

Subject



Heve.
bcpc.

CC MASTER

10 DOWNING STREET

10 December 1984

From the Private Secretary

Dear Len,

POSSIBLE VISIT BY THE PRIME MINISTER
TO THE UNITED STATES IN FEBRUARY 1985

The Prime Minister had a discussion this afternoon with Sir Oliver Wright about her projected visit to Washington in February 1985.

The Prime Minister said that she had two worries about her visit in February. The first was that she would have seen President Reagan and discussed the most important issues with him in December. She would see him again at the Economic Summit in Bonn in May. A visit in February might seem a bit of an imposition. The second was that she had hoped, on this occasion, to get outside Washington and see something of the South and West. This would inevitably mean making speeches, for which new ideas would be needed. She had made a large number of speeches this autumn and was not convinced she had the time or the material to produce further worthwhile speeches as early as February.

Sir Oliver Wright said that the White House had made it quite clear to him that the Prime Minister would be very welcome in February despite the fact that she would also pay a brief visit in December. February would be ideal timing for the proposed seminar with President Reagan on arms control matters and the Prime Minister's participation was essential for the success of that. It was also most important for her to have an early opportunity to meet the new leadership in Congress whose influence over the main issues of interest to the United Kingdom such as the budget deficit and the US position on arms control would be very great. It would not be necessary for the Prime Minister to go through with the full programme which he had proposed in his telegram. For instance a slightly shorter visit taking in just Washington and Texas would be perfectly feasible. He would be happy to help with ideas and material for speeches. For a short visit, he envisaged only two: one in Washington which might deal with politico/security matters including East/West relations, arms control, the state of the Alliance and the European contribution to it; the other an economic speech dealing with the international economic situation and also perhaps bringing in the Prime Minister's views on the future of democracy.

The Prime Minister said that she would reflect further but would want to be quite certain that what was proposed was convenient and acceptable to President Reagan before making a decision. She would thus mention it to him on 22 December.

It would be prudent to start planning now on the basis of a visit in February taking in Washington and Texas but leaving California for a later occasion. In particular, work should be set in hand straightaway on material for speeches. At least until further guidance is forthcoming, these should be on the two broad themes proposed by Sir Oliver Wright; and we should take up his offer to provide material, asking the Embassy to submit this as soon as possible for the New Year. But you and David Peretz, to whom I am copying this letter, will undoubtedly want to commission work here (leaving the future of democracy to be dealt with by us) with the aim of submitting reasonably full draft outlines by 10 January.

I am copying this letter to David Peretz (HM Treasury), Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

yes sir,
C.D. Powell

C.D. POWELL

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.