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C.F.O.
HM Ambassador,
Paris

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER **PRIME MINISTER'S** 6 June 1979

PERSO AL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T21a /nat.

My dear President,

On returning to London, I am writing to thank you most warmly for your kindness and hospitality to me in Paris yesterday. I am delighted that my first visit abroad as Prime Minister should have been to our close neighbour and historic friend and ally, France. As you said during your talk, the history of the relationship between our countries has been uneven: but it has never been distant and I, for my part, am convinced that we stand now at the beginning of a period of closer partnership and deeper friendship both bilaterally and as members of the Community.

Our talk together was of the greatest value to me and I welcomed the opportunity both to hear your views on European and world affairs and also to give you a first indication of the priorities and concerns of the new British Government. I have arranged for the senior official in our Department of Energy, Sir Jack Rampton, to get in touch with his French counterpart immediately in order to carry forward the bilateral consultations on energy matters which, we both agree, should take place before the meeting of the European Council in Strasbourg, and looking ahead to Tokyo, in order to co-ordinate our positions on this central issue. I should add that I was deeply impressed by my visit to the uranium enrichment plant at Tricastin: it is a striking demonstration of the foresight and courage with which France has tackled the problems which loom so large for all of us in Europe during the next 25 years.

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Finally, I should like to thank you for your magnificent gift to me of Sevres porcelain and for your most thoughtful present of Congreve's works; I shall value these not only for themselves but for the memory of an important day in our relations which was also, for me, an immensely enjoyable one.

I look forward to our next meeting in Strasbourg. With every best wish,

Yours sincerely
Raymond Helber

His Excellency Monsieur Valery Giscard d'Estaing