

PRIME MINISTER

Visit by Mrs. Gandhi

You said recently that you felt that you should see Mrs. Gandhi off when she leaves at about 2200 hours on Thursday, 25 March.

May I suggest that you should consider this again:

- a) The next day you leave for Harrogate, where, on the Saturday, you make an important speech to the Central Council. Given that you will have been so preoccupied with Mrs. Gandhi in the early part of the week, Thursday evening is (so Caroline tells me) quite the best time for you to concentrate on your speech for Harrogate.
- b) You are already doing Mrs. Gandhi an unusual honour in meeting her on arrival. If you also see her off, the precedent will be even worse and we shall be told by others that they ought to have the same treatment. This is practicable in some capitals but not in London where it takes so long to get to the airport.
- c) Since Mrs. Gandhi will be spending the Thursday privately, it is quite in order for you to say good-bye to her on the previous day.

May I therefore suggest again that I should try to find a Cabinet Minister to see Mrs. Gandhi off?

Yes mb

A.F.C. 11.2

11 February 1982

15 February 1982

Visit by Mrs. Gandhi

In my letter of 11 February I promised to write about the departure arrangements for Mrs. Gandhi.

The Prime Minister is inclined to think that Mrs. Gandhi should be seen off by a Cabinet Minister and would be grateful to know whether this can be arranged.

JOHN COLES

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

