



cc Home Office
N.I.O.

Vatican.

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

19 October 1981

Dear Mr Paisley,

Thank you for your letter, signed on behalf of the British Council of Protestant Christian Churches, about the Pope's proposed visit to this country next year.

The Pope is recognised by Her Majesty's Government as a Head of State, and as such must and will be shown proper courtesy on a visit. Such courtesy implies no recognition of the spiritual claims of the Papacy. The purpose of the proposed visit is of course a pastoral one, and the Pope will be in this country at the invitation of the Roman Catholic hierarchies of England and Wales, and Scotland.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

The Reverend Dr Ian R K Paisley, M.P., M.E.P.