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Prime Minister
Agree recommendation to
advance state visit
of King Juan Carlos
to Spring 1986?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Your own visit is trickier. Gonzalez pressed
you hard yesterday to come soon. You could
go in September. But the Foreign Secretary advises
Dear Charles, a visit in mid-1986.
Agree to delay visit?

12 March 1985

Yes
no CDP
14/13

Spain: High Level Visits

Following the lifting of Spanish restrictions on Gibraltar, we have been thinking about what would be the best programme of high level visits, given the Spaniards' clear enthusiasm for an early State Visit by King Juan Carlos to Britain, and a visit by the Prime Minister to Spain.

/but King Juan Carlos is of course very close to the Royal Family / both both sides have so far accepted that a State Visit has had to be ruled out until the Spaniards changed their policy over Gibraltar. The Royal Visits Committee has for some time accepted the case for an early State Visit after the removal of restrictions on Gibraltar, thereby setting the seal on the new relationship. A slot for King Juan Carlos is currently in the programme for autumn 1986. The Foreign Secretary believes however that his visit should be advanced to Spring 1986 in place of either President Chadli of Algeria or King Hassan of Morocco, who would be rescheduled for the autumn. There would be considerable disappointment in Spain if a State Visit were to be delayed until late 1986; and an invitation to King Hassan of Morocco to come here first could, despite its return nature, be misunderstood in Spain.

Developments over Gibraltar itself; the state of the EC accession negotiations; and the timing of Spain's referendum on NATO (possibly February 1986), of the next Spanish General Elections (due by October 1986) and of a State Visit by King Juan Carlos are all factors which would affect the timing of a visit to Spain by the Prime Minister. The Foreign Secretary believes that it would be best to see how his first meeting goes with Sr Moran over the handling of Spanish proposals on the question of sovereignty over Gibraltar before a decision is taken over a visit to Spain by the Prime Minister. It was agreed in the Geneva meeting on Gibraltar that that meeting will take place in December.

If a State Visit were to take place in Spring 1986, the Prime Minister might go to Madrid in mid-1986 - which would still be within the life of the present Spanish legislature.

/By



By then too the prospects for Spanish accession to the EC would be clear, without the possibility of the Prime Minister being dragged into the final bargaining stages of the negotiations. Spain's connection with NATO ought also to have been clarified, with less risk of the visit being misinterpreted as a high-level lobbying exercise.

There may, of course, be Spanish pressure for an early visit by the Prime Minister, given that she has not visited Spain, and is one of the last European Heads of Government not to have met Sr Gonzalez substantively since he became Spanish Prime Minister. Nevertheless, if a State Visit is brought forward to Spring 1986, this would show the Spanish Government that we were working seriously for closer relations. In addition, there may be an opportunity for a bilateral meeting with Senor Gonzalez in the margins of any major international gathering at which both Prime Ministers might be present.

We shall have to see how things settle down over Gibraltar, and the Royal Visit Committee will need to consider the question of the State Visit in due course but I should be grateful to know if, for planning purposes at this stage, the Prime Minister agrees to the following programme:

- (a) December 1985. Visit by Sir Geoffrey Howe to Madrid;
- (b) Spring 1986. State Visit to London by King Juan Carlos and Queen Sophia;
- (c) Summer/autumn 1986. Visit by the Prime Minister to Madrid.

Yours ever,

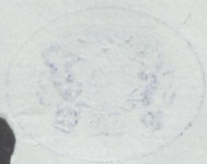
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

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10 Downing Street

12 MAR 1985

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 March 1985

SPAIN: HIGH LEVEL VISITS

Thank you for your letter of 12 March conveying the Foreign Secretary's advice about the programme of high level visits between Britain and Spain.

The Prime Minister agrees that a visit by King Juan Carlos should be advanced to spring 1986 in place of either President Chadli or King Hassan who could be postponed until the autumn. She also agrees that she should not herself go to Madrid until mid-1986. Although it is obviously impossible to be firm about dates for the moment, September looks the most likely month.

CHARLES POWELL

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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