

MASTER

cc SUBJECT

CONFIDENTIAL

filed on ART and AMENITIES Policy PT3

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

ROYAL EXHIBITION

Lord Whitelaw spoke to the Prime Minister about the Royal Exhibition being canvassed for the 40th Anniversary of The Queen's reign. He set out the issues as in my minute of 11 April.

Lord Whitelaw said that his intention was to limit himself to activities where he could take a non-executive role.

The Prime Minister shared his reservations about the project. There would be a natural tendency for it to drift towards over-commercialisation. She felt that Lord Whitelaw's involvement would not simply be a question of lending status or giving general direction.

This would inevitably be somewhat stressful. It would inevitably involve some degree of executive involvement in keeping a close eye on the details of the project. She thought this would be done better by some one within the Royal Family who could not only give advice but could also take decisions on whether proposals were acceptable. For these reasons, she felt it better that Lord Whitelaw did not take this on.

Lord Whitelaw said he was most grateful for this advice which he would follow.

AT

ANDREW TURNBULL

13 April 1989

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PRIME MINISTER

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MEETING WITH LORD WHITELOW

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Royal Exhibition

Lord Whitelaw's main purpose in coming to see you is to discuss a tricky proposition that has been put to him. Mr. Robin Gill, who made the film about the Royal Family in 1968-69, proposes to establish a permanent exhibition about the Royal Family in Canary Wharf. This would be opened in 1992 to commemorate the 40th year of The Queen's reign.

This idea grew from a proposal to build a new version of the Dolls House which is on show at Windsor. It was then decided to create replicas of the State Rooms with videos of State occasions and film of Royal tours. It is further to be expanded with some Commonwealth involvement. This is entirely a private sector venture requiring no financial support from Government.

The Duke of Edinburgh was approached to be chairman of the trustees. He declined though the Palace has taken a stance of benevolent neutrality.

A celebration for The Queen's 40th anniversary may seem odd, being neither the silver nor the golden jubilee. Against that a reign of 40 years is undoubtedly a major achievement, surpassed by only five previous monarchs. There is no guarantee that The Queen would survive to the 50th but if she did it would be a major Government occasion.

Lord Whitelaw feels unenthusiastic about the project
His appointment would inevitably imply, to some degree, a seal of approval by Government. He would not wish to undertake this if you were opposed to it.

The Council for Charitable Support

Lord Whitelaw has become the Council's chairman. Attached is a copy of his letter lending his support to the invitation extended by the Council's secretary for you to attend a seminar around this time next year. This would discuss such issues as the role of individuals, the role of companies, tax incentives, status of charities etc. The Home Office see merit in this if you would like to do it.

Other matters

You may wish to talk to Lord Whitelaw about current political developments. You can also seek his views on the management of Government business in the Lords. Are any changes needed to procedures? Is a new list of working Peers called for?

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ANDREW TURNBULL

11 April 1989

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