



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 October 1985

*Prime Minister  
Agree to write as the  
Foreign Secretary proposed (as  
amended)? And offer to go to  
Paris for a few hours*

*Dear Charles,*

Anglo/French Summit

Thank you for your letter of 29 October about the need to find an alternative date on which the Prime Minister could meet President Mitterrand.

*if necessary? CJP 30/k.*

The Foreign Secretary, who has had a chance to discuss this with Sir John Fretwell, fears that in the present state of mind of the French Government, this change of plan will risk giving considerable offence. President Mitterrand will find it difficult fully to understand the reality of the Parliamentary pressures that make it essential for the Prime Minister to change an important commitment of this kind at the last moment, and it is conceivable that, in his present political circumstances, he might fall prey to a suspicion that we were motivated partly at least by a desire to humiliate him. The Foreign Secretary agrees therefore that the circumstances will need very careful explanation and handling.

He thinks that the best way to minimise the risks would be for the Prime Minister to write a personal letter of explanation to President Mitterrand and for Sir Robert Armstrong to take this to Paris to give to M. Attali for the President. This would be the only effective way of bringing home the seriousness of the Prime Minister's problem and of her concern to find a way over it that did not involve cancellation of the meeting.

I enclose a draft letter which would meet the case. It is couched in the kind of terms which we believe are necessary if it is to serve its purpose. As you will see, the draft conveys the thought that on this occasion a more intimate meeting will in fact be more useful than a full Summit meeting, given the priority issues to be discussed. The Foreign Secretary also thinks it would be essential for the Prime Minister at least to make the offer of going to Paris instead of assuming that President Mitterrand will still come here. It would be more difficult to make this offer afterwards if President Mitterrand replied that he could not make it to London but would be glad to see the Prime Minister in Paris if she chose to come.

/ The Foreign ...



The Foreign Secretary has asked me to explore with Sir Robert Armstrong the possibility of his advancing his visit to Paris to this coming Friday. He believes it will be important to make this approach to the Elysee as soon as possible after the Cabinet discussion has taken place so as to reduce the possibility of the French picking up the scent of the problem before President Mitterrand has heard from the Prime Minister direct.

I am copying this letter to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours ever,*  
*L. V. Appleyard*  
(L V Appleyard)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

JA 43



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

30 October 1985

**ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT**

Thank you for your letter of 30 October about interpretation at the Anglo-French Summit.

As you know the dates of this meeting are now in question. It may be considerably nearer the end of the month, in which case Mr Lederer may after all be available.

In any event neither of the ladies you mention are up to the necessary standard. If Mr Lederer is not available, we shall just have to rely on the French side's interpreter if he is willing.

(C. D. Powell)

C. R. Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

*h*



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 October 1985

Dear Charles,

Anglo-French Summit: 18 November

As you will recall, it was agreed that we should engage Mr Rudolf Lederer as interpreter for the Prime Minister's talks with President Mitterrand on 18 November.

Unfortunately Mr Lederer has now told us that he will be unable to leave Brussels at this particular time, since he has a daughter who is seriously ill. He expects to be available again towards the end of November, so his engagement for the Anglo-German Summit on 27 November is not affected.

As our own French interpreter-designate, John Penney, will not finish his training until June, we must find some other replacement. In the past we have on occasions used other freelance French interpreters for the Prime Minister including:

- Mrs Marie-Helene Taylor - Prime Minister's talks with President Mobutu of Zaire (September 1984)
- Mrs Micheline Dennis - Prime Minister's talks with Mr Klibi, Secretary General of the Arab League (February 1984)

If this arrangement is still acceptable, we should be grateful to know which of these alternative interpreters is preferred, so that we can secure her services without further delay.

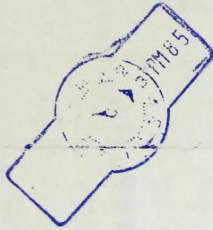
Yours ever,  
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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## 10 DOWNING STREET

29 October 1985

From the Private Secretary

Dear Gen,

ANGLO/FRENCH SUMMIT

It now seems virtually certain that the Anglo/Irish Summit will be on Friday 15 November and that the Prime Minister will in consequence have to make a statement to the House on Monday 18 November. At her meeting with the Foreign Secretary and the North Ireland Secretary this morning, it was agreed that it would not be reasonable to try to take the Anglo/French Summit on the same day as at present planned. It was agreed, however, that it remained very important to have a high level meeting with the French before the Luxembourg European Council.

This presents us with two problems. The first is how to explain to the French that we can no longer maintain the date of Monday 18 November. My own feeling is that we shall have to come clean with the Elysee in the strictest confidence. I understand that Sir Robert Armstrong is to visit Paris early next week. One course would be to warn the French later this week of the need to change the dates, saying that Sir Robert would explain the reasons when he came. But if you have an alternative solution it would be helpful to know.

The second problem is to find alternative dates. I think that the only real prospect for doing this is to consider weekends; and to look at the possibility of moving from a full scale bilateral summit to a meeting involving Heads of Government and Foreign Ministers only at Chequers. Assuming this latter could be arranged, the best dates from the Prime Minister's point of view would be Saturday 23 or Sunday 24 November, with Saturday 16 November a reluctant third choice.

I would be grateful if you would consider the handling of this and let me know the Foreign Secretary's views on how we should proceed. It might be prudent to wait until after Cabinet discussion on Ireland on Thursday before taking any irrevocable step with the French Government.

I am copying this letter to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Charles Powell*  
Charles Powell

Len Appleyard, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

MR POWELL

*ce German  
-Summits?*

I have arranged briefing meetings for the French and German bilaterals. The Foreign Secretary unfortunately cannot make either but it would be difficult for me to find other times.

Would it be possible for me to have these briefing meetings without the Foreign Secretary.

CAROLINE

29 October 1985

MRS. RYDER o/r

**BILATERALS**

Would you have a word with Sandra at FCO about briefing meetings for the Bilaterals with the FRG and France. There are already slots identified in the diary for this (14 November, 1700-1800, 26 November, 1700-1800). The Foreign Secretary may, I understand, find it difficult to fit in with these times, and you will need to check with Sandra to see if they need to be changed.

MEA

(MARK ADDISON)

22 October 1985





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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

MISS BOWDRAY  
Cabinet Office

**ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT**

Just to say that I am content with the list of briefs for this Summit set out in the Annex to Mr. Cowper-Coles' letter of 16 October.

CHARLES POWELL  
25 October 1985