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ACT 2000

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, 9 - 13 JANUARY 1983

The purpose of this note is to set out, for future reference, the procedure which I used in making the necessary departure arrangements for this particular trip. Because of its very nature, these arrangements involved logistical problems normally never encountered by a Duty Clerk when preparing for overseas trips, and hopefully, should the need arise again, the following will prove useful in achieving the desired results.

First and foremost my brief was to arrange for the transportation of all members of the party and their luggage leaving from No. 10 - Prime Minister, Mr. Thatcher, Mr. Butler, Mr. Coles, Mr. Ingham and myself - on Friday 7 January to the point of departure from UK - RAF Brize Norton - whilst maintaining total secrecy of the visit. Disclosure of information about the proposed ^{VISIT} would have meant its immediate cancellation. Thus the element of surprise was all important

However, it was obvious from the beginning that it would be impossible to achieve these objectives without involving other people. The problem was to keep this to an absolute minimum and (apart from the military side of the affair which was to be handled totally by MOD) at what point those people should be informed and how much they need be told.

The first thing I did was to decide who these people should be:

1. DRIVERS

Having considered the full implications involved it was clear that I must use only our own drivers and in this instance only three.

2. PM'S PROTECTION

The Special Branch Officers had to be informed at some stage. This was done by Robin and John informing [redacted] who, it was agreed, would travel with the Prime Minister from No. 10 to RAF Brize Norton. Thereafter, the PM's protection would be the

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responsibility of the Military.

3. No. 10 STAFF

No other members of the No. 10 staff, including Private Secretaries not involved in the visit, Duty Clerks and Garden Room girls should have any knowledge of the visit. Nevertheless, as indicated further on in this note, this was not totally possible. The mere fact that conversations ^{took place} behind closed doors in the Private Office which included myself obviously brought attention to the fact that something was afoot.

However, in the event that I should be asked directly about a possible forthcoming trip and I considered the matter unavoidable, I was authorised to take the person to one side and inform them of the absolute minimum and swear them to secrecy. In such instances I should inform Robin or John.

4. WORKING IN CF

In conjunction with A. Davies-Jones, who had by this time been informed ^{by Robin Butler} / I considered it unavoidable that I would need to work from CF and that it would be impossible to do this without informing colleagues in CF of the work that I was engaged in.

This was done, but again, only the absolute minimum information *was* disclosed.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

My initial enquiries with Leslie Wright, Cabinet Office, indicated that whilst he was aware of something happening and had a good idea what it was, he had been excluded from any details. Working on that basis, without disclosing details of location, timings etc. I requested two Brahms with key tapes and two sets of codings for the RACAL sets which were already in my possession.

/6. STATIONERY, BOXES ETC.

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The normal stationery box was prepared with the addition of No. 10 notepaper and envelopes which were obtained without reference to G.R. Whilst it would have been possible to obtain other despatch boxes (ie black, being less conspicuous than red) the shortage of time, the resulting excuses which would have been necessary and the need to inform the Front Door etc., etc., made this an unnecessary step.

7. LUGGAGE

I then had to consider firstly how the members of the party would bring in their luggage on Friday 7 January without suspicions being aroused, bearing in mind that not even the Front Doorman, Custodians or Police were aware of our plan. It was, therefore, necessary to inform the three drivers who would be involved and this was done on Thursday afternoon (6 January). In fact it turned out that only one driver (Joe Beattie) was informed of what was required; the other two (Tom Savage and Ken Godbeer) were not available at that time. Between the two of us we devised the following plan:-

- i) Cars to pick up Robin and John from home with luggage on Friday morning and bring to No. 10. Bernard in this instance would use his own car.
- ii) Their luggage to remain in these cars and for the drivers to transfer them into one car which I would use as the transport vehicle that evening.
- iii) My own luggage - I had no option but to bring this through the front door entrance and, if asked, I would say I was going away for the weekend.

It was decided that Tom Savage's car would be the transport vehicle for Friday evening and it was arranged that Mr. Butler's luggage would be transferred from Joe Beattie's car and Bernard Ingham's from his own car, during the course of Friday afternoon.

/ The drivers

The drivers arranged the timings between them and I obtained Bernard Ingham's car keys for them to do this. Thus the only remaining baggage was my own, the Prime Minister's and Mr. Thatcher's luggage, red boxes, briefcases, two Brahms and RACAL sets. So far as suitcases were concerned, there was no way in which we could arrange for the Prime Minister's and Mr. Thatcher's to be taken out of the building, other than by way of the Front Door, without it being obvious that something out of the ordinary was happening.

Indeed, the very fact that it was a Friday night lended itself readily to the pretence that the Prime Minister and Mr. Thatcher would be going to Chequers and, therefore, it would be normal for their luggage to be in the Front Hall, albeit slightly more than normal, viz a large hanging wardrobe. This could easily be explained away if necessary, by the fact that the Prime Minister's Dressmaker would be at Chequers during the weekend and that Mr. Thatcher would be going on somewhere else after the weekend.

However, choosing this method would have the following results:-

a) The GR girl and Switchboard Operators who were due to go to Chequers would either have to be informed before or after arriving for duty at No. 10 on the Friday afternoon. Attempting to advise them before would complicate matters and, therefore, it was decided to wait until after they arrived at No. 10 on that Friday afternoon before informing them that, whilst they would not be going to Chequers, the impression that they were had to be maintained.

b) No. 10 as a whole, including the Switchboard operators in the building, would be expecting the PM to arrive at Chequers at some point during Friday evening, as would staff at Chequers. Vera Thomas had, in fact, been given the minimum of information required and she advised her staff that the PM would not be arriving at Chequers until some time on Saturday 8 January. It therefore remained to inform our Switchboard operators, which I did when I informed the two operators due to go to Chequers, that they would need to play out their role by providing

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appropriate answers according to who asked the questions. By Friday evening, the Duty Private Secretary and Duty Clerk would also be made aware of the requirements and, therefore, should be consulted in cases of difficulty.

c) It was, therefore, necessary if we were to maintain the impression of a normal Friday evening for the GR girl and two Switchboard operators due to go to Chequers to leave No. 10 at the normal time, in the normal way.

Logistically, it proved necessary for them to leave slightly earlier than normal and Tom Savage was used to take them by car from No. 10 and drop them off at an appropriate point from whence they could make their way home.

d) However, having committed Tom to this he could not return to No. 10 to take me to the airport with all the luggage, some of which had yet to be loaded, viz. red boxes, my luggage, Brahms, Racal, the Prime Minister's and Mr. Thatcher's luggage. We therefore had to arrange in some way to get these remaining items out of No. 10. Red boxes at the Front Door would obviously cause some suspicion.

We decided that we could achieve this by Ken Godbeer taking the Prime Minister's and Mr. Thatcher's luggage out via the Front Door, as normal, loading it into his car. He would then bring his car round to the back door and the remaining items would then be transferred from CF to his car. Before doing so I would inform the Custodians that I would be using the back door "to take something out to Horseguards", thus avoiding any investigation when the alarms went off.

Ken would then transfer this luggage to Tom's car using the Private Garage facilities at Marsham Street. Ken would then return to No. 10 to wait for the Prime Minister's and Mr. Thatcher's departure.

As Tom could not return to No. 10 it was arranged that he would wait in Whitehall for me. I would then simply walk out the Front Door and make my way down to him, at the arranged time.

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/This method

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used
This method would also be/in respect of Robin, John and Bernard who would leave ^{five} minutes before the Prime Minister's and Mr. Thatcher's departure and make their way to Whitehall where Joe Beattie would be waiting. They would then wait until the Prime Minister's car turned into Whitehall and then follow behind.


It is, therefore, obvious that whilst the logistics, as summarised in the attached table, were theoretically operable, there was a certain element of risk involved and required a certain amount of luck to pull it off.

Return arrangements, whilst being much simpler, still involved the time of departure from the Falkland Islands to be kept secret.

There is, however, no point in detailing these arrangements for the record but suffice to say that similar but much less involved methods were necessary and worked equally well.

Arrangements for our cars to be at RAF Brize Norton at the appropriate time had been made prior to departure from the UK and the information left with the Duty Private Secretary for action at the proper time.

The results proved that the plan worked but whether or not it will be possible to use this method again will depend upon circumstances at the time.


A. LOGAN
DUTY CLERK
19 January 1983

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CAR PLAN

FRIDAY 7 JANUARY 1983

- 0800 Joe Beattie pick up FERB with luggage.
- 0830 Tom Savage pick up AJC with luggage. During the course of the day, FERB's and Bernard Ingham's luggage (the latter from his own car) to be transferred to Tom Savage's car.
- 1630 GR girl and two Switchboard operators leave No. 10 in Tom Savage's car with luggage and dropped off at points outside the immediate vicinity. They will make their way home. Tom Savage then to proceed to Private Garage, Marsham Street.
- 1645 Prime Minister's and Mr. Thatcher's luggage loaded into Ken Godbeer's car at Front Entrance, No. 10, then to proceed to Back Door, No. 10 where remainder of luggage held in CF will be loaded. Ken Godbeer then to proceed to Private Garage, Marsham Street to transfer luggage to Tom Savage's car.
- 1730 Tom Savage to be at entrance to Cabinet Office, Whitehall, to pick up A. Logan, Duty Clerk and proceed to RAF Brize Norton.
- 1840 Joe Beattie to be at entrance to Cabinet Office, Whitehall to pick up Messrs. Butler, Coles and Ingham. Then to wait until Prime Minister's car turns into Whitehall and then to follow.
- 1845 Prime Minister and Mr. Thatcher depart No. 10 in Ken Godbeer's car with _____ as Protection Officer.

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