

PRIME MINISTER

CDP
7/xi

TALKS AT CAMP DAVID

We need to get absolutely clear the position about attendance at your talks at Camp David. Various people aspire to attend. And one or two Americans hope to increase their prospects of being there, by trying to ensure that their British counterparts are present.

The absolutely essential point is that only one person should speak on our side. That means you should be the only minister present (when we disregarded that excellent principle in February 1985, the value of the meeting was much reduced).

The Americans will undoubtedly have more people on their side, for part of the time. But that is helpful, because they get to hear you: and get to hear what the President says to you.

I strongly advise against taking other officials for two reasons:-

- (i) it will be an opening for the Americans to send people like Perle, who will greatly complicate our task, particularly when it comes to trying to get an agreed statement; and
- (ii) (less important but not to be ignored) there will be problems on our side. Patrick Wright is in Washington, but you do not want him at Camp David (quite rightly: he does not know the subjects). But if other officials go and he does not, he loses face with the Americans and that affects his usefulness on other matters. The point is, I don't think you need anyone but Antony Acland.

The only question mark is over Percy Cradock. Even in his case, I think the problems identified above might arise. And he can make his most effective contribution at the briefing

stage here in London. We have made time in the diary next week for him to talk the issues through with you (once the speeches are out of the way).

Agree to restrict it to Antony Acland (and me as note-taker)?

ESP

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Charles Powell

5 November 1986