



Ref. A090/447

MR POWELL
✓Note for the file

Visit now cancelled,
but I think the
basis of charging proposed
in para.3 is the right

The Prime Minister's Visit to Paris

Thank you for your minute of 5 February about the Prime Minister's possible visit to Paris for an EDU working dinner later this month.

2. There are two possible bases for charging the Party which, I think, could be defended. One is the basis described in your minute, namely that, since the Prime Minister is required to travel in an RAF plane by reason of the security considerations attaching to her position as Prime Minister, the Party should only be charged the equivalent of the commercial fares for the Prime Minister and her political secretary. This is the basis which we adopt in charging the Prime Minister and Mr Thatcher for their flights to their holiday destinations. This would leave No 10 bearing the difference between the costs charged by MOD and the commercial fares.

3. The alternative basis, which was used when the Prime Minister returned from the Conservative Party Conference in Bournemouth by RAF helicopter in 1988, was that the MOD charged on their "extra cost" basis and this charge was passed on to the Party. The merit of this basis is that it can be said that no cost to public funds arises because of the Prime Minister's use of an HS125 on a Party occasion.

4. Of these two bases, I am inclined to think that the second is the more appropriate for Party events, although I think that a defence could be mounted for the first. (I was incidentally a



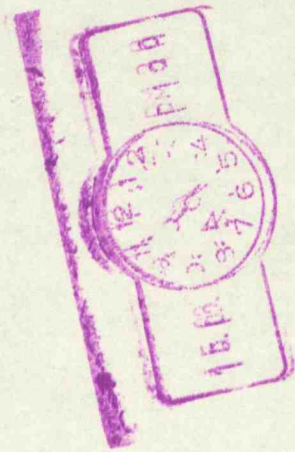
little surprised to see that it is proposed that a Private Secretary and a Garden Room girl should accompany the Prime Minister on what you describe as a purely Party occasion.)

R.R.B.

ROBIN BUTLER

15 February 1990

Pr tar: Ed Supp
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COMMUNICATIONS



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

SIR ROBIN BUTLER

The Prime Minister has it in mind to attend a working supper in Paris in late February of Party leaders organised under EDU auspices. She would probably fly out in the afternoon and return late the same evening. It is a purely Party occasion.

I imagine that the security advice would be that the Prime Minister should not travel to Paris by scheduled airline, but should as usual use an HS125. She will need to take a Private Secretary, Garden Room Girl and two detectives, as well as a Political Secretary. I should be grateful for your views on the appropriate basis for charging this visit. Would it be correct to charge the Conservative Party the equivalent of a business class return fare for the Prime Minister and the Political Secretary? I assume it would not be necessary to charge the whole cost of the HS125, given that she has to use it because of her position as Prime Minister.

C. D. POWELL

5 February 1990