

Note: This was overtaken by a conversation between the PM and Derek Howe, as a result of which the PM decided to cancel the visit. Pps came out from here only on 12 June, having gone astray. *Better for now* cc: Mr. Sherbourne
would be any easier in September
not
2 Oct
Derek 1976

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO THE NORTH WEST

A decision is needed soon on whether to proceed with your proposed visit to the North West on Friday, 13 July. Provisional arrangements have been made for you to visit the International Garden Festival at Liverpool in the morning, and BNFL at Risley in the afternoon (for the opening of a new headquarters building). But you have already expressed some doubts about the visit because of other pressures on your diary in July.

The possibility of your visit to the Garden Festival has become public knowledge since Mr. Jenkin mentioned it in the House, although Bernard has been doing his best to dampen things down.

Garden Festival

Advice is attached from both Mr. Jenkin and Mr. Walker. Mr. Jenkin favours postponement of at least the Liverpool part of the trip, on the grounds that in the present situation it could be misinterpreted. Certainly, you would face massive demonstrations.

On the other hand, cancellation would be a disappointment for some of the more moderate elements in the city opinion. A leading article in the Liverpool Daily Post on 11 May said:-

"Nothing would do more for the morale of the majority of Liverpool people than to see the Prime Minister personally getting to grips on the spot with the city's problems.

It would not be an easy undertaking but under no circumstances must Liverpool be allowed to become a no-go area".

/Agree

Agree nevertheless to postpone the visit to the Garden Festival?

Risley

Mr. Jenkin also has doubts about the visit to Risley. He points out that it could be awkwardly timed in relation to the publication of Sir Douglas Black's report on cancer incidence in West Cumbria, and possibly in relation to the DPP's decision on prosecution of the company. Mr. Walker, on the other hand, would like the visit to go ahead on the grounds that Risley is sufficiently far removed from the Sellafield site to avoid any serious risk of embarrassment.

A visit to Risley would not make much sense on its own, if the Liverpool engagement is postponed. Agree to put off the visit to Risley as well?

Judy Clerk
PP D. Barclay

23 May, 1984

July is a very difficult month and we should respect engagements at that time. Parliamentary matters! Signature cancelled this visit.

MR. BARCLAY

PRIME MINISTER

Visit to the North West on Friday 13th July

Prime Minister: The combination of Liverpool and BNFL makes for a very controversial and difficult day. I think you may like to reconsider this tour in the light of the latest advice from Departments (which I have sought).

DMSB
27/4

We now need to tie up the details of this tour. The draft programme at present looks like this (times approx):-

- AM Depart London
- Fly to Speke Airport, Liverpool
- Visit International Garden Festival (1½ hours)
- Conservative Party Lunch

- PM Call in at the end of a Conservative Board of Finance (CBF) lunch
- Open new office building of BNFL at Risley
- Fly back to London

The questions requiring a decision are:-

1. The CBF
Both Brenda Lowe and Brian Wyldbore-Smith would very much like you to visit the CBF lunch at the coffee stage for half an hour and ^{they} assure me that the senior industrialists attending it (the Duke of Westminster might also be present), far from being offended, would be only too delighted. It would be held at a venue close to the normal Party workers' lunch. It will help raise money for the Party. Do you agree to do the CBF?

.../

2. Should you include another engagement?

Brenda Lowe's advice is that you should not undertake an additional engagement because she is worried about demos which would look bad. However, given the sensitivity of Liverpool and its problems I have a feeling that - important though the Garden Festival is - it would help if you could be seen doing something more substantial. There are two possibilities:-

- (a) You could visit the Albert Dock complex at the northern end of the Merseyside Development Corporation's South Docks area, close to the Liverpool City Centre. This is a fine Grade 1 listed building, the largest such building in the country. Work is now well underway by the MDC to restore the fabric of the building and negotiations are well advanced with potential occupiers. Full restoration and regeneration will necessarily take several years. OR
- (b) A private meeting(although the fact of it taking place would be made known)- with the Bishop of Liverpool, David Shepherd and the Roman Catholic Archbishop Warlock.

The preference of Michael Alison and myself is the meeting with the Bishop and Archbishop.

Do you agree to such a meeting? OR

Would you prefer no additional engagement?

SS

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

27.4.84



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

27 April 1984

You will recall from my letter of 24 November 1983 that the Prime Minister is planning to visit BNFL at Risley on Friday, 13 July.

The Prime Minister will need to come to a firm view soon whether or not to go ahead with these plans. I should be grateful to know whether your Secretary of State has any comments.

I am copying this letter to Alan Davis (Department of the Environment). I should be grateful if he could include in his response any views which his Secretary of State may have on whether we should proceed with the proposed visit to the Liverpool Garden Festival.

David Barclay

Michael Reidy, Esq.,
Department of Energy.

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cc D/N [initials]

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 June 1984

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE NORTH WEST

The Prime Minister was most grateful to your Secretary of State, and to the Secretary of State for Energy, for their advice on whether she should proceed with her proposed visit to the North West next month.

The Prime Minister has decided that on balance it would be better to postpone both parts of the visit. We have so informed the Merseyside Development Corporation as organisers of the Garden Festival, and British Nuclear Fuels Limited.

Although the Prime Minister's diary for the rest of the year is already quite full, we will keep under review the possibility of visits to Liverpool and to BNFL, since we are conscious that changed circumstances might make either or both highly desirable later this year.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Michael Reidy (Department of Energy).

(DAVID BARCLAY)

John Ballard, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

[initials]



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY
THAMES HOUSE SOUTH
MILLBANK LONDON SW1P 4QJ

01 211 6402

David Barclay Esq
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1

22 May 1984

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 27 April to Michael Reidy about the Prime Minister's plans to open the new BNFL Headquarters building at Risley on 13 July. We have seen John Ballard's reply of 15 May.

Mr Walker is keen that the proposed visit should go ahead, because it should provide a much needed boost to the morale of BNFL staff and help revive the Company's difficult public image. Although the decision by the Director of Public Prosecutions may not be known by 13 July, Mr Walker considers that endorsement of the new offices and facilities at Risley ought to be sufficiently far removed from the problems of Sellafield to avoid embarrassment.

I am copying this letter to John Ballard (Environment).

Yours

John

J S NEILSON
Private Secretary

1984



COPIES

CF7
902



2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

15 May 1984

Dear David

You copied to me your letter of April 27 to Michael Reidy (DEn), and sought any views my Secretary of State might have about proposed visits by the Prime Minister to BNFL at Risley and to the Liverpool Garden Festival.

It is of great importance to rebuild confidence and morale both within BNFL and in the west Cumbria area around Sellafield, and my Secretary of State will be putting suggestions to the Prime Minister (in consultation with the Secretary of State for Energy) about some ways of achieving that. A visit by the Prime Minister at an appropriate time would make an important contribution. However a visit to the headquarters offices at Risley on July 13 would be awkwardly timed in relation to publication of Sir Douglas Black's report on cancer incidence in west Cumbria, and possibly also in relation to the decision by the Director of Public Prosecutions on prosecution of the company following the incident last November. The Prime Minister will wish to take these matters into account.

My Secretary of State remains of the view that a visit to the International Garden Festival in Liverpool would be worthwhile. However in the present situation it could be misinterpreted and a visit later in the year, perhaps in September or October would be preferable. If the Prime Minister was disposed to make a visit at that later time it would be desirable to combine a visit to the Garden Festival with other engagements on Merseyside in order to achieve a balanced programme.

I am copying this letter to Michael Reidy.

Yours sincerely

JOHN BALLARD
Private Secretary

David Barclay Esq



five

607

cc: JOE
D. Energy

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

5 July, 1984

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your kind letter of 3 July. Although I am afraid that there is nothing I can add at this stage about the possibility of a visit at another time, it was good of you to renew your invitation so warmly.

(David Barclay)

C. Allday, Esq, CBE.

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From the Chairman and Chief Executive

British Nuclear Fuels plc



Head Office: Risley Warrington Cheshire WA3 6AS
Telephone: Warrington (0925) 35953 Telex: 627581

3rd July, 1984.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP.,
10, Downing Street,
LONDON SW1.

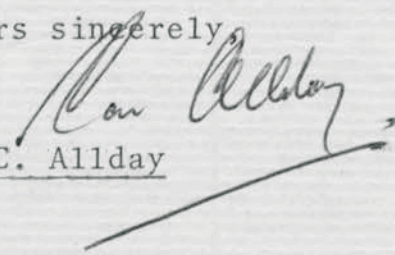
Dear Prime Minister,

We were of course all very disappointed that you are unable to open the Company's new Headquarters and Design Offices at Risley on 13 July, but fully recognise the pressures on your time. I was delighted to hear, however, that you have not ruled out the possibility of reinstating the visit at a later date and, therefore, we have not arranged for an alternative opening ceremony for the new building in the hope that you may be able to come to Risley, say, next Spring.

I am sure that you would find the advanced computer techniques which we are using to aid design and project control very interesting. These techniques are of particular importance to the THORP project, which I am very pleased to say is going well.

While the Company has suffered some setback in recent months, we are now recovering. We are all determined to restore public confidence in the Company and in the future of nuclear power.

Yours sincerely


C. Allday

BNFL

Regd. Number: 1002607 England Regd. Office: Risley Warrington Cheshire WA3 6AS



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 June 1984

I am afraid that this letter brings disappointing news about the Prime Minister's proposed visit to Risley on 13 July.

As you know, this visit was to have formed part of a one-day tour by the Prime Minister of the North West region. Unfortunately, the other pressures on the Prime Minister's time next month are now such that she has decided - with great regret - not to proceed with this tour. She has asked me to say how sorry she is not to be visiting Risley as planned, although she hopes that a visit may be possible at another time. If such a possibility does emerge we will, of course, be in touch with you directly.

The Prime Minister would be grateful if you would pass on to your Board her regret at this change in her arrangements.

C. Allday, Esq., CBE.



10 DOWNING STREET

1 June 1984

From the Private Secretary

I am afraid that this letter brings disappointing news about the Prime Minister's proposed visit to the International Garden Festival on 13 July.

As you know, this visit was to have formed part of a one-day tour by the Prime Minister of the North West region. Unfortunately, the other pressures on the Prime Minister's time next month are now such that she has decided - with great regret - not to proceed with this tour. She has asked me to say how sorry she is not to be visiting the Garden Festival as planned, although she hopes that a visit may be possible at another time. If such a possibility does emerge we will, of course, be in touch with you directly.

The Prime Minister would be grateful if you would pass on to Mr. Leslie Young her regret at this change in her arrangements. She hears nothing but good of the Garden Festival, and trusts that it will continue from strength to strength through the summer.

Basil Bean, Esq.



Leon

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434
My ref:

Your ref:

14 May 1984

Dear Mr Ingham

POSSIBLE VISIT BY PRIME MINISTER TO LIVERPOOL

My Secretary of State has asked me to send you the attached copy of an editorial in Friday's Liverpool Daily Post in case you have not already seen it.

Yours sincerely

A H Davis

A H DAVIS
Private Secretary

Bernard Ingham Esq

Nolo

10F2

VISIT VALUE

IN THE opinion of some political observers, Liverpool is the most difficult of the Government's present problems, with the exception of Northern Ireland. Every step towards a solution therefore deserves an ovation.

That is why the report in yesterday's Daily Post that the Prime Minister would shortly be paying Liverpool a visit was so welcome. Unfortunately, within hours, Downing Street seemed to be engaging in a damping-down operation.

Mrs Thatcher's diary, it was being suggested, was already full. The idea of a Liverpool visit appeared to be receding.

Obviously, allowances must be made for the kind of strict security which must surround the Prime Minister's movements. Although it is sad that the city cannot openly play the part of host, as it could in happier times, security considerations must always be paramount.

But behind the essential secrecy, the hope must be that plans for an unannounced visit will go ahead.

Mrs Thatcher's visit to the Falklands and to Ulster have greatly heartened those troubled communities. Merseyside is no less in need of assurances that the Prime Minister has first-hand knowledge of its immense difficulties. Very positive action is demanded.

It can be argued that Michael Heseltine, when he was Environment Secretary, virtually lived in Liverpool for long periods, and even that did not halt the decline, although the Garden Festival and other Government aid schemes have all been greatly welcomed.

Nothing, however would do more for the morale of the majority of Liverpool people than to see the Prime Minister personally getting to grips on the spot with the city's problems.

It would not be an easy undertaking but under no circumstances must Liver-

Daily
Post-
11/5/84

TO: PS/SOS N16/05
PS/PERM SEC N16/12
MR HEISER N14/18
MR PICKUP P1/158
MR McDONALD PRESS OFFICE

Behind Jurgon health

see this

20F2

Daily Post 11/5/84

Maggie 'no intention' of meeting city leaders

by David Utting

PRIME MINISTER Margaret Thatcher is not prepared to make talks with Liverpool's Labour leaders part of any trip to the International Garden Festival.

Government sources were last night keen to stress that there is no more than a "remote possibility" that Mrs Thatcher will be able to visit the Garden Festival at all this summer.

And they were adamant that she had no intention whatever of widening such a trip into a tour of the city or a meeting with councillors over the city's budget crisis.

The deliberate attempt to douse speculation was in remarkable contrast to Wednesday's disclosure by Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin that the Prime Minister was considering a Liverpool visit "including the International Garden Festival."

Mrs Thatcher appears to have decided overnight that Mr Jenkin gave the wrong impression and would have



Mrs Thatcher

done better to say nothing at all. If, however, she does still hope to see the Garden Festival, security reasons dictate that she would prefer her visit to be unexpected.

But Liverpool Labour MPs reacted angrily to the news that talks with the council are out. Mr Terry Fields, MP for Broadgreen, said it was "deeply disappointing."

"She and her Government have a major responsibility for the council's financial position and she is ducking out," he said.

Comment—Page 20

Mr Bob Parry, MP for Riverside, last night wrote to Mrs Thatcher urging her to say if it was true that a visit was now unlikely.

"If the leak is true, it will only confirm my own personal opinion that you have washed your hands of Liverpool with all its grave problems," he told her.

His letter added that it was "unthinkable" that she should miss the festival out as a result of her initiative giving Mr Michael Heseltine special responsibility for Merseyside when he was Environment Secretary.

"If you do come, I trust you will see not only trees and flowers but also flesh and blood," said Mr Parry. "Human beings that are living in fear, misery and suffering caused by the policies of your government."

He said he also hoped she would meet civic and church leaders as well as trade union officials.

TO ANDREW TURNBULL, No10.
FROM JOHN BALLARD, JAE.

05/10 09:35 P02 *MERSEYSIDE TASK FORCE

2/2

DAILY POST 10/5/84

Labour denies a U-turn on budget

by David Hope

LIVERPOOL'S Labour city council leadership last night strenuously denied claims that they had done a U-turn on their illegal budget.

Following last week's increased majority at the polls, Labour were expected to push ahead with their confrontation plans at next week's annual meeting of the city council.

Nothing now stands between the city's rulers and their avowed intent to introduce a budget between £90 million and £180 million above government targets without levying a big enough rate to pay for it.

But yesterday Labour announced they would now postpone a budget fixing meeting until after Environment Secretary Mr Patrick Jenkin's visit to the city on June 7 in a last ditch attempt to wring more cash from the Government.

Labour leader Councillor John Hamilton said there was



John Hamilton

"total unity" in the party over the decision.

Mr Jenkin had always said Liverpool could be treated no differently to other local authorities. "But the intensity and scale of the problems is higher here in any other area of the country," said Councillor Hamilton.

His deputy Councillor Derek Hatton said: "It may suit the Press and opposition to believe we are backing down. But nothing could be further from the truth.



Chris Hallows

"We are prepared not to be provocative, and see what he has to offer. In no way are we open to a climbdown—the electorate last week gave us an unequivocal mandate."

Finance chairman Councillor Tony Byrne said the authority remained financially sound.

Meanwhile, anger erupted from Liberal and Conservative ranks.

For Labour took 20 seats on major committees, leaving just seven to be divided, five

to the Liberals and two to the Tories.

On a strict ratio basis, Labour should have taken 16 seats according to figures drawn up by council officers.

Liberal leader Sir Trevor Jones described the move as "political spite".

Conservative leader Councillor Chris Hallows accused Labour of "milking the rate-payers" through taking the extra seats and the attendance allowances that go with them.

Conservatives on some committees were allowed just one seat, which meant there would not even be a seconder for Tory proposals. On a number of key committees dealing with the council's staff and workforce Labour took all seats.

"If anyone is going to negotiate with the trade unions we shall do it in the best interests of the Labour movement—we do not need Tories or Liberals," said Councillor Hatton.



Mrs Thatcher—boost for British week

Maggie at the double for festival

by Peter Surridge and David Using

THE two Maggies—the Premier and the Princess—are to visit Liverpool's International Garden Festival in July.

Mrs Thatcher is likely to be flown in to the 125-acre South Docks site by helicopter when she arrives during British Week.

Princess Margaret is expected to represent the Queen on the prestigious occasion.

It is not certain whether the two will attend the festival at the same time, but officials were confident last night that both would attend.

Whitehall sources were last night deliberately vague as to the timing of Mrs Thatcher's trip, confirming the view that it will be shrouded in the strictest security and announced only at short notice.

It is not known whether Mrs Thatcher will meet the city's Labour leaders, like her Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin next month.

She has paid one visit to Liverpool since becoming Prime Minister, a week after the Toxteth riots.

Even though details of her tour only leaked out as her car reached the city, demonstrators threw tomatoes at her and husband Dennis.

Garden Festival—Page 12

No U-turns—Page 13

A second visit in the present political climate could carry even greater risks but Mrs Thatcher is determined that Liverpool will not become a "no go" area.

Liverpool's deputy leader Councillor Derek Hutton last night welcomed the prospect of a visit by Mrs Thatcher.

"We will take her on the same tour we're planning for Patrick Jenkin and I'm sure she'll see poverty and squalor which she doesn't even know exists," he said.

Mr Jenkin was adamant yesterday that his trip on June 7 would not revolve around the city's illegal budget.

Labour's ruling National Executive yesterday offered Liverpool councillors full support in seeking to "resolve the present impasse," but stopped short of backing an unbalanced budget.

In the Commons, Labour's environment spokesman Dr John Cunningham offered his party's help in any move to resolve the city's crisis. But he added: "The already appalling



10 DOWNING STREET

~~GR~~

Please ask DOE and DFEN
how quickly they can
reply to my recent letter
about this visit. We
need to take a final
decision soon.

~~Kay~~: I've agreed with
John Ballard that
they will send a
letter.

~~DMB~~
10/5

~~DMB~~
10/5

DAVID

I spoke to DOE and apparently
the PM's visit to Liverpool was
discussed at Cabinet this morning
do you still require advice from
them?

RM 10/5

File

358

16 April 1984

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 27 March. I am sorry not to have replied before now.

I am afraid that the Prime Minister has not yet finalised plans for a visit to Merseyside. But if the opportunity does arise to accept your kind invitation to open the new municipal offices and land registry buildings, we will certainly be in touch with you.

David Barclay

Councillor David A. Fletcher, J.P.

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**Metropolitan
Borough of Wirral**

Mr Sherbourne

*Perhaps we
cd discuss ?*

**Leader of the Council
Councillor David A. Fletcher, JP**

Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey,
Merseyside, L44 8ED
telephone 051-638 7070

*Dms
2/4*

date 27 March 1984

R31

to The Prime Minister,
The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher M.P.,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON.

CG/LC/SO'N.

Dear Prime Minister,

I understand that you may be visiting the Garden Festival
of the Merseyside Development Corporation sometime this summer.

You will recall that I have previously been in correspondence
with you, enquiring whether it would be possible for you, in
June 1985 or so to declare open the new Municipal Offices and
Land Registry Buildings in Birkenhead. I understand that your
Diary has prevented you from taking a firm decision but I wonder
if when you are in Liverpool, your engagement would permit you
to spend sometime to visit Wirral - a remaining Bastion of a
Conservative controlled Council in a Metropolitan County area
- and see one of our show pieces, an Enterprise Agency or a Small
Business Work Shop. If so I know such a visit would give tremendous
encouragement to the Governments many supporters in the Borough.
A one hour visit would be very much appreciated indeed.

Yours sincerely,

Leader of the Council



10 DOWNING STREET

Confidential

13th April, 1984

We have been thinking further about the Prime Minister's visit to the North West on Friday, 13th July and in particular the suggestion of the Prime Minister visiting a Central Board of Finance lunch after the Party lunch.

I am a little apprehensive about the Prime Minister visiting Liverpool and appearing to do two lunches while not visiting anything more "substantial" than the International Garden Festival and the BNFL (which might itself be slightly controversial) - I caricature the arguments which we might encounter.

I would be very grateful for your views as to whether the Prime Minister should include anything else in her programme at the expense of not doing the CBF lunch. It is just such a sensitive part of the country at the present.

I am back in the office after Easter and perhaps we should talk very promptly that week.

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE
Political Secretary

Miss Brenda Lowe

MR. SHERBOURNE

We had a brief word yesterday about the programme for the Prime Minister's visit to Liverpool in July. I am afraid I had forgotten that earlier this month DOE had put forward two suggestions for additional engagements in the morning (see the letter of 10 February from Alan Davis, attached).

I do not think that we need to decide quite yet whether we need to pursue either of these possibilities, but you may like to seek comments in confidence from the local agent.

AB

7 March 1984

13 February 1984

Thank you very much for your letter of 10 February about the Prime Minister's proposed visit to Liverpool.

BH | We will of course bear in mind the two suggestions in your letter as the Prime Minister's programme for the day takes shape. I will let you have an indication of the Prime Minister's view a little nearer the time.

David Barclay

A.H. Davis, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

107



2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

*Thanks
have in mind
plus details
have a new find
even a little more like*

10 February 1984

Dear David

We spoke last week about the Prime Minister's visit to Liverpool on 13 July. The Prime Minister is visiting the International Garden Festival in the morning, and has political engagements in Cheshire in the afternoon. You said that she might be able to fit in other Liverpool engagements if we thought it desirable.

There are two other things in Liverpool that my Secretary of State suggests the Prime Minister might like to visit. The first is the Albert Dock complex at the northern end of the Merseyside Development Corporation's South Docks area, close to Liverpool City Centre. This is a fine Grade I listed building, the largest such building in the country. Work is now well underway by the MDC to restore the fabric of the building and negotiations are well advanced with potential occupiers. Full restoration and regeneration will necessarily take several years.

The second suggestion is the Plessey factory at Edge Lane, also near Liverpool City Centre. Plesseys manufacture the System X telephone exchange equipment. They are also participating with English Estates, the County Council and the City Council in creating the Wavertree Technology Park. Sixty acres of previously derelict land adjoining the Edge Lane factory are now being prepared and serviced to provide high quality sites for modern technology-based companies. Plesseys will take part of the site for one of their own companies and it is hoped that with the support of the company others will be attracted so as to improve the industrial base in the heart of the City.

*Yours
Alan*

A H DAVIS
Private Secretary

David Barclay Esq