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CCPC



Prime Minister:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Agree to the

London SW1A 2AH

programme set out in Yes not

15 August 1986

the telegram attached?

Also agree to a tree planting ceremony?

Dear Tim,

18/8

No - only Projects have planted trees in Norway. I think it would be a mistake for me to do so

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORWAY: 11-12 SEPTEMBER 1986

We are continuing work on the details of the programme for the Prime Minister's visit to Norway. I enclose for ease of reference copies of Sir William Bentley's telegrams 162, 176, 196 and 199.

I should be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister is content with the sequence of events in telegram 162. We agree the Ambassador's recommendation that a call by Mr Willoch (telegram 196) should be maintained in the programme. Although Mr Willoch has let it be known that he does not now intend to lead a new coalition if Mrs Brundtland should be defeated, he remains for the time being the Leader of the Norwegian Conservative Party and is also likely to remain influential in Norwegian politics (Sir W Bentley suggests he could be a future Foreign Minister). Should changes in the Party leadership be announced before the Prime Minister's visit the possibility of revising the programme could be considered.

The proposed tree planting ceremony (telegram 199) might not attract entirely favourable publicity. When Lady Young cut down the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree outside Oslo in November 1985 there were some polite but determined demonstrations protesting about the British contribution to the acid rain which is damaging lakes and forests in southern Norway. Nonetheless Lady Young's advice is that the Prime Minister should undertake this engagement. It will be possible to control participation at the ceremony at the residence.

As part of our preparations for the visit we have conducted further research into the records of top level visits to and from Norway. We had thought that Mrs Thatcher would be the first serving British Prime Minister

to

Tim Flesher Esq
10 Downing Street



to visit Norway since it gained full independence from Sweden in 1905. In fact the Prime Minister and Lady Dorothy MacMillan visited Norway in June 1960. The Prime Minister might care to glance at the then Ambassador's despatch.

Yours sincerely

David Reddaway

David Reddaway
Private Secretary to
Baroness Young

GRS 190

CONFIDENTIAL

FM OSLO

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 162

OF 220845Z JULY 86

MY TELNOS 145-147: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORWAY

1. A RE-ORDERING OF THE PROGRAMME FOR 12 SEPTEMBER IS NECESSARY BECAUSE THE MFA HAVE NOW TOLD US THAT (A) THE KING'S LUNCH MUST START AT 1330, AND (B) A VISIT TO THE STORTING IS NOT ADVISABLE, SINCE IT WILL BE IN RECESS (AND UNDER REPAIR) AND THE PRESIDENT AND MOST MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WILL BE ABSENT.

2. I THEREFORE SUGGEST REVISED TIMING AS FOLLOWS:

1045 LEAVE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

1110 ARRIVE HQ AFNORTH

1210 LEAVE HQ AFNORTH

1230 ARRIVE EMBASSY

1305 LEAVE FOR PALACE

1315 AUDIENCE WITH THE KING

1330 LUNCH WITH THE KING

1500 LEAVE PALACE FOR EMBASSY

1515 CALL BY MR WILLOCH AT RESIDENCE

1545 PRESS CONFERENCE

1620 TO BYGDOY, FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS IN MY TELNO 146 - see 176

1735 LEAVE BYGDOY

1745 ARRIVE EMBASSY

1815-1945 RECEPTION

13.

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3. GRATEFUL FOR AUTHORITY TO PLAN ON THESE LINES. FROM THIS END, THE MAIN QUESTION IS THE AVAILABILITY OF MR WILLOCH AT THE TIME PROPOSED: THIS CANNOT BE CHECKED UNTIL HE RETURNS FROM HOLIDAY.

BENTLEY

LIMITED

WED

NEWS D

INFO D

DEFENCE D

PROTOCOL D

PS

PS/LADY YOUNG

PS/HR EGGAR

PS/AUS

MR DEAREK THOMAS

MR RATFORD

COPIES TO:

PS/NO. 10 DOWNING ST

-2-
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FM OSLO

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 196

OF 121340Z AUGUST 86

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORWAY: MR WILLOCH

1. IN RESPONSE TO PERSISTENT STORIES IN THE PRESS, MR WILLOCH HAS DURING THE PAST WEEK MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT IS NOT NOW HIS INTENTION TO BE PRIME MINISTER AGAIN IF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS FORCED OUT OF OFFICE. THIS WOULD APPEAR TO CONFIRM SPECULATION WHICH STARTED WHEN THE COALITION GOVERNMENT FELL IN THE SPRING. HOWEVER, NO FORMAL DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN BY THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY. NOR IS IT CLEAR WHO WILL REPLACE WILLOCH AS THE COALITION'S PRIME MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE, ALTHOUGH PRESTHUS (CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY) IS THE OBVIOUS FAVOURITE. WILLOCH HIMSELF IS BEING CANVASSED AS A FUTURE FOREIGN MINISTER.
2. IN THE LIGHT OF THIS I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO KNOW WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER STILL WISHES TO RECEIVE WILLOCH ON 12 SEPTEMBER AS SUGGESTED IN MY TELNO 162. THE MFA HAVE NOT YET APPROACHED HIM ABOUT THE APPOINTMENT, AS THEY AWAIT AUTHORISATION FROM LONDON THAT THE REVISIONS SUGGESTED IN TUR ARE ACCEPTABLE.
3. AS SEEN FROM HERE, IT WOULD BE A PITY TO CANCEL THE MEETING AS IT WOULD BE MRS THATCHER'S ONLY CONTACT (APART FROM WILLOCH'S PRESENCE AS A GUEST AT THE DINNER AND RECEPTION, AND PRESTHUS' PRESENCE AT THE LATTER) WITH THE NORWEGIAN CONSERVATIVE PARTY. I HAVE CONSIDERED WHETHER PRESTHUS MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN THE MEETING. BUT THIS COULD BE AWKWARD DURING A FORMAL PRIME MINISTERIAL VISIT ORGANISED BY MRS BRUNDTLAND'S OFFICE. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT WE STICK TO A BILATERAL MEETING WITH WILLOCH. THIS WOULD ALLOW MRS THATCHER THE OPPORTUNITY FOR TALKS WITH A SENIOR AND INFLUENTIAL MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITION WHOM SHE HAS MET BEFORE, AND WHO IS CHAIRMAN OF THE STORTING FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. GRATEFUL FOR INSTRUCTIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

BENTLEY

GRS 175

RESTRICTED

TOP COPY

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FM OSLO
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 199
OF 130840Z AUGUST 86

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORWAY

1. IT OCCURS TO ME THAT, IF THE PRIME MINISTER FELT SO INCLINED, A NOTABLE WAY TO MARK HER VISIT WOULD BE FOR HER TO PLANT A TREE IN THE RESIDENCE GARDEN. THERE IS A LONG TRADITION OF THIS IN OSLO, TREES HAVING BEEN PLANTED BY MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH AND NORWEGIAN ROYAL FAMILIES AND BY LORD MOUNTBATTEN. IF MRS THATCHER WERE TO PLANT A TREE, SHE WOULD BE THE FIRST 'POLITICAL' PERSONALITY TO DO SO, BUT I BELIEVE THAT THIS WOULD BE ENTIRELY APPROPRIATE GIVEN THE LANDMARK IN ANGLO-NORWEGIAN RELATIONS.
2. THE CEREMONY WOULD TAKE 10 MINUTES OR SO, AND COULD PERHAPS BE FITTED IN BEFORE THE PRIME MINISTER LEAVES FOR THE PALACE AT 1305 ON 12 SEPTEMBER. IT WOULD HAVE THE ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE OF ENABLING THE EMBASSY STAFF TO BE ON HAND FOR THE CEREMONY, WHEREAS IN THE PRESENT PROGRAMME THERE IS NO SUCH OCCASION.
3. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO KNOW REASONABLY SOON WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD LIKE ME TO PROCEED WITH THIS IDEA, SO THAT THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.

BENTLEY

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OBLNAN 1545

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

19 August 1986

The Prime Minister has now seen David Reddaway's letter of 15 August about her visit to Norway on 11 and 12 September. She has agreed to the revised draft programme attached to the letter but is not disposed to agree to a tree planting ceremony which she believes to be more appropriate for a Royal visit than a Prime Ministerial visit.

(Timothy Flesher)

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

DSG