

Confidential

I agree with

MR WHITMORE

Colin - such a course of
action would have the
greatest

Visit of Pope

Possible Address to both Houses of Parliament

consequences and

I would advise in the strongest possible terms against this would
proposal.

It would, surely, be highly controversial. There will be some
controversy anyway over the Pope's visit, but it is reasonable to
hope that, as it is now planned, it will be a happy and fruitful
visit. Include the pomp and ceremony (and symbolism) of an address
by the Pope to both Houses of Parliament, and the visit will be
plunged in controversy. We can, surely, be virtually certain that
this sort of thing is not what the Pope wants to do on a pastoral
visit; Cardinal Hume and the wiser Roman Catholics would, I suspect,
be strongly opposed, and the other Churches would find it very
difficult to take, and the sort of gesture which would undo the
atmosphere in which they hope to have their talks with the Pope on
Christian unity questions.

damage the Pope,
the ecumenical
church
and
Parliament
etc.

N.D. Perhaps we
should do it in
Colville (onally) but

CVP

Prime Minister.

I have no doubt that
the view will be strongly opposed

I agree with Mr Peterson that it would
be inappropriate for the Pope to give, in the
course of a pastoral visit, an address to the
members of both Houses of Parliament. In any
case he would apparently be the first churchman
in modern times to be singled out for such
honour, and that alone would be likely to be
badly received in some Protestant quarters.

20 March 1981

PS
Prime Minister.

We now have the attached
address from Sir Robert
Amstrong ~~recommending~~ recommending
against the idea of his
address.

AKH
20 iii

Do you want to reply to his lord
characterising his idea down? Or would
you like to discuss it with him and the other
Ministers concerned? My own view is that a meeting
could be present. AKH 20 iii