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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 September 1979

Sir John Hunt GCB
CABINET OFFICE

2.10
22.10.

Sir John,

PREMIER HUA GUOFENG'S VISIT: OBJECTIVES AND BRIEFING

1. As you know, the Chinese Premier Hua Guofeng will be making an official visit to this country from 28 October to 3 November. He will come here from France and Germany and before a visit to Italy. He will be accompanied by Vice Premier Yu Qiuli, Foreign Minister Huang Hua, and four Vice Ministers (of Foreign Affairs, Planning, Foreign Trade and Public Security).
2. This will be the first time a Chinese Prime Minister has visited Britain, and Hua's first visit to Western Europe. A visit at this level is unlikely to be repeated for a long time: and, as Hua is effectively, though not in name, Head of State as well as Government, it represents a unique opportunity for us to influence and impress Chinese political, economic and commercial thinking at the highest level.
3. The timing is particularly appropriate. Since the fall of the "Gang of Four" and the return to power of Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leadership have been increasingly looking to broaden the scope of their political and commercial cooperation with the West. They see the West both as a bulwark against the Soviet Union, and as a vital source of the modern technology they need for their economic modernisation. Our own bilateral relations with China have become substantially closer under the new Chinese leadership and our bilateral trade and cooperation over Hong Kong have both improved. Hua's visit offers us the opportunity both to carry this process further, and also to make an important contribution to the further strengthening of the West's overall relationship with China.
4. The programme for Hua's visit will probably include two sessions of talks with the Prime Minister and an exchange of dinners; lunch at Buckingham Palace; entertainment by the Duke of Kent (as Vice Chairman of the B0iB), the Lord Mayor of London, the Governor of the Bank of England, and the Speaker; and industrial and commercial visits inside and outside London. We are also considering, in consultation with other departments and the Chinese as appropriate, the possibility of concluding an Air Services Agreement, a Cultural Agreement, a Trade Protocol or an Understanding on Agricultural Cooperation in time for signature during the visit.

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5. Our principal objectives for the visit will be to impress Hua with Britain as a stable and prosperous society, and as a source of top-level industrial, agricultural, energy and defence equipment and technology; to establish at the highest level a productive and understanding relationship between China and Britain; to encourage the Chinese Government in general to play a more active and responsible role in international affairs; to probe Hua's views on relations with the Soviet Union and to put our own views to him; and to influence his thinking on other issues, particularly those of special concern to us (eg Southern Africa).

6. The Prime Minister should also be advised to discuss Asia, particularly Indochina, and China's role in the area; trade and defence sales; and Hong Kong. A number of other bilateral issues could also usefully be raised briefly.

7. We would not expect the Chinese to want a detailed formal agenda, but we would need to agree with them on the main topics to be discussed, with the bilateral issues to be covered in the Second Session. We would expect that the Prime Minister would wish that, in addition to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretaries of State for Trade, Industry, and Defence should be present for the Second Session. There may also be parallel talks with Foreign Minister Huang Hua, and possibly (on economic subjects) with Vice Premier Yu Qiuli, whose position as Minister in Charge of the State Planning Commission gives him particular influence on decisions affecting the Chinese economy, externally as well as internally.

8. The Soviet Union will be watching Hua's visit with close attention. Although the Chinese and the Russians have agreed to start talks about their relations in September, those relations are likely to remain hostile. The Chinese may well hope that Hua's visit to Western Europe this autumn will in effect "play the European card" against the Russians by encouraging the view that there exists a form of tactical, anti-Soviet alliance between China and Western Europe. This is a point on which the Russians have shown themselves to be extremely sensitive and they will be watching for any sign that the West Europeans, and the United Kingdom in particular, are willing to side with China against Russia. We should therefore take care to avoid public statements during the visit which might unnecessarily damage our relations with the Soviet Union, which are currently somewhat improved.

/ 9. I enclose at Annex A a list of suggested objectives for the
/ visit, and at Annex B a list of suggested briefs.

Michael Palliser
Michael Palliser

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Copies to:

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ANNEX A

PREMIER HUA 'S VISIT TO LONDON

UK OBJECTIVES

1. To impress Premier Hua with Britain as a stable and prosperous society; as a reliable and important interlocutor on international issues; and as a major source of advanced technology.
2. Through a frank exchange of views, to establish a working understanding with the Chinese Government at the highest level; in particular:
 - (a) to explain to Premier Hua HMG's world view, especially on the Soviet Union and East/West relations; to probe Chinese intentions concerning Sino-Soviet relations, and Chinese policy in South East Asia;
 - (b) to seek Premier Hua's support, or understanding, for HMG's policies on international issues of particular concern to us, particularly Southern Africa;
 - (c) to encourage the Chinese Government to take an increasingly active part in multilateral discussions.
3. To reaffirm our expectation that the Chinese Government, following the many exchanges of delegations and their economic reassessment, will place substantial orders with British firms in the near future for industrial, agricultural, energy and defence equipment.
4. To reaffirm our interest in expanding the scope of our educational, cultural, scientific and technological exchanges with China.
5. To improve further our understanding with the Chinese Government over the future of Hong Kong, and thus to contribute to political and business confidence in Hong Kong's future.

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CHINESE OBJECTIVES

1. To enhance Premier Hua's personal standing, both within China and internationally, and to assert China's role as a world power.

2. To develop China's relations with the UK as a major member of the Community and Atlantic Alliance; to seek our understanding and support for China's foreign policies, particularly in relation to the Soviet Union and areas of strategic importance to China such as Indochina.

3. To look for ways of improving commercial and technological cooperation with the UK which will benefit China's modernisation plans; and to press for further trade concessions, particularly in the EEC context.