

Begins:

"Dear Mr. Gumbs. I wanted to speak to you on the telephone concerning the talks we had yesterday and today with the representatives of St. Kitts and Nevis. But I have to send you a written message. I think you will be very satisfied with my report. We have had brisk talks with the Kittitians and the Nevisians and we are making a pressannouncement about all the talks immediately. As I have always tried to make clear, I see myself as having inherited a binding commitment from the former British Administration to legislate for the formal separation of Anguilla. I therefore feel it important to tell you personally how the passage on Anguilla reads. It is as follows:

"It was agreed between the Minister of State and the Premier that formal constitutional processes would be put into effect to separate Anguilla from the Associated State of the St. Kitts/Nevis/Anguilla as early as possible in 1980 and to provide for her status as a separate British Dependency. This would involve a request and consent motion under Section 9 of the West Indies Act in the State's Legislature and consequential legislation by the British Government". You will notice at once that I have not set a precise date. Let me explain why, even with the passing of a Resolution under Section 9 of the West Indies Act, there still has to be Parliamentary Legislation here, and this is my difficulty. No one can forecast next year exactly when there will be a suitable occasion for a debate on SKNA. I would not want to promise, say 31 March and then have to break my word because of unforeseen Parliamentary pressures. But you now have a categorical announcement of the Constitutional processes which will be put in hand. This gives you the assurance of Anguilla's future status which your Governemtn needs for many reasons, such as the power to raise new revenue, from sources such as coins and stamps, hitherto denied - and I trust it will provide a big boost to the external investment in tourism which I hear with pleasure is beginning to get off the ground. I congratulate you on at last achieving the objective for which Anguillans have been striving for so long. With best wishes Nicholas Ridley". Ends.

