

John. Please **CONFIDENTIAL**

see if we can  
find a link to  
any one from the  
Embassy who  
wants it -  
otherwise we shall leave London  
to accompany embassy as per

Prime Minister.

I see no point in all this mystery.  
I think we should agree with the French that  
a brief announcement is made just before you

Ref. A084/76

MR COLES

A.S.C. 6/1

David  
no

Meeting between the Prime Minister and President Mitterrand

Monsieur Attali rang up at lunchtime again today.

2. I was able to tell him of the Prime Minister's acceptance of President Mitterrand's invitation to lunch with the President in Paris on Monday 23 January. I said that she would be accompanied only by you.
3. The President proposes to entertain the Prime Minister informally at the Chateau de Marly. He invites her for 12.00 noon: it would be sufficient for her to arrive, presumably at Villacoublay, at 11.30 am (French time).
4. Monsieur Attali said that he understood from Sir John Fretwell that it would be the Prime Minister's wish to travel incognita. He would propose that there should be no advance announcement of the visit. I said that I should need to consult the Prime Minister about that, though I thought it very likely that it would be acceptable to her that there should be no prior announcement. On the other hand it might be a mistake to try to make a mystery of the visit: if it came out that the Prime Minister had gone over to Paris and nothing was said about it even after the event, more significance might be read into the visit than was appropriate. On this basis we might wish to propose that there should be no announcement of the visit beforehand, but that a very brief statement should be issued afterwards to the effect that the Prime Minister had accepted an invitation from the President for a private and informal lunch on Monday 23 January.
5. Monsieur Attali thought that it would be useful if he and I were to meet the previous week: it could help each of us to brief on the agenda for the meeting between the President and the Prime Minister.
6. I am sending a copy of this minute to Mr Fall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

RTA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

6 January 1984

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