

CONFIDENTIAL



Bo SLH  
ce PC  
a from

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

29 August 1984

Prime Minister's Visit to South East Asia and  
Sri Lanka

Thank you for your letter of 28 August enclosing draft messages from the Prime Minister to the Heads of Government of Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Sri Lanka explaining that she must regretably postpone her visits to their countries.

I enclose revised versions of the messages as approved by the Prime Minister and should be grateful if you would arrange for their very urgent despatch. It would be helpful if our posts could be asked to report by flash telegram when the messages have been delivered.

In dealing with questions from the press once the messages have been delivered, the No 10 Press Office will take the following line, which has been approved by the Prime Minister:

"Arrangements were being discussed for the Prime Minister to visit Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Sri Lanka for a fortnight in the latter part of September.

The Prime Minister has decided that, against the background of the present industrial situation, it would not be right for her to be so far away from Britain for this period. She has therefore proposed to the Heads of Government concerned that her visits to their countries should be postponed. She hopes that the visits can be reinstated at an early date".

C D Powell

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

Visit to SE Asia

I attach draft messages to the four Heads of Government concerned about the postponement of your visit.

We shall also need a line to take with the press once the messages have been delivered. I suggest:

"Arrangements were being discussed for the Prime Minister to visit Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Sri Lanka for a fortnight in the latter part of September.

The Prime Minister has decided that, against the background of the present industrial situation, it would not be right for her to be so far away from Britain for this period. She has therefore proposed to the Heads of Government concerned that her visits to their countries should be postponed. She hopes that the visits can be reinstated at an early date."

Agree messages and press line?

CDP

Yes - I have spoken to  
letter to Mr. Nicholas

28 August 1984



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 August 1984

Dear Charles,

Prime Minister's Visit to South East Asia and Sri Lanka

Thank you for <sup>your letter</sup> explaining that it was necessary for the Prime Minister to postpone her visit to Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Sri Lanka next month.

[Extensively redrafted]

I attach draft messages from the Prime Minister to the Heads of Government concerned cast in the form of telegrams to posts. These would be accompanied by a telegram of instructions to Heads of Mission asking them to deliver the messages as soon as possible. Once these messages have been delivered to Heads of Government, we propose to invite the High Commissioners/Ambassadors concerned to call formally at the FCO. It would be most helpful if, in the circumstances, you were to speak to them on the telephone first. We can liaise about that tomorrow.

The postponement of the Prime Minister's visit will, of course, be regretted, but we believe that it will be understood. We may, however, have some difficulty with the Prime Minister of Malaysia. Dr Mahathir is a strong personality. He may also misread our motives against the background of the current bilateral air services dispute. This seems to us to justify supplementary instructions to Mr Gillmore in Kuala Lumpur on presentation of the postponement. A draft is attached.

We shall let you have briefing for the Prime Minister's dinner with the Heads of Mission on 30 August in the course of tomorrow.

Sir Geoffrey Howe has not seen these drafts. I will be showing him copies overnight.

Yours ever,

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

Peter Ricketts

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

File No. ....

OUTWARD

Security Classification  
CONFIDENTIAL

Department .....

Drafted by .....

(Block Capitals) .....

TELEGRAM

Precedence  
IMMEDIATE

Tel. Extn. ....

DESK BY -290001..... Z

FOR  
COMMS. DEPT.  
USE

Despatched (Date) .....  
(Time) ..... Z

POST BY ..... Z

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin) ..... Z(G.M.T.) (Restrictive Prefix) .....

(Security Class.) ..... (Caveat) .....

(Codeword) ..... (Privacy marking) .....

(Desk by) ..... Z

TO IMMEDIATE KUALA LUMPUR ..... Tel. No. .... of .....  
(precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post) .....

AND TO SAVING .....

INFO .....

INFO SAVING .....

Distribution:—

[TEXT]

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO SOUTH EAST ASIA AND SRI LANKA

1. We realise that this will be a difficult message to put across.

Dr Mahathir was evidently looking forward to this visit which has considerable political and economic significance for both sides.

2. We recognise that Mahathir may <sup>now</sup> react adversely; and that he may see a link (which does not exist) between postponement and our bilateral air services problem. Grateful if in conveying the Prime Minister's decision you could emphasise (a) the domestic

//background

CONFIDENTIAL

Copies to:—

CONFIDENTIAL

background and (b) that Malaysia has not been singled out. The visit was to have underlined the progress in our relations with Malaysia. The objective remains unchanged.

3. You can assure Dr Mahathir, as necessary, that there is no connexion with air services. We believe that it should be possible for us to disagree on particular points without impact on our relations generally.

4. We shall be briefing the press accordingly.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

File No. ....

OUTWARD

Security Classification CONFIDENTIAL
Precedence IMMEDIATE
DESKBY .....290001Z.....Z

Department .....

Drafted by  
(Block Capitals) .....

TELEGRAM

Tel. Extn. ....

FOR  
COMMS. DEPT.  
USE

Despatched (Date) .....  
(Time) .....Z

POSTBY .....Z

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin).....Z(G.M.T.) (Restrictive Prefix).....

(Security Class.)..... (Caveat/  
Privacy marking).....

(Codeword)..... (Deskby).....Z

TO..... IMMEDIATE KUALA LUMPUR..... Tel. No. ....of.....  
(precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post).....

AND TO SAVING.....

INFO.....

INFO SAVING.....

Distribution:-

[TEXT]

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRIME MINISTER  
OF MALAYSIA

Begins

1. I have been looking forward keenly to my visit to Malaysia. In particular, I have been hoping to learn first-hand about your achievements and objectives, to confirm that we have much in common and to contribute to the development of a modern and forward-looking relationship between our countries.

2. It is therefore with particular regret that, against the background of developments in the industrial situation here, I have concluded that it would not be right for me to be absent for a prolonged period from the United Kingdom at this time. I feel sure you will understand these difficult situations, and the need /for

Copies to:-

for unpalatable decisions which they so often require.

3. This is a great disappointment to me personally as I had been particularly looking forward to continuing our discussions. I also very much regret the inconvenience to you, Mr. Prime Minister, and to the Government of Malaysia, from this change of plan. I hope that the visit can be rearranged to take place in a few months' time. Our High Commissioner will be in touch with you about this.

4. Meanwhile, may I send you my best personal wishes.

Ends

File No. ....  
Department .....  
Drafted by  
(Block Capitals) .....  
Tel. Extn. ....

OUTWARD  
TELEGRAM

Security Classification CONFIDENTIAL
Precedence IMMEDIATE
DESKBY 290001 .....Z

FOR COMMS. DEPT. USE	Despatched (Date) ..... (Time) .....Z	POSTBY .....Z
----------------------------	--	---------------

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin).....Z(G.M.T.) (Restrictive Prefix).....  
(Security Class.)..... (Caveat/  
Privacy marking).....  
(Codeword)..... (Deskby).....Z

TO IMMEDIATE JAKARTA Tel. No. ....of.....  
(precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post).....  
.....  
.....

AND TO SAVING.....  
INFO.....  
.....  
.....  
INFO SAVING.....

Distribution:—

[TEXT]

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRESIDENT SOEHARTO

Begins

1. Your letter of 3 August confirmed your kind invitation to me to visit Indonesia. This was to have been my first visit. As you will know, I have been looking forward keenly to it. Our two countries have in recent years built up a valuable relationship. I have seen the planned visit as an opportunity not only to learn at first hand of Indonesia's achievements but also to promote further our political, economic and

/technological

Copies to:—



• technological links. I was also looking forward to continuing the very useful exchange of views which we began on your own State Visit to Britain in 1979. I greatly appreciate the thought and care that has gone into the preparation of my programme.

2. It is with great regret therefore that I have to inform you that I shall not after all now be able to come to Indonesia in September. Developments in the industrial situation in Britain make it impossible for me to be absent from home for such a prolonged period. I must with great reluctance, postpone my visit to Indonesia as to the other countries on my itinerary. This is a disappointment to me personally. I also greatly regret the inconvenience to you, Mr. President, and to the Government of Indonesia from this change of plan. I should still very much like to fulfil my visit in the not too distant future. Our Ambassador will be approaching you about this.

3. I send you my warmest best wishes.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

File No. ....

OUTWARD

Security Classification  
CONFIDENTIAL

Department .....

TELEGRAM

Precedence  
IMMEDIATE

Drafted by  
(Block Capitals) .....

Tel. Extn. ....

DESKBY 290001.....Z

FOR  
COMMS. DEPT.  
USE

Despatched (Date) .....  
(Time) .....Z

POSTBY .....Z

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin).....Z(G.M.T.) (Restrictive Prefix).....

(Security Class.)..... (Caveat/  
Privacy marking).....

(Codeword)..... (Deskby).....Z

TO IMMEDIATE SINGAPORE Tel. No. ....of.....  
(precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post).....

AND TO SAVING.....

INFO.....

INFO SAVING.....

Distribution:-

[TEXT]

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER  
OF SINGAPORE

Begins

1. I have been looking forward keenly to my visit to Singapore next month, my first as Prime Minister. As you know I find our discussions enormously stimulating and useful. It is therefore with very great regret that I have concluded that, against the background of developments in the industrial situation here, of which you will doubtless be aware, it would not be right for me to be absent for a prolonged period from the United Kingdom. I am obliged, therefore, with great reluctance to postpone my visit to Singapore, as to the other countries on my itinerary. I am confident that,

Copies to:-

as a Prime Minister yourself, you will understand that situations of this sort can sometimes arise.

2. This is a deep disappointment to me personally as I had been quite particularly looking forward to seeing you. I also very much regret the inconvenience to you and your colleagues from this change of plan after all the work which has been done on the programme. I hope to be able to reinstate my visit as soon as the situation permits. Our High Commissioner will be approaching you to see what alternative dates might be convenient.

3. Meanwhile may I send you my warmest personal good wishes.

Ends.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

File No. ....

OUTWARD

Security Classification  
CONFIDENTIAL

Department .....

TELEGRAM

Precedence  
IMMEDIATE

Drafted by  
(Block Capitals) .....

Tel. Extn. ....

DESKBY 290400Z .....Z

FOR  
COMMS. DEPT.  
USE

Despatched (Date) .....  
(Time) .....Z

POSTBY .....Z

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin).....Z(G.M.T.)

(Restrictive Prefix).....

(Security Class.).....CONFIDENTIAL

(Caveat/  
Privacy marking).....

(Codeword).....

(Deskby).....Z

TO IMMEDIATE COLOMBO  
(precedence) (post)

Tel. No. ....of.....

AND TO (precedence/post).....

AND TO SAVING.....

INFO.....

INFO SAVING.....

Distribution:--

[TEXT]

MIPT: MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER TO PRESIDENT  
JAYEWARDENE

Begins:

1. I am very sorry to have to tell you that it will not after all be possible for me to visit Sri Lanka next month to attend the inauguration ceremony for the Victoria Dam. I had been looking forward keenly to this event, to seeing your country after all that you told me during your own visit here, and to the honour of addressing the Sri Lanka Parliament. However, developments in the industrial situation in the UK make it inappropriate for me to be so far from home for the protracted time envisaged in my planned tour of South East Asia and Sri Lanka. I am sure that with your own heavy responsibilities you will understand my reasons for this decision.

Copies to:--

2. It is a very deep disappointment to me and my husband that we should not be able to be with you at the commissioning of the Victoria Dam and, in particular, that we are unable to accept your personal invitation to what will be a historic occasion. I also much regret the inconvenience caused to you and to your Government by this change of plan after all the work which has been done on my programme. I hope, however, that it will be possible for me to be represented at the commissioning ceremony by a British Minister.

3. I send you my best wishes and hope that it will be possible for me to reinstate my visit to Sri Lanka before too long.

Ends.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN