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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

20 April 1989

BICENTENARY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Thank you for your letter of 20 April proposing arrangements which would enable the Prime Minister both to take Questions on the afternoon of 13 July and arrive in Paris in time to attend the inauguration of the opera at 1900 (local time) that day. What you propose seems just about feasible and you may plan on that basis. But I have not entirely lost hope of persuading the Prime Minister to abandon Questions that day.

I am copying this letter to Alex Allan (HM Treasury).

Charles Powell

Stephen Wall Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 April 1989

Dear Charles,

Bicentenary of the French Revolution: Paris,
13-14 July 1989

map. The Prime Minister wrote to President Mitterrand on 31 January accepting in principle his invitation to participate in the Bicentenary celebrations on 13-14 July. She warned that it would be hard for her to leave London before the end of Prime Minister's Questions. If she is to arrive for the main event of the day, she will need to be prepared to change in the VCl0 on the way to Paris.

The latest information we have on the programme for 13-14 July is as follows:

13 July

Morning	Arrival of Heads of State and Government [Bilateral meetings as desired] Ceremony (unspecified) at the Trocadero
1300	Lunch given by President Mitterrand, probably at the Elysee
1530	Public event (unspecified "Spectacle")
1900	Inauguration of the Opera de la Bastille
2100	Gala dinner given by President and Mme Mitterrand at the Musee d'Orsay

14 July

Morning	Military parade on Champs Elysee
Lunch	Given by President Mitterrand at Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1500	Official Bicentenary programme ends and Economic Summit begins

We understand that at least eighteen Heads of State and Government have already accepted (see attached list). We expect that most, if not all, of the principal guests will decide to arrive in Paris in time for the evening events on 13 July. Many will arrive in time for President Mitterrand's lunch. The Americans expect the President (and Mr Baker) to arrive in Paris in time for the Opera inauguration on 13 July. The Canadians expect their full delegation to be in Paris in time for some or all of the 13 July celebrations.

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Although the earlier events could be missed, the Foreign Secretary believes that it would be very desirable for the Prime Minister to attend the Opera inauguration and Gala Dinner (the Foreign Secretary and Chancellor are also invited). Both will be highly visible events. Sir Ewen Fergusson advises that the 13 July events are certain to be unusual and impressive. The Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and Chancellor would be able to attend the Opera inauguration if they were to travel by VC10 (one is reserved) and the Prime Minister were prepared to change for the Opera and Gala Dinner in flight in order to travel direct from the House of Commons to Heathrow and from Orly Airport to the Opera.

The Foreign Secretary hopes that the Prime Minister can agree to attend the Opera inauguration. The timings could be:

1530	Prime Minister's Question Time ends By car to Wellington Barracks
1540	Depart by Puma
1550	Arrive Heathrow Southside
1600	Depart Heathrow
1810	Arrive Paris Orly
1855	Arrive Opera de la Bastille

It may not be necessary to leave as much as 45 minutes to reach the Opera. But it might be necessary to arrive there slightly earlier than 1855 hrs. We may need to adjust exact timings in due course.

I am copying this letter to Alex Allan (HM Treasury).

Jens,
Stephe Wall

(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT WHO HAVE ACCEPTED
PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN
13-14 JULY CELEBRATIONS

Europe

Greece
Ireland
Portugal

Africa

Egypt
Gabon
Ivory Coast
Senegal
Togo
Uganda
Zimbabwe

Asia

India
Pakistan
Philippines

Latin America

Argentina
Brazil
Mexico
Uruguay
Venezuela

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