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cc: PC  
Press Office

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

18 January 1988

VISIT OF THE PRIME MINISTER TO TURKEY

Thank you for your letter of 18 January about the Prime Minister's visit to Turkey. In view of the Ambassador's assurances that it will be possible to carry out a full programme on Friday, we can go ahead on the basis of the full Scenario 2 programme, with the Prime Minister travelling out on the evening of 6 April. It is quite clear, however, that we must abandon the idea of travelling on the inaugural British Airways flight to Ankara and should use the RAF VC10 as usual.

As regards the announcement, we have no objection to making it on 25 January. Our Press Section will discuss the text direct with the Department.

Charles Powell

Lyn Parker, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 January 1988

Dear Charles,

Visit by the Prime Minister to Turkey

In your letter of 11 January you asked for advice on whether the Prime Minister could really undertake a full programme in Turkey on Friday 8 April. We have checked this with Timothy Daunt in Ankara. He confirms that the programme proposed in Scenario 2 is fully workable. Turkey has maintained a "European" working week since the day of Kemal Ataturk. We hope that, nevertheless, the Prime Minister would wish to travel out on Wednesday evening (6 April) and undertake the full Scenario 2 programme (subject of course to possible modification in discussion with the Turks).

You also asked us to reflect on the question of possible travel to Ankara on a BA inaugural flight. The security assessment is on balance against the Prime Minister's doing so, given the possibility that the flight might stage in Rome and the likelihood that it would not be solely dedicated to the Prime Minister's party. We do not know if the BA aircraft could be used for the return journey or how the Ankara/Istanbul leg would be organised. Advance publicity would also be ruled out, for security reasons, and this would almost certainly reduce the attractions of the idea to BA. If you wish, we could discuss the possibilities with BA senior management in London. But the logistical arguments for using the RAF VC10 are formidable. We therefore recommend that we abandon the BA option.

We should be grateful for your advice on the timing and text of a formal announcement of the Prime Minister's visit. The Turks would like parallel announcements to be made on 25 January and have proposed the following:

"At the invitation of HE Mr Turgut Ozal, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, the Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, will pay an official visit to Turkey in April."

We see no security objections to this. I should be grateful to know whether you agree to the Turks' proposal.

However, L Parker

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

(L Parker)  
Private Secretary

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PM TOURS : Turkey, Jan 88

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