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PRIME MINISTER

YOUR VISIT TO PEKING: RETURN BANQUET

The Ambassador in Peking strongly advises (see attached telegram) that if the return banquet is to be the memorable occasion which you wish, we should:

- (a) go for a menu of 75 rather than 50 Yuan a head. For 160 guests, if this is the final total, this would mean the cost rising from £2,400 to £3,600.
- (b) offer the drinks traditionally provided to meet the tastes of Chinese guests.
- (c) offer champagne as well as white wine.

I am afraid this will make the occasion more expensive, but it would probably be wise to accept local advice. As you know, we are going to considerable lengths to make this a rather splendid occasion - taking special silver, etc. - and it would be a pity to spoil it by doing less than the guests would consider adequate.

Agree to Sir Percy Cradock's suggestions?

A. J. C.

Yes
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8 September 1982

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GR 10

RESTRICTED

FM PEKING 030657Z SEP 62

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 494 OF 3 SEPTEMBER

FOR DONALD AUS AND HEAD PCD

MR DONALD

HD | PCD

14D | FIED

14D | 14AGD

No 10 D. Street

X 24

IMMEDIATE
ADVANCE COPY

YOUR TELNO 340: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: RETURN BANQUET

1. I SHOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD RECONSIDER THE DECISIONS REPORTED IN PARA 1 OF TUR.

2. WHEN I SAW HER IN LONDON, THE PRIME MINISTER EMPHASISED SHE WISHED TO MAKE THE RETURN BANQUET A MEMORABLE OCCASION. IT WILL NOT BE IF THE DRASTIC ECONOMIES PROPOSED IN TUR OR SIMILAR ECONOMIES ARE IMPLEMENTED. WE CANNOT HAVE A MEMORABLE BANQUET IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT.

2 3. I SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATIONS PUT FORWARD IN PARAGRAPHS 4 AND 5 OF EVERARD'S TELELETTER OF 25 AUGUST. THE 50 YUAN PER HEAD MENU LACKS EG SHARK'S FIN AND SEA SLUGS, BOTH DELICACIES TO A CHINESE PALATE WHICH WOULD BE CONSPICUOUS BY THEIR ABSENCE ON AN OCCASION SUCH AS THIS. (THEY ARE INCLUDED IN THE 75 YUAN MENU.)

4. NOR SHOULD WE ATTEMPT TO SKIMP ON THE DRINKS. TO MEET CHINESE CUSTOMS AND THE TASTES OF THE CHINESE GUESTS, IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO OFFER THE DRINKS WHICH ARE TRADITIONAL HERE (MINERAL WATER, BEER, FIZZY ORANGE AND MAOTAI)., ALSO TO CONFORM WITH OUR NORMAL CUSTOMS, AND ALL RECENT WESTERN PRECEDENTS HERE, IT IS NECESSARY TO OFFER CHAMPAGNE AS WELL AS WHITE WINE. I HOPE YOU CAN ARRANGE FOR THE CHAMPAGNE TO BE BROUGHT ON THE VC10.

5. THE AMOUNT OF EACH DRINK CONSUMED PER CAPITA WILL OF COURSE BE SMALL, BUT THE AVAILABILITY OF A WIDE RANGE OF BEVERAGES ON AN OCCASION SUCH AS A RETURN BANQUET WILL BE A MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S GUESTS.

CRADOCK

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