

PRIME MINISTER

You queried the arrangements under which Cabinet Ministers seek your permission to travel overseas, where this is for a routine European meeting.

It is necessary for us and the Cabinet Office to know of these travel arrangements, to ease the scheduling of meetings. The Minister's office write one letter of request, which comes here as well as to the Cabinet Office, the Foreign Office and the Whips Office. In future, I will respond once we know that the Foreign Office are content and that there are no major scheduling problems over Cabinet and committees, but I will not trouble you with the requests unless there is something unusual - e.g. proposal that a PPS or a wife should go, or an extravagant number of Ministers attending the same meeting.

MAP Speed orb

5 December 1979

C.F. 7/11

To note that you can now let me have approval drafts when you first show me Cabinet Minister's EEC visits, subject only to FCO clearance.

MAP 7/11

Ministers!



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

We are now getting bids for holiday trips abroad by Ministers during the Christmas Recess. May I take it that you would like to approve personally absences by Cabinet Ministers, but that you do not need to be troubled with Junior Ministers provided they have been cleared by their Secretary of State and the Foreign Secretary? I will, of course, include the latter in the usual weekly list of absences.

*Mered
ms*

MAD

*28/11
David Paul
To note*

27 November 1979

MAD

i.e. we clear without reference to PM. MAD.

CF.

For approval drafts, etc

Minister

MAP 14/1

PRIME MINISTER

Travel proposals for your approval:

1. Hector Munro: to visit the USA from 15-22 February for the Winter Olympics;
2. Mr. Pym: holiday "abroad" 3-8 April - destination as yet undecided;
3. Sir Keith Joseph: California/New York or Chicago for speaking engagements and discussions on co-operation with US industry and inward investment, 27-30 May (Whitsun Recess).

MAP

11 January 1980

MS

n.a
MAP

PRIME MINISTER

Ministers' Visits

1. Giles Shaw (Northern Ireland Office) proposes to spend a week in the USA, promoting Northern Ireland as an investment prospect, from next Monday.

2. Norman Lamont proposes to visit the USA from 3 - 6 December, for discussions on Energy. This will focus on an invitation from the Heritage Foundation to speak about UK energy policy. In addition to discussions with various people, he will visit Three Mile Island.

Agree to both these visits?

Yes out

Agree that you should continue to give personal approval for less routine visits, such as these, by Junior Ministers?

3. John Nott already has your permission to be in the Middle East from 23 - 28 November. As Cabinet has been brought forward to Wednesday, 28 November, he has asked whether you will agree to allow him to miss Cabinet. (You have already agreed to Mr. Howell's absence for similar reasons). Agree subject to any additions to the Agenda which would require his presence?

Yes out

MAP

n

21 November 1979



Ministers
↓

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 November 1979

We spoke about a change we wish to introduce in the system for approving overseas visits. I attach a copy of a letter which is going to all Ministers' offices, explaining that the Prime Minister is delegating to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary the approval of short visits to Europe by junior Ministers.

As I told you, I would be grateful if you would keep a careful eye on the European meetings which are to be attended by Ministers from several Departments. This is the only area in which the Prime Minister has expressed any interest in respect of the sort of visits for which you will now be giving approval. If you have any doubts about particular cases, do of course speak to us about them before conveying the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's approval.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Willian Austen in the Chief Whip's Office, who will in future need to inform you if the Whips wish to object for Parliamentary reasons to a particular visit. As you know, the Whips' Office is not giving formal written approval at present, as part of our efforts to cut down the paperwork on overseas visits.

M. A. PATTISON

Ray Pringle, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

DJG



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 November 1979

The Prime Minister was grateful for Mr. Nott's suggestion that approval for some junior Ministers overseas visits could be devolved. She agrees with this, and we will shortly be circulating instructions to allow certain brief visits to be undertaken without prior clearance from No. 10.

M. A. PATTISON

Stuart Hampson, Esq.,
Department of Trade.

255

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL



*Mr Paterson
I am content.*

10 DOWNING STREET

*Mr.
15/11*

From the Private Secretary

MR. VILE

CABINET OFFICE

CABINET OFFICE
A 6295
15 NOV 1979
FILING INSTRUCTIONS
FILE No.

We spoke about Mr. Nott's suggestion for simplifying the procedure for clearing short visits overseas by Junior Ministers. As you know, the Prime Minister is attracted by Mr. Nott's suggestion.

Subject to your views, I would propose to promulgate the change by a circular letter as in the attached draft.

MAJ

14 November 1979

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL

file

BK

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL



BIE 16/11/79

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

MR. VILE

CABINET OFFICE

We spoke about Mr. Nott's suggestion for simplifying the procedure for clearing short visits overseas by Junior Ministers. As you know, the Prime Minister is attracted by Mr. Nott's suggestion.

Subject to your views, I would propose to promulgate the change by a circular letter as in the attached draft.

M. A. PATTISON

14 November 1979

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL

KR 11

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

14 November 1979

Alan Martin,

Overseas Visits by Junior Ministers

Paragraph 45 of "Questions of Procedure for Ministers" requires Junior Ministers to clear their visits overseas with the Prime Minister, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Chief Whip, and to inform the Secretary of the Cabinet of their plans.

The Prime Minister has concluded that it is not necessary for all such visits to come to her personal attention. In future, paragraph 45 of "Questions of Procedure for Ministers" should be interpreted as follows.

Junior Ministers should first seek the approval of their Secretary of State for any proposed overseas visit. Where the visit is for a routine business meeting within Europe, and would involve an absence of no more than two nights, the Prime Minister is content to accept the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's judgement that the visit should go ahead. In these cases, the Minister's Private Office should therefore write to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's Private Secretary seeking approval for his absence, copying his letter to the offices of the Chief Whip and the Secretary of the Cabinet. When the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary gives his approval, his Private Secretary will record this in a letter to the Minister's office, the offices of the Chief Whip and the Secretary of the Cabinet and to No. 10.

In the case of visits which do not qualify as routine visits involving absences of no more than two nights, Junior Ministers should continue to seek clearance as in paragraph 44(1) of "Questions of Procedure for Ministers".

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to all Ministers, and to David Laughrin (Civil Service Department).

Yours sincerely

Mike Pattison

Martin Vile, Esq.,
Cabinet Office

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

John Nott suggests below that it is unnecessary for all Ministerial visits overseas to be cleared by No. 10. He considers that junior Ministers could make short overseas visits with the approval of their Secretary of State, subject to F.C.O. and Whips clearance. It would be possible to agree that junior Ministers could travel to routine meetings within Europe for absences of, say, no more than two nights, without your formal approval. The only occasions on which I have felt it unnecessary to draw your attention to such visits was when a number of Departments are sending Ministerial representatives to the same meetings - usually an EEC meeting. Other less routine visits by junior Ministers do sometimes require closer checking e.g. Mr. Lamont's recent visit to the USSR for an energy symposium.

In practice, the visits where one might allow delegated authority do not cause a great deal of unnecessary work. The Minister has to clear his lines with the F.C.O. and the Chief Whip, and we then clear with a routine letter.

It would be attractive to do away with this paperwork. But this takes up a minimum of staff time here, and you may therefore think that No. 10 should continue to be aware of all Ministerial absences. A change would not greatly reduce the paperwork but would limit the picture you get of the activities of all your colleagues.

Would you like us politely to decline Mr. Nott's suggestion?

I agree with John Nott

MAP

am.

13 November 1979



From the Secretary of State

PRIME MINISTER

MINISTERIAL VISITS OVERSEAS

I saw recently a letter which Norman Tebbit's Private Secretary sent to yours about Norman's 1-day visit to Brussels to attend a meeting of Eurocontrol (the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation) on which he is our representative. I was surprised that it was necessary for him to seek your approval for a visit of this kind although my attention has been drawn to paragraph 45 of "Questions of Procedure for Ministers".

I can well understand the need for the Foreign Office and the Chief Whip's Office to be kept informed of visits by all Ministers, the former to ensure that our posts are able to carry out a co-ordinating role and the latter to avoid any Parliamentary problems. I can also understand the need to exercise financial discipline and avoid wasteful public expenditure. In the case of visits by Heads of Departments it is therefore appropriate that your approval should be sought. I do question, however, whether it is essential that you should be troubled with every request by a junior Minister for even a short official visit overseas. The advance approval of the Secretary of State concerned will in any case have been obtained. Is this possibly an area where we could set an example by cutting down on bureaucracy? - and paper.

I am copying this minute to Robert Armstrong and Ian Bancroft.

J. N.

Department of Trade
November 1979

7 ✓ 1979



CONFIDENTIAL

Minister

subject file
Walker Min Ab



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

MR LAUGHRIN

I attach a copy of a letter I have sent to the Ministry of Agriculture. You may like to have this for your records, as it reinforces the line the Prime Minister has been taking in response to requests for Parliamentary Private Secretaries to travel overseas with Ministers at public expense. To date, she has only been prepared to agree this where arrangements can be made which do not increase the journey costs, or in the case of meetings which are essentially political, where a PPS can replace a Private Secretary.

M. A. PATTISON

6 November 1979

K.P.S.



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

6 November 1979

Thank you for your letter of 5 November, about the Minister of Agriculture's plans to attend the Council of Ministers (Agriculture) meeting in Brussels on 12/13 November.

The Prime Minister is content with the arrangements for Mr. Walker and Mr. Buchanan-Smith to attend, subject to Parliamentary and Government business.

The Prime Minister has also consider Mr. Walker's request to include his Parliamentary Private Secretary in the delegation. She has decided that she cannot agree to this on this occasion. If there is an occasion in the future when Mr. Walker travels to a similar meeting by RAF plane, she would consider the proposal to include his PPS, as there would be no additional charge to public funds for fares.

I am sending copies of this letter to Ray Pringle (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and Barry Hilton (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

Miss R.A. Bratley
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

ministers

2

PRIME MINISTER

You asked about requests from Ministers for their wives to travel on public expense on overseas visits. I attach a list of the requests which we have received since May.

As you will see, your suspicions about the Ministry of Agriculture are well justified. In the particular case of Mr. Walker's trip to the Netherlands tomorrow, I understand that he has now decided that his wife should not accompany him. It has also become clear that only the return trip was to be by RAF aeroplane, and that - despite the impression which had been given earlier - the outward leg of the trip will be on a commercial flight. Mr. Walker was unwilling to meet the cost himself.

We will keep this list up to date.

A.S.

MS

19 September 1979

Ministers seeking Prime Minister's approval to be accompanied by their wives on official visits abroad, their expenses being met from public funds.

	M. Martin	Zambia + Zimbabwe	17 Sept - 4 Oct 1980	PM approved.
	R. Bruce	S. Africa	15 Sept - 2 Oct 1980	only approved within S.A.
<u>FCO</u>	Sir I. Gilmore	Cyprus	19-23 Apr 1980	PM approved.
	N. Ridley	Latin America and the Caribbean	July 1979	PM approved
	Lord Carrington	USA	3-6 May 1980	PM app'd.
	P. Baker	Paris Air Show	13-14 June	PM did not approve
<u>Treasury</u>		Poland + Yugoslavia	18-25 Nov 79	PM approved.
	Sir G. Howe	Malta	25-28 September	PM approved
		Belgrade	28 Sept. - 5 October	PM approved
		Luxembourg	9-10 June	
<u>Energy</u>				
	D. Howell	USA	27 Sept. - 3 October	PM approved
		Mexico, USA + Venezuela	September 1980	PM refused.
<u>Defence</u>	B. Thompson	H. Kong	25 Sept - 10 Oct 80	
	K. Speed	USA	3-9 August 79	PM did not approve
		USA	5-15 Sept 80	PM approved.
<u>MAFF</u>				
	P. Walker	France	13-15 May	PM approved
	(PM + A.B. Smith)	Italy	3-5 June 1980	PM app'd.
		Latin America	21 October - 2 Nov.	PM approved, but visit later cancelled
		Netherlands	20 September	PM did not approve
		Dublin	26-28 September	PM did not approve but wives did not wish to go
	Lord Ferrers	Kenya and Sudan	22 Sept. - 4 October	PM did not approve
<u>Trade</u>	J. Wiggins	Canada + Cologne	31 Aug - 11 Sept	PM did not approve
	J. Nott	New Zealand, Australia and USA	13 Sept. - 4 October	PM approved
	Attorney General	Barbados	24 April - 5 May	PM approved.
	Scotland			
	K. Younger	Bonissel	3-4 Dec	PM, not approve



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 September 1979

B/F 10.9.79

tw

Ministers

Action taken on min. ab.

You will have seen a copy of Ros Bratley's letter to me of 31 August, seeking approval for the Minister of Agriculture and Mr. Buchanan-Smith, with wives, to travel to Dublin from 26 to 28 September.

The Prime Minister is not disposed to agree to such a large group travelling at public expense, but is prepared to consider precedents for such European meetings before she takes a final decision. Could you please let me know whether there are precedents for this level of attendance at public expense for similar meetings in the recent past.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Ros Bratley (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) and Barry Hilton (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

Ray Pringle, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

lg

PRIME MINISTER.

1.

Agriculture want two wives to travel at public expense for one meeting Are you prepared to agree?



Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Whitehall Place London SW1A 2HH

MAF
31ix

From the Minister's Private Office

Mike Pattison Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
London SW1

I should like further details of previous meeting.
No department other than MAF

31 August 1979

Dear Mike

has asked for such a large party and 2 wives to public expense for a meeting

I am writing to seek the Prime Minister's permission to my Minister visiting Ireland from 26-28 September. The visit is at the invitation of the Irish Government who are the present holders of the Presidency of the EEC Council of Ministers. As you will know it has become normal practice for the Presidential country to hold an informal Council to enable discussions to take place in a more relaxed atmosphere than is normally the case. It also gives an opportunity for each country to show something of its agricultural system.

that kind
can
formed
—
out.

The Minister will travel by schedule flights leaving for Ireland on the morning of 26 September and returning on the afternoon of 28 September. The invitation extends to the Minister of State (C), a private secretary and the Permanent Secretary and also to the Minister's wives. I should be grateful for permission for the travel costs for Mrs Walker and Mrs Buchanan-Smith being met from public funds.

I am copying this letter to Ray Pringle (FCO) Murdo Maclean (Government Chief Whip's Office) and Barry Hilton (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever
R A Bratley

Miss R A Bratley
Assistant Private Secretary

Minister



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

*See Mr Nott's
Min' Ab.*

I have put to you separately a proposal that four Ministers should represent the UK at the EEC Council of Ministers on Tuesday 12 June.

You have now moved the Budget Cabinet to that morning. If you approve the visits it will mean that Messrs. Nott and Gilmour will miss Cabinet. This is obviously unavoidable for at least one and probably both for this particular meeting.

✓ M.A.P. I really think M.A.P.

Mr. Nott should be at the

*Budget speech & therefore
at the Cabinet meeting*

7 June 1979

and

PRIME MINISTER

The attached letter sets out Mr. Lester's proposals for a summer visit to the USA financed by the US State Department.

He has not yet had clearance from the Whips or the FCO. But if you wished to instruct that Ministers should not travel under sponsorship of a foreign government (as in the cases of foreign corporations, in relation to Mr. St. John-Stevas' request earlier this week) I can make this known now, and therefore prevent further time being spent on clearing and planning this trip.

I believe Sir George Young wishes to take up a similar invitation, although he is now investigating ways of travelling within the American Government's International Visitor Programme, but with expenses met by the Department here.

Can you please say whether:

- i. you are prepared to permit Ministers to travel under any form of foreign financial sponsorship?
- ii. you are prepared to let Ministers travel under such programmes even if they refuse to accept finance from foreign sources?

1 June 1979

P.S.O.

MAD

This just initi- on.

Little M.P. are backbench
members - when their minds are
available. On they go as junior
of the U.S. Govt. changed through
the Foreign Office. There is no
hybrid animal.

Further - there will be various
responsibilities for Ministers in the
House at that time.

He cannot be a Minister or
Junior M.P. The same applies to
Sir George Young.

Art.

PRIME MINISTER

✓ MAD

Ministers' Movements

I intend to put in your box each Friday a list of Ministerial absences overseas for the next seven days.
Is the attached format convenient?

in separate folder at back of file

The Cabinet Office prepare a list of the exact whereabouts of all Ministers over the weekend. This also takes account of the likely timing of any journey, at home or abroad, which they may be making during the weekend. It gives telephone numbers for all available points. Our switchboard have a copy of this list. At the weekend, they can therefore either obtain any Minister by telephone, or tell you how soon they will be able to do so. In future, when you ask the switchboard to obtain a Minister whom they know to be overseas, they will ask you whether you would like to be put through to him overseas or whether you want to speak to someone else at home.

MAD

Parlyson - the new movements look nice. as!

1 June 1979

CF to see + return
MAD 28/5
Minister



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

You have agreed that I may give your approval to short business trips, and to holiday trips in the forthcoming recess, without reference to you provided that the Chief Whip and the Foreign Office are content.

I take it that you would like to see all visits which require an absence from Cabinet, and all longer overseas visits on business. I will also put to you any visits which look out of the ordinary, and of which you should therefore be aware before they are approved and publicised.

We are now beginning to get bids for summer holiday travel plans. Where these are likely to be in the recess and do not involve Cabinet Ministers, should I give your approval without further reference to you?

MAD *Yes please*
out.

24 May 1979

FILE Ministers

DS



Albans

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 May 1979

Dear Tony,

David Holt has now left the Private Office here. Caroline Stephens, the Prime Minister's Personal Assistant, is now working from the Private Office, and she will keep the diary. I will handle Ministerial absences.

I am sending copies of this letter to Private Secretaries to all members of the Cabinet, Genie Flanagan (Transport), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office), Martin Vile (Cabinet Office) and David Laughrin (Civil Service Department).

Yours ever

Mike Pattison

Tony Butler, Esq.,
Home Office.