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3003

PREM 19/2699

Possibility of opening the Churchill War Rooms to the public

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

May 1981

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
2.6.81							
<del>15.6.81</del>							
<del>29.6.81</del>							
<del>4.11.81</del>							
<del>30.11.81</del>							
<del>10.12.81</del>							
<del>4.1.82</del>							
<del>18.6.82</del>							
<del>8.11.82</del>							
<del>9.11.82</del>							
<del>14.4.83</del>							
<del>27.2.84</del>							
<del>23.2.84</del>							
<del>12/3/84</del>							
<del>24/3/84</del>							
<del>3/4/84</del>							
<del>5.4.84</del>							
<del>6.4.84</del>							
<del>16.5.84</del>							
<del>29/5/84</del>							
<del>2.6.86</del>							
<del>21-3-84</del>							

PREM 19/2699



*Nguyen*

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley AMICE MP  
Secretary of State for the Environment  
Department of the Environment  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 3EB

21<sup>st</sup> - March 1989

*Dear Nick,*

**CABINET WAR ROOMS**

Thank you for your letter of 17 March about the transfer of financial and management responsibility of the Cabinet War Rooms to the Imperial War Museum. As you say this has been the subject of discussion between our officials.

I agree that the transfer makes good sense and I accept that, as a part of the deal, we have to write off the £650,000 of setting up the costs. I would hope that under the new arrangements there will be an improvement in the financial performance of the Rooms.

I am also content with the terms of your draft answer.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Richard Luce and Sir Robin Butler.

*Yours Ever,*

JOHN MAJOR

*file with dm*

Govt Buildings.

Churchill War  
Rooms May 87





*Handwritten notes and signatures in blue ink, including the name 'R. H. M. 2' and several illegible scribbles.*

*Handwritten signature in blue ink.*

2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB  
01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

The Rt Hon John Major MP  
Chief Secretary  
HM Treasury  
Parliament Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 3AG

17 March 1989

*Dear John*

CABINET WAR ROOMS

I am writing to let you know of changes which I propose should be made in financial and management responsibility for the Cabinet War Rooms.

As you will be aware, they represent the most important surviving part of the emergency accommodation provided in the basement of the Treasury building to protect Mr Churchill and the War Cabinet against aerial attack during the Second World War. In 1948 the then Minister for Works undertook that the Rooms would be maintained as they were at that time. At present they are the responsibility of the Property Services Agency but have been managed on a day to day basis by the Imperial War Museum under a short term Management Agreement since they were opened to the public in 1984.

This Agreement is nearing the end of its first five year term and, as you know, my officials have been reviewing the future of the CWR with yours, and with others concerned, against the background of a continuing deficit on the Memorandum Trading Account.

Our officials have concluded that it is inappropriate for PSA to continue having administrative and Vote responsibility for a Museum, even one situated in the basement of a Government building. They recommend that the Rooms be leased on a long term basis to the IWM and the artefacts transferred into their collection. The IWM, for their part, are content to accept full financial and administrative responsibility on the basis of detailed terms which have now been worked out at official level.

I understand that you have now had a chance to consider those terms and are content to endorse the transfer of responsibility on that basis and to agree the writing off of the initial setting up costs. I share your view that this transfer of responsibility represents the most satisfactory way forward, particularly bearing in mind the future commercial development of PSA and wa

now propose to announce the change formally to the House, following up the statement my predecessor made in 1948. The text of an Answer we hope to make before Easter is attached below. I should be grateful for your agreement to this by 21 March. We shall also be writing to the IWM's Chairman of Trustees to confirm the arrangements.

I am copying this to the Prime Minister in view of her personal interest in this Museum at the time of its opening, Richard Luce and to Sir Robin Butler.

*J. Amos*  
*Nicholas*

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

To ask the Minister if he will make a statement about the future of the Cabinet War Rooms

Mr

Since 1948 my Department has maintained the more important of the Cabinet War Rooms as they were used during the War, in accordance with an undertaking given at that time by the then Minister for Works. In 1984 the Rooms were opened to the public generally and the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum agreed to manage them as a Museum under a short term agreement on behalf of my Department.

The initial five year term of this management agreement is now approaching its end and officials of my Department and others concerned were asked to review, in consultation with the Imperial War Museum, the future arrangements for managing the CWR.

On the basis of their report, the Government have concluded that it would be inconsistent with the future commercial development of the Property Services Agency which I announced last May (Hansard Col. 333) for it to retain a direct responsibility for managing the Rooms. Furthermore, we feel that my predecessor's commitment as to the preservation of this important historic site will be best discharged by giving full responsibility to those professionally concerned with museum management.

The Government are therefore pleased to accept an offer from the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum to take on direct responsibility for the Cabinet War Rooms and for honouring the commitment given in 1948. A number of the artefacts currently displayed in the Rooms are from the Museum's collection or are on

loan from the Churchill family. We are now transferring ownership of all the Rooms' other contents, including all documents, photographs equipment and furniture as well as all fixtures and fittings, to the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum. The Rooms themselves form part of a Government Office building and will be leased to the Trustees of the IWM on an agreed basis from 1 April 1989.



Vol. 448

8 March 1948

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Written Answers

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Written Answers

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is a director of two companies which receive subsidies for the deep mining of ore. One of these companies is financing a development scheme approved by the Board.

#### Furnaces (Scrap Supplies)

Mr. Gallacher asked the Minister of Supply the number of furnaces which have been closed down in Britain due to lack of scrap at the steel works; and the tonnage lost because of this.

Mr. G. R. Strauss: At various times since 1st January, 1948, six furnaces have been closed for want of scrap, due to local distribution difficulties. The loss of steel is estimated at 8,000 tons.

### MINISTRY OF WORKS

#### War Cabinet Rooms

25. Commander Maitland asked the Minister of Works whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to keep the War Cabinet rooms in the same state as they were in at the end of the war which is their condition at present; whether members of the public may be allowed to see these rooms; and whether details and photographs of them which would be of great interest may be made available to the public through the medium of the Press.

Mr. Key: Yes. The more important of these rooms will be maintained as they were used during the war. My Department will be happy to arrange for the Press to take photographs and, in fact, some photographs have already appeared. Owing to the situation of the rooms it would not be practicable to throw open for inspection by the general public accommodation which forms part of an office where confidential work is carried on.

#### Bricks

28. Mr. Lipson asked the Minister of Works if he is now able to state the result of his representations to the British Transport Commission that no section of the brick industry should have an unfair advantage in the matter of transport rates.

Mr. Key: A meeting has been arranged between the Railway Executive and the Midland Federation of Brick and Tile

Manufacturers, with officers of my Ministry in attendance, when exceptional freight rates for bricks will be discussed.

34. Sir F. Sanderson asked the Minister of Works whether he is aware of the piling up of bricks, owing to lack of demand resulting from the curtailed building programme; and if he will remove the restrictions and permit private enterprise in the building of houses to function, with a view to removing the problem of over production of bricks.

Mr. Key: The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The second part of the Question is for my right hon. Friend the Minister of Health, but in considering it account has to be taken of other factors besides the supply of bricks.

#### OVERSEAS AIRFIELDS (MAINTENANCE)

36. Mr. Platts-Mills asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs following upon the recent agreement governing the use of airfields in the Caribbean and Bermuda, what further negotiations are in progress for the handing over to American authorities responsibility for the technical operation and maintenance of British airfields; and which are the airfields concerned.

Mr. McNeil: Since the answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative, the second part does not arise.

### GERMANY

#### Berlin Undertakings (Public Ownership)

37. Mr. Platts-Mills asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what was the attitude adopted by the Commandant and Deputy Commandant of the British Sector towards the proposed transfer of undertakings to public ownership on the 16 occasions this matter was discussed in the Berlin Kommandatura; and, in view of the public declaration of support for the proposal accorded by the Soviet representative, what is holding up the transfer of these undertakings to public ownership.

Mr. McNeil: The Commandant and Deputy Commandant of the British Sector have always made it clear that

010

DRN



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB  
01-212 3434

My ref:  
Your ref:

2 June 1986

~~CADP~~

To see.

DW  
5/6

Dear Colleague,

**CABINET WAR ROOMS**

The Cabinet War Rooms were re-opened by the Prime Minister as a Museum in April 1984. They are run for the Department by the Imperial War Museum on a commercial basis.

In the 2 years they have been operating as a Museum, the Rooms have been included very successfully in the itineraries of a number of visiting dignitaries. A number of receptions have been held there too. The space available is not large but they do provide somewhere "different" for receptions. Your Minister may like to bear them in mind for suitable occasions.

John Wenzel, the Curator, (01-930 6961) is the contact.

A copy of this letter goes to Brigadier Cowans at the Government Hospitality Fund.

*Tons*

*Nick*  
NICHOLAS DEXTER  
Private Secretary to  
Sir George Young



*Mr Barclay*

*Is it right to feel  
and visitors should pay?*

*Mr Higham  
30/5*

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

*I think  
it would be a very  
poor advert. for Britain  
to feel we are  
paying for  
photographers  
tickets for a number of  
Ambassadors.*

My ref: 01-212 3434

Your ref: Ambassador.

29 MAY 1984 *J. M. 907*

Dear Mr Barclay

I have notified your press office about a forthcoming visit which you may like to note for future reference.

Mr David Steel has sought permission from this Department to take the Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and the Belgian Ambassador on a visit to the Cabinet War Rooms on 5 June. His party will pay for entrance like any other visitors and this Department's only involvement will be to keep the Rooms open for 15 minutes longer than normal. Photographers will accompany the party, but no formal press conference will be held in the building.

Sir George Young is content that the visit should proceed; indeed, it is difficult to see how it could be prevented, but I thought that you should be alerted in case it is picked up by the press.

*Yours sincerely*

*Spoke to Dave who will  
re-consider.*

*Trevor Beattie*

TREVOR BEATTIE  
Private Secretary

*2nd  
3/5*

David Barclay Esq

pto

16/5

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet War Rooms

The Director of the Imperial War Museum has sent you an album of photographs of the Cabinet War Rooms.

I have put this in the flat, and have sent an appropriate letter of thanks.

David Barclay

to name etc

CABINET WAR  
ROOMS BLUE FILE



ate  
SSM

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

16 May 1984

Thank you so much for your letter of 16 May. The Prime Minister was delighted with the photographs, which will be a permanent reminder of a very happy day.

David Barclay

Dr Alan Borg

AB



Imperial War Museum  
Lambeth Road  
London SE1 6HZ  
Telephone 01-735 8322

From the Director  
Dr Alan Borg FSA

ACNB/BB/IV/74

16 May 1984

Dear Mr. Barclay

We have put together the enclosed album of photographs of the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms and I wondered if the Prime Minister might like to retain this as a souvenir of the occasion.

Yours sincerely  
Alan Borg

David Barclay Esq  
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1



2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref:

Your ref:

*Pa  
DMS  
9/2*

6 April 1984

*mt*

*Dear Margaret,*

Thank you so much for sending the Cabinet War Rooms off to such a good start. It is marvellous to have this vivid reminder for all to see of the stark conditions under which operations were directed in the battle to which, as you said in your speech, we all owe our present freedom. I haven't the slightest doubt that it will become one of the major attractions in London.

I think all concerned can draw satisfaction from the outcome of this combined operation between the PSA and the Imperial War Museum. By drawing on the different skills of the PSA in adapting the building and of the Imperial War Museum in researching and presenting the exhibition, a result has been achieved of which we can all be proud.

*Your ever  
Patrick*

PATRICK JENKIN



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

5 April 1984

Dear Sir John

I write to thank you most warmly for all the efforts which you and your staff made to make the opening ceremony for the Cabinet War Rooms such an enjoyable and memorable occasion. It is both a fascinating and moving experience to see the cramped quarters from which Churchill, his colleagues and their devoted staff directed the war effort.

Would you please pass on my special thanks to Mr. Crawford who gave me such a lively insight into the treasures now in your charge.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Grandy, G.C.B., K.B.E.,  
D.S.O.





de v

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

5 April 1984

The Museum very kindly provided copies of two books on which the Prime Minister was able to draw in preparing her speech on the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms. I am returning both volumes herewith - it was kind of you to let us borrow them.

(David Barclay)

Mrs Andrew  
Imperial War Museum

Govt Bldg: Cabinet War Rooms.



file

6

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

3 April 1984

Opening of the Cabinet War Rooms

I enclose on a personal basis a draft of the latest version of the Prime Minister's speech at the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms. As discussed, the Prime Minister would be grateful if your Secretary of State could avoid duplicating any of this material in his remarks.

There may yet be some further amendments, but these are unlikely to be substantial. We will be arranging for the final text to be issued as a Press Notice tomorrow.

It would be helpful to have a sight of your Secretary of State's speech as soon as it is available.

David Barclay

A.C. Allberry, Esq.  
Department of the Environment.

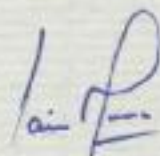
PRIME MINISTER

CABINET WAR ROOMS

There is much press interest in the opening of the War Rooms tomorrow morning. Photographers, including TV, plus journalists from PA and Reuters, will cover your arrival, the opening ceremony, but, because of the constraints of space, only the beginning and end of your tour of the Rooms themselves.

By using a separate entrance, the press will already be in position when you arrive at the Cabinet Room at the beginning of your visit to the Rooms. They will then be kept back, to reappear, again ahead of you, at the Map Room and Prime Minister's Room towards the end of the tour. They will wish to cover the initial part of the reception which concludes the programme.

Content with these arrangements?



IAIN R MURRAY  
PRESS OFFICE

3 April 1984

PRIME MINISTER

Opening of the Cabinet War Rooms

Your speech for the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms is opposite.

Briefing

Briefing is attached as follows:

- Note on press arrangements - immediately below
- Programme - Flag One
- Ground Plan - Flag Two
- Background Brief - Flag Three
- Booklets - Flag Four

Arrival

You are due to arrive by car at 1110 am. Departure from No 10 will now be from the Front Door, leaving at 1105 am and driving via Trafalgar Square.

*DBS*

(David Barclay)

3 April 1984

CF

It has been - file with RB  
at home.

1320 MR. C. R. TRUTER, MBE,  
25, Muswell Hill,  
London N10. 3PR.

Thursday, 29th March 1984.

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

file with RB  
Thank you very much  
for the invitation to the Opening of the  
Cabinet War Rooms next Wednesday, 11th April.  
I look forward immensely  
to being present at the ceremony.

Yours most sincerely,

Christian Truter

Govt Bldgs : WAR Rooms

MAY 81



2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB  
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

28 March 1984

*Dear David*

CABINET WAR ROOMS: OPENING CEREMONY

Thank you for your letter of 12 March indicating the Prime Minister's agreement to the proposals and the draft programme. You will wish to know that the additional invitations have been sent out and I understand that Lord Attlee, Lord Thurso and Lord Shinwell have all accepted.

I now attach briefing for the Prime Minister and draft speaking notes as follows:

- a. Programme for the ceremony, including the names of those who are to be introduced to the Prime Minister Flag 1
- b. Plan for the ceremony and reception area Flag 2
- c. Draft Speech notes Flag 3
- d. Background briefing Flag 4
- e. Copies of the official booklet and guide leaflet (in separate envelope attached).\*
- f. The updated guest list.

The speech notes includes, as requested, one or two anecdotes about life in the Cabinet War Rooms. They have been provided by the official historian for the Cabinet War Rooms who is employed by the Imperial War Museum.

No doubt you will let me know if there is anything further that you need. It would be helpful to know whether the Prime Minister will wish to be introduced to any particular guests in addition to those indicated in the official programme.

*Yours sincerely*

*John Ballard*

J F BALLARD  
Private Secretary

\* These you already have.

David Barclay Esq

CABINET WAR ROOMS OPENING CEREMONY - 4 APRIL 1984

PROGRAMME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 11.10 am Secretary of State welcomes the Prime Minister at entrance to marquee - area d on attached map at Flag 2 - and introduces her to:
- Sir John Grandy, Chairman of Imperial War Museum.
  - Dr Borg, Director, Imperial War Museum
  - Mr G Hopkinson, Director, London Region
- The platform party moves to seating area - b on map.
- 11.15 am Secretary of State speaks
- 11.20 am The Prime Minister speaks and unveils plaque - shown at area a.
- 11.30 am Secretary of State leads Prime Minister through entrance to Cabinet War Rooms, down stairs to reception area and introduces her to:
- Mr C A K Pain PSA London Region Assistant Director with overall responsibility for new works.
  - Mrs E M Causley-Cooper PSA London Region Assistant Director with financial and administrative responsibility.
  - Mr J N Mutch, PSA London Region Project Manager with overall responsibility for the scheme.
  - Mr R Crawford, Deputy Director, Imperial War Museum
  - Mr S Batchelor, Superintending Officer of the Consultant Architects, Gordon Bowyer and Partners.
- Mr Mutch and Mr Crawford will accompany the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister on a tour of the Rooms.
- Platform party to follow.
- Churchill family and other VIPs to make a tour after a short interval, accompanied by Mrs Causley-Cooper and Mr Pain.



DURING THE TOUR the Prime Minister will meet:

At the Transatlantic Telephone - Mr J Wenzel, Curator of Cabinet War Rooms

In the South Corridor - Mrs Crosby, Head Warder

In the Map Room - Miss A Commander who catalogued exhibits and documents.

In the Museum Room - Mr P Simkins, Museum Historian and author of the Cabinet War Room Guide.

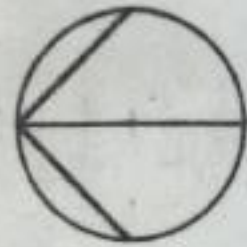
Mr M P Houlihan, Ex-Imperial War Museum:  
responsible for historical interpretation and presentation of the site.

AT THE END OF HER TOUR (In the Museum Shop area) the Prime Minister will be introduced to:

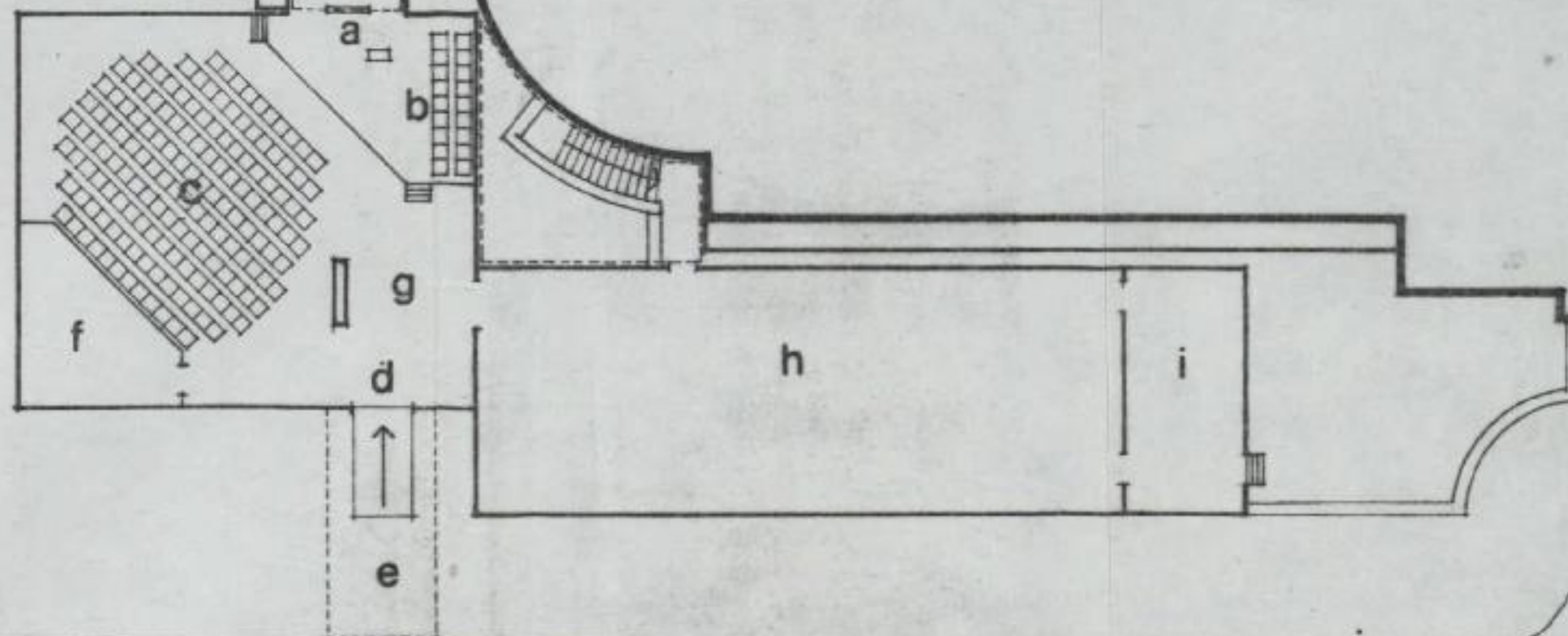
Mr G Christopher	Superintending Architect, PSA London Region
Mr G Bowyer	Architectural Consultant
Mr A Irvine	Designer of Cabinet War Room scheme (Gordon Bowyer and Partners in association with Alan Irvine, Architectural Consultants)
Mr R Dawson	H L Dawson & Partners Mechanical and Electrical Consultants
Mr D Fiddes	Veale & Sanders Quantity Surveying Consultants
Mr R Wheaton	Morrish & Partners Structural Consultants
Mr P Stone	Haymills Main Contractor
Miss P Lutgen	Principal, PSA London Region who handled the financial and administrative details of the project.
Miss J Ely	PTOI Architect, PSA London Region
Mr K McGreevy	Clerk of Works, PSA London Region
Mr M Lines	Clerk of Works

12.00 am  
approx.

The Prime Minister joins the guests at the reception.

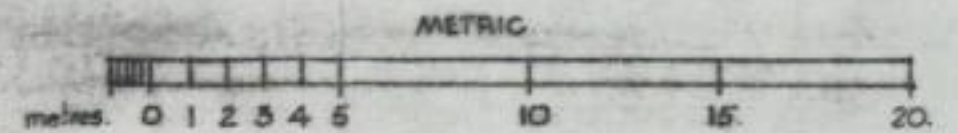


- a - unveiling and speech area.
- b - V.I.P. seating (18 no).
- c - guests seating (150 no).
- d - initial welcoming and introduction area.
- e - canopy over footpath.
- f - press reporting area.
- g - press area during ceremony.
- h - reception area.
- i - caterers area.



# CABINET WAR ROOMS

opening ceremony



Museums and Galleries Group



Department of the Environment

## BACKGROUND BRIEFING

1. The Cabinet War Rooms which originally consisted of only 3 rooms became operational in August 1939 but by the end of 1939 they had been extended and embraced much of the area now preserved. They remained in use until Japan surrendered in September 1945.
2. In 1949 the then Minister of Works announced that some of the Rooms were to be preserved. They have since been open to the public by special arrangement.
3. In 1981 Mr Heseltine suggested and the Prime Minister agreed that they should be opened generally. The Prime Minister visited the Rooms and took a great interest in the proposals.

## THE ROOMS

4. The Rooms now being opened to the public include the Cabinet Room, where Churchill's War Cabinet held over one hundred meetings; rooms used by the Chiefs of Staff, including General Sir Hastings Ismay (Churchill's Chief of Staff) members of the Joint Planning Staff and Joint Intelligence Committee and their secretariats. The complex includes, of course, the Prime Minister's Room, allocated to Churchill as a combined office and bedroom; the Transatlantic Telephone Room, where the Prime Minister could speak directly by telephone to President Roosevelt in the White House; and the Map Room and Annex, where the latest information about operations on all fronts was collected, sifted and presented.

5. The Rooms in the 'southern suite' (Rooms 60-62B), which were used mainly by the Advanced HQ of GHQ, Home Forces, Sir Edward Bridges, Secretary to the War Cabinet and by General Sir Hastings Ismay and his staff were emptied at the end of the War. With the exception of General Ismay's room, these are all being opened to the public for the first time. These rooms have had to be completely refurbished and laid out as they were during the War and have involved the Imperial War Museum in a considerable and delicate conservation effort to restore them to their original state.

## THE WORKS INVOLVED

6. This was a PSA works project. The Imperial War Museum forecast that around 300,000 visitors a year might be expected to visit the rooms once they were opened to the public generally. PSA's task was, therefore, to devise a scheme which would enable these large numbers of people to pass through the Rooms and afford environmental protection and maintain security of the exhibits without destroying the atmosphere of the complex. Architects Gordon Bowyer and Partners, in association with the designer Alan Irvine, were commissioned to prepare detailed designs and the Imperial War Museum (IWM) were invited to carry out the historical research, conservation, cataloguing and display work. The IWM was also invited to manage the museum on behalf of the PSA. The satisfactory outcome owes much to the efforts and team work of the staff of the three organisations involved.

7. Construction began in October 1982 and was largely completed by January 1984. Completion was phased to allow the IWM to dress the rooms from June 1983 onwards. The main contractor was Haymills Limited.

8. Adaptation involved the creation of a new entrance, installation of a lift and other facilities for the public, including the handicapped. The provision of an external queueing area with minimum impact on the surroundings, accommodation for Museum staff and the creation of a circulation route..

9. Technical problems which had to be overcome included the removal of many tons of wartime ARP concrete to make way for the foyer and access; the creation of the circulation route also involved a 4 month operation to bore a tunnel through the central concrete mass.

10. Dual air-conditioning systems were required. One to protect exhibits and one to control the public area. Some new openings were made to enable the public to see into the Rooms but alterations have been kept to a minimum.

#### FINANCE

11. The initial capital and subsequent running costs will be borne by PSA. The Imperial War Museum, as managing agents, being reimbursed by PSA.

- i) Total estimated cost of adapting the Rooms is £1.9m made up as follows:

Construction works	£1.30m
Consultants Fees	£0.30m
Research, dressing and display work by IWM	£0.30m
	<hr/>
	£1.9m
	<hr/>

- ii) Other details:

Entrance charge	£2. Adults/£1 children and OAPs
Expected number of visitors a year	300,000
Estimated receipts from admission charges and sales from the Museum shop	£500,000
Estimated running costs	£440,000 p.a.

12. The Museum will be open to the public from 6 April daily with the exception of Mondays, Christmas Eve and Bank Holidays. The Curator of the Museum is Mr John Wenzel; the writer of the history of the Cabinet War Rooms is Mr Peter Simkin.

PRIME MINISTER'S SPEAKING NOTES

I am very pleased to be here today.

When Michael Heseltine - then Secretary of State for the Environment - suggested that the Cabinet War Rooms should be made generally available to the public I was excited by the idea.

After visiting the Rooms in 1981 before any of the conservation work had been carried out, I was even more excited by their potential and I shall be very interested to see the finished product for myself.

I think it right that everyone, not only in this country but people from all over the world, should be able to see one of the most important complexes of rooms in our modern history.

I suspect that many of the younger generation, who have been brought up on a diet of star wars and space travel, will be surprised by what might be described as hasty, makeshift accommodation. Yet in that cramped underground accommodation Winston Churchill, his War Cabinet and the Chiefs of Staff of Britain's armed forces kept their fingers on the pulse of a world war.

They were also an information and planning centre where the Joint Planning Staff and Joint Intelligence Committee prepared and co-ordinated their combined strategic and operational plans.

And it was here, when the danger of invasion was at its height, that the Commander-in-Chief Home Forces and his staff also had rooms.

This rather modest accommodation was therefore at the centre - in fact it was the hub - of Britain's fight to defend her freedom /and that of the rest of Europe/ throughout the dark years.

Modest as they may be the Rooms now serve to remind us of the enormous effort and courage that went into the defence of our democracy between 1939 and 1945.

But all was not despondency and gloom in those underground rooms, as I am sure that many of you here today can testify.

I understand that the beds were not particularly comfortable. Indeed I believe that Winston Churchill preferred to sleep upstairs in what was known as the No.10 Annexe. When, on the insistence of his wife, he promised to go to bed in the underground bedroom, he did so, but half an hour later informed his startled private detective that the promise kept he would now go upstairs to sleep.

Nevertheless, a great many people did sleep in the rooms and rely on the weather indicator board for information on what was going on outside. I am told that 'Windy' was the in-joke for air raid in progress.

I hope visitors will get some feel for the atmosphere of the time - dedicated purpose presided over by a Winston Churchill who, in the words of General Sir Leslie Hollis, regardless of the hour, in slippers with pom-poms, wearing a magnificent mandarin dressing-gown embroidered with red and gold dragons, cigar clamped between his teeth, would stamp along the corridor to the transatlantic telephone room to consult with the American President.

I am pleased to see here today many who in one capacity or another contributed to that effort.

I am sorry that some were not well enough to attend but I am sure their thoughts are with us today.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to all of those who have helped to preserve these rooms in the past and to those who have worked so hard to make today possible.

I have much pleasure in declaring the Cabinet War Rooms open.

CABINET WAR ROOMS : ANECDOTES

Despite the serious purpose underlying all activities in the Cabinet War Rooms, some aspects of life and work there had a lighter side and have been recorded, with some amusement, by those who worked in the basement. Given below are some of the anecdotes for which we have written or oral evidence:-

1. Weather Indicator Boards

Attached to the eastern wall of the main corridor, near the underground Cabinet Room, is a wooden holder containing indicator boards which, during the war, gave news of the weather outside to staff working in the basement. These indicator boards were changed, when appropriate, either by George Rance, the civilian representative of the Ministry of Works in the Cabinet War Rooms, or by one of the Royal Marines who acted as guards and orderlies. Thus staff working underground were given some idea of what weather to expect when they ventured upstairs. During heavy air raids Rance, as a private joke, would sometimes put up the board bearing the word: 'Windy'.

2. Transatlantic Telephone Room

- (a) General Sir Leslie Hollis who, during the war was Senior Assistant Secretary (Military) to the War Cabinet and Secretary to the Chief of Staff Committee, was one of two few men, apart from Churchill himself, allowed to enter the small secret room from which the Prime Minister could speak directly by telephone to President Roosevelt in Washington. Hollis later describes how:

'Churchill would suddenly decide to speak to the President, regardless of what hour it might be in Washington. In his slippers with pom-poms, wearing his magnificent mandarin dressing-gown embroidered in red and gold dragons, the belt pulled tightly round him, his cigar clamped like some miniature torpedo between his teeth, he would stamp along the corridor towards the telephone. Even in the unhealthy light from the electric bulbs that lit the corridor, his complexion seemed cherubic and as pink as if he had just risen from eight hours' sleep. The rest of us would be pale and unhealthy in that wretched light, but not Churchill'.

- (b) Whenever a call was made from the room, a small comedy of manners took place. Neither Churchill nor Roosevelt relished holding the telephone until his counterpart was at the other end and ready to speak. Consequently, once the call had been placed, Hollis would have to keep the line open until he was sure that the President was actually on the telephone. In Washington the same procedure was followed, with both Hollis and the President's aide pretending that their chiefs were on the line, when in fact they were not. By the time the President and the Prime Minister did make contact, their respective subordinates could be forgiven for feeling more than a little tense.
- (c) According to Hollis, Churchill would often light a fresh cigar while engaged in telephone conversation with the President. When the Prime Minister eventually emerged from the tiny room, it would be full of smoke and it appeared as if Churchill was stepping from the heart of a furnace.

### 3. The Prime Minister's Room (Room 65A)

Room 65A, immediately to the north of the Map Room, was reserved for the Prime Minister's use as an emergency office and bedroom from the summer of 1940 onwards. Although he made some of his famous wartime broadcasts from the room in 1940, Churchill only slept there on two or three occasions during the Blitz, spending most nights in the shelter prepared in the disused underground station at Down Street, near Piccadilly. From December 1940 onwards, the Prime Minister preferred to sleep in the 'No. 10 Annexe' - the suite of rooms prepared for him on the ground floor of the building above the Cabinet War Rooms. However, Detective-Inspector W H Thompson, Churchill's personal detective at that time, has recorded how, on one occasion, Mrs Churchill made her husband promise to go to his basement room when a raid started, and asked Thompson to see that the Prime Minister carried out her wishes.

When Thompson had seen the Prime Minister safely to bed there and went to turn out the light, Churchill asked for it to be left on. Shortly afterwards, Thompson was summoned by the Prime Minister and entered the room again, only to find that Churchill had put on a dressing-gown and was gathering up his papers. According to Thompson, Churchill then said: 'Well, Thompson, I have kept my word. I came downstairs to go to bed. Now I am going upstairs to sleep'.

### 4. Churchill's Boots

Hollis states that one of Churchill's servants in the Cabinet War Rooms was a Royal Marine called Ives. Ives became extremely worried at the Prime Minister's habit of going upstairs into St James's Park to watch the effects of air raids. Eventually, Hollis and others told Ives that he must do his best to deter the Prime Minister from such nocturnal expeditions. Ives hit upon the idea of hiding the Prime Minister's boots. Then, one night, during the Blitz, Churchill called him and asked for the boots. After some time, Ives finally ran out of excuses and had to produce them. Having put them on, Churchill is reported to have said:

'I would have you know that as a child, my nursemaid could never prevent me from taking a walk in the Park when I wanted to do so. And, as a man, Adolf Hitler certainly won't.'

### 5. The Pool of Cement

When the Cabinet War Rooms were being strengthened at the end of 1940, particularly with the installation of the concrete slab above the basement, Churchill apparently took a close interest in the work, often clambering over girders and temporary walls to offer advice to the workmen about bricklaying and so on. The evidence we have gathered indicates that on one such occasion, the Prime Minister jumped down off a girder and his feet became embedded in a pool of liquid cement.



6. Sleeping in the Sub-basement

When the air raids were at their height, many of the staff of the Cabinet War Rooms slept in the sub-basement below, which has very low headroom in places and was also cluttered with pipes and ducts. The constant hum of ventilation machinery, the ever-burning electric lights and the presence of rats did not help to make this a comfortable experience, particularly for some of the personal secretaries and typists.

Mrs K M Maxwell, who served as secretary to Colonel (now Lieutenant-General Sir) Ian Jacob at that time, has related to us how one of her dreads was having to visit the toilet in the middle of the night. Since such facilities were primitive or non-existent in the basement and sub-basement themselves, this involved trailing along the passages, obtaining a key from the Marine Guard to let them into the main building upstairs, and afterwards trailing all the way back.

One of Churchill's personal secretaries, Elizabeth Nel, wrote:-

'When, having slept nearly for six hours, to the roar of the air-conditioning, in a narrow cot covered with Army blankets, one would be aroused by the alarm clock and emerge from one's room, there were all sorts of people about whom one wished to avoid. We had all fitted ourselves out with housecoats of the variety that displayed no signs of night attire, but somehow as one hurried up the draughty stairs in the morning, feeling heavy-eyed,.....one always met the most glamorous officers coming into the CWR, looking spruce and a bit haughty'.

7. The Sugar Lumps

Several small personal reminders of life in the Cabinet War Rooms were discovered when they were being conserved and restored. For example, carefully tucked away in a drawer of the Map Room was an envelope containing sugar lumps belonging to Wing Commander J S Heagerty, one of the Map Room officers. The sugar lumps had remained there undisturbed since the war.

PRIME MINISTER

You are to open the Cabinet War Rooms  
on Wednesday, 4 April.

The background brief for the Opening Ceremony is in the folder below. It includes a draft programme (Flag A) and guest list (Flag B), as well as an interesting collection of anecdotes about life in the Cabinet War Rooms (Flag C).

The programme allows for a ten minute speech. I attach a draft outline, for discussion at 1530 tomorrow.

*DMS*

27 March, 1984.

CS - N.T.

WAR ROOTS

MR.

883-2348

C.R. TRUTER,  
25, MUSWELL HILL,  
LONDON N10. 3PR <sup>NST</sup> <sup>CONSTIT</sup>

Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> March 1984

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

pl's

226

Here is the copy of a letter  
from you, which I omitted to enclose in <sup>Sent</sup>  
my letter of last Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March. <sup>to Mackay</sup>  
<sup>in CF</sup>

I do apologise for the omission.

Yours sincerely,

Christian Truter



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

5 August 1981

Dear Mr Truter,

Visit to the War Rooms

You gave us a marvellous conducted tour this afternoon and I enjoyed every minute. How very impressive the rooms are and incredible to think of all the work that was done in such a confined space. They have a very distinctive atmosphere.

With all best wishes for your retirement and many thanks for taking so much trouble this afternoon. Thank you too for the beautiful bouquet of flowers.

It was a most memorable and impressive occasion. We all came away marvelling that such victories can be masterminded in those circumstances.

Yours sincerely

Christiaan R. Truter, Esq., M.B.E.

Margaret Thatcher



ER

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

26 March 1984

We had a word on the telephone about the enclosed letter to the Prime Minister from Mr. C.R. Truter, who until his retirement in 1981 was Curator of the Cabinet War Rooms.

Unless you see any objection, I think the Prime Minister would wish him to be invited, and I should be grateful if you could arrange this.

(DAVID BARCLAY)

Andrew Allberry, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment.



SR

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

26 March 1984

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 23 March. She well remembers meeting you in 1981, and of course is looking forward to seeing the Cabinet War Rooms again next week.

We will be in touch again as soon as possible about your request for an invitation to the opening ceremony.

(DAVID BARCLAY)

C.R. Truter, Esq.

[change of address  
and telephone number]

853.2348.

MR. C. R. Truter,  
25, Mansell Hill,  
London N10 3PR.

Friday, 23rd March 1984.

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

You may remember me when you recall visiting the Cabinet War Rooms the day before I retired as curator in August, 1981. (I enclose a copy of a letter from you).

In a lift travelling back to the ground floor, you said, "This place must be preserved and opened to the general public. We must have a grand opening. The Royals must be there, and (tapping me on my chest in emphasis) you must be there!"

I have just heard today of an official opening being arranged for the Cabinet War Rooms, and should be most grateful if I could be included in any arrangements.

With my special interest, you will appreciate how much an invitation would mean to me.

Yours sincerely,  
Christian Truter



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

12 March, 1984

Dear Andrew,

CABINET WAR ROOMS

The Prime Minister has been considering your Secretary of State's minute of 21 February about the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms, in the light of further advice from the Chief Whip.

The Chief Whip has proposed that in addition to those members of both Houses already on the list, invitations should be sent to Lord Attlee, Lord Thurso and Lord Shinwell, because of their close family or personal connections with the War Cabinet. Lord Attlee takes the SDP whip in the House of Lords, and Lord Thurso is a Liberal. The Prime Minister agrees with these proposals, together with your Secretary of State's other recommendations (including the proposed invitation to Mr. John Silkin).

The Prime Minister is content with the draft programme for the opening ceremony which was attached to your Secretary of State's minute. I should be grateful if you could arrange for appropriate background briefing and draft speaking notes to reach this office by Friday, 23 March.

Yours ever,  
David

(David Barclay)

A.C. Allberry, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment



PRIME MINISTER

CF / please return  
with file.

D  
12/3

Cabinet War Rooms

As you know, the Chief Whip has been sounding out the Opposition Parties about representation at the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms on 4 April.

In the light of their discussions with the Alliance, the Whips suggest that Mr. Jenkin might invite Lord Attlee (SDP) and Lord Thurso (Liberal). In both cases the recent connection would be their fathers' close connection with the War Cabinet. As for the Labour Party, the Whips recommend invitations to Lord Shinwell, a former Secretary of State for War, and to Mr. John Silkin.

Content for invitations to be sent to the above plus those on the attached draft guest list submitted by Mr. Jenkin.

Yes  
ms

AT

PR D. BARCLAY

drafts + draft speech

9 March, 1984.



File 46

cc: Mrs. Ryder

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

28 February 1984

OPENING OF THE CABINET WAR ROOMS

We had a further word about invitations to the Opposition Parties for the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms. I passed on to the Prime Minister the Chief Whip's view that it would be appropriate to invite Lord Shinwell, as a former Secretary of State for War, together with Mr. John Silkin, as the senior official Opposition spokesman on defence. I also said that the Chief Whip advised against invitations to the Alliance. The Prime Minister considers, however, that it may cause undue trouble not to invite anyone from the Alliance, and she would be grateful for a word with the Chief Whip about this. We will be in touch to arrange a time.

DAVID BARCLAY

Murdo Maclean, Esq.,  
Chief Whip's Office.

865

PRIME MINISTER

CABINET WAR ROOMS

In the attached minute, Mr. Jenkin seeks your agreement to the programme and guest list for the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms on 4 April.

You will wish to consider the question of representation of Opposition parties.

The Chief Whip's view is that we might invite Lord Shinwell, as a former Secretary of State for War, together with Mr. Silkin, as the senior Opposition spokesman on defence.

He advises against any invitations to the Liberal Party or to the SDP. There would therefore be a risk of another "injured" letter from Dr. Owen.

Agree programme and draft guest list, including Mr. Silkin and with the addition of Lord Shinwell?

*I think it will cause trouble if we do not invite anyone from the*

*Attiane!*

*DMS*

27 February 1984

*Could I have a word with the Chief Whip, not*



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

22 February 1984

Cabinet War Rooms

We spoke about the attached minute from the Secretary of State for the Environment to the Prime Minister about the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms on 4 April.

I am sure that the Prime Minister would welcome the Chief Whip's advice on invitations to Opposition parties. You explained that the sentence in Mr. Jenkin's minute about this may not fully reflect the Chief Whip's considered views.

BF // Could I please have your advice before the weekend if possible, so that the Prime Minister can be invited to approve the guest list.

(David Barclay)

Murdo Maclean, Esq.,  
Government Chief Whip's Office

J.P.



PRIME MINISTER

**CABINET WAR ROOMS**

Following your agreement in principle to perform the opening of the War Rooms, your Private Office offered 4 April as a date which would be convenient to you and we have been planning on that basis.

As space in the War Rooms is extremely limited, we propose holding the formal opening ceremony on Clive Steps under a marquee. This would be followed by a tour of the Rooms and a reception and buffet luncheon in a second marquee alongside the building. Details of the suggested programme for the day are attached.

Arrangements are in hand to deal with the considerable interest from British and foreign media. My Press Office are in touch with yours about the detailed arrangements.

The draft guest list attached has been drawn up in consultation with the Imperial War Museum who will be running the Cabinet War Rooms on behalf of my Department. The list has been edited by Robin Cooke, who is taking a close interest in the arrangements. The Chief Whip has advised against inviting Leaders of other parties, but suggested that John Silkin might be invited to represent the Opposition and his name appears in the list.

I should be grateful to know if you are generally content with these proposals and with the draft guest list, which will of course include any of your personal staff accompanying you.

PJ

P J

21 February 1984

OPENING OF THE CABINET WAR ROOMS - 4 APRIL 1984

DRAFT OUTLINE PROGRAMME

- 11.00am All guests to be seated.
- 11.10am The Prime Minister arrives and is introduced to the platform party. Speeches made by the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister.
- 11.30am The Prime Minister unveils a plaque.
- The Prime Minister is conducted to the CWR reception area and is introduced to senior PSA and Imperial War Museum staff and consultants, who will lead her and VIPs on a tour of the Rooms.
- Meanwhile, guests are offered sherry and are invited to view the plaque and a display of photographs in the marquee.
- 12.00 am (approx) The Prime Minister joins the guests at the reception.
- Guests start to visit the War Rooms shortly before the Prime Minister departs.

OPENING OF THE CABINET WAR ROOMS - 4 APRIL 1984

Guest of Honour

The Right Honourable  
Margaret Thatcher, FRS, MP  
accompanied by Mr Denis Thatcher, MBE, TD  
(and PPS, PS's as advised)

Proposed Guest List

SECTION 1

DOE/PSA Ministers

The Right Honourable  
Patrick Jenkin, MP

Secretary of State for the  
Environment

Mr I Gow, MP

Minister for Housing and Construction

Sir George Young, Bt, MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of  
State

Other Ministers and Opposition Spokesman

The Right Honourable  
Michael Heseltine, MP

Secretary of State for Defence

Mr J Stanley, MP

Minister of State for the Armed Forces

The Earl of Gowrie PC

Minister of the Arts

The Right Honourable  
John Silkin, MP

Senior Spokesman for the Opposition.

Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Environment

Sir Robert Cooke

Members of the Churchill Family

Mr and Mrs Winston Churchill  
and Family

Grandson of Sir Winston Churchill.  
Lent his Grandfather's First World  
War pistol.

Lord and Lady Soames

Daughter and son-in-law of  
Sir Winston Churchill

The Lord and Lady Duncan Sandys

Chairman of War Cabinet Committee  
for Defence against V-weapons.  
Sir Winston Churchill's son-in-law

Ambassador of the United States of America

His Excellency Mr Charles H Price II

SECTION 2

Representatives of Trustees of the Imperial War Museum

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Grandy, GCB, KBE,  
DSO (Chairman)

Sir Arthur Drew, KCB, JP (Deputy Chairman)

Field Marshal Sir Edwin Bramall, GCB, OBE, MC

Sir Maurice Dorman, GCMG, GCVO, DL

The Right Honourable Sir Kenneth Robinson, FCIT

Dame Felicity Peake, DBE, AE, JP

The Rt Rev M A Mann

Dr J M Rae, MA



SECTION 3

Former members of staff of the War Cabinet Office and  
Prime Minister's Office

Mrs Joan Astley, OBE	In charge of Special Information Centre (author)
Major A H Bishop	Joint Planning Staff Secretariat
Sir John Colville, CB, CVO	Junior Private Secretary, 10 Downing Street Private Secretary, Princess Elizabeth 1947-1949
Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir William Dickson, GCB, KBE, DSO, AFC	Joint Planning Staff, Chief of the Air Staff 1953-1956
Captain C M Drake, RN	Joint Intelligence Committee
Mr V H S Benham	War Cabinet Office
Air Chief Marshal Sir Alfred Earle, GBE, CB	Assistant Secretary to Chief of Staff
Sir William Gorell Barnes, KCMG, CB	War Cabinet Office (Civil) Director of Tarmac Ltd and Donald McPherson Group Ltd
Sir Ronald Harris, KCVO, CB	War Cabinet Office. Private Secretary to Sir Edward Bridges
Mr D F Hubback, CB	Private Secretary to Sir Edward Bridges Clerk of the Financial Committee of the House of Commons 1979-81
Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Jacob, GBE, CB, DL	War Cabinet Office, Trustee of IWM 1966-1975
Wing Commander G H Lewis, DFC	Map Room Officer
Captain J S S Litchfield, CBE, RN	Joint Planning Staff
Mr Ian McEwan, MVO	Private Secretary to Lord Ismay
The Lord Annan, OBE	War Cabinet Office and Joint Intelligence Staff
Sir John Curle, KCVO, CMG	Private Secretary to Sir Edward Bridges. Director of Protocol Hong Kong since 1976
His Grace the Duke of Portland, CMG	Chairman of Joint Intelligence Staff, Foreign Office
Sir John Martin, KCMG, CB, CVO	Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, British High Commissioner in Malta 1956-1967

Former Members of Staff of the War Cabinet Office and  
Prime Minister's Office (Continued)

Sir William Murrie, GCB, KBE	Assistant Secretary in War Cabinet Office
Sir John Peck, KCMG	Junior Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Ambassador to Republic of Ireland 1970-1973
Captain Sir Richard Pim, KBE, VRD, DL, RN	Prime Minister's Map Room Officer Member of Council, Winston Churchill Memorial Trust 1965-1969
Group Captain Peter Riddell, CBE	Joint Planning Staff
Air Commodore R E de Vintras, CBE	Joint Planning Staff
Sir John Winnifrith, KCB	Establishment Officer, Director General of National Trust 1968-1970
Lady Iliffe	War Cabinet Office Secretariat
Miss D Brown	Superintendent of Typing
Mrs Margaret D'Arcy	Typist/Secretary to Sir Leslie Hollis
Miss Elizabeth Green	Secretary to Lord Ismay
Mrs Gladys Hymers	Typist
Mrs Olive Margerison	Typist/Secretary to Sir Leslie Hollis
Mrs K M Maxwell	Personal Secretary to Sir Ian Jacob
Miss Sheila Minto, MVO, OBE	10 Downing Street Secretariat
Mr and Mrs Ray Smith	War Cabinet office Secretariat
Mrs Joan Sneddon	War Cabinet office Secretariat
Mrs Sylvia Goodman	War Cabinet office Secretariat
Mrs Christine Foster	Secretary to Sir Edward Bridges
Mrs K Hill	Personal Secretary to Sir Winston Churchill
Miss Grace Hamblin	Personal Secretary to Winston Churchill and Clementine Churchill.

Former Staff of War Cabinet Office

Mr C G Prouse	GHQ Home Forces
Captain G A French, CBE, RN	Joint Planning Staff
Major A C Beer	War Cabinet Office Secretariat
Mr N H West	War Cabinet Office Secretariat
Mrs Nancy Maydon	War Cabinet Office Secretariat
The Countess of Onslow	10 Downing Street Secretariat
Mrs Margaret Paine	War Cabinet Office Secretariat
Mrs Margery Ransom	War Cabinet Office Switchboard Operator
The Lord Coleridge, KBE, DL	Joint Planning Staff
Sir Laurence Kirwan, KCMG, TD	Joint Planning Staff, Vice President of Royal Geographical Society
Major General D A L Wade, CB, OBE	GHQ Home Forces Signals
Lieutenant-Colonel E C H Organ, OBE	GHQ Home Forces Signals

Public Figures Associated with Sir Winston Churchill and/or  
Wartime London

The Lord Geoffrey-Lloyd PC	Minister in charge of Petroleum Warfare Department 1940-1945
The Rt Hon Harold Macmillan, PC, OM, FRS	Wartime ministerial appointments.
General Sir James Marshall- Cornwall, KCB, CBE, MC	Commanded III Corps, GOC-in-C Western Command 1941-1942. Knew Churchill.
Professor R V Jones, CB CBE, FRS	Author of <u>Most Secret War.</u> Air Staff 1939. Assistant Director of Intelligence, 1941
Mr Robert Rhodes James, MP	Author of <u>Churchill: A Study in Failure, 1900-1939.</u> Editor, <u>The Complete Speeches of Sir Winston Churchill;</u> <u>1897-1963</u> Contributor to <u>Churchill:</u> <u>Four Faces and the Man</u>
Mr I D S Beer	Headmaster of Harrow
Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Lewin	
Dame Vera Lynn, DBE	
Mr John Snagge, OBE	
The Lord Zuckerman, OM, KCM	Scientific Adviser, Combined Operations HQ. Scientific Adviser on planning, Allied Expeditionary Force; Mediterranean Allied Air Force; Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, 1939-1946.
Mr and Mrs Donald Forbes ) )	
Mr and Mrs John Harvey ) )	Former close associates of Sir Winston's in Woodford.
Mrs Doris Moss OBE )	

SECTION 4

Historians and individuals prominent in the fields of museums and tourism

Professor Michael E Howard, CBE, MC, DLitt, FBA, FR Hist S, FRSL	Cabinet Office Historian; ex-Trustee of IWM
Dr A N Frankland, CB, CBE, DFC	Cabinet Office Historian; ex-Director of IWM
The Lord Bullock, FBA	Former Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University Historian, Member of British National Committee for the History of the Second World War (BNC)
Professor Margaret M Gowing, CBE, FBA, FR Hist S	Professor of the History of Science, University of Oxford Historical Section, Cabinet Office 1945-1959. Member of BNC
Mrs H E Forbes	Administrative Officer in Charge, Cabinet Office, Historical Section, BNC
Sir David Hunt, KCMG, OBE	Private Secretary to Churchill 1951-52; Chairman Board of Governors, Commonwealth Institute
Sir William Deakin, DSO	Advisor to Winston Churchill on European and general questions for Churchill's 'The Second World War' Chairman British National Committee for the History of the Second World War
Sir Christopher Lever, GBE, JP	Chairman, London Tourist Board
Mr Duncan Bluck	Chairman, British Tourist Authority (from end of March 1984)
Mr Martin Gilbert, FRSL	Official Biographer of Churchill
Miss Elizabeth Barker, OBE	Historian, author of "Churchill and Eden at War". Member of British National Committee for the History of the Second World War
The Lord Montagu of Beaulieu	President, Museums Association and Chairman of the Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings Commission for England
Mrs D J Browne	Administrative Officer, National Trust, Chartwell
Lord Charteris	Chairman of the National Heritage Memorial Fund
Mr Simon Ridley	Secretary, Museums and Galleries Commission

People who have given assistance with or advice on the restoration of the Rooms

Mr Derek Robinson, MBE	Liaison Engineer, BBC Information Dept. Assisted with the loan of the outside broadcasting equipment.
Mr Neil Johannesson	Curator, British Telecom Showcase. Advised and assisted with GPO equipment.
Mr Patrick Heagerty	Son of senior RAF Mapkeeper. Lent document and the Cabinet War Rooms Visitors Book.
Mrs Barbera Bond	Senior Map Research Officer, Mapping and Charting Establishment. Assisted in the replacement of maps.
Major General E W Barton, CB MBE	Director of Military Survey, Ministry of Defence
Mr F J Marsh, FIIC	Head of Conservation, India Office Library Conserved maps and other documents on display.
Mr Nigel de Lee	Senior Lecturer, Department of War Studies and International Affairs, Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.
Mr Robert Purdy ) Mr Ron Ferrier )	Retired GPO Engineers responsible for installing telephones in CWR during the war.
Mr H J Gregory	Retired BBC Engineer who operated broadcasting equipment in the CWR.
Mr H L Theobald	Formerly Head of the Cabinet Office Historical Section.

SECTION 5

Westminster City Council

Mrs Pheobette Sitwell

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor  
of Westminster

Mr David Whitty

Chief Executive, Westminster City  
Council.

Office of Arts and Libraries

Mr R W Wilding

Deputy Secretary, Head of OAL

Imperial War Museum staff

Mr A C N Borg, FSA

Director

Mr R W K Crawford

Deputy Director

Mr P J Simkins

Museum Historian, author of  
Cabinet War Rooms guide

Mr M P Houlihan

Exhibitions Research Officer

Mr D J Penn

Keeper of the Department of  
Exhibits and Firearms

Mr R W A Suddaby

Keeper of the Department of  
Documents

Mr J Wenzel

Curator of the Cabinet War Rooms

Dr C Dowling

Keeper of the Department of  
Museums Services

Miss A Commander

Catalogued exhibits and documents

Mr Paul Russell

Assisted with conservation,  
cleaning and dressing of the Rooms

Mr J F Golding, ISO

Establishment and Finance Officer

Mr J J Chadwick

Secretary of the Museum

Directors and Historians of other Museums

Dr Neil Cossons, OBE

Director, National Maritime Museum

Dr John Tanner, CBE, FRAeS, FSA

Director, RAF Museum

Mr W Reid, FSA, FMA

Director, National Army Museum

Dr Geoffrey Martin, FSA, FR Hist S Keeper of Public Records.

SECTION 6

PSA Staff, Consultants and Contractors

PSA/DOE Staff

Mr A M Alfred	Chief Executive
Mr G H Chipperfield	Deputy Chief Executive
Mr G Hopkinson	Director, PSA London Region
Mr C A K Plain	Assistant Director (New Works) PSA London Region
Mrs E M Causley-Cooper	Assistant Director (Administration) PSA London Region
Mr G Christopher	Superintending Architect
Mr N Mutch	Principal Architect
Mr J Ely	PTO I Architect
Mr K McGreevy	Clerk of Works
Mr M Lines	Clerk of Works
Miss P Lutgen	Principal
Mr T R Hornsby	Director of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings Directorate
Mr J Ferneyhough (DWO)	District Works Officer
Mr M Hurst (QS)	Quantity Surveyor
Mr H Hambly (QS)	Quantity Surveyor
Mr A Reading (M&E)	M&E Engineer
Mr D Drummer (M&E)	M&E Engineer
Mr A Beattie (CEG)	Civil Engineer
Mr M Tomlinson (CEG)	Civil Engineer
Mrs R Leeder	Executive Officer
Mr M Collins	Higher Executive Officer
Mr N Mobbs	Chairman, Property Services Advisory Board



PSA/DOE Consultants and Contractors

Gorden Bowyer & Partners in Association with Alan Irvine (Architectural Consultants)	Mr G Bowyer Mrs S Batchelor, Superintending Officer Mr A Irvin, Designer Mr J Coleman, Job Architect
H L Dawson & Partners (Mechanical and Electrical Consultants)	Mr R Dawson Mr R Mansfield
Vealde & Sanders (Quantity Surveying Consultants)	Mr D Fiddes Mr I Way
Morrish & Partners (Structural Consultants)	Mr R Wheaton
Haymills (Main Contractor)	Mr J Elms, Director Mr D Hardy, Contract Manager Mr P Stone, Agent Mr D Lewis, Managing Director Mr P Howarth
Thorn EMI (Mechanical Contractor)	) ) )
T C Clark (Electrical Contractor)	) Names to be confirmed ) )
Royal Parks	Mr A Stephenson - Bailiff
Security	Air Vice Marshal B Lock Mr A Bobsin - GOGGS Security

CAB WAR ROOMS.

CONFIDENTIAL



bc: Michael Scholar

DFG

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

14 September 1983

Dear John,

CABINET WAR ROOMS

Your Secretary of State discussed with the Prime Minister this evening his minute of 14 September about the opening of the Cabinet War Rooms. The Prime Minister said that in principle she would be glad to perform the opening ceremony. Could you please be in touch with Tim Flesher (or in his absence Michael Scholar) about possible dates and timings.

Yours sincerely,

Robin Butler

John Ballard, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment.

DFG



PRIME MINISTER

CABINET WAR ROOMS

The preparations for opening the Cabinet War Rooms to the public are now well advanced and I expect the Rooms to be ready early next year.

The Imperial War Museum have agreed to run the Rooms on the Department's behalf. The works and other preparations will be completed by the end of March and the Imperial War Museum are hoping to catch the start of the tourist season at Easter.

Arrangements for the opening have yet to be worked out but I have in mind a formal opening, including a tour of the Rooms, followed by an informal reception. The guests could include some of those who had worked in the Rooms, members of the Churchill family, as well as Ministers and members of the armed services.

There will be a great deal of public interest in the opening. I would like to get press and other publicity arrangements put in hand as soon as possible.

I very much hope you will yourself be willing to perform the opening ceremony. The precise date is variable and can be suited to your diary.

14 September 1983

P J



de  
GOVERNMENT  
BUILDINGS

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

9 November 1982

This is just to record that the Prime Minister has seen and noted your Minister's letter of 8 November about the increase in the expected cost of the construction work to the Cabinet War Rooms.

I am sending a copy of this to John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office).

Timothy Flesher

John Henry, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

2 MARSHAM STREET

LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 7601

2

MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION

Prime Minister

RT

My Ref: ST/PSO/44530/82 8/n

Dear Prime Minister.

28 NOV 1982

ms

CABINET WAR ROOMS

The Chief Secretary has asked me to bring to your attention the fact that there has been an increase in the expected cost of the construction work to the Cabinet War Rooms.

Michael Heseltine first put the proposal to open the War Rooms to the public to you and to colleagues on 29 May 1981, and in a subsequent progress report on 9 November reported that the estimated cost based only on outline and preliminary designs was £750,000. Following a number of design modifications - particularly to move the public areas away from the corner of Birdcage Walk and Horse Guards Road and also to open up to the public some additional rooms that the Imperial War Museum considered to be of historical interest and significance - the PSA estimate prior to going out to tender was in the range of £1.1m to £1.5m. In the event a contract has been secured for £1.2m.

Though I recognise that a significant escalation of costs between the preliminary and detailed design stages has occurred I am in no doubt that the final outcome will be altogether more satisfactory to the public. I would also mention that the Imperial War Museum now believe that instead of the original estimate of 100,000 visitors a year, up to 300,000 visitors may be attracted with consequent benefit in admission revenue. They also propose keeping the rooms open 7 days a week. On the latest estimate of visitors and running costs the extra capital would be recovered with the proposed charge of £1.50 plus VAT per adult over a 15-20 year period.

I am copying this letter to Leon Brittan.

Yours etc.  
John Stanley

JOHN STANLEY

Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP

Sort. Buildings: Poss. Opening  
of Churchill War  
Room  
5/81



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB  
01-212 7601

*Colin Building*

MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION

*JF*  
*29/6*

C J Walters Esq  
Private Secretary  
Home Office  
Queen Anne's Gate

29 June 1982

*Dear Colin*

CABINET WAR ROOMS

Thank you for your letter of 18 June to Alan Riddell.

We have noted the four practical security measures that you consider necessary, and I am writing to confirm that these measures will be taken. The person from the Department responsible for overall security considerations will be Mr J R Coates.

I am copying this to Tim Flesher (No 10) and Mary Giles (Mr Channon's Office).

*Yours sincerely*

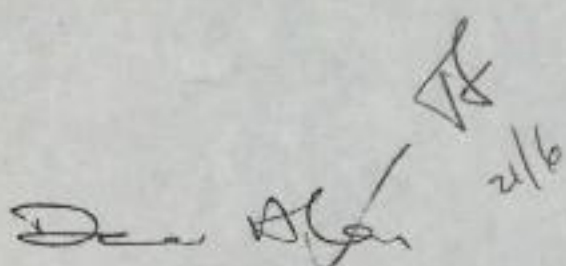
JOHN HENRY  
Private Secretary



Govt. Buildings

HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

18 June 1982


  
 Dear Alan

CABINET WAR ROOMS

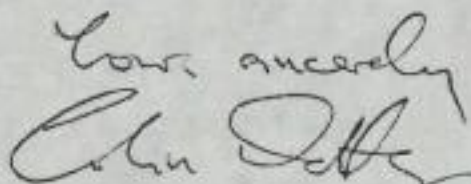
Thank you for copying to us your letter of 16 June to No 10 about proposals to meet media interest in the Cabinet War Rooms.

We have consulted Air Vice Marshall Basil Lock (MPO) and the Metropolitan Police and have no objections in principle on security grounds to the proposals. But we are advised that a number of practical security measures would seem to be needed. They are:

- i) a record should be kept of the names and number of people admitted;
- ii) a check made on entry and departure (possibly showing press cards or other means of identification);
- iii) the three access points to other parts of the building should be watched. No mention should be made of where they lead or the current use of rooms beyond those doors; and
- iv) the press/media should be carefully supervised at all times with a single person from the Department of the Environment being responsible for overall security considerations.

No doubt you will see that these points are followed up.

Copies of this go to Tim Flesher at No 10 and Mary Giles in Mr Chammon's office.

Yours sincerely  


C J WALTERS

A Riddell, Esq.



RM

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

17 June, 1982

I am writing to confirm my message this morning that we see no difficulty with the arrangements for accommodating media interest in the Cabinet War Rooms. We suggest, however, that ITN should be offered the same facilities as the BBC in the first instance.

TF

Mrs P Szmigin  
Department of the Environment

24p



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

2 MARSHAM STREET

LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 7601

MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Langham:

Do you see any difficulty? If not, I shall tell DoE to go ahead.

TF

16/6

16 June 1982

J. Nesher

~~There~~ No problems, but ITV should be invited along with Bobel. Both should be done together out of fairness - and to save time later!

Dear Willie,

1 You will remember that we cleared the enclosed Press Notice with you last week, announcing tenders for construction work to the Cabinet War Rooms. There has been considerable media interest since then, including a bid from BBC Newsnight to film the Rooms before work starts.

17/6

My Minister proposes to accommodate the media interest in the following ways

- to permit a single filming session by one BBC and (if it is requested) ITV crew, supervised by the PSA.
- to arrange a special briefing and conducted tour for press, TV and radio to show how the War Rooms will be reconstructed to accommodate the general public. My Minister would take this briefing himself in conjunction with PSA and Imperial War Museum.

The Minister would be grateful to know if you are content with these proposals and would appreciate an urgent reply. I am also copying this to John Halliday in the Home Secretary's office in case there are any security considerations they wish to raise. A copy also goes to Mary Giles in Mr Channon's office.

Yours sincerely  
Alan Rickard

MRS PAMELA SZMIGIN  
Private Secretary



## Press Notice

207

10 June 1982

### TENDERS INVITED FOR OPENING SECOND WORLD WAR CABINET WAR ROOMS TO THE PUBLIC

The Property Services Agency has today invited tenders for the preparation of the Cabinet War Rooms to be opened for display to the general public. This work is expected to be complete by Autumn 1983.

The Cabinet War Rooms are a basement complex beneath the Government Offices, Great George Street, London. They were used by Winston Churchill during the Second World War for Cabinet meetings with the Chiefs of Staff. This complex was also the nerve centre of many of the central activities for the duration of the War. The Rooms include the Cabinet Room itself, a key map room and Winston Churchill's bedroom and office. These rooms have been left as they were in 1945 and have been available in recent years only for limited guided tours on application. The tours will cease on 30 June to enable work to commence.

The Imperial War Museum is playing a key role in providing PSA with advice on the historical aspects, and conversion work is necessary to admit large numbers of people. It is especially important to strike a balance between allowing visitors access to the rooms and the needs of conservation and security. Within that balance the existing character and atmosphere of the Rooms, so evocative of conditions in the last War, will be retained.

It is proposed that the Imperial War Museum will administer the Cabinet War Rooms on behalf of the PSA.

#### NOTE FOR EDITORS

The decision to open the Cabinet War Rooms to the public was taken last autumn.

Formal planning consultations were submitted to Westminster City Council under the Circular 7/77 procedure on 1 June.

Consultants for the project: Gordon Bowyer and Partners  
Buzac and Irvine  
H L Dawson and Partners

Press Inquiries: 01-212 3495/6/4/3/2  
Night Calls:  
Weekends and Holidays: 01-212 7071  
Public Inquiries: 01-212 3434; ask for  
Public Inquiry Unit



*My Englishman / I see no problems about going ahead with this as long as it is made clear that the decision was taken in principle long ago.*  
 Agree? *wh*

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
 2 MARSHAM STREET  
 LONDON SW1P 3EB  
 01-212 7601

MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION

*J. Pickett*

*I have so told Mr Stanley's office.*

*This has frequently been written about in diary 8 June 1982 columns. I agree to that as we make clear decision was taken long time ago*

*wh  
2/6*

Dear Mike

*9/6*

CABINET WAR ROOMS

My Minister had intended issuing a Press Notice when tenders for the work on the Cabinet War Rooms were invited. This was originally intended for June 9.

However, the Minister has some doubts about issuing the Press Notice, (A draft of which I enclose) because of the current international situation. He has been advised that there is a lot of Press interest in the War Rooms and, on balance, would like to go ahead with the release if you have no objections. The tenders meanwhile will not be issued until the Minister has received clearance from No 10.

Please could we have your urgent comments. I am copying this to Mary Giles in Mr Channon's Office and to the Imperial War Museum.

*Yours sincerely  
 Pamela Szmigin*

MRS P M SZMIGIN  
 APS/MR STANLEY

TENDERS INVITED FOR OPENING SECOND WORLD WAR CABINET WAR ROOMS  
TO THE PUBLIC

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3. The Imperial War Museum is playing a key role in providing PSA with advice on the historical aspects and conversion work necessary to admit large numbers of people . It is especially important to strike a balance between allowing visitors access to the rooms and the needs of conservation and security. Within that balance the existing character and atmosphere of the Rooms, so evocative of conditions in the last War, will be retained.
4. It is proposed that the Imperial War Museum will administer the Cabinet War Rooms on behalf of the PSA.

Note for Editors

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Consultants for the project: Gordon Bowyer and Partners  
Buzas and Irvine  
H L Dawson and Partners

Wh  
23/2

TW



2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref: H/PSO/10837/82

Your ref:

27 February 1982

*De Paul*

Thank you for your very helpful letter of 28 January. I was very pleased to learn that the Imperial War Museum are prepared to consider running the Cabinet War Rooms after all.

The proposed financing and staffing arrangements are unusual but I think they should provide the basis for an agreement. I have asked my officials to discuss the details with the Imperial War Museum and your officials.

Meanwhile if we are to achieve the target opening date of October/November 1983 the designs for displaying the War Rooms to the public need to be approved by all concerned. I hope that the Imperial War Museum will be prepared to join in these decisions now.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary.

*Yours ever*  
*MHE*

MICHAEL HESELTINE

Paul Channon Esq MP



Department of Education and Science

Office of Arts and Libraries  
From the Minister for the Arts

Elisabeth House, York Road  
London SE1 7PH

Telegrams: Araldes London SE1  
Tel: 01-926 9222

*Mr 2/1*  
*Paul Butler*

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP  
Secretary of State for the Environment  
Marsham Street  
London SW1

28 January 1982

*Dear Michael*

You wrote to me on 10 December, asking if the trustees of the Imperial War Museum might be persuaded to think again about the possibility of running the Cabinet War Rooms if the latter are refurbished for public admittance.

I have had another talk with Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir John Grandy, the chairman of the trustees. I emphasised that I was raising the subject again with them on the express understanding that the cost of the necessary adaptations would be borne by DOE, and that the only question at issue was the management of the War Rooms when the refurbishment has been completed. Nevertheless Sir John still had serious reservations. He and his colleagues are much concerned about the major commitments they are already facing as regards the maintenance and development of the Museum and its outstations at Duxford and HMS Belfast; they feel that it would not be in the interests of the Museum to accept a further responsibility which might, because of its obvious public interest, require them to reassess the priority they have given to these commitments.

Nevertheless after discussion Sir John agreed that the Trustees would like to be as helpful as they could without prejudicing their first duty to the Museum. They would therefore be prepared to consider taking on the running of the War Rooms if the resources involved were clearly separated from those of the Museum as such. I think this could only be achieved by your making some direct financial arrangement with the Trustees under which they would manage the War Rooms for you. The terms of any such arrangement would of course be a matter for agreement between you and the Trustees. I think they would probably expect, in addition to covering the outgoings involved, a management fee and a share of any profit that was made. My concern would be to ensure that none of the additional cost should fall on their ordinary Vote, and that the Government as a whole should expressly recognise that this activity was not part of the Museum's own operations. If you would like to pursue this

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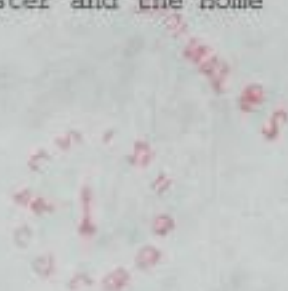


perhaps OUP officials should now meet the Director and report to us so that we can decide on the next steps.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary.

Y  
-  
Paul

PAUL CHANNON





Wm 5/1  
2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref: H/PSO/19792/81

Your ref:

- 4 JAN 82

*De la...*

CABINET WAR ROOMS

Thank you for your letter of 26 November. I will undertake to meet the capital cost of this scheme from within my Departmental programmes in view of its unique character and the general feeling among colleagues that this remarkable historical monument should be made more accessible to the public at large. As you will have seen from the letter of 30 November, the Prime Minister agrees that the normal rules on rates of return need not apply to this project; but we will expect to cover the running costs.

Copies of this letter go to the recipients of my earlier letter.

*you are*  
*Michael Heseltine*

MICHAEL HESELTINE



CR 11/12 Cont Bldgs

2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref: H/PSO/16916/81

Your ref:

10 December 1981

*Handwritten signature*

CABINET WAR ROOMS

As you know, I have reported to the Prime Minister on the progress we are making in our plans for opening the Cabinet War Rooms to the public. The project has attracted much interest among colleagues and all those who have seen the War Rooms are convinced that they will prove to be of immense popular interest.

Good progress is being made with the preparatory work but we still have the problem of finding some suitable body to manage the Rooms once they are open; and whoever takes on that job ought to have the opportunity to contribute to the design work now in progress.

As you know, my feeling is that the Imperial War Museum is the right body to handle this and I am very surprised that you have found them so resistant to the idea. They have the expertise in historical presentation, exhibition work and management which is needed if the War Rooms are to be run in the way they should be as a major national monument. The London Tourist Board are very enthusiastic about its potential as a tourist attraction and they think there might be some possibility of its being run as a commercial enterprise. The company that operates Madame Tussauds are known to be interested in diversifying their activities but I cannot think that this would be regarded as a fitting way to present the War Rooms.

May I ask you to have one more attempt to persuade the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum to take this on? It would surely enhance their own reputation and visitors to the War Rooms could very likely be attracted to visit the Museum as well. Here we have the War Rooms, with their potent national interest, and the Museum with their national standing and expertise. It ought surely to be possible to bring them together. I would be most grateful for your help in this.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and to the Home Secretary.

*Handwritten signature*

MICHAEL HESELTINE



C HO  
KIT  
COL  
NIO  
CO  
Govt Bldgs

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

30 November 1981

Cabinet War Rooms

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 9 November. She has also seen the Chancellor of the Exchequer's letter to Mr. Heseltine of 26 November.

The Prime Minister has noted the progress that has been made on opening the Cabinet War Rooms to the public. She agrees with the Chancellor that the scheme should be financed from within the Department of the Environment's existing PES provision; but she is content to waive Treasury rules on the rate of return to be earned on this unique project.

I am copying this letter to Andrew Jackson (Home Office), Jill Rutter (H.M. Treasury), Jim Buckley (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office), Mike Hopkins (Northern Ireland Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

W. F. S. RICKETT

Mrs. Helen Ghosh,  
Department of the Environment.



Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG  
01-233 3000

26 November 1981

The Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, MP.,  
Secretary of State for the Environment

*Dear Michael*

CABINET WAR ROOMS

I have seen your minute of 9 November to the Prime Minister.

On the source of finance I repeat the Chief Secretary's view, which was endorsed by MISC 62 in its recommendations on the PSA public expenditure programme, that the scheme is not a sufficiently high priority to warrant additional expenditure. I am however content that it should go ahead provided that you finance it from within whatever total may be agreed by Cabinet for your Departmental programmes.

Copies of this letter go to the other recipients of yours.

GEOFFREY HOWE

*2 -*  
*John*

Good progress. On X, you will see from the Chancellor's letter attached that he insists Mr Heseltine should find the capital cost from within his PES provision. On Y, I understand that the Treasury are willing to waive the rules provided you agree. Content to do so?



Prime Minister

CABINET WAR ROOMS

This is the progress report for which you asked following your visit to the Cabinet War Rooms with John Stanley at the beginning of August.

We have now solved most of the practical issues:

Yes not Wm 26/11

Security: the Home Secretary has confirmed in his Private Secretary's letter of 25 August that the Metropolitan Police were satisfied that external security and control could be maintained and that work on the proposal to open the Rooms to the public could proceed on the assessment that the security problems could be overcome.

Design of entrance: we have re-examined this following your comments during your tour. Because of the location of particular sections of war-time reinforced concrete it is not cost-effective to site the entrance other than where you were shown. However, the public access will be designed so that any queue bends right away from the junction of Storey's Gate and Birdcage Walk. The drop in ground level and the boundary wall will help ensure this, and barriers will be used if necessary.

Appointment of architects and design consultants: Gordon Bowyer and Partners with Buzas and Irvine have now been appointed to do the first stage of planning work.

There are three points outstanding:

X | Source of Finance: the total capital cost on a cash basis is estimated to be £750,000, with expenditure of £250,000 arising in 1982/83 and £500,000 in 1983/84. As this is a project being undertaken because of its national historic importance and its cost is relatively small in public expenditure terms, I think it only reasonable that my Department should be granted an additional bid for the £0.75 m spread over the two years in question; but if the Chief Secretary finds it impossible to agree to this I will undertake to find it from within my own Department PES provided that I can decide how this can best be done at the time the expenditure arises.

Y | Rate of return: following the Chancellor's minute of 26 June, Treasury officials have said that this project must satisfy the normal rate of return on capital projects. I explained in my earlier letter that it could cover its running costs (by entrance charges, sales etc) but not the capital costs. I hope you will agree that this unique project need not conform to Treasury rules for conventional capital investment.

Responsibility for operation: because of other manpower commitments the Imperial War Museum have declined to take this on. They seem the logical people to do so as the War Rooms are clearly of great historical interest and the Museum have the expertise in

conservation and exhibition work and in the handling of visitors. I am having a further discussion with Paul Channon to see whether the Trustees of the War Museum can be persuaded to handle the running of the War Rooms. Failing that it would fall on my Department, unless we can devise a private sector solution. I am asking the Home Secretary whether this is ruled out on security grounds.

I know that you are anxious that the War Rooms should be opened before the ending of this Parliament and we will do our utmost to achieve this provided the three points above can be rapidly resolved.

Copies of this minute go to the other members of the Cabinet, Paul Channon and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*MSA*

MH

- 9 NOV 81

YD



✓  
4/10  
2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref: H/PSO/16742/81

Your ref:

26 AUG 81

Dear Andrew

WAR CABINET ROOMS

I have seen a copy of your letter of 31 July to Mike Pattison. ✓

The interim assessment of the security aspects of the proposal to make the War Cabinet Rooms more accessible was helpful and encouraging. I would be grateful however if you would do all that you can to expedite final clearance as we need to settle the security arrangements to press ahead with the scheme.

A copy of this letter goes to recipients of yours.

Yours ever

Jeffrey Channing

J P CHANNING  
Private Secretary

A P Jackson Esq



Prime Minister  
Progress.

2.

HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

MA 25/ VIII

25 August 1981

Dear Mr

MS

GREAT GEORGE STREET WAR CABINET ROOMS.

Andrew Jackson wrote to you on 31 July and indicated that we would write to you again once the Metropolitan Police had considered the report of the Security Adviser to the Civil Service Department on the implications for the internal security of the Churchill War Rooms of opening them to the public.

The Metropolitan Police have discussed the report with the Security Adviser, and visited the Rooms. They have agreed with him a number of comparatively minor additions to the measures recommended in his report and, subject to the implementation of the recommendations in the entirety, share his conclusion that internal security could be maintained.

As Andrew explained in his earlier letter, the Metropolitan Police were already satisfied that external security and control could be maintained. Work on the proposal to open the Rooms to the public can, therefore, now proceed on the assessment that the security problems could be overcome.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of Cabinet and those to Mr. Channon and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely  
Colin Walters.

C. J. WALTERS

FILE



10 DOWNING STREET

Govt VLS  
Buildings  
cc HO  
HMT  
Min Arts  
Co

From the Private Secretary

6 August 1981

As you may know, the Prime Minister paid a visit to the Churchill War Rooms earlier this week, accompanied by Mr. Stanley. She was awaiting an opportunity to do so before responding to your Secretary of State's minute of 29 May about the possibility of improving access for the public.

Since your Secretary of State wrote that minute, the Prime Minister has seen the comments made on the proposal by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Home Office. She is pleased to see that the security problems do not appear to be as great as had initially been feared. For her part, she found her visit to the War Rooms fascinating, and she is most enthusiastic to see this important piece of history made more accessible. In the course of her visit, she discussed with Mr. Stanley the precise location of the new entrance which would be required, and he will no doubt have her views in mind in pursuing the matter. She hopes that it will now be possible to press ahead with arrangements along the lines suggested in your Secretary of State's minute. Perhaps you would be able to let us have a progress report on the outstanding questions by, say, 1 November.

*Rx*

I am sending copies of this letter to Andrew Jackson (Home Office), Peter Jenkins (HM Treasury), Mary Giles (Office of the Minister for the Arts) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

D. A. Edmonds, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment.

50



From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

Prime Minister

2

*You may wish to see this interim security assessment before you visit the War Cabinet rooms on Tuesday.*

HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

*wh  
31/7*

31 July 1981

*wh  
MS*  
  
Dear Mike

GREAT GEORGE STREET WAR CABINET ROOMS

I am sorry that it is taking so long to provide you with an assessment of the security implications of opening the Churchill War Rooms to the public; this letter is, I am afraid, only an interim assessment, but the Home Secretary thought the Prime Minister would wish to be aware of progress on this question before she visits the Rooms next week.

The interest of the Metropolitan Police in this is primarily in external security and control. Whilst they have pointed out that, if the Rooms became a major attraction, there could be difficulties in accommodating queues on the footway in Great George Street, they are satisfied that opening the Rooms would not affect external policing materially.

*see 22/6  
(attached)*

Internal security is primarily a matter for the Government, and you will have seen a copy of the report on this by the Security Adviser to the Civil Service Department, which indicates that satisfactory arrangements could be made. The Metropolitan Police have subsequently indicated that they occasionally have responsibilities for internal security in adjacent areas, for example the old Home Office building on Remembrance Day, and they need an opportunity themselves to consider the Civil Service Department report. They will do this quickly, and I will write to you again when they have completed their assessment.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of Cabinet, and those to Mr Channon and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Jim*

*Arew*

(A P JACKSON)


M A Pattison Esq

PRIME MINISTER

CP: P.M. is going on  
Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>. There are  
2 minutes which she  
will have to read.  
Will he know which  
ones.

You have been wanting to visit the <sup>CP</sup> Churchill War Rooms for some time and <sup>27/7</sup> John Stanley's Office are in constant touch about this. Mr. Truter, who is in charge of the War Rooms, leaves on Tuesday, 4 August in the evening and wonders whether there is any chance of your visiting the Rooms that day. If the House is not sitting you have an almost empty diary.

Is this something you would like to do?

  
his please  
M.

24 July 1981

Mr. Tinter  
233 7830.



WMSH

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR

NORTHERN IRELAND

The Rt. Hon. Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Treasury Chambers  
Parliament Street  
London  
SW1P 3AG

8 July 1981

*Sir Geoffrey*

GREAT GEORGE STREET WAR CABINET ROOMS

In your minute of 26 June to the Prime Minister about Michael Heseltine's proposal that the War Cabinet Rooms should be opened to the public, you suggested that I might have views on the security implications for my Department.

As you know, the Treasury, as the major occupiers of the Great George Street building, are responsible for its physical security. Provided that whatever arrangements are made do not reduce the present standards of security I would not wish to raise any objection to the proposal. I should also be reluctant to challenge it on financial grounds. I accept that the exercise should be self-financing, but if Michael Heseltine is content I really do not think we need become too involved in the details.

I am sending copies of this letter to Cabinet colleagues, Paul Channon and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours ever*

*Humphrey*

Ref: A05214

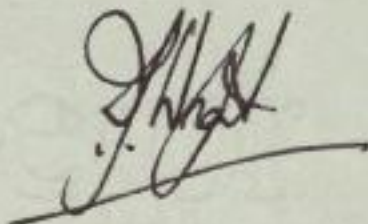
① N/A / I have spoken to DFE and David Wright, Wm 8/7

② BF 17/7

MR. WHITMORE

I have seen the continuing correspondence about the Great George Street War Cabinet Rooms.

2. I really do wonder whether it makes sense to do a whole lot more detailed work on financing and the cost-effectiveness of opening these rooms to the public. The fact is they are directly under the Northern Ireland Office, and would be all too obvious a target for a terrorist attack. The precautions that it would be necessary to take would be bound to diminish the attraction of the Rooms as a tourist resort, and would certainly add very much to the cost of maintaining them as such. In the circumstances my strong inclination would be to recommend a decision now to put this idea into cold storage for the time being without further ado.



Robert Armstrong

(dictated by Sir R. Armstrong  
and signed in his absence)

7th July, 1981

DSG

Gowt  
Boil days



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

29 June 1981

Dear John

GREAT GEORGE STREET WAR CABINET ROOMS

The Prime Minister was grateful for the Chancellor's minute of 26 June on this subject.

The Chancellor will of course be aware that the Home Secretary is considering the security implications of opening the War Cabinet Rooms to the public, but the Prime Minister notes the Chancellor's comment that both he and Mr. Atkins would wish to be consulted before a final conclusion is reached.

The Prime Minister also agrees with the Chancellor that officials should do more detailed work on the financing and cost-effectiveness of opening the War Cabinet Rooms to the public before a final decision is taken.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to other members of the Cabinet, and to Mary Giles (Office of the Minister for Arts) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever  
William Rickett

John Wiggins, Esq.,  
H.M. Treasury.



Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

01-233 3000 Prime Minister

PRIME MINISTER

The Home Secretary is already considering the security implications of this proposal. I think you may want to support the Chancellor's view that more detailed work should be done on the financing and cost effectiveness of the scheme before taking a final decision. Agree?

Yes not. 2/12/6

GREAT GEORGE STREET WAR CABINET ROOMS

I have seen a copy of the Secretary of State for the Environment's minute to you of 29 May with a proposal that the War Cabinet Rooms should be opened to the public.

2. I have two interests in this. First the proposal would involve additional expenditure, whether financed by public subscription wholly or in part. It is not a good time to be contemplating additional expenditure and I think it unlikely that colleagues would agree that other operational requirements should be given up to pay for it.

3. I should also want to be sure that the cost-effectiveness of the scheme has been properly assessed. Rough calculations suggest that there would need to be a very substantial flow of visitors to make the scheme pay for itself.

4. Second, I am concerned about physical security. The Treasury as major occupier of the Great George Street building is responsible for maintaining the standard of physical security laid down for protecting the building and its contents against unauthorised access. The Great George Street building is of course shared with other Departments. The Northern Ireland Office in particular has offices close to and above the proposed entrance. Humphrey Atkins may therefore have views. Subject to that however I would

/wish to be fully





wish to be fully satisfied that the security arrangements provide adequate protection. Even then it may not be a risk worth taking.

5. I am therefore not persuaded that we should agree, even in principle, to endorse the proposal at the present time. I would however be happy for officials of the departments concerned to discuss the proposal in more detail to see if a viable scheme can be produced.

6. I am sending copies of this minute to other members of Cabinet, Paul Channon and Sir Robert Armstrong.

(G.H.)

26 June 1981

covering RESTRICTED



Civil Service Department  
Whitehall London SW1A 2AZ  
01-273 4400

*Mrs. Pleese*  
*WR*  
*22/6*

From the Private Secretary

22 June 1981

Colin Walters  
Private Secretary to the Secretary  
of State for the Home Department  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

*Dear Colin,*

CHURCHILL WAR ROOMS

... I attach a copy of a report to the Lord President made by Air Vice-Marshal Lock, our Security Adviser. The Lord President is content with this report and I am sending it to you so that the Home Secretary can consider it and in turn report to Mr Heseltine and the Prime Minister. I understand that Hayden Philipps is the official concerned.

A copy of this goes to Mike Pattison (No.10), David Wright (Cabinet Office) and to Robin Young (in John Stanley's Office).

*Yours sincerely,*  
*Jim Buckley.*

J BUCKLEY

covering RESTRICTED

*OF when Home Sec reports.*

*WR*  
*23/6*

PS/LORD PRESIDENT

THE CHURCHILL WAR ROOMS  
GREAT ST GEORGE STREET GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Introduction

1. As the Lord President will be aware, Mr Michael Heseltine recently minuted the Prime Minister on the subject of the Churchill War Rooms. (Flag A). The Prime Minister wishes to be assured that security aspects have been adequately covered (Flag B) and I have been asked by the Home Office to conduct a survey and satisfy the Lord President and the Home Secretary on this point.

The Threat

2. Several levels of threat need to be considered bearing in mind that there is no practicable means by which the identity of visitors may be checked.

a. Pilfering. Numerous items on display can readily be removed and there is no doubt that pilfering will occur unless adequate steps are taken to prevent it.

b. Vandalism. It would be a simple matter to deface or damage certain historic exhibits if they are not protected.

c. Bomb Threat. The introduction of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) is a possibility that must be borne in mind. Such devices if carried in a case or package might contain approximately 20lbs of TNT or equivalent. In the confined spaces under consideration, such an IED could cause severe damage and loss of life/injury to personnel in the War Rooms; other parts of the building would be unlikely to be seriously affected however. The size of the package would be such as to preclude surreptitious introduction providing appropriate screening takes place at the entrance. Smaller devices (eg cassette incendiaries) could be concealed about the person and it would be difficult to detect these on entry. Adequate supervision throughout the visiting area will therefore be necessary.

d. Infiltration of Adjoining Premises. An individual could attempt to make his way from the War Rooms to other parts of the underground complex either directly or by hiding until "after hours"; this latter method would provide the attacker with more time for barrier penetration.

Planning

3. I am satisfied that plans for the new scheme are such as to provide answers to all the above threats. Pilfering and vandalism will be countered by the erection of suitable glass screens and these will also help to prevent the placing of IEDs

in hideaway locations such as in cupboards or under beds. Even so, the main defence against the bomb threat must lie in ensuring that:

- a. All hand carried objects are deposited under supervision in suitable accommodation adjacent to the entrance.
- b. Custodians are strategically placed within the visiting area.
- c. A thorough search is made at the beginning and the end of each day and the premises are secured during the silent hours.

Plans for a. b. and c. above have already been made and the required manpower identified.

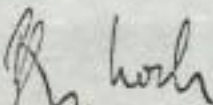
4. Regarding infiltration of adjoining premises, it will be necessary to block-off any routes which could be used for this purpose, preferably on a permanent basis. If this were found to be impracticable (eg because of a door which needed to be retained as a fire exit) special measures would be required such as fitting an emergency "break glass" device coupled with an alarm. Such a system would be relatively simple and inexpensive to arrange - a matter of a few hundred pounds compared with approximately £½ million for the project as a whole. Searches as at 3c. above will complete the anti-infiltration measures.

#### Conclusion

5. From the security viewpoint I confirm that the Lord President and the Home Secretary may safely agree to the project proceeding on the understanding that protective measures will be monitored during the planning, building and commissioning stages.

#### Action

6. If this report is acceptable to the Lord President I should be grateful if it could be forwarded to Haydn Philipps at the Home Office for consideration by the Home Secretary. A copy goes to PS/Permanent Secretary.



G. LOCK  
 Air Vice-Marshal  
 CSD Security Adviser

17 June 1981



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

15 June 1981

The Prime Minister has seen and noted the Secretary of State for Trade's minute of 9 June, supporting the Secretary of State for the Environment's suggestion to open the War Cabinet Rooms to the public.

I am enclosing with this letter a copy of my letter of 2 June to Jeff Channing at the DOE setting out the Prime Minister's reaction to this idea.

I am sending copies of this letter, without enclosure, to Colin Walters (Home Office), Jeff Channing (Department of the Environment) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

**M. A. PATTISON**

Nicholas McInnes, Esq.,  
Department of Trade.

14

Prime Minister

We are awaiting advice  
on the security aspects,  
which look problematic.

PRIME MINISTER

I have seen a copy of Michael Heseltine's 29 May note to you about the War Cabinet Rooms in Great George Street. I fully support his proposal to open them to the public.

MPD  
12/11

Although some may think that London already has too many tourists, I believe that such an exhibit would be a significant attraction. We cannot be seen to be presiding over the deterioration of these rooms and their contents beyond repair. The proposal, particularly if private finance can also be raised, seems to me to be a very imaginative and cost-effective way of ensuring their preservation. Whilst my Department would not be in a position to help with capital costs, I am fairly confident that the British Tourist Authority and the English Tourist Board would be happy to participate in promotional and marketing exercises for the scheme.

I am copying this to Cabinet colleagues, to Paul Channon and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

WJB

Department of Trade  
1 Victoria Street  
London, SW1H 0ET  
9 June 1981

JB

~~C.F.~~

~~Please send copy of my letter  
of 2/VI (to J.H. Channing, DoE)  
to Mr. McNees at DoT.~~

Ref: A05001

MR. WHITMORE

The Secretary of State for the Environment has sent me a copy of his minute of 29th May, proposing the opening to the public of the War Cabinet Rooms in the basement of the "New Public Offices" in Great George Street.

2. It is an imaginative and enterprising idea. But I think that we ought to have some regard to the security implications of admitting members of the public to the basement of a central public office of that kind. No doubt it would be possible to make sure that the public had no access to other parts of the building; but a well-placed terrorist bomb in the basement of the New Public Offices could do damage which would have much propaganda as well as financial costs; and it could defeat much of the object of the exercise if all the visitors had to be searched to make sure that they were not secreting anything of that kind.

3. I doubt whether the gain is worth the risk.

RA

Robert Armstrong

2nd June 1981

2 June 1981

The Prime Minister has seen the Secretary of State for the Environment's minute of 29 May about plans to make the Churchill War Rooms publicly accessible.

She is interested in this idea, although she would want to see confirmation that the Home Secretary is satisfied that the security implications have been adequately covered in the proposed new arrangements.

As Mr. Stanley knows, the Prime Minister would herself be interested to take a look at the War Rooms and she hopes to find an opportunity to pay a quick visit in the next few weeks.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office), and Colin Walters (Home Office).

M A PATTISON

Jeff Channing, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment.

JH



PRIME MINISTER

In the attached minute, Mr. Heseltine seeks your approval in principle for his plan to open the Churchill War Rooms to the public. John Stanley mentioned this idea to you some weeks ago, and was very keen to find an opportunity to have you taken round the War Rooms.

Is this still something you would like to do? If so, would you want to withhold your final judgement on Mr. Heseltine's plan until you have been there? Or are you content that he should go ahead regardless of whether you can find an opportunity to visit? (We would need to find half-an-hour or so for you to go round, but it ought to be possible to arrange it at quite short notice if a gap appeared in your diary.)

1 June 1981

MP  
I should love to go.  
Home Security & Security?  
They must be considered first.  
m



Prime Minister

You will know that the basement of the offices in Great George Street holds the rooms occupied by the War Cabinet during the last Great War.

These rooms are of considerable historical significance and interest, but under present arrangements the public have only very limited access. Moreover the important and unique documents and other items housed there are deteriorating as time passes.

I have put steps in hand to arrest the deterioration and I would be grateful to have your approval to opening the rooms to the public at large.

To do this we would propose to create a new entrance (on the corner of Great George Street and Horseguards Road) and to instal glass screens between visitors and the exhibits. We would then permit visitors to pass unescorted (but supervised) through the rooms, and would hope to cover the running costs - including the staff required - from admission charges. We might even manage a small surplus. Initial capital expenditure of perhaps £550,000 to £650,000 would be needed - probably during 1982 and 1983. This sum might be found from either public or private sources, or by a combination of the two. I shall discuss the former with the Chancellor and shall also explore whether this sum, or part of it, might be raised privately perhaps by an appeal. Before I can take this further however, I need to know whether in principle you would be willing to have the War Rooms opened to the public.



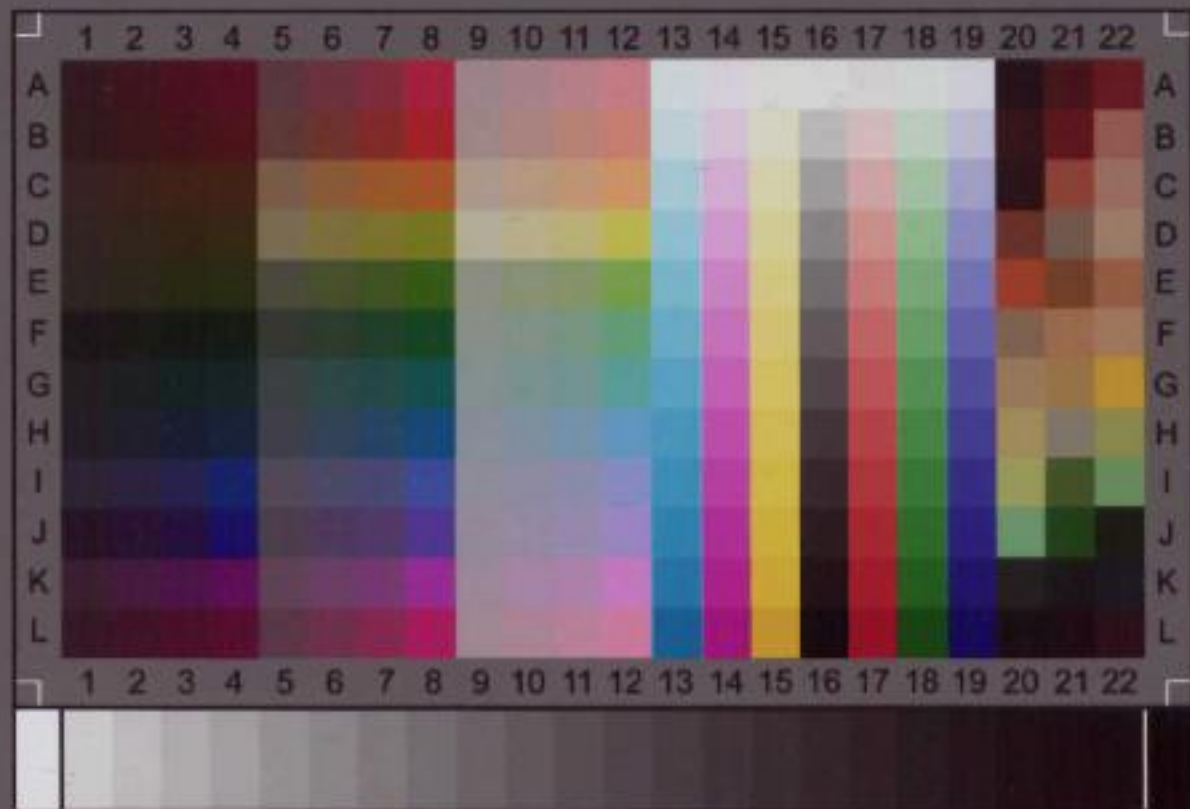
I hope you will be able to agree to this. I have consulted the Imperial War Museum and they are very enthusiastic about the potential of the War Rooms which they believe could be developed into a major tourist attraction.

I am copying this to Cabinet colleagues, to Paul Channon and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*MH*

M H

29 MAY 81



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