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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 June 1982

Dear John,

Anglo-Italian Summit

In my letter of 15 April I confirmed that 7 July would be acceptable to the Italians as the date for the next Anglo-Italian Summit meeting. We now need to consider the framework of arrangements.

The Ambassador in Rome has written to ask whether the Prime Minister might be prepared to travel to Rome on the afternoon of 6 July. This would make possible a programme similar to the one prepared for the Prime Minister's last trip to Rome on 23 November 1980 which, in the event, had to be cut short due to pressure of Parliamentary business at home. Although the Italian government is shaky and has not performed well on the Falklands, Italy remains our third most important European partner in political terms. A visit lasting longer than a day would allow the Prime Minister to meet a broader cross-section of Italians than has been the case in recent years.

The programme for the 1980 Summit involved an afternoon arrival in time for a tête-à-tête meeting, followed by an official dinner during the evening. Plenary talks were to be held the following morning, followed by a working lunch. In the afternoon an audience of the Pope was planned; it is too early at this stage to consider whether such an engagement would be timely on this occasion. The Prime Minister could also have brief meetings with some of the Party Secretaries of the Coalition.

If other engagements prevent the Prime Minister from travelling to Rome on 6 July (I understand that an audience with The Queen has already been arranged for that evening), the Secretary of State hopes that the Prime Minister can agree to spend the night of 7/8 July in Rome.

There is a case for adding another Minister to the British team. We need to derive as much benefit as we can in particular fields from the general political impetus created by a Summit meeting. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose Private Office is aware of the possibility, would be an ideal candidate to accompany the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. Alternatively, Lord Cockfield is already planning a visit to Italy in July which could be combined with the Summit. A further possibility would be to ask the Secretary of State for Industry whether he would be prepared to go. There is always scope for



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improving industrial collaboration, and Mr Jenkin's presence could therefore be valuable.

I should be grateful if you could let me know the Prime Minister's views on which Minister she would like to accompany her, before we say anything to the Italians about wider participation in the Summit. I enclose a draft letter from you to the Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ensure that the dates are kept free in his diary. The letter could be adapted if the Prime Minister wishes to be accompanied by one of the other Ministers I have suggested.

Mr Pym will be in Yugoslavia from 5-6 July, and will travel direct to Rome on the evening of 6 July: he would not be able to arrive earlier.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretaries to Sir R Armstrong, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretaries of State for Trade and for Industry.

Yours ever.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Francis Richards'.

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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