



Prime Minister

The Home Secretary agrees with  
the Foreign Secretary. Sir A. Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Parsons also agrees. London SW1A 2AH

2. Agree that

(a) Destefanis should be refused a visa  
on the ground that his entry into the U.K. would not be conducive to the public good? 17 June 1983

(b) we should say that we are ready to allow a properly-organised visit and will be in touch with the ICRC about this.

Dear John,

A.J.C. 21/6

Falklands: Argentine Next-of-Kin: Destefanis's Visa Application

It was agreed that our decision on whether to grant the visa application which Destefanis lodged on 30 May should be taken after the General Election. Destefanis has meanwhile turned up in Europe and has been pestering our Embassies in Paris and Rome. They have stuck to the line that the normal processing period for visa referrals was 3 - 4 weeks. This timing means that we should announce our decision sometime between 20 and 27 June.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary will be putting forward recommendations about a possible fresh initiative for a properly-organised visit to the Falklands by Argentine next-of-kin (my letter of 23 May and your reply of 24 May). But we need to decide before then whether or not to grant Destefanis a visa.

Paragraph deleted and retained under  
Section 3(4)

Wayland

22 January 2013

Nevertheless, and although Destefanis emerged from the April episode with his public reputation considerably battered, including in Argentina itself, there may still be a tendency for the press to make no distinction between our policy towards Destefanis and our position in principle on the possibility of an Argentine next-of-kin visit. If we keep Destefanis out of Britain, he will no doubt do what he can to whip up these feelings. But the impact should not be very great. If we let him in, Destefanis's cause is likely to be taken up by Mr Tam Dalyell and others in the business of making trouble for us on the Falklands, as over the Belgrano. The public impact





could be correspondingly greater.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's view is therefore that on balance we should turn down Destefanis's request for a visa. I understand that this might be done by means of a personal certification by the Home Secretary that his exclusion would be conducive to the public good. Sir G Howe realizes that visa refusals of this kind are not made lightly, and that the Home Secretary will need to consider this very carefully, but believes that the evidence against Destefanis is such that it is justifiable in this case. On timing, Sir G Howe believes that we should be in no rush to give Destefanis a decision on his visa, provided we respect the original deadline given to him. If he goes back to Argentina before a decision, so much the better.

Presentation will clearly be all-important. If we refuse Destefanis a visa, this should concentrate on the distinction between our readiness to allow a serious and properly-organised visit, as we have long made clear, and the personal unacceptability of Destefanis (and his organisation) playing any role in this in view of his record (we could if necessary reveal that Destefanis has close links with the Argentine navy and naval intelligence). It would be helpful if we could also say that we are in the process of considering how best to take forward the question of a proper visit and will be in touch with the ICRC about this.

I am copying this to Tony Rawsthorne (Home Office), Richard Mottram (MOD) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever*  
*J E Holmes*

(J E Holmes)  
 Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
 10 Downing Street

Argentina Relations  
Pt 34



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cc HO  
MOD  
CO

tel

Argentina

**10 DOWNING STREET**

*From the Private Secretary*

24 June 1983

Falklands: Destefanis

Thank you for your letter of 17 June.

The Prime Minister has seen your letter, together with Hugh Taylor's letter of 21 June.

Mrs. Thatcher agrees that Destefanis should be refused a visa on the grounds that his entry into the UK would not be conducive to the public good. She however agrees that we should say that we are ready to allow a properly organised visit and will be in touch with the ICRC about this.

I am copying this letter to Tony Rawsthorne (Home Office), Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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SECRET

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

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HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

21 June 1983

Dear John,

The Home Secretary has seen John Holmes' letter of 17 June about De Stefanis.

He agrees with the proposal that if De Stefanis continues to press his application he should be excluded on the Home Secretary's personal certification that De Stefanis' entry to the United Kingdom would not be conducive to the public good. He accepts the arguments put forward for following this course in the fourth paragraph of John Holmes' letter. The fact that De Stefanis has been used and encouraged in his activities by elements in Argentine Naval Intelligence who are anxious to cause as much embarrassment for HMG as possible is certainly, in the Home Secretary's view, an additional factor contributing to the personal unacceptability of De Stefanis, although these contacts would not in themselves amount to a justification for exclusion on security grounds. (While it is our policy to refuse admission to identified hostile intelligence officers, both the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been careful not to apply that policy to those on the fringe of intelligence activities. Indeed we understand that the Security Service raised no objections to De Stefanis coming here.)

There would be no appeal against the Home Secretary's decision and the refusal notice given to De Stefanis would say only that the Home Secretary had refused his application on the ground that his exclusion would be conducive to the public good: it would not give reasons. FCO and Home Office officials would need to co-ordinate the public presentation of the decision to refuse based, as John Holmes says, on our readiness to allow a properly-organized visit to the Falklands and the personal unacceptability of De Stefanis in this context in view of his past activities.

We understand from FCO that De Stefanis may in fact be returning to Argentina. Even if he does return there we do not think that we could regard his application as having lapsed since it was made in Buenos Aires in the first place. However, it does not seem necessary to issue the refusal notice to him unless he raises the question of his application with us again, whether in Europe or in Argentina.

A copy of this letter goes to John Holmes (FCO), Richard Mottram (MOD), and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely  
Hugh Taylor

H H TAYLOR

A J Coles, Esq

SECRET

ARGENTINA: Relations Pt 34

21 JUN 1963





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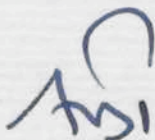
cc Mr. Jackling

MR. COLES

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DESTEFANIS VISA APPLICATION

I have seen a copy of John Holmes' letter to you of 27<sup>th</sup> June. I agree with the FCO recommendation. My first instinct, some weeks ago, was to leave the decision until after the election and then turn Destefanis down. I realise that there will be some criticism in this country if we do so. But the alternative would be to give a media field-day to a thoroughly discredited and undesirable person representing a thoroughly undesirable organisation. I see no reason why we should abet such a manifestation.



A.D. PARSONS  
21 June 1983

SECRET





Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 June 1983

Pine Mustar

Dear John,

Argentina: Attempt by Senor Destefanis to visit the United Kingdom

You may have seen from BISBA telno 460 that Destefanis applied on 30 May to the British Interests Section for a visa to visit this country, with the object of seeing the British authorities in order to obtain permission for a next-of-kin visit to the Falklands. The Buenos Aires correspondent of The Times has reported that Destefanis also plans to visit Rome, Madrid and Paris to build up support for his case.

In applying for the visa, Destefanis said that he would like to pick up his visa in Paris in time to enter this country on 9 June. He was told that the normal processing period for visa referrals is 3 - 4 weeks (ie 20 - 27 June).

Destefanis's presence in this country at the time of the Election could only be unhelpful. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary believes we should stick to the normal timing for visa referrals and ensure that, if Destefanis comes to Britain after all, it is not until comfortably after the General Election. A decision whether to grant him a visa is best taken after the election.

We have told posts likely to be approached by Destefanis that they should tell him that the visa is receiving normal attention but that no decision can be expected for some weeks. Both the FCO and Home Office press departments could take the same line if necessary.

I am copying this to Tony Rawsthorne (Home Office).

Yours ever  
  
 (J E Holmes)  
 Private Secretary



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(FM BERNE 310900Z)

FM BIS BUENOS AIRES

TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 460 OF 30 MAY  
AND TO IMMEDIATE MVD

FOR FID AND MVD

YOUR TELNO 88 : OSVALDO DESTEFANIS

A/N LODGED FOLLOWING VAF WITH US TODAY :

- 1- DESTEFANIS, OSVALDO BARTOLOME LUIS
  - 2- ARGENTINE
  - 3- 11/12/1942 BUENOS AIRES
  - 7- MARRIED
  - 10-ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN
  - 13-USD 2000
  - 14-2 JUNE '83-EXPECTS TO ENTER UK 9 JUNE FROM PARIS
- NO REFERENCES

A/N SAID REASON FOR JOURNEY WAS TO CONTACT BRITISH AUTHORITIES TO TRY AND OBTAIN PERMISSION FOR RELATIVES OF ARGENTINE DEAD TO VISIT WAR GRAVES ON FALKLAND ISLANDS. HE PROPOSES TO STAY AS LONG AS IS NECESSARY TO CONTACT BRITISH AUTHORITIES. A/N ASKED FOR VISA DECISION TO BE FORWARDED TO PARIS WHERE HE WILL CALL BEFORE 9 JUNE. HE WAS TOLD THAT DECISIONS ON VISA REFERRALS ARE CURRENTLY TAKING 3 TO 4 WEEKS.

2. HE REQUESTED AND WAS GRANTED A BRIEF INTERVIEW WITH ME DURING WHICH HE EXPLAINED HE WISHES TO ORGANISE A VISIT OF ARGENTINE NEXT OF KIN TO THE FALKLANDS THIS TIME WITH MINIMAL PUBLICITY AND FOR PURELY HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES. HE HAD NO LINKS WITH THE ARGENTINE MILITARY AUTHORITIES BUT REPRESENTED OVER 400 NEXT OF KIN, ABOUT 80 O/O OF WHOM DID NOT WANT THEIR DEAD RETURNED TO ARGENTINA. HE CARRIED A COPY OF THE MAGAZINE GENTE IN WHICH HE POINTED OUT TO ME AND DISPUTED THE MINISTER OF STATE MR ONSLOW'S ASSERTION THAT HMG HAD HAD NO NEGOTIATIONS WITH DESTEFANIS AND SAID HE HAD LETTERS FROM THE RED CROSS TO PROVE THE CONTRARY. HE STRESSED HE WAS WORKING THIS TIME WITH MAXIMUM DISCRETION AND WAS NOT PUBLICISING HIS PROPOSED TRIP TO EUROPE.

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3. I TOLD HIM WE WOULD FORWARD HIS VISA APPLICATION IMMEDIATELY BUT AUTHORITY WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM LONDON AND I COULD NOT ANTICIPATE THE RESULT, THOUGH IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING AFTER HIS PREVIOUS ATTEMPT TO VISIT THE ISLANDS THAT HMG WOULD HAVE TO CONSIDER THE APPLICATION VERY CAREFULLY. IN REPLY HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE WAS AVOIDING PUBLICITY, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO DO SO IF A VISA WERE REFUSED. I REPLIED THAT I WAS SURE HMG WOULD GIVE FULL CONSIDERATION TO HIS CASE.

JOY

UNQUOTE

POWELL-JONES

REPEATED AS REQUESTED

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

FAIKLAND ISLANDS GENERAL

FCO

FID

CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

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MR TANDY  
HOME OFFICE  
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