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closed, 40 years.

PRIME MINISTER

Agreed 24/8

Cardinal Hume has just returned from a visit to Rome.

\* ~~~~~ \* on behalf of the  
British Catholic Bishops he issued an invitation to the Pope  
to make a pastoral visit to Britain in the summer of 1982  
and the Pope has accepted.

\* ~~~~~ \*  
The Cardinal is apparently keen to make this public as  
soon as possible, ahead of any leak from the Vatican.

\* ~~~~~ \*

I do not think this need cause the Government any  
embarrassment. We have been taking the line that no visit  
by the Pope was planned, but that the Government would wel-  
come a visit if he decided to make one. All we need do is  
prepare a response to Press enquiries confirming that the  
Government is indeed happy to hear that he will be coming.

I am ensuring that the Foreign Office know of the visit.  
I think we should also warn the Northern Ireland Secretary  
and the Home Secretary. If you agree, I will arrange for them  
to be informed this evening and, subject to any comment  
they have, we will prepare a Press line for your approval.

If you are content with this, I suggest that if Cardinal  
Hume approaches us, we should make it clear that we have no  
wish to interfere with his intention of making a public  
announcement on Tuesday.

(SIGNED) M A PATTISON

24 August 1980

\*~\* Passages deleted and  
closed, 40 years, under  
FOI Exemptions. @Wayland  
20.10.11