENNETT HAVE EXPRESSED TO ME THE SAME VIEW. COUNCILLOR CHEEK IS PRESENTLY INDECISIVE. I HAVE NOT HAD THE CHANCE OF DISCUSSING THIS ISSUE WITH CAMP COUNCILLORS BUT I SHALL NOT BE SURPRISED IF COUNCILLORS BINNIE AND LUXTON TAKE THE SAME VIEW. COUNCILLOR TIM BLAKE IS ON RECORD AS SAYING THAT HE WOULD NOT WISH AGREEMENT ON THE NEW FALKLAND ISLANDS CONSTITUTION TO FLOUNDER OVER THE ISSUE OF A SEPARATE CONSTITUTION FOR THE DEPENDENCIES. COUNCILLOR TONY BLAKE MAY SUPPORT HIM IN THIS VIEW.
4. WE CAN EXPECT THEREFORE A MAJORITY OF COUNCILLORS VOTING AGAINST THE NEW CONSTITUTION UNLESS WE CAN PROVIDE THEM WITH CONVINCING REASONS FOR BREAKING THE PRESENT CONSTITUTIONAL LINKS BETWEEN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS AND THE DEPENDENCIES. AT PRESENT, IT LOOKS AS THOUGH EVEN A CATEGORICAL ASSURANCE THAT, UNDER SEPARATE CONSTITUTIONS, THE DEPENDENCIES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE CIVIL COMMISSIONER IN COUNCIL WOULD FAIL TO SWAY THEM OVER.
5. I SHOULD EMPHASISE THAT ROWLANDS' VIEW IS NOT BASED ON ANY FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS. HE HAS CONSISTENTLY HELD TO THE ARGUMENT THAT IT WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR ANY BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SELL A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF THESE ISLANDS, TO PARLIAMENT AND THE BRITISH PUBLIC IF THE DEPENDENCIES REMAIN LINKED WITH THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. HE HAS NO DOUBT ABOUT THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PRESENT BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF FALKLAND ISLANDERS, BUT HE REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT FUTURE BRITISH GOVERNMENTS AND WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE THIS GOVERNMENT MAKE IT EASIER FOR ANY FUTURE GOVERNMENT TO GET RID OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. IN HIS VIEW, PROMULGATION OF SEPARATE CONSTITUTIONS NOW WOULD UNDERMINE THE CONFIDENCE THAT HMG HAS BEEN BUILDING UP IN THE ISLANDS SINCE 1982.

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6. AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE PUT THIS VIEW AS FORCIBLY AS I CAN IN THE PAST AND I HAVE WARNED THAT IT WOULD BE THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE OF SEPARATING THE TWO CONSTITUTIONS. I HOPE THAT THOMAS WILL BE PREPARED FOR A TOUGH SESSION OF JOINT COUNCILS ON 18 DECEMBER.

HUNT

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