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RW

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 June, 1982

You told me this morning that following the Prime Minister's telephone conversation with Sir Nicholas Henderson last night, the impression had been obtained that Mrs Thatcher had criticised the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for not informing her of the fact that President Reagan was due to telephone her yesterday.

I have discussed this with the Prime Minister who has asked me to convey the assurance that this must have been based on a misunderstanding. She intended absolutely no criticism of this kind.

Since I heard the Prime Minister's conversation with Washington at around 0030 hrs this morning I think I can explain how the misunderstanding arose. The Prime Minister meant to convey to the Ambassador that she was surprised that the President should have rung her to propose a new peace initiative without giving any forewarning of the subject matter of the conversation. I think Mrs Thatcher felt that, given the relationship between ourselves and the Americans, some advance warning of the nature of the President's message could have been expected.

You did, of course, tell No.10 late yesterday afternoon that the President would be telephoning the Prime Minister - Mrs Thatcher was informed at once at Chequers. In the event, the call did not take place until 2330 hrs.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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