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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

18 February 1988

*Dear Brian,*

**VISIT BY FRENCH MINISTER OF DEFENCE**

Thank you for your letter of 17 February about M. Giraud's visit in March. I am afraid that it will not be possible for the Prime Minister to see him. She has an enormous number of foreign visitors in the diary at present, far more - in the opinion of my colleagues here - than there should be. Moreover she thinks that a meeting with M. Giraud will lead to speculation about some new development in Franco-British nuclear co-operation which would not be justified or necessarily desirable at present.

I am copying this letter to Lyn Parker (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely,  
Charles Powell*

(Charles Powell)

Brian Hawtin, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.

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Prime Minister

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1

Telephone 01-2307922XX 01-218 2111/3

MO 14/4V

I think you really  
must draw a line somewhere  
on foreign visitors. We are getting  
for too many many. There is no strong  
reason to see M. Giraud: indeed a  
meeting is likely to lead to speculation  
about some new development in  
Fran-British  
under

17th February 1988

Dear Charles,

VISIT BY FRENCH DEFENCE MINISTER: 22ND MARCH 1988

We spoke about the possibility of a call on the Prime Minister by M. Giraud. You will recall that our Ambassador mentioned this idea before M. Giraud's visit last December but, at that stage, a call could not be fitted into the Prime Minister's diary. Our Ambassador has now returned to the charge and suggests that a call during M. Giraud's visit on 22nd March, when he is to speak at Chatham House on France and European defence, would be worthwhile. I attach a copy of his telegram.

prop-  
not  
Agree  
not  
to see  
him?

Unfortunately, my Secretary of State will be away that day. But he agrees strongly with our Ambassador's comment that the Prime Minister would find M. Giraud a worthwhile interlocutor. You kindly agreed to look into the possibilities of a meeting.

COO  
17/2

I am copying this letter to Lyn Parker (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely  
B R HAWTIN

(B R HAWTIN)  
Private Secretary

Agree NOT  
to see him  
nd

Charles Powell Esq  
No 10 Downing Street

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UNOFFICIAL VISIT BY FRENCH DEFENCE MINISTER: 22 MARCH

1. GIRAUDS CABINET (SCHLUMBERGER) HAVE TOLD US THAT GIRAUD HAS ACCEPTED AN INVITATION TO SPEAK AT CHATHAM HOUSE ON 22 MARCH ABOUT FRANCE AND EUROPEAN DEFENCE. THE MEETING IS AT LUNCHTIME, AND GIRAUD HAS ENGAGEMENTS IN PARIS THAT AFTERNOON, BUT SCHLUMBERGER IMPLIED

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THAT HIS MINISTER COULD ARRIVE IN TIME FOR A MORNING MEETING IF WE WISHED TO PROPOSE ONE.

2. IF MR YOUNGERS DIARY PERMITS, I RECOMMEND THAT HE OFFER TO RECEIVE GIRAUD. THIS WOULD ALLOW A GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON CURRENT ISSUES, AND THUS KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM OF ANGLO-FRENCH DEFENCE EXCHANGES (THE LATEST EXAMPLE OF WHICH IS THE USEFUL TALKS BETWEEN NICHOLLS, DUSP, AND CONZE ON 15 FEBRUARY). IT WOULD ALSO PROVIDE A STIMULUS TO PROGRESS ON THE PROPOSALS FOR CO-OPERATION IN THE CONVENTIONAL FIELD MENTIONED IN THE PRIME MINISTERS JANUARY MESSAGE TO MITTERRAND.

3. YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO CONSIDER DISCUSSING WITH 10 DOWNING STREET WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD LIKE TO SEE GIRAUD (THE DIARY WAS TOO FULL FOR SUCH A MEETING DURING HIS OFFICIAL VISIT LAST DECEMBER). I BELIEVE THAT SHE WOULD FIND HIM A WORTHWHILE INTERLOCUTOR (HE HAS A FAIR CHANCE OF REMAINING WHERE HE IS IF BARRE WINS THE PRESIDENCY, THOUGH NOT WITH MITTERRAND OR CHIRAC).

4. NICHOLLS SAW GIRAUD BRIEFLY AFTER HIS TALKS WITH CONZE AND MAY

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HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT GIRAUDS PLANS.

FERGUSSON

BT

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