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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 November 1982

Dear Sir,

NETHERLANDS AMBASSADOR

The Netherlands Ambassador called on the Prime Minister this morning, mainly to make his number before the State visit of Queen Beatrix from 16 - 19 November.

The Prime Minister enquired after the health of Prince Claus. Mr. Huydecoper said that the Prince was now very much better. He had taken too much upon himself during the earlier part of the year, particularly during Queen Beatrix's visit to the United States.

There was then some discussion of the Prime Minister's visit to Bonn and Berlin last week. Mrs. Thatcher said that she had discussed with Chancellor Kohl the importance of maintaining the Nato double decision. She had made it plain that she thought Britain, Germany and Italy should go ahead whatever other countries decided. In response to the Prime Minister's questions, Mr. Huydecoper said that sites were being prepared in the Netherlands for the eventual missiles and that the programme of the new Government was fairly encouraging to those who believed that Netherlands should support the double decision.

Mr. Huydecoper asked whether Chancellor Kohl had thrown any light on the discussion at the Franco/German Summit on defence matters. The Prime Minister said that the Chancellor appeared to have received some kind of assurance that the numbers of French troops on German soil would not be diminished.

Towards the end of the conversation, the Ambassador said that he had learned from the Hague that, primarily for constitutional reasons, Queen Beatrix wanted her talk with the Prime Minister on 17 November to be in a very small group, without records being taken. The Prime Minister is disposed to agree to this and envisages that the only other persons attending the talks might be the two Foreign Ministers. I understood from the Ambassador after his call that a proposal along these lines was to be made through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. I should be grateful if you could confirm in due course that the above formula meets with the wishes of Queen Beatrix.

BF

A. J. COLES

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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