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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister.

You indicated last week that you might prefer a smaller party of Ministers than that set 'A' below. Would you, in the light of this letter, be prepared to take the six colleagues mentioned?

21 October 1981

Dear Michael,

Ans 26/x

I think it is absurd. Would you find out if the names should really work then?

Anglo-German Summit

Clive Whitmore wrote to Brian Fall on 15 October to confirm that the forthcoming Anglo-German Summit had been postponed until 18 November, and that the Prime Minister would travel to Bonn on the evening of Tuesday 17 November. We shall, as you suggest, now set in hand detailed planning of the visit on this basis.

The first point on which I should be grateful for guidance concerns the size and composition of the party. It is obviously tempting to cut the party right down to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. This would eliminate the need for a plenary session to summarise the work of separate meetings between individual ministers, so saving a good deal of time for substantial discussion. And it will in any case certainly no longer be feasible for the full British team envisaged for the 29/30 October dates to travel on the revised timings. But Lord Carrington still believes that there would be great advantage in getting as large a ministerial team as possible to Bonn. Apart from our original intention to celebrate the coming Summit as the 10th in the series, the German side have told us they are very keen to receive a large British party and there is no doubt that a smaller team would rob the occasion of some of its significance. The actual time available for discussion with German Ministers will in fact not be significantly less than had been provided for in the 29/30 October plans.

I doubt it is 1/10th to Collette (?) at Cannon and I think that the important thing is that the party is not

Our preliminary enquiries suggest that the Minister of Agriculture, the Secretaries of State for Defence, Trade, Industry, Energy and possibly Employment, may be able to travel. The Chancellor of the Exchequer appears to have an unbreakable commitment, but if the Prime Minister were accompanied by six ministers, this would be the largest British team ever to be fielded for a summit.

A.

Yours ever.

Francis Pickles

(F N Richardson)

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