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Mufax'd to Chequers
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CONFIDENTIAL

ccPC

PRIME MINISTER

PRESIDENT MITTERRAND

You will see from the attached minute that President Mitterrand wants to come to have lunch with you soon to discuss the European Council. He suggests 16, 17 or 21 October.

It is a curious request. We have a regular summit on 21 November which isn't so far off. And it's rather early now to have a sensible discussion of the European Council.

I suspect his motives are:

(a) to put M. Chirac in the shade. This will be underlined further if he brings the Foreign Minister with him; and

(b) to discuss East/West relations and the prospects for the summit. The French are very worried that the Americans are over-enthusiastic for a summit for domestic reasons.

You don't particularly want to play Mitterrand's game against Chirac. On the other hand, of course, Chirac came alone to lunch at Chequers a few months ago. And it's actually quite hard to turn Mitterrand down without seeming to administer a rebuff.

Of the dates proposed, 17 and 21 October are out (visit to Haselmere and Prime Minister's Questions respectively). 16 October would be possible, though it is a Cabinet day and you could not meet the President at the airport. Alternative possible dates if you want to see him would be Saturday 18 or Sunday 26 October, both at Chequers; or Friday 31 October in Downing Street.

So:

(1) agree to meet President Mitterrand?

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- (2) if so, agree it should be just him plus one official?
(our side would be just you and a Private Secretary);
- (3) order of preference between
Thursday, 16 October
Saturday, 18 October;
Sunday, 26 October;
Friday, 31 October.

C.D.P.

(C. D. POWELL)
4 October 1986

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Shall have to
ms

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*He will
have to decide*

- (3) order of preference between

③ Thursday, 16 October - but explain airport, *He could be
helicoptered in*
Saturday, 18 October;

② Sunday, 26 October;

① Friday, 31 October. ✓

*to
through the Palace*

*much better
not*

C.D.P.

(C. D. POWELL)

4 October 1986


Ref. A086/2793

MR POWELL

Monsieur Jacques Attali rang from the Elysee this evening, to say that the President of the French Republic would very much like to come and have an informal talk with the Prime Minister later this month, by way of preparation for the meeting of the European Council later in the year. He would come unaccompanied (save for a member of his staff, presumably Monsieur Attali) or with the Foreign Minister.

2. The specific proposal is that he should come for lunch on 16 October, 17 October or 21 October.

3. I was asked to put this to the Prime Minister, and to convey the answer personally to Monsieur Attali and not to anyone else.



ROBERT ARMSTRONG

3 October 1986