



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

8 March 1982

Prime Minister's visit to Japan, China and Hong Kong

Thank you for your letter of 4 March, which the Prime Minister has seen.

Mrs. Thatcher has commented that she would prefer to go to China first. In the past, she has always found visits to Communist countries to be the most strenuous part of an overseas tour and she therefore prefers to go to them at the outset. Perhaps you could kindly reflect on this point. If you consider that the order of visits which you have proposed (your last paragraph) should, for very good political reasons, be maintained, it may be that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would wish to offer the Prime Minister further advice. But, if not, perhaps you could let me have a revised outline in due course.

The Prime Minister would like to see something of Japanese culture but has indicated no particular preference. She has, however, never been outside Tokyo and would like to do so. It may be that you will be able to find a suitable cultural event in a place other than Tokyo.

If possible the Prime Minister would also like to see something of Chinese rural life though she has previously seen the usual communes.

I think it is a little early to give you an indication of the likely size of the party from No. 10. Mrs. Thatcher definitely proposes to accompany the Prime Minister throughout the tour and it may be that separate programmes will be required at certain points. But it is perhaps best to wait until we have agreed a revised outline before taking that matter any further. Otherwise, the Prime Minister is not likely to decide for some time on the composition of her party. But I think you may take it that it will be of similar size to e.g. the party which went to India in the Spring of last year.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



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Prime Minister

(a) Content with general shape of programme?

Should prefer to go to China first - Communist countries are always the most dangerous → prefer to do them first

(b) do you want any cultural events in Japan or China? Preferences?

Japan - I have never been outside Tokyo. Should like to.

(c) It all looks very urban. Do you want to see rural life in Japan or China?

China - but I have seen them used to commerce.

(d) Will Mr. Thatcher accompany throughout?

Yes

not

A.F.C. 5/3

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 March 1982

Dear John,

Prime Minister's Visit to Japan, China and Hong Kong

We have consulted Posts about the likely shape of the Prime Minister's proposed visit to Japan, China and Hong Kong in September, and the Embassies in Tokyo and Peking have in turn spoken informally to the Japanese and Chinese Governments. Before we take matters any further, I should be grateful for an indication of the Prime Minister's own wishes. In seeking them, you may perhaps find it useful to have the following rough outline of the programme as it appears at present:

Saturday 18 September - leave UK by RAF flight for Tokyo.

JAPAN

Sunday 19 September (morning) - arrive Tokyo. Relatively quiet day for acclimatisation.

Monday 20 - Wednesday 22 September - in Tokyo. Programme to include (probably) an audience and perhaps a lunch with the Emperor; a meeting and a meal with Mr Suzuki; a meeting with senior business leaders; a meeting with the press, perhaps in the form of a speech at the Japan Press Club; possibly a visit to the British promotion at the Takashimaya Department Store in Tokyo; and a visit to see some aspect or aspects of modern Japanese technology, for example the Fujitsu Fanuc computer and semi-conductor works near Tokyo (Fujitsu have recently set up a link with ICL). Leave around midday on 22 September.

CHINA

Wednesday 22 September - arrive Peking in time for briefing before dinner, which could be a banquet given by Zhao Ziyang.

/Thursday 23

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Thursday 23 and Friday 24 September - in Peking. Programme to include meetings with Zhao Ziyang; calls on Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang; press conference and possible interview with Chinese television; and visit to Peking cancer hospital and research unit, which has a British-trained Director and some British equipment.

Saturday 25 September - fly to Shanghai. Programme to include visit to a shipyard (there is a proposal by Sir Y K Pao that the Prime Minister launch one of his ships) and perhaps visit nearby Naval base.

Sunday 26 September - fly to Hong Kong.

HONG KONG

Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 September - in Hong Kong. Programme to include opening of Castle Peak A Power Station; meeting with unofficial members of the Executive and Legislative Councils (UMELCO); visit to garrison forces; and a press conference.

Tuesday 28 September - leave for UK.

Wednesday 29 September (early morning) - arrive UK.

As you will see, this programme is no more than an outline at this stage. We should be grateful for indications in particular of the Prime Minister's likely cultural interests, for example whether she would like to visit Chinese artists' studios or a painting academy in Peking, or whether she would be interested in any musical or dramatic performance. In general we have conceived the visit as being largely working, with the essential elements being the meetings with Japanese and Chinese leaders, and with no sightseeing as such given that Mrs Thatcher visited both China and Japan in 1977. We should also be grateful for an indication of the likely size of the party from No 10, including any members of Mrs Thatcher's family for whom separate programmes may be required.

I should perhaps explain that both the Japanese and Chinese governments would prefer the order of visits to their two countries to be as we have proposed. This suits us well, as there will be very great interest in Hong Kong in the results of the Prime Minister's discussions with Chinese leaders in Peking, and this will in practice require her to go straight on to Hong Kong from China. To return to the UK direct from Hong Kong also makes geographical sense.

*Yours ever*  
*John Holmes*  
 (J E Holmes)  
 Private Secretary



28th  
MAR 1982