



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

22 September 1986

*Dear Charles,*South Pacific Conference, Papeete, 3-5 November

On 18 September we received the enclosed letter from the French Ambassador to the Prime Minister, covering a message from M. Gaston Flosse, Head of the Territorial Government of French Polynesia, inviting the Prime Minister and Mr Thatcher to attend the South Pacific Conference in Papeete from 3-5 November. Officials at the French Embassy have told us that M. Chirac will be in Papeete at the time to lead the French delegation. They add that similar invitations are being extended to President Reagan and Prime Ministers Hawke and Lange.

The South Pacific Commission is an advisory and consultative body which runs regional programmes for development. Its membership consists of the island territories (both self-governing and non-self-governing) and Australia, New Zealand, France, the USA and the UK. British membership is now formally justified only by our responsibility for Pitcairn; but at modest cost we are seen to be involved in regional affairs. An FCO Minister has sometimes attended part of the proceedings in recent years. Lady Young did so in 1984. In 1985, however, an Assistant Under-Secretary led the UK delegation.

The Foreign Secretary's view is that, given our Presidency and the likely pressure of other business in November a senior official rather than a Minister should attend this year. American and French attendance has hitherto been at senior official level. We have already told the Conference's Secretariat that Mr David Gillmore (our new Deputy Under-Secretary, responsible for Asia) will lead the British delegation.

The Foreign Secretary does not think that M. Chirac's possible presence at the Conference should lead us to change our proposed representation. He sees no reason for the Prime Minister to do more than to send a courteous reply (draft enclosed) to the French Ambassador declining M. Flosse's invitation.

*Yours ever,**Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

HE Monsieur Jacques Viot
 French Embassy
 58 Knightsbridge
 LONDON SW1X 7JT

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

I was very pleased to receive your letter of 17 September, in which you conveyed Monsieur Flosse's kind invitation to attend the 26th South Pacific Conference in Papeete.

Unfortunately I have a very full programme of commitments at that time and I greatly regret that I am unable to accept this invitation. Would you be so good as to convey this message to Monsieur Flosse and send him my best wishes for the success of the Conference?

CJP

Enclosures—flag(s).....



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

23 September 1986

Dear Ambassador,

I was very pleased to receive your letter of 17 September in which you conveyed Monsieur Flosse's kind invitation to attend the 26th South Pacific Conference in Papeete.

Unfortunately I have a very full programme of commitments at that time, and I greatly regret that I am unable to accept this invitation. Would you be so good as to convey this message to Monsieur Flosse and send him my best wishes for the success of the Conference?

Yours sincerely
Raymond Chanter

His Excellency Monsieur Jacques Viot

CAJ

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE

LONDRES

L'AMBASSADEUR

17th September, 1986

Dear Prime Minister,

I have just received this message addressed to you by Monsieur Gaston Flosse, Président du Gouvernement du Territoire de Polynésie française.

I enclose it herewith.

Yours sincerely,

J. Viot

Jacques Viot

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
Prime Minister,
Downing Street,
LONDON S.W.1

MESSAGE DE MONSIEUR GASTON FLOSSE
PRESIDENT DU GOUVERNEMENT
DU TERRITOIRE DE POLYNESIE FRANCAISE

A

THE RT. HON. MARGARET THATCHER, M.P.,
PRIME MINISTER

Le 17 septembre 1986

"Madame le Premier Ministre,

La Polynésie française aura le privilège d'accueillir la 26ème conférence du Pacifique Sud qui se tiendra à Papeete du 3 au 5 novembre 1986.

A cette occasion, je serais très heureux de vous compter ainsi que votre époux parmi mes invités d'honneur.

Au nom du gouvernement de la Polynésie française, je vous souhaite la bienvenue et vous convie à participer aux manifestations d'amitié organisées par le territoire dans la grande tradition de l'hospitalité de nos îles.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Madame le Premier Ministre, l'expression de ma haute considération.

signé : Gaston Flosse."./.



Faint, embossed text, likely a brand name or title, positioned below the crown emblem. The text is mirrored across the horizontal fold of the paper. The words appear to be "Edinburgh" and "Bank" in a stylized, serif font.