



Prime Minister

EOP  
25/xi

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

25 November 1986

Dear Tony,

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FALKLANDS: UN VOTE

M. Bujon, from M. Chirac's office, telephoned me late this morning about the French vote on the Falklands resolution at the UN.

As he had promised the Prime Minister, M. Chirac had looked into the possibility of changing the French vote to an abstention. He had reluctantly concluded that he could not do so. The reason was that President Mitterrand had publicly, at the press conference following the Anglo-French Summit, committed France to support the Argentine resolution. While it would have been possible to change the decision while it remained confidential, to do so after a public announcement would amount to a humiliation of President Mitterrand. M. Chirac had been careful to avoid this on other issues. He was sorry not to be able to help the Prime Minister this time, but remained willing to consider a change in the French position next year, particularly if the matter was raised with him in good time.

I said that naturally we would be disappointed with this reply. I recalled that M. Chirac had told the Prime Minister that the fact that President Mitterrand wanted to vote for the Argentine resolution was not a good enough reason to do so. But I noted the undertaking to reconsider the French position next year. We would certainly follow this up.

A point which the Prime Minister is likely to ask: did we in fact approach M. Chirac's office direct about the French vote in advance of the Anglo-French Summit?

yours sincerely,

Charles Powell

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