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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Prime Minister

London SW1A 2AH

My first reaction was to doubt this but on reflection I think that an invitation issued in the terms proposed might be helpful over Hong Kong. We should not be committed to a visit until it suited us. Agree?

20 October 1982

Dear John,

A.F.C. 20/10.

Invitation to Chinese Prime Minister

We spoke earlier about the absence from the records of the Prime Minister's visit to China of any mention of her intended invitation to Zhao Ziyang to visit Britain. The Embassy in Peking recently asked the Chinese informally about this. The Chinese response was that they were not certain whether to regard the only reference they had noted (the passage in the Prime Minister's return banquet speech where she said she looked forward to seeing Zhao in Britain) as an invitation.

The Chinese will have expected a reciprocal invitation, and it was agreed in principle by the Prime Minister (your letter of 20 July) that she should extend one. A visit by Zhao in due course will contribute to our bilateral relations. This would offer commercial as well as political advantages. In the meantime a formal invitation will do no harm to the atmosphere of the negotiations on Hong Kong. We therefore see merit in confirming the position to the Chinese. I enclose a telegram instructing the Embassy to take suitable action, and should be grateful for confirmation that you agree.

*Handwritten initials*

*Yours ever*

*John Holmes*

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

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# OUT TELEGRAM

Classification and Caveats

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Precedence/Deskby

PRIORITY

ZCZC  
GRS  
CLASS  
CAVEATS  
DESKBY  
FM FCO  
PRE/ADD  
TEL NO

1	ZCZC
2	GRS
3	CONFIDENTIAL
4	
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6	FM FCO
7	TO PRIORITY PEKING
8	TELEGRAM NUMBER
9	AND REPEATED FOR INFORMATION TO HONG KONG
10	GALSWORTHY'S TELELETTER OF 18 OCTOBER TO THOMSON: INVITATION FOR
11	A RETURN VISIT BY ZHAO ZIYANG
12	1. The Prime Minister agrees that you should confirm her
13	invitation to Zhao in more formal terms.
14	2. Please therefore approach the MFA at whatever level you judge
15	most appropriate. You should say that you have been asked to
16	confirm that the Prime Minister would welcome a visit to Britain
17	by the Premier at a mutually convenient time. You could add
18	that we think contact at top level will be increasingly important
19	as our relations continue to develop, and that it will be
20	conducive to the practical cooperation that both sides seek.
21	
22	/// PYM
23	// NNNN
24	/
25	

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
File number	Dept PRIVATE OFFICE	Distribution  LIMITED FED HKGD MR DONALD MR GIFFARD PS/LORD BELSTEAD
Drafted by (Block capitals) J E HOLMES		
Telephone number		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

2 OCT 1952

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4 5 6 7 8 9

FILE

cc to China P. 1/24



China

10 DOWNING STREET

20 July, 1982

From the Private Secretary

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO CHINA

Thank you for your letter of 19 July. The Prime Minister agrees in principle to extend, during her visit to China, a return invitation to the Chinese Premier to visit Britain.

I suggest that nothing is said to the Chinese about this matter in advance of the Prime Minister's visit. If the point could be included in the briefs, the Prime Minister will decide how to play the hand when she is in China.

SECRET

B J P Fall, Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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