

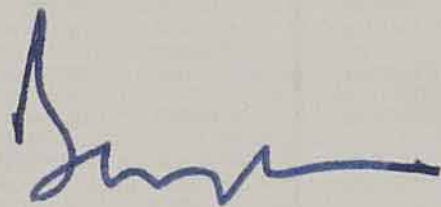
MR. PATTISON

cc. Mr. Gow
Mr. James
Mr. Gaffin
Mr. Howe

Visit to Wales

I have only one point to make on your minute of October 16 re ~~re~~ the contingency plans for the above. This concerns the evening before the visit proper.

Depending on the time of arrival in Cardiff, I would like to press the idea of, say, an hour's discussion over drinks or even dinner with editors of the main regional media - i.e. newspapers, radio and television. Such off the record briefings are very important if there is to be effective communication of the Government's policies. Whitehall tends to be too inbred and London oriented. Meetings with regional editors are a potentially important two-way flow of information, opinion and temperature and I hope you will do what you can to facilitate them.



B. INGHAM

19 October, 1979

c. Mr. Gow
Mr. Ingham
Mr. Howe

MR. RYDER

The next regional visit on the Prime Minister's programme is to Wales. This is tentatively planned for mid-January, but I asked the Welsh Office to let us have an outline programme now, to enable us to put the visit in hand at short notice if suitable dates unexpectedly come free.

I attach a copy of the Welsh Office reply, with their proposed programme.

The Prime Minister has seen this, and is content to work from this outline. On the basis of an earlier discussion with you, I also suggested to her that she might consider planning to leave London the previous day in time to pay a visit to Anglesey before going on to Cardiff. Subject to hesitations about travelling conditions, based on last year's experience, the Prime Minister is content for plans to be made on this basis.

I would be grateful for any comments you and other recipients of this minute may have, before I reply to the Welsh Office. Could I please have any responses by close of play on Friday 19 October?



16 October 1979

Y SWYDDFA GYMREIG

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From The Secretary of State for Wales

4 October 1979

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 30[✓] August in which you asked for our suggestions for a day's programme for the Prime Minister in Wales which would include some time at the Welsh Office in Cardiff.

I enclose the outline of a programme, based largely on Cardiff. The programme includes brief notes on the visits etc suggested, where additional explanation seems necessary. It takes account of the points made in your letter and of the suggestions put forward in Bob Williams' letter to you of 8 June.^{pt1} As you will see Dow Corning Ltd, Barry, is a small high-technology plant and there is a link between that suggested visit and our suggestion that in the afternoon the Prime Minister should visit the Welsh Office Industry Department.

The programme would enable the Prime Minister to meet a good range of Welsh Office staff. Over lunch she could, as you suggest, discuss major problems facing the Welsh Office with Ministers and senior officials. The afternoon visit to Industry Department would inter alia give her an opportunity to meet staff of different grades in their places of work. At tea, she could meet members of the Welsh Office Departmental Whitley Council Staff Side. Perhaps I could mention that my Secretary of State is not now inclined to press the idea of a lunch with a cross-section of the South Wales community as mentioned in Bob Williams' earlier letter.

We have not included any cultural items though such an item - say a visit to the Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagans, just outside Cardiff, or to the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff with its recently acquired collection of Rubens' Cartoons - could be substituted for one of the other items in the programme if the Prime Minister wishes.

M A Pattison Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1



In this connection I should mention that the Welsh National Opera Company will be having short seasons in Cardiff from 30 October to 10 November 1979- from 26 February to 8 March 1980; and from 13 May to 17 May 1980. If her visit coincides with one of these seasons, and it is possible in the event for her to arrive in Cardiff a little earlier in the evening than your letter suggests, the Prime Minister may wish to attend a performance by this internationally renowned Company.

Finally, there will, of course, be considerable media interest in the Prime Minister's visit and considerable media coverage should be possible for most parts of the programme.

We have not approached any of the outside organisations suggested for involvement in the programme. While, if the Prime Minister is content, it could be arranged fairly quickly, we should therefore appreciate as much notice of dates as possible in order to make the final arrangements.

Yours ever
G C G Craig

G C G CRAIG
Private Secretary



SUGGESTED OUTLINE PROGRAMME FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO CARDIFF

Late evening Arrive at hotel, Cardiff
Overnight at hotel

8.15 am Leave hotel

8.45 am Arrive at Dow Corning Limited, Barry for visit

Dow Corning Limited, a subsidiary of an American company, is engaged in the manufacture and marketing of silicone products. The Barry plant employs 400 people, and achieved sales of £34m in 1978 - a 100% increase in 2 years. A major investment is planned, costing £135m and generating a further 125 jobs and considerable balance of payments benefits. This project was secured against strong international competition, although following the decision to reduce the rate of regional development grants in development areas the previous Government's offer of selective financial assistance had to be increased to secure it.

9.45 am Leave Dow Corning Limited

10.15 am Arrive at Ely Hospital, Cardiff for visit

Ely Hospital is a 436-bed mental-handicap hospital with some new accommodation but much of it still housed in old but upgraded buildings. In 1969 a committee of inquiry (chaired by Sir Geoffrey Howe) reported adversely on allegations of staff misconduct and ill treatment of patients. Since then, the Health Authority and the staff have made major improvements in conditions. The Hospital Advisory Service now considers that there has been a complete transformation of the Hospital. The local authorities are participating with the Welsh Office and South Glamorgan AHA in an imaginative community based project for the mentally handicapped in Ely (NIMROD - New Initiatives for the Care of the Mentally Retarded in Ordinary Dwellings) and there would be an opportunity for the Prime Minister to meet some local authority members and officials.

11.15 am Leave Ely Hospital

11.30 am Arrive Queen Street pedestrian shopping area, Cardiff for walkabout



Queen Street has long been one of the main shopping streets of central Cardiff but it has fairly recently become a pedestrianised shopping area which will give access to an enclosed shopping development now under construction as part of the City's central area redevelopment. Queen Street now displays a bustling active appearance, thronged with people; a place for various open air activities.

- 11.50 am Leave Queen Street shopping area
- 12 noon Media interviews and/or Press Conference at Welsh Office, Cathays Park
- 12.45 pm Lunch at Welsh Office with the Secretary of State, Permanent Secretary, Deputy Secretaries and other Welsh Office officials
- 2.30 pm Leave Welsh Office, Cathays Park
- 2.45 pm Arrive for visit to Industry Department, Welsh Office, Gabalfa, Cardiff
- There would be an opportunity for a brief tour of Industry Department to meet staff of different grades where they work, and for a discussion on the work of the Department whose main role is to encourage the expansion and modernisation of existing industry in Wales; attract new industry; oversee the Welsh Development Agency; provide selective financial assistance; and encourage and assist exporters.
- 3.35 pm Tea with Departmental Staff Side representatives at Welsh Office, Gabalfa *(+ cross section of staff 114)*
- 4.00 pm Leave Welsh Office, Gabalfa
- 4.15 pm Courtesy call on Lord Mayor of Cardiff at City Hall
- 4.30 pm End of programme