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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

ECONOMIC SUMMIT

I enclose an extract from the record of the Prime Minister's conversation with Chancellor Kohl on 8 November which relates to their discussion of dates for the Economic Summit.

A. J. COLES

9 November 1983

But President Reagan would find that very difficult. Her own view was that since Mitterrand had a long time to go before his elections and President Reagan had to face elections in the Autumn of 1984, we should bow to the latter's needs. Chancellor Kohl said that he quite agreed. He doubted whether the Economic Summit would have any effect on the European elections as far as Mitterrand was concerned, except that the latter might draw advantage from it. Nevertheless, Mitterrand had real problems in another connection. Many people were now saying that he would not be able to last out his whole term. The polls were very bad. If the European elections went badly for him, there would be a demand in France for national elections. The result of those, though it had never happened before, might be that Mitterrand would preside over a Government of the Opposition. We should then see whether de Gaulle's Constitution was viable.

The situation in France was rather worrying. Mitterrand would probably be very rigid externally because domestic affairs were forcing him into compromises which were not in line with his policy. There was also a new upsurge of protectionism. Chirac had visited Bonn few days ago and had said that Mitterrand would not last for seven years.

The discussion ended at 2045 hours.

8 November 1983

Chancellor Kohl said that the dates proposed for the Economic Summit, namely 8-10 June, were acceptable to him. Some said that Mr. Nakasone might not be able to attend at that time. He had seen him last week and did not think that to be true. Nakasone would have elections this year and should therefore be free to come to Europe next June. But what about President Mitterrand? The Prime Minister said that Mitterrand argued that the European elections on 18 June would be a judgment on his record and that, since the Economic Summit was not likely to give him much comfort, it would be better to have it after the European elections.

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