



①  
CDP  
27/3.

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

You may like  
to have another  
look at this,  
it would be helpful  
to have a sketch  
on your preferences.

You are of course  
absolutely right: Expo is  
in Brisbane.

CDP 25/3.

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## PRIME MINISTER

## VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

We need to give some preliminary thought to your visit to Australia in August. There are a number of questions to settle.

How long do you want to spend in Australia?

The only specific event for you is British day at Expo 88 in Adelaide on Friday 5 August.

*I thought it was  
Brisbane?*

Other possible engagements are:

- a day in Canberra to meet Mr. Hawke and other members of the Government;

- some time in Sydney and in Melbourne. The Opposition leader has invited you to dinner in Sydney. We have major commercial and economic interests in Melbourne (but you have of course been before);

*Probably  
a must.*

- a visit to Perth. You might like to spend some time there on the way out or back.

*Would like to  
see Perth.*

This points to at least three full working days in Australia, and allowing some time to rest after the journey, it's probably wise to say four days: Tuesday 2 August-Friday 5 August inclusive.

(If you wanted to visit Alistair McAlpine at Broome, you would have to allow at least another day. Broome is three hours flight from Perth, and the VC10 cannot land there.)

Where should you stop on the way to or from Australia?

The VC10 (or Tristar for that matter) needs to make a minimum of two stops on both the outward and return journey. They can be refuelling stops only: or you can make them into visits of half-a-day or more.

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The main candidates are:

- Oman. You have not been since 1981. But the Sultan may be in the UK in late July/early August.

*We could repeat there - perhaps have landing he was in residence which I doubt.*

- UAE. Again you have not been for some time; our commercial interests are substantial, and Sheikh Zaid's State visit is not until mid-1989.

- Pakistan. A stop-over here would demonstrate our solidarity and support for Pakistan at what is likely to be a difficult moment over Afghanistan. But it might necessitate a visit to India as well. *Yes*

- India. There would not be much point if Rajiv Gandhi is still in a deep sulk over Panorama. But you could stop in Madras to see Mr. Alexander (although this might cause some concern in Sri Lanka).

*We could clear this with Sri Lanka*

- Bangkok. You left Thailand off your 1985 itinerary and they have been pressing you since then to go.

- Singapore. You always find a talk with Lee Kuan Yew useful, and he has already sent a message to say that he would love to see you. This could be a meeting at the airport.

*Have to stop - could drink in from the airport section.*

- Fiji. A visit would show conclusively that we do not regard them as beyond the pale; and the Pacifics generally would be greatly chuffed. But it would be a longer journey home and because you were going Westabout would eliminate some of the other options listed above as possible stopovers on the way home.

*May be discuss - this would have implications for our relationship with India.*

Quite apart from what is desirable, one has to think of what is feasible in terms of timing. For instance, to be in Australia by the night of Monday 1 August and assuming departure from London on the morning of Saturday 30 July, you could have half a day each in Pakistan and Thailand but technical stops only in the Gulf and Singapore.

How should you travel?

I have investigated alternatives to the VC10. There is no significant difference in flight time between the VC10 and a Tristar. The Tristar might be more comfortable on a very long journey, but would cost about 50% more. The cost of chartering Concorde for Australia would be about £500,000.

The choice of intermediate stops would be limited. It looks like the VC10.

*- Agreed - but we really must make more comfortable arrangements for the Press.*

I suggest that you indicate in order of priority the places where you would like to stop-over, and we will then work out a detailed itinerary to see how far it is possible. Agree?

C.D.I.

*if Fiji is possible, 2, allow  
Canton? 2 to 2. Unless we were  
going to India on the way back  
we could not go to Pakistan. That  
would really mean the Gulf - Singapore,  
Perth (on the way out) and then  
Brisbane.*

(C. D. POWELL)

24 March 1988





Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
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London SW1A 2AH

23 March 1988

cc PC  
D/C

*Dear Charles,*

Prime Minister's Visit to Australia

Your letter of 7 March asked for advice on the Prime Minister's visit to Australia.

Aircraft Types

The flying speed of a Tristar is roughly the same as that of a VC10, but the Tristar has a longer range. Using a Tristar might save one refuelling stop (1½ hours) in each direction. But two refuelling stops would be the minimum needed by either a VC10 or Tristar in each direction. The total flight time, whether by VC10 or Tristar, between London and Canberra would be 25½ hours outwards and 27 hours on the return.

We estimate roughly that the cost of using an RAF VC10 for the whole trip would be £240,000 whereas a Tristar chartered from British Airtours would cost £410,000.

Programme in Australia

Sir John Leahy has left Canberra, and John Coles arrived there yesterday. The post in Canberra have for planning purposes suggested the following programme:

Monday 1 August

Afternoon/Evening arrive Canberra: no engagements that evening

Tuesday 2 August

Calls in Canberra, including lunch with Mr Hawke

Wednesday 3 August

Speech to National Press Club in Canberra  
Fly to Melbourne  
Dinner hosted by Premier of Victoria, Mr Cain

/Thursday

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Thursday 4 August

Speech to the Committee for the Economic Development of  
Australia in Melbourne  
Fly to Sydney for dinner hosted by Opposition Leader,  
Mr Howard

Friday 5 August

In Brisbane for British Day at EXPO

Saturday 6 August

Depart for UK

A visit to Perth could be fitted in, but this would probably have to be at the expense of Melbourne, which is of greater importance to British interests. If the Prime Minister nonetheless decided to go to Perth it would be best to do so either at the start of the visit, or else on Saturday, 6 August on the way home. Either way it would be difficult to make a visit to Broome (Lord McAlpine's suggestion): Broome is three hours flight from Perth and can only be reached by a smaller aircraft than a VC10.

Possible Stopovers

The Foreign Secretary recommends planning for one or two stopovers in each direction. There are strong candidates in the Gulf and in South East Asia. There is also a good case for including stops in the Indian sub-continent but it is difficult to offer firm advice at this stage.

South Arabia/The Gulf

Oman is our preferred stop-over in the Gulf, provided the Sultan does not himself come to London privately this summer (he is not expected to decide whether to come for another month or so). The Prime Minister has not visited Oman since 1981. Relations are exceptionally close and a visit could be timely in putting the seal on new UK/Oman defence arrangements. A stopover on the way back in the United Arab Emirates would be our second choice. Shaikh Zaid's State Visit to London will not take place until the summer of 1989 at the earliest. The UAE has been helpful with facilities for RN's Armilla and Cimnel forces and we have important commercial interests.

/We

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We do not favour a stopover in Saudi Arabia: we shall have received Crown Prince Abdullah in London only six weeks before the Prime Minister's visit to Australia, and the King came on a State Visit here in March 1987.

South East Asia

A stopover in Bangkok would allow the Prime Minister to discuss Cambodia, to give support to Biwater in their bid for a large irrigation project, and to make up for the omission of Thailand from her 1985 itinerary. We do not think General Prem would resent a brief stopover. The Foreign Secretary would, however, give priority to a visit to Singapore if it is not possible to include both. Lee Kuan Yew has got wind of the Prime Minister's visit to Australia and our High Commissioner has been asked to pass a message that he would be happy to see Mrs Thatcher on her outward or return journey, either for an official visit or a stopover.

Indian Sub-Continent

Pakistan is likely to be facing a very difficult situation over Afghanistan by the summer: a stopover in Islamabad would be appreciated by the Pakistanis as a demonstration of our solidarity and support. We should also consider India but it is difficult to know whether our relations with India will have recovered sufficiently from the Panorama programme setback to make a visit in August wise. We do not wish to propose a visit to Islamabad until we are clearer about the desirability of including India. A third candidate could be Colombo, but that depends on whether or not President Jayewardene pays a guest of government visit here in the summer.

Possible Itinerary:

Outward Journey

The following paragraphs outline possible itineraries, including stopovers in the sub-continent.

Assuming departure from London in the morning of Saturday, 30 July, the necessary technical stop in the Gulf would come in the late evening, too late for any meetings.

Islamabad could be reached in the early hours of Sunday, 31 July, with the remainder of the night available for rest there, followed by discussions on the Sunday morning (no great difficulty in a Muslim country).

/Depending

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Depending on the length of stay at Islamabad - a long stopover would obviously permit a better programme - there would be the possibility of a stopover at Bangkok on the Sunday evening.

A technical stop at Singapore would be needed by the VC10, whether it came from Islamabad or Bangkok. This would be made in the early hours of Monday, 1 August, so that talks with Lee Kuan Yew could not conveniently be arranged.

Return Journey

Assuming departure from Brisbane in the morning of Saturday 6 August, a technical stop at Singapore on the afternoon of Saturday 6 August would allow for a meeting at the airport with Lee Kuan Yew.

From Singapore it would be possible to fly to either New Delhi or Colombo, with the possibility of talks with Rajiv Gandhi or Jayewardene on the evening of Saturday 6 August. After leaving New Delhi or Colombo, the Prime Minister could arrive in Muscat (or Salalah) or in Abu Dhabi in the early hours of Sunday 7 August and have most of the night available for rest, before paying calls in the morning before departure for London. It would also be possible to fly direct from Singapore to Muscat or Abu Dhabi.

/ I enclose possible itineraries for the outward and return journeys showing how the stopovers might be fitted in.

In due course the Foreign Secretary would welcome a chance of discussing all these options with the Prime Minister, to give more specific advice about which has the higher priority in the promotion of British interests.

*John G. ...*

*(Signature)*

(R N Culshaw)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

DRAFT ITINERARY (all times local)

## Outward Journey

Saturday 30 July

10.00 Depart London for Muscat  
(8 hrs 15 min flying time)

21.15 Arrive Muscat  
Technical stop (1½ hrs)

22.45 Depart Muscat for Islamabad  
(3 hrs flying time)

Sunday 31 July

02.45 Arrive Islamabad  
Rest ) (10 Hrs)  
Talks with Zia and Junejo )

12.45 Depart Islamabad for Bangkok  
(5 hrs flying time)

19.45 Arrive Bangkok  
Talks with Prem (4 hrs)

23.45 Depart Bangkok for Singapore  
(2 hrs 25 min flying time)

Monday 1 August

03.10 Arrive Singapore  
Technical stop (1½ hrs)

04.40 Depart Singapore for Canberra  
(7 hrs 35 min flying time)

14.15 Arrive Canberra

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OR (for 14 hrs in Islamabad and no stop in Bangkok)  
16.45 Depart Islamabad for Singapore  
(7 hrs flying time)

Monday 1 August

02.45 Arrive Singapore  
Technical stop (1½ hrs)

04.15 Depart Singapore for Canberra  
(7 hrs 35 min flying time)

13.50 Arrive Canberra

Return Journey

Saturday 6 August

10.00 Depart Brisbane for Singapore  
(7 hrs 55 min flying time)

15.55 Arrive Singapore  
Technical stop (1½ hrs)  
Talks with Lee Kuan Yew

17.25 Depart Singapore for Delhi  
(5 hrs 25 min flying time)

20.20 Arrive Delhi  
Talks with Gandhi (4 hrs)

Sunday 7 August

00.20 Depart Delhi for Muscat  
(3 Hrs 40 mins flying time)

02.30 Arrive Muscat  
Technical stop (1½ hrs)

04.00 Depart Muscat for London  
(8 hrs 40 min flying time)

09.40 Arrive London

OR 17.25 Depart Singapore for Colombo  
(3 hrs 45 min flying time)

18.40 Arrive Colombo  
Talks with Jayewardene

23.40 Depart Colombo for Muscat (or Abu Dhabi)  
(4 hrs 10 mins [4 hrs 35 min] flying time)

OR (for talks in Muscat or Abu Dhabi)

02.30 [03.00] Arrive Muscat [Abu Dhabi]  
Rest ) 8 hrs  
Talks with Sultan [Shaikh Zaid] )

10.30 [10.30] Depart Muscat [Abu Dhabi] for London  
(8 hrs 40 min [8 hrs 20 min] flying time)

16.10 [15.50] Arrive London

PMAAAB



PM TOURS Australia Jan 88

