

GRS 260

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FM OTTAWA
TO DESKBY 080830Z FCO
TELNO 252
OF 072000Z MAY 86

YOUR TELNO 163: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO EXPO 86 IN VANCOUVER

1. THE ROYAL BALLET'S PRESENCE IN VANCOUVER IS THE MAJOR BRITISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME ASSOCIATED WITH EXPO. THE BRITISH DAY HAS BEEN ARRANGED TO COINCIDE WITH THE VISIT OF THE BALLET. THE ABSENCE OF THE GUEST OF HONOUR FOR BRITISH DAY FROM THE BALLET'S PERFORMANCE THAT EVENING WOULD INEVITABLY GIVE RISE TO COMMENT AND SPECULATION AS TO THE REASON. IT WOULD EXPECT THE ROYAL BALLET TO BE CONCERNED AND DISAPPOINTED. THE ORGANISERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC WOULD BE SURPRISED AS OTHER NATIONAL DAY PARTICIPANTS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE INVOLVED IN THEIR COUNTRY'S CULTURAL EVENTS. FURTHERMORE THE BRITISH COUNCIL'S MAIN EFFORT AT EXPO HAS BEEN IN SUPPORT OF THE BALLET.

2. WE WERE PLANNING TO INVITE SOME 200 GUESTS TO THE BALLET AND THE SUBSEQUENT RECEPTION. THESE WOULD INCLUDE MANY OF THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED (FINANCIALLY) OUR EXPO ACTIVITIES AND ARE PARTICIPATING IN OUR TRADE PROMOTION PROGRAMME. THE ALTERNATIVE DINNER WOULD NOT ENABLE US TO CAST OUR NET AS WIDE. WE WOULD THEREFORE LOSE SOME COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGE.

3. THERE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE SOME (EG PREMIER OF BC, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, SENIOR EXPO OFFICIALS, COMMERCIAL SPONSORS OF THE BALLET) WHO WOULD FIND EMBARRASSING THE NEED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THE BALLET AND A DINNER. THIS PROBLEM WOULD BE MANAGEABLE BUT SOME IMPACT WOULD BE LOST AT BOTH EVENTS.

4. I REALISE HOW DIFFICULT A DECISION THIS IS. I AM HOWEVER CONVINCED THAT THE OVERALL BRITISH INTEREST WOULD BE BEST SERVED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S ATTENDANCE AT THE BALLET FOLLOWED BY A RECEPTION. ANY AWKWARDNESS AFTER THE BALLET COULD PERHAPS BE AVERTED IF PRINCESS MARGARET HELD HER OWN SMALL PARTY, LEAVING THE PRIME MINISTER'S RECEPTION AS THE MAJOR BRITISH EVENT.

5. DURING MY STAY IN VANCOUVER FOR THE OPENING OF EXPO I HAVE FOUND ENORMOUS INTEREST IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S FORTHCOMING VISIT AND GENUINE APPRECIATION OF HER DECISION TO COME TO EXPO FOR BRITISH DAY. IT WOULD BE A PITY IF THIS EXTREMELY FAVOURABLE ATMOSPHERE BECAME CLOUDED.

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6. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR EARLIEST POSSIBLE CLEARANCE OF PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR MORNING AND AFTERNOON OF 12 JULY. (MY TELNO 198). WE NEED SOON TO START MAKING DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS.

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020625Z MAY 86
FM AIRBORNE
TO CABINET OFFICE 005 IMMEDIATE
BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L AND PERSONAL

FOLLOWING FOR GALSWORTHY, FOREIGN OFFICE AND ADDISON,
NO. 10 DOWNING STREET FROM CHARLES POWELL

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO EXPO 86 IN VANCOUVER

I HAVE DISCUSSED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER PRINCESS MARGARET'S
DECISION TO ATTEND THE ROYAL BALLET PERFORMANCE IN VANCOUVER ON
12 JULY AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR HER OWN PROGRAMME.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S TENTATIVE VIEW IS THAT THERE IS LITTLE
POINT IN HER GOING TO THE BALLET AS WELL AS PRINCESS MARGARET.
HER PREFERENCE WOULD THEREFORE BE TO ARRANGE A DINNER FOR
SOME 50/60 LEADING POLITICAL AND BUSINESS FIGURES FROM BRITISH
COLUMBIA. BUT SHE WOULD ONLY WANT TO DO THIS IF WE WERE
QUITE CERTAIN THAT IT WOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS A SNUB TO THE
ROYAL BALLET SEMICOLON AND WOULD NOT POSE AN AWKWARD DILEMMA
FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT BE TORN BETWEEN ATTENDING THE BALLET AND COMING
TO THE DINNER. CLEARLY WE NEED THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S CONSIDERED
ADVICE ON THIS RATHER DELICATE POINT AND I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL
IF IT COULD BE OBTAINED.

BF ||

THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD NOT WISH ANY FURTHER EFFORT MADE TO
PERSUADE PRINCESS MARGARET TO CHANGE HER PLANS.

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PS / LADY YOUNG
SIR W HARDING
MR DAVID THOMAS

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