

Thatcher drops a few names

From Patricia Clough
Bonn, Nov 18

Mrs Margaret Thatcher today provided some merriment for dignitaries at a lunch here in her honour, much to the embarrassment of West German officials, by greeting guest after guest, only to find that they had not attended.

The hitch came at the end of the Prime Minister's speech when she began to read out a list of personalities who had contributed especially to Anglo-German relations.

"Can I say how delighted I am to see the British director of the Cologne Opera", she announced.

But Mr John Pritchard was nowhere to be seen. "Oh dear", the Prime Minister said, "he is not here." Evidently sensing trouble, she added: "I've got five or six more names to mention."

She tried again, calling out: "The British conductor of the Bamberger Sinfonica?" No answer. The laughter grew.

The next on the list fortunately was seated in front of Mrs Thatcher, Dame Lilo Milchsack, the founder—shortly to retire—of the annual Anglo-German Königswinter conferences. "The most important people retire several times in their lives", Mrs Thatcher assured her.

□ At a press conference after the lunch Mrs Thatcher and Herr Schmidt spoke about the EEC Common Agriculture Policy and the budget.

Mrs Thatcher said that progress so far had not been rapid but they hoped to make advances at the European Council meeting next week. Details of the British contribution to the budget were not discussed and Herr Schmidt denied suggestions that West Germany wanted Britain to pay back some of the money it had received this year or to pay more next year.

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The Times (London, England), Thursday, Nov 19, 1981; pg. 8; Issue 61086. (296 words)

Category: News

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Gale Document Number:CS134973811