

RESTRICTED



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

11 January 1984

Meeting between the Prime Minister and President Mitterrand

Would you please refer to my letter of 9 January.

We have given further thought to the announcement of this visit. On reflection, the Prime Minister is inclined to think that it will be better to seek French agreement to announcing it some two or three days in advance, say at 1100 hours on Friday, 20 January. The alternative device of announcing the visit on the day of the meeting will, in our view, lead to unnecessary speculation about its purpose and surround it with a mystery in which we see no point.

We propose, subject to French agreement, to make the announcement in the following terms:

"The Prime Minister has accepted an invitation to visit Paris for talks with the President of France on 23 January. She will leave London early that morning and return in the afternoon."

Could you now please seek French agreement to the above.

I am copying this letter to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office) and also to Sir Philip Moore (In view of our changed intentions regarding the announcement).

ALDOLES

R.B. Bone, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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C. M. TOURS - Visit  
to Paris,  
Jan. 83.



FILE

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

9 January, 1984

MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND PRESIDENT MITTERRAND

You will have seen Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 6 January.

With regard to paragraph 4, I take it that M. Attali misunderstood Sir John Fretwell. Mrs. Thatcher has not expressed a wish to travel secretly, nor is that practicable. The Prime Minister does not wish to make a mystery of the visit. She believes that we should agree with the French that a brief announcement is made just before she leaves London. Any other course will simply lead to unnecessary speculation. Could you seek French agreement on this point and draw up a form of words with them.

I should be grateful if the detailed arrangements for the visit could now be put in hand. We wish to avoid any encounter between the Prime Minister and the press. I assume that this will be manageable on the French side. On the assumption that they confirm that there is no danger of an encounter with journalists, we shall not take a representative of the No.10 Press Section. The party would consist of the Prime Minister, myself a Duty Clerk, a Secretary and a Detective.

It would be helpful if Sir John Fretwell could meet the Prime Minister on arrival and give her in the car any last-minute briefing which may be necessary.

I take it that you will be arranging a small aircraft for this visit. Perhaps I could say now that, in order to make the trip as economical as possible, the Prime Minister would be content for any spare places on the aircraft, either on the outward or the return journey, to be filled by Government Officials who have business in Paris or London.

I hope it will be possible to restrict the circulation of correspondence on this matter. We must ensure that there is no leak before the announcement on 23 January.

I am copying this letter to Richard Hatfield in the Cabinet Office.

R. Bone, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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