



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 April 1982

Dear John,

Prime Minister's Visit to the Far East

Thank you for your letter of 8 March. We have consulted the Embassies in Tokyo and Peking about the order of visits, in the light of the Prime Minister's comments, and are now in a position to offer further advice for which you asked.

It is unfortunately clear that both the Japanese and the Chinese Governments would find it extremely difficult to arrange a satisfactory visit for the Prime Minister if the order of the visits were reversed. The Japanese Foreign Ministry have told us that it would be virtually impossible for Mr Suzuki to receive Mrs Thatcher after 24 September. An extraordinary session of the Japanese Diet will start around that date, and Mr Suzuki and other Cabinet Ministers will be required to attend the Diet almost continuously for the first ten days of the session. The Foreign Ministry have also emphasised that, apart from his heavy schedule, Mr Suzuki will be very preoccupied with the substance of the Diet debates, which are particularly sensitive and which fall only two months before Mr Suzuki has to offer himself for re-election as President of the Liberal Democratic Party and hence as Prime Minister. The Chinese, for their part, have given us less details, but have told us that they will be preoccupied with another "high-level State visit" which cannot be moved, until 20 September. Lord Carrington does not believe that it would be right to disregard the very clear preferences which both Governments have expressed. I hope therefore that the Prime Minister will be able to agree to visiting China after Japan.

We shall of course hope to arrange the programme in China in such a way as to avoid imposing too great a strain on the Prime Minister and her party. Travel within China will be relatively simple, as (subject to the Prime Minister's views) the intention is to visit only Peking and Shanghai. We have considered how to meet the Prime Minister's wish to see something of rural life, bearing in mind that in 1977 she visited a People's commune near Suzhou in the relatively fertile Shanghai district. The Embassy in Peking have suggested that an interesting day could

/be arranged



be arranged in the country near Peking, which might, for example, include a visit to one of the communes which is making extensive use of bio-gas in dwellings; a visit to one of the large communes nearer the capital which supplies foodstuffs to city markets; a visit to a free market, which is one of the aspects of revived, and less collectivised Chinese agriculture; and perhaps a visit to an old temple en route. If on the other hand the Prime Minister has in mind a visit to some more scenic area, this could be arranged, but might mean cutting out Shanghai. If this were her wish we could offer a number of alternative suggestions for interesting and attractive places away from the main centres.

The Prime Minister's wish, when visiting Japan, to see some part of the country other than Tokyo suggests that we might plan on her spending a day or two longer in Japan. This would in any event be appropriate given that the Japanese Government have now indicated their wish to invite the Prime Minister as an official guest of the Government, a relatively rare honour which would normally imply a stay of at least four days if not longer. One way of achieving this might be to advance the departure from the UK to Thursday 16 September; this would give an arrival time in Tokyo of Friday 17 September (the Japanese would strongly prefer Mrs Thatcher to arrive in Tokyo rather than, say, Osaka). This would permit a journey by air or by bullet train to Osaka or Kyoto on Saturday 18 September, returning to Tokyo in the evening of Sunday 19 September. The Osaka/Kyoto region includes a number of advanced industrial developments as well as much of the historical and cultural wealth of Japan. The remainder of the programme could be approximately as set out in my letter of 4 March. I enclose a revised draft outline for convenience.

I am writing to you separately about recent approaches we have had from the Korean Government about possible inclusion of Korea in the Far East tour.

Yours ever

J E Holmes

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Private Secretary

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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE FAR EAST

Draft Outline Programme

Thursday 16 September ✓

Leave UK by RAF flight for Tokyo.

Friday 17 September

Arrive Tokyo. Relatively quiet day for acclimatisation.

Saturday 18 September

Travel to Osaka by air or bullet train. Industrial visits. Stay overnight in Kyoto.

Sunday 19 September

In Kyoto. Return to Tokyo later.

Monday 20/Tuesday 21 September

Official talks and calls in Tokyo

Wednesday 22 September

Fly to Peking. Some official calls; welcome banquet.

Thursday 23 September

Official talks and calls in Peking.

Friday 24 September

Touring in Peking region.

Saturday 25 September

Fly to Shanghai: possible ship launch.

Sunday 26 September

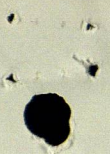
Fly to Hong Kong.

Monday 27/Tuesday 28 September

In Hong Kong: meetings and visits. Leave for UK in evening of 28 September.

Wednesday 29 September

Arrive UK early morning.



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Dear John,

Prime Minister's Visit to the Far East: Korea

As I mentioned in my separate letter about the visits to Japan and China, there is a further consideration. We have been under heavy pressure from the Korean Government in recent weeks for the Prime Minister to include a visit to South Korea in her Far Eastern tour. The Secretary of State for Trade minuted to the Prime Minister on 30 March on the same point. The Koreans argue that it would not be understood in their country if the Prime Minister did not take this opportunity for a visit. They have also implied that a Prime Ministerial visit (the first by a British Prime Minister) could pay significant dividends in the negotiations on defence and civil contracts for which we are competitors; and that by contrast failure to pay a visit, at a time when the French are putting some effort into their relations with the Korean Government at the highest level (President Chun may be visiting France next year), could have adverse consequences for our exports to Korea.

We should not necessarily be moved by these rather heavy-handed Korean tactics. However it is undeniable that a visit to Korea could pay significant commercial dividends over the period of their current 5-Year Plan. The Korean Government frequently decides where to place major commercial contracts for political reasons. President Chun has a strong personal interest in demonstrating his access to the leaders of major Western countries. He was received in Washington by President Reagan last year; Mr Trudeau has recently visited Seoul; following a successful visit to the ASEAN countries last year, Chun has now set his sights on Europe. (He has twice hinted that he would like to visit the UK, apart from his possible visit to France).

We recognise that the Far East tour will already be tiring enough. The Prime Minister might however find interesting a brief visit to one of the most successful of the newly industrialising countries, and one which operates under the constant shadow of military threat from communist North Korea.

/If we



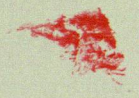
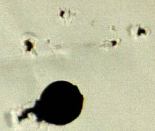
If we pursue this possibility, there are clearly consequences for the rest of the Far East programme. The Koreans have indicated that a stop-over of a few hours in Seoul would be acceptable and our Ambassador believes that the inside of a working day (to include calls on the President and Prime Minister and a meal) would be sufficient. A complicating factor is that the Chinese would not like the Prime Minister to fly direct from South Korea (which they do not recognise) to Peking. If Korea were to be included, therefore, it would have to be the first stop - or alternatively the last. There is little difference in flying time between the UK and Seoul or Tokyo. If the Prime Minister agrees to visit Japan before China as we have recommended, the order of visits would then be either Korea/Japan/China/Hong Kong; or Japan/China/Hong Kong/Korea. The inclusion of Korea would of course mean a slight compression of the programme in Japan or China unless a further 24 hours were added to the visit.

If the Prime Minister concludes that a visit to Korea on this occasion is not feasible, and wants to balance any Korean disappointment, the best way would be to invite President Chun to visit the UK next year. (1983 marks the centenary of the ratification of the Anglo-Korean Treaty establishing diplomatic relations). If the Prime Minister cannot go to Korea she might therefore wish to send President Chun a personal message explaining the difficulties and at the same time extending an official invitation for him to visit the UK during 1983 as a guest of Government. A suitable draft could be provided.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

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