

TIME MINISTER

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Visit of Premier Hua

I understand from Clive that you are not keen on the reception you will be giving Premier Hua on the evening of Monday, 29 October, being held at the Banqueting House, and that you would prefer to have it at Lancaster House.

The difficulty is that Premier Hua will be attending a lunch (probably hosted by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary) at Lancaster House the same day. The meal will finish at 1400 or thereabouts. Your reception is due to begin at 1730. If your reception were to be held at Lancaster House it would mean that Premier Hua would be <sup>a</sup>the guest twice within three hours or so <sup>at</sup> of Lancaster House. Apart from the desirability of varying Premier Hua's programme, GHF will have very little time to prepare properly for your reception.

If, in the light of the above, you would like me to pursue the question of switching the reception from Banqueting House, I will, of course, do so. But you may prefer to leave the programme in its present form.

Is there any alternative?  
Banqueting House is not-  
very nice. Could we  
use Banthorpe House  
(though more at least in District!)  
ref:

24 September, 1979.

PRIME MINISTER

Your Reception for Premier Hua

I have been into the question of whether a venue other than the Banqueting House could be found for your reception on 29 October for Premier Hua.

Marlborough House would not be possible. It is reserved with some strictness for Commonwealth occasions. I do not think that Hong Kong provides a sufficient excuse. (I imagine that Premier Hua might in any case regard your reasoning as somewhat double-edged!)

The other possible venue would have been St. James's Palace. But I am told that this would only be available if Royalty were involved. Since you are giving a dinner at which Royalty will not be present it would hardly be feasible to invite a member of the Royal Family to the reception.

We seem to be left, therefore, with the Banqueting House. I am not sure why you dislike the Banqueting House. I am assured that great care will be taken with floral decorations and the like. My own experience has been that, provided the guest list is sufficiently large to fill the Banqueting House (and it will be on this occasion), the overall effect is not unimpressive.

*Thoughtful entrance. How  
many people? Could we have it in  
No. 10? out.*

*Paul*

26 September 1979

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I have informed  
F.C.O. (Miss DeLidde)



10 DOWNING STREET  
Prime Minister

There will be 400/500 guests at your  
reception. The maximum number  
for No 10 is 200 (Mr Taylor thinks  
150 is enough.) N.B. I have had  
350 less. m.t.

There would be an awning over the  
entrance to the Banqueting House. I  
have asked the P.S.A. to look into the  
possibility of carpeting the stairs  
temporarily on this & similar occasions.  
I have asked G.H.F. for assurances about  
floral decorations & the like at the  
entrance & on the stairs. If I am  
satisfied that the stonework of the  
entrance would be adequately signified,  
would you be prepared to go ahead? Yes.

(The Chinese advance party have seen  
& admired the Banqueting House).

27.9. Am