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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

TOP SECRET

21st December 1984

Sir Philip Woodfield, KCB, CBE

Northern Ireland Office

Your ref:- PUS/L/1800/MLR

Dear Philip,

OPERATION ABERCORN

Many thanks for your letter of 20 December containing a detailed programme. The Prime Minister has approved this. One or two points of detail:-

- i. The Prime Minister will not hold a final press conference or make a statement to camera. She will issue a written statement which we are drafting on the basis of the notes enclosed with your letter. This means that the Prime Minister should be able to leave a little earlier and I have changed the timing of her leaving the VIP lounge for the runway to 1530.
- ii. Our party will include one Private Secretary, not two. The reference to an Assistant Private Secretary should be deleted throughout. Our party will therefore be six (2 plus Private Secretary, Press Secretary, 2 Special Branch).
- iii. Provision is needed for the Private Secretary in Car Plant E
- iv. Could it please be arranged that there is a dedicated telephone (preferably in a private room) by which we can contact No. 10, and vice versa, at RUC Station Newtownards; Drumadd Barracks; Aghnacloy; and Aldergrove. Could I please have numbers of manned telephones through which No. 10 can contact me at those places.

Yours ever,
Robin Butler.



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TOP SECRET

21st December 1983

Sir Philip Woodfield
Northern Ireland Office
Your ref: PUS/L/1800/MHR

Dear Philip,

OPERATION ABERCORN

Many thanks for your letter of 20 December containing a detailed programme for Operation Abercorn.

The Prime Minister^{Minister} has approved this. There are two changes of detail:-

- i. The Prime Minister will not hold a final press conference or make a statement to camera. Instead she will issue a written statement which we are drafting on the basis of the notes enclosed with your letter. This means that the Prime Minister should be able to leave a little earlier and I have changed the timing of her leaving the VIP lounge for the runway to 1530

* N.B.
There appears to be no provision for Private Secretary in Car Plan B: such provision will be needed!

- ii. Only one Private Secretary^{*} will be accompanying the Prime Minister from here. The reference to an Assistant Private Secretary should therefore be deleted throughout. The main party will be six people (2 plus Private Secretary, Press Secretary, 2 Special Branch). Yours ever, Robin Butler