



Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 February 1982

Dear Private Secretary,

Ministerial Visits to the USA

In his letter of 26 June 1981, Willie Rickett drew the attention of Departments to the procedures for arranging Ministerial visits abroad. We recently discussed with No 10 the particular concern of the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary about the continuing high number of visits to the USA. In 1981, fifty-one official Ministerial visits to the United States were planned, of which thirty-eight eventually took place. In September alone, sixteen visits were in prospect; eleven took place. The early summer months were also congested, making the planning and organisation of a worthwhile programme extremely difficult. We already have provisional notification of twenty-three Ministerial visits planned for 1982.

This volume puts considerable strain on our posts in the USA, especially the Embassy in Washington. Equally, unless the flow of visitors is well-regulated, there is a serious risk of over-taxing American hospitality. If the US circuits become overloaded the good-will and co-operation of our contacts may be strained, and a visit can even harm, rather than benefit, transatlantic relations.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would like to see some streamlining of the procedures to ensure that we get maximum value from Ministerial visits. Apart from avoiding the bunching of visits as far as possible, we need to co-ordinate the purposes and itineraries of different visits so as to minimize duplication between them.

It may be helpful if I draw attention to a few basic points: In the first place, as the Prime Minister has stressed (Clive Whitmore's letter to Private Secretaries of 29 April 1981), the Parliamentary situation is not one which requires Ministers to confine working visits overseas to the Recesses. It should therefore be possible to reduce the concentration of visits at Easter, in the early summer and in September.

/As soon as



As soon as a visit to the USA is contemplated, this Private Office should be consulted in writing. I should like to stress this point. Even where much of the organisation of a visit will be carried out by a section of the Embassy which normally conducts most of its correspondence directly with another Department in Whitehall, it is important to contact the FCO first. We will then consult the Embassy in Washington.

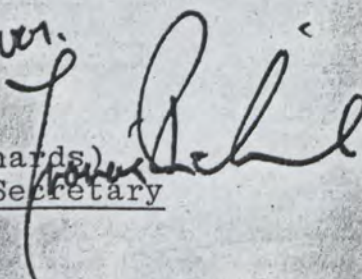
Proposals for visits should be addressed in the first place to me. Follow-up action falls to North America Department (Mr Torlot on 233-4665) and they are always happy to give advice in advance of any formal correspondence. Even after a visit has been approved in outline, Departments wishing to communicate with posts in the USA by telegram are asked to use the FCO communications network, passing messages to North America Department for onward transmission. This ensures that we can keep abreast of arrangements as planning proceeds.

As far as the substance of visits is concerned, experience shows that the more clearly-defined the objective of a visit, the easier it is to get Americans to help set up a worth-while programme. A visitor with a particular item of business to transact or who, for example, wishes to study American experience in a specific field will usually be better served than one who goes for familiarisation or in order simply to make contact with his opposite numbers.

As a final point, may I add that FCO Ministers are always pleased to see copies of reports produced by other Ministers on their visits to the USA.

I should be grateful if you could draw this letter to the attention of all those concerned with Ministerial visits in your Department. I hope that it will be possible to adhere closely to these guidelines in setting up future visits for Ministers.

I am addressing this letter to the Private Secretaries to all Ministers in charge of Departments and sending copies to Willie Rickett (No.10), Barry Hilton (Cabinet Office) and William Austen (Chief Whip's Office).

Yours ever,

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

Private Secretaries



15 FEB 2



1947



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

17 February 1982

Dear Private Secretary

Ministerial Visits to the USA

On 5 February, Francis Richards wrote to Private Secretaries about the procedures for arranging Ministerial visits to the USA. The Prime Minister has seen this letter, and has asked me to endorse the guidelines that it sets out. In particular, she has asked me to make four points:

- a) She hopes that Ministers will confine visits to the USA to those which are really necessary;
- b) She has asked me to remind you that, under the rules of procedure, Ministers should not commit themselves to visiting other countries without consulting the Foreign Secretary, and, in the case of Cabinet Ministers, the Prime Minister herself;
- c) The Prime Minister considers that it is very important that when seeking approval for any visits overseas, departments should set out clearly and succinctly the objectives of the visit. In the case of visits to the USA, which so many Ministers want to visit, this appears especially important;
- d) Like FCO Ministers, the Prime Minister is always pleased to see copies of reports produced by Ministers on their visits overseas, including those to the USA. She feels these reports are especially useful when they give an assessment of how far the objectives of the visit have been achieved.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to all Ministers in charge of Departments, and to Barry Hilton (Cabinet Office) and William Austen (Government Whips' Office, House of Commons).

Yours sincerely

William Kickett

Private Secretaries

du



Sony - Not in GR.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

16 February 1982

GR

*Have you got my
draft letter to PS's?
I haven't.*

*WR
16/2*

Dear Willie,

Ministerial Visits to the USA

WR

Thank you for your letter of 11 February, with which you enclosed a draft letter to Private Secretaries giving the Prime Minister's personal endorsement of my circular letter of 5 February on this subject.

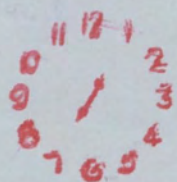
We are happy with the terms of your draft and have no comments or amendments to offer.

Yours ever.

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

W Rickett Esq
10 Downing Street

16 FEB 1962



file BK
Ministerial Visits
to the USA
19/2

11 February 1982

I have shown your draft Private Secretary letter of 5 February to the Prime Minister, and she has agreed that I should endorse the points you made.

I propose to write along the lines of the attached draft. Before doing so, I would welcome any comments you may have on the draft.

WFS RICKETT

Francis Richards, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

FAR

PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Visits to the USA

The FCO have now written to Private Offices to ensure that Ministerial visits to the USA this year are properly planned. Their letter is attached. As you will see, 51 Ministerial visits to the USA were planned last year of which 38 eventually took place.

I think it would be useful if I were to write to Private Offices myself, saying that you endorse the FCO letter, and making four points in particular:-

- a) That you hope that Ministers ~~will exercise restraint,~~ and confine visits to the USA to those that are really necessary;
- b) In particular that Ministers should not commit themselves to accepting invitations to visit the USA without consulting the Foreign Secretary and yourself.
- c) That in seeking your approval for any visits overseas, Departments should set out clearly and succinctly the objectives of the visit, and that this is perhaps particularly important in the case of visits to the USA, which so many Ministers want to visit.
- d) That, like FCO Ministers, you are always pleased to see copies of reports produced by Ministers on their visits overseas, including those to the USA, and that you feel these reports are especially useful when they give an assessment of how far the objectives of the visit have been achieved.

WM

Amad mb

9 February 1982

RESTRICTED

Mr Pritchard

WV
17/6

Amintore



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 June 1981

Dear Willie,

Ministerial Visits to the United States

When we were discussing visits to the United States this morning, I mentioned that 15 Cabinet Ministers either had visited the United States already this year, or had submitted plans to do so. You asked to receive a list. This is attached.

I also attach, for background information, a fuller schedule of forthcoming visits to the United States and Canada, which is used as a working paper by the North American Department. This schedule is not a comprehensive list of all Ministerial visits likely to take place in the course of the year, but will give you some idea of the level of traffic.

yours ever
Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

W Rickett Esq
10 Downing Street

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30 August - 4 September	<u>Mr Edwards</u> Secretary of State Welsh Office Mr Craig: 0222-824258/823200	X to Lord Carrington direct	Submission	Not Washington Low Key. West Coast on following on from two weeks holiday in Colorado
7 - 16 September	<u>Mr Younger</u> Secretary of State Scottish Office Godfrey Robson 031 556 8400 ex 4001	X	Submission	East Coast. Not Washing New York and San Francis
16 - 29 September	<u>Mr Biffen</u> Secretary of State for Trade	X	X	New York, Boston, Washin (partly private visit).
20 - 25 September	<u>Lord Carrington</u> for UNGA (probable)			
5 - 9 October 72	<u>Mr Jenkin</u> Secretary of State Department of Health and Social Security	X	Submission	Date not good. New York Chicago, Philadelphia Washington (and Private to Toronto). ? Ottawa?
19 - 23 October	<u>Mr D Hurd</u>			Disarmament debate UN related
26 - 1 October	<u>Sir G Howe</u> Chancellor of Exchequer + Governor of Bank of England			Washington (IMF)

8-10 June
22 June

Trenchard
Not

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NON MINISTERIAL VISITS

22 - 27 May	Lord and Lady Trefgarne, New Orleans only, British Airways,
30 May - 12 June	House of Commons Select Committee on Education, Science and Arts, Washington, New York, Houston,
16 - 26 June	Select Committee on Energy, Washington, Princeton, Boston, Detroit, San Francisco, Oregon, Seattle, PCCU 3952 3541
17 June	HRH Prince of Wales, New York
12 - 21 July	House of Commons Select Committee on Transport: Toronto, New York, Washington, San Francisco,
24 - 28 October	Chatham House Industrialists,
25-30 October	FAC to UN (Firm) PCCU and UND dealing,
October	Lord Limerick (will tack on to Chatham House industrialists and then continue <i>dw.</i>) Chairman BOTB - tentative,

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TENTATIVE VISITS (no formal request for FCO approval received).

1981

Mrs Oppenheim
Minister of Consumer Affairs
Department of Trade
Chris Charles
215 5662

Possibility of visit summer 1981
Still vague. Could be
complication since Parkinson
and Biffen already going. Doubt
ful at this stage

"October"

TOMY KING. Min, DO Environment
Tebbit ?
Department of Industry

Letter coming mid 76
20 1981

November

Earl Ferrers
(Min. (Lords)
MAFF)

Pegged on Las Vegas Convention.
Now looking doubtful

19-20.

July 1981

Ottawa Economic Summit
Lord Carrington

ROYALS

2 - 9 July

Queen Mother

Canada. Firm.

6 - 9 July
(privately 10-12)

Princess Margaret

Canada

HRH Prince of Wales
HRH Prince of Wales

USA
USA

(See other list).

Princess Margaret

Washington

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MINISTERIAL VISITS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE THIS YEAR

JANUARY	Marshall, Department of Industry
FEBRUARY	<i>PM + S of S</i>
MARCH	NOTT } Ministry of Defence SPEED } PATTIE }
APRIL	BAKER } Department of Industry MARSHALL }
MAY	BUTLER - Northern Ireland Office PARKINSON Department of Industry.

*also Solicitor-General for Scotland
Nicholas Fairbairn*

cc Mr Berthoud
Mr Berry
Miss Griffith-Jones
Miss Hughes

Mr Morland } Washington
Miss Davis }
Miss Anderson } BIS New York.

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CABINET RANK US VISITORS TO LONDON

C Weinberger	4 - 5 April
A Haig	9 - 10 April
D Regan	11 - 13 April
Drew Lewis	21 - 24 May
J R Block	27 - 29 May
B Brock	28 - 30 May
Weinburger	10 - 11 May
H Kissinger	20 - 21 May
Tapley (UN Arab NATO)	10 May - 10 May Transit
Baldrige	Transit on 12th

CONFIDENTIAL

10 NOV 1981

11 12 1
2
3
4



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 March 1981

010

Dear Michael, *MAD*

During the course of the visit which the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary paid to Washington last week, it became clear that the process of nominating and confirming members of the new Administration and of defining new positions on policy issues was still at a relatively early stage and was likely to take some time to complete. While that process is continuing, members of the new Administration are concentrating on the process of the business of settling in and working out their policies; and it became clear that they were likely not to want to receive too many visitors from overseas during this period. If too many visitors go from here, there is a danger of their coming to be regarded as a nuisance and therefore of their being harmful rather than beneficial to British interests, and to the close and cordial relationship which the recent visit by the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary promises has established.

A number of visits have already been planned. Apart from these, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary thinks that no Minister should pay an official visit to the United States during this period - say, between now and the end of July - unless he has been invited by his counterpart to do so or has a positive and definite reason for proposing a visit and there is good reason why the visit cannot wait until later in the year. It should also be a general principle during this period that official visits are paid only by Ministers in charge of Departments; visits by junior Ministers clearly ought in these circumstances to be postponed.


These considerations make it the more important that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary should be consulted in good time, if a visit to the United States is contemplated (in the first place through the North America Department at the FCO). In considering whether the visit should go ahead he will have the considerations which I have described in this letter very much in mind.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to all Ministers in charge of Departments, and to David Wright in the Cabinet Office.

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

Z. in
JS
(G G H Walden)
Private Secretary

010.
Sas
Ref: A04349


CONFIDENTIAL

MR. ALEXANDER

Letter has come.
Prime Minister
I attach a list of the visits
already 'in the works'. Hope that I
should write as proposed?
Am 9/3

I think that those of us who accompanied the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary on their visit to Washington all formed the impression that the new Administration was still very much in the early stages of settling its position on most of the policy issues which faced it, in domestic as well as in international affairs. I also formed the impression that, while they very much welcomed the visit by the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, and were looking forward to the Secretary of State for Defence's visit in 10 days time, there was a danger that we were at risk of overdoing the number of visits at this early stage in the life of the Administration, to the point where such visits could be regarded by the United States Administration as a nuisance, and could thus be counter-productive to our own interests. This impression was strongly reinforced in a conversation which I had with the Ambassador, who urged that we should keep down the number of Ministerial visitors during the coming months. This applies generally to Ministerial visits, but with particular emphasis to visits by junior Ministers.

2. I think that it would be useful if you or the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's Private Secretary (to whom I am sending a copy of this minute) were to send a letter to the Private Secretaries to Ministers in charge of Departments on the lines of the draft attached.

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

3rd March 1981

CONFIDENTIAL



DRAFT LETTER TO THE PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO
MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF DEPARTMENTS

During the course of the visit which the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary paid to Washington last week, it became clear that the process of nominating and confirming members of the new Administration and of defining new positions on policy issues was still at a relatively early stage and was likely to take some time to complete. While that process is continuing, members of the new Administration are concentrating on the process of the business of settling in and working out their policies; and it became clear that they were likely not to want to receive too many visitors from overseas during this period. If too many visitors go from here, there is a danger of their coming to be regarded as a nuisance and therefore of their being harmful rather than beneficial to British interests, and to the close and cordial relationship which the visit by the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary promises to establish.

The Prime Minister [Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary] thinks that no Minister should pay an official visit to the United States during this period - say, between now and the end of July - unless he has been invited by his counterpart to do so or has a positive ~~and~~ definite reason for proposing a visit, ~~there is good reason why the visit cannot wait until later in the year,~~ It should also be a general principle during this period that official visits are paid only by Ministers in charge of Departments; visits by junior Ministers clearly ought in these circumstances to be postponed.

These considerations make it the more important that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary should be consulted in good time, if a visit to the United States is contemplated. In considering whether the visit should go ahead he will have the considerations which I have described in this letter very much in mind.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to all Ministers in charge of Departments.



APPROVED MINISTERIAL VISITS: USA

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dept</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Mr Nott	MOD	10 - 12 March
Mr Baker	Dept of Industry	7 - 13 April
Mr Marshall	Dept of Industry	13 - 16 April
Mr Prior	Dept of Employment	23/5 - 2/6
Sir K Joseph	Dept of Industry	22/5 - 8/6

PENDING MINISTERIAL VISITS: USA

Mr Howell	Dept of Energy	2 - 4 April
Mr Butler	N. I. Office	26 April - 2 May
Mr Speed	MOD	19 - 24 March

Lord Belwin