(1)

PRIME MINISTER

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL

Sir Philip de Zulueta reacted intemperately to the news that you (and M. Chirac) would not attend the Franco-British Council at the end of May. This is entirely unreasonable, since he had no reason to believe that you would do so. Since the Avignon meeting we have consistently told him not to assume that you would attend. He didn't want to hear.

Still, we need to get him to simmer down. The proposal is that you and M. Chirac should both:

a) send messages to the meeting;

b) agree to see the French and British Chairmen afterwards, to receive a report of the proceedings.

This would be an elegant way out.

Agree? Yes mk

CDP

(C.D. Powell)
20 February 1987

FILE
DA
LPE

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

23 February 1987

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL

Thank you for your letter of 20 February about the problems which have arisen over the decision by the Prime Minister and M. Chirac not to attend the forthcoming meeting of the Franco-British Council in Cardiff.

The Prime Minister would be content to show support for the Conference by other means than attending it. She would, for instance, be perfectly happy to send a message and to see the two co-chairmen afterwards to receive a report on the proceedings. I have mentioned this to M. Bujon in M. Chirac's office, who thought that M. Chirac would be perfectly content with this procedure.

(Charles Powell)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CDPC

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 February 1987

Dear Charles,

Franco-British Council

Thank you for your letters of 9, 12 and 16 February. The Foreign Secretary subsequently invited Sir Philip de Zulueta to call on 18 February.

There is, as you say, no reason why the Franco-British Council should have assumed the Prime Minister's attendance at their Cardiff Conference. You and FCO officials have repeatedly made it clear to both Sir Philip de Zulueta and Mr Hadley that her attendance this time should not be taken for granted. (Sir Philip did not dispute this in discussion with the Foreign Secretary, but claimed he had interpreted it as "understandable caution on the part of officials"). Both we here and the Embassy in Paris have avoided suggesting to the French that the Prime Minister would go to Cardiff, despite occasional indications that M Chirac would if she did.

There is also no justification for the Council's complaint that they were kept unnecessarily long without a clear decision: once the Prime Minister's decision not to go to Cardiff had been taken the Department warned Mr Hadley of it informally on the telephone and of the imminence of a letter to Sir P de Zulueta, well before the meeting with the French Section of the Council. Sir Philip's behaviour in reaction to the Prime Minister's letter to him of 5 February have strengthened our view, which we know to be shared by some members of the Council, that his attitude and style of leadership may no longer be in the Council's best interests.

/We

We have considered how to handle the present situation in order to avert the possibility of Sir Philip persuading the Council to cancel the Cardiff Conference, which he has called an extra-ordinary meeting on 25 February to discuss: or even to dissolve itself, alleging loss of government interest. Sir Philip suggested in talking to the Foreign Secretary that the Prime Minister might adopt some other means of showing support for the Conference; and we believe that this avenue may offer a solution. If the Prime Minister would agree to send the Conference a message associating herself with it, and afterwards to see jointly the Chairmen of the French and British Sections of the Council to receive a report of the Conference and of the Council's other activities, this would provide the earnest of high level support for the Council which they seek. We would ask M Chirac to join in sending a message and similarly to receive the two Chairmen.

I should be most grateful if you would let me have an early indication of whether the Prime Minister would agree to this proposal. If so, we should like to act on it before the Council's meeting on 25 February. The Foreign Secretary's meeting on 23 February with M Raimond would provide an opportunity to put it to the French.

Yours ever,

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing St

FRANCE · Franco Cauvl
Juil'83



RESTRICTED

file DTS (36)

cc Sir P. Cradock

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 February 1987

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL

I have seen a copy of Paris Telegram No 154 about the French reaction to the Prime Minister's inability to attend the Franco-British Council meeting in Cardiff. Monsieur Bujon (Monsieur Chirac's Diplomatic Adviser) told me today that he had informed the French organisers that Monsieur Chirac would definitely not be attending the meeting in Cardiff. He had been asked by Senator Pontillon not to give publicity to this for the time being. He had also been asked whether Monsieur Chirac would have any objection to an attempt to find alternative dates which might suit the Prime Minister better. Monsieur Bujon had said that there would certainly be no objection to such an exercise from the French side but it was a question for us.

It seems increasingly likely, therefore, that the Franco-British Council's approach will be to try to pin the Prime Minister down to an alternative date. As you know, this is not what the Prime Minister wants. It suggests to me that we should try hard to persuade the Franco-British Council to accept an alternative speaker, for instance, the Lord Chancellor or the Lord President if they happen to be available and given that the Foreign Secretary is otherwise engaged.

C D POWELL

Lyn Parker, Esq.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

RESTRICTED

GRS 280
RESTRICTED

Restricted

FM PARIS
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 154
OF 131126Z FEBRUARY 87
[COLLAR]

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL MEETING IN CARDIFF, MAY 1987

SUMMARY

1. FRENCH DISAPPOINTMENT AT PRIME MINISTER'S ABSENCE.

DETAIL

2. SENATOR PONTILLON (CHAIRMAN OF THE FRENCH SECTION OF THE FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL) SPOKE TO ME LAST NIGHT ABOUT FRENCH DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL BE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE CARDIFF MEETING OF THE COUNCIL IN MAY. SEPARATELY, CHIRAC'S CHEF DE CABINET TOLD MY MINISTER YESTERDAY THAT A ONE-DAY VISIT TO CARDIFF BY CHIRAC FOR THIS OCCASION REMAINED A FIRM FIXTURE IN CHIRAC'S DIARY. A FRENCH MEMBER OF THE FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL'S DEFENCE COMMISSION (WHO HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL SINCE ITS INCEPTION) ALSO TOLD WESTON LAST NIGHT THAT IF THE CARDIFF MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WAS NOT A MANIFEST SUCCESS, IT WOULD IN HIS VIEW SPELL THE DEMISE OF THE COUNCIL. OTHERS ARE BEGINNING TO CANVAS THE POSSIBILITY OF POSTPONING THE MEETING TO A DATE WHICH MIGHT BE MORE CONVENIENT FOR THE PRIME MINISTER.

3. THE FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL IS THE MAIN FORMAL CONDUIT FOR HIGH-LEVEL NON-GOVERNMENTAL BILATERAL EXCHANGES WITH FRANCE, AND HAS SOME SYMBOLIC VALUE FOR THE FRENCH, PARTICULARLY WHEN SET BESIDE THE ELABORATE HIGH-LEVEL EXCHANGES THEY HAVE WITH THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. WHILE THE ESSENCE OF THIS SORT OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ENTERPRISE IS THAT IT SHOULD GENERATE ITS OWN ENERGIES AND INTERESTS, VISIBLE POLITICAL COMMITMENT BY BOTH SIDES AT THE BIENNIAL MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL WILL REMAIN NECESSARY TO ITS CONTINUED HEALTH AND SELF-CONFIDENCE. IT WILL REQUIRE AN EXCEPTIONAL EFFORT TO PERSUADE THE FRENCH THAT WE ARE NOT BEGINNING TO DOWNGRADE THE COUNCIL AND ALL ITS WORKS.

FRETWELL

YYYY

PCLNAN 7437

NNNN
EUROPEAN POLITICAL
WED.

Restricted

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

13 February 1987

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL

I enclose a copy of a further letter from Sir Philip de Zulueta about the Franco-British Council. You will want to take this into account in tendering your advice on his earlier letters. This should reach us by 18 February please.

Charles Powell

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

cc FCO
AC

Franco-British Council BRITISH SECTION

2 Clarendon Close London W2 2NS Telephone 01-262 8959

Sir Philip de Zulueta
Chairman

Please reply to: 6 John Street,
London, WC1N 2ES
Telephone: 01-242 9921

12th February, 1987

Charles Powell, Esq.,
Private Secretary,
10 Downing Street,
London, SW1A 2AA.

Dear Charles Powell,

What you say in your letter of February 9th is, of course, true: it is also true that we have always carefully avoided saying definitely that the Prime Minister had accepted to come to the Cardiff Conference. Unfortunately, however, this is all irrelevant in the present circumstances. Preparations for Cardiff have been going on for the last seven months with the full knowledge of the Foreign Office and the Welsh Office, and, of course, of the French Government. As you know, these meetings were originally built around the concept of the two Prime Ministers coming to them and making speeches, thus giving public expression to their joint interest in Franco-British relations. It was, therefore, not unreasonably assumed on both sides that, subject to some quite unforeseen event, the Prime Ministers would attend, particularly our Prime Minister as Britain is the host country, and when Monsieur Chirac signified his firm intention to attend the general assumption was naturally confirmed.

What particularly distresses me about the present situation is that it makes the Prime Minister look both discourteous and uninterested when I know that she is neither. That is why I hope sincerely that the Prime Minister will find it possible to change her decision about Cardiff and agree to attend, subject, of course, to unforeseen complications, such as the calling of an Election in late May or early June. Should the latter event take place the Conference will have to be cancelled anyway.

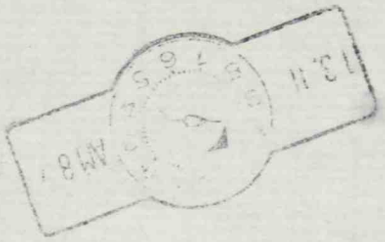
I would have replied to your letter sooner but I had to go to Chicago, whence I am dictating this.

Yours sincerely,

pp. Philip de Zulueta

Dictated by Sir Philip de Zulueta
and signed in his absence.

FRANCE : franco - Brun Courau Juin 63



File

DA

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

9 February 1987

Dear Sir Philip.

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to acknowledge receipt of your letters of 6 February and 9 February, the first of which crossed with her own letter to you of 5 February. The Prime Minister will of course reply herself in due course. I would only recall that my letter of 10 December 1985 to Mr. Hadley and my letter of 8 July 1986 to you both made clear that any decision about her participation in the next Franco-British Council Conference would have to wait until nearer the time, and could not therefore simply be assumed.

yours sincerely

Charles Powell

(Charles Powell)

Sir Philip de Zulueta

file

DA

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

9 February 1987

Dear Lyn,

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL

I enclose copies of two letters to the Prime Minister from Sir Philip de Zulueta. The first, written on 6 February, deals with the arrangements for the Franco-British Council meeting in Cardiff. The second, dated 9 February, is a reaction to the Prime Minister's letter of 5 February explaining that she will be unable to attend the Conference.

Sir Philip's peremptory letter of 9 February has no justification. If you go back through the files you will discover:

(i) My letter of 1 December 1984 to Colin Budd recording the Prime Minister's conclusion that it should no longer be considered indispensable for Prime Ministers to take part in meetings of the Franco-British Council and suggesting that Foreign Ministers should be regarded as the natural representatives of their respective governments.

(ii) My letter of 3 January 1985 to Colin Budd agreeing that the FCO should tell Sir Philip de Zulueta that he should not automatically assume that the Prime Minister would attend the Conference in future.

(iii) My letter of 29 November 1985 to Colin Budd recalling this position and saying that I proposed to reply in this sense to a letter from Mr. Hadley of the Franco-British Council. I did so on 10 December 1985.

(iv) My letter of 8 July 1986 to Sir Philip de Zulueta saying that any decision about the Prime Minister's participation would have to wait until nearer the time.

(v) My letter of 9 July 1986 to Robert Culshaw once again recording the position.

(vi) My letter of 4 September 1986 to Colin Budd noting that the proposed dates for the Franco-British Council were most inconvenient for the Prime Minister.

(vii) My letter of 19 January to you once again setting out the position.

8/2

In the light of all this, the Franco-British Council in general, and Sir Philip de Zulueta in particular, should have no reason whatsoever to have assumed the Prime Minister's attendance. In retrospect, it is a pity that we did not take a firm decision, as was recommended initially from here in 1984, that the Prime Minister would not attend in future. The timing of the Prime Minister's recent letter to him may also have been unfortunate, but I am afraid that we were not aware here that the French and British Sections of the Council were currently meeting in Paris.

I should be grateful for any advice which you may have to offer on how to reply to Sir Philip's letter. It would also be helpful to know what discussions the Foreign Office have had with the Franco-British Council about the Conference in recent months and what has been said in the course of these about the Prime Minister's attendance. Meanwhile I will send Sir Philip a holding reply.

yours ever

(Charles Powell)

(C.D. POWELL)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Franco-British Council BRITISH SECTION

2 Clarendon Close London W2 2NS Telephone 01-262 8959

Sir Philip de Zulueta
Chairman

Please reply to: 6 John Street,
London, WC1N 2ES
Telephone: 01-242 9921

9th February, 1987.

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Thatcher, M.P.,
10 Downing Street,
London, SW1.

Dear Prime Minister,

CARDIFF CONFERENCE

Your letter of February 5th reached me on my return from a visit to Brussels today and has crossed my letter to you of February 6th.

I must admit that I was surprised and distressed by what you wrote. To start with the timing of your letter could scarcely have been more unfortunate since it was written on the very day on which (as the Foreign Office at least knew perfectly well) the French and British sections of the Council were meeting in Paris. At this meeting the French Section again assured us that Monsieur Chirac was looking forward to coming with you to Cardiff and had entered the date in his diary. The French Ambassador had, incidentally, confirmed this to me some two weeks ago. As I mentioned in my last letter, the two sections did agree that if an election was called here for the early summer the Conference would have to be post-poned because British politicians would be unable to come and French politicians would feel inhibited. I am myself doubtful whether either the French or British sections of the Council will feel justified in putting public money and private effort into holding the Conference if the Prime Ministers are not prepared to come. You mention an alternative speaker to yourself for the dinner but there is no alternative to you. As you know, on these occasions it is not so much what is said as who says it that matters.

I have two reasons for feeling distressed that you are not prepared to come to Cardiff. The first is the discourtesy and apparent lack of interest which your

decision, in my view, implies to the French. Britain is the host country on this occasion and you will recall the annoyance even of the French when President Giscard d'Estaing at the last minute sent Monsieur Barre to represent him at the Bordeaux meeting and also that Monsieur Fabius came to Avignon for the meeting even though his father had only just died. Even if Monsieur Chirac himself accepts that you have good reason not to come this time it will clearly be impossible to conceal from the French that it was you who first decided to stay away. My second, and perhaps more important concern, is that your decision seems to indicate a lack of British government interest in the work of the Council whose formation was, as you know, a British initiative taken when The Queen visited President Pompidou. Steady work to maintain and improve Franco-British relations seems to me and to my members of great importance - perhaps even more important for Britain than for France. So far the members of the Council have felt that their voluntary efforts were supported by all the political parties and in particular by the Heads of Government. Perhaps unjustly your decision will be taken to imply a lack of interest in our modest efforts and will naturally be so discouraging to our members, both French and British, as to call in question the usefulness of the Council - even though it is, so far as I know, the only government supported effort in the field of Franco-British relations.

You will understand, therefore, why I feel that it is my duty to ask you to reconsider your decision. If you feel unable to do so I should be grateful if I could come to see you to discuss the matter before we have to tell the French (or indeed my own Council).

Yours very sincerely

Philip de Zulueta

FRANCE: franco-British Council June 83

PIO

Franco-British Council BRITISH SECTION

2 Clarendon Close London W2 2NS Telephone 01-262 8959

Sir Philip de Zulueta
Chairman

Please reply to: 6 John Street,
London, WC1N 2ES
Telephone: 01-242 9921

6th February, 1987

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Thatcher, M.P.,
10 Downing Street,
London, SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

CARDIFF CONFERENCE

We had a meeting of the French and British Sections of the Franco-British Council in Paris on February 5th which finalised most of the arrangements for the Cardiff meeting. I thought that I should perhaps send you a brief report at this stage as to where we are.

We are going to try at Cardiff to be a little bit more specific in our themes and to concentrate on what Britain and France could and should do together in a number of fields. On the Friday, May 29th, after an Opening Session we look forward to what is really the highlight and, in a sense, the main point of the Conference, namely the speeches by yourself and Monsieur Chirac at dinner. We had hoped that the Prince of Wales might come to the luncheon, but much to the regret both of the French and of the Welsh His Royal Highness has declined owing to a previous engagement. On the Saturday we shall divide, as usual, into Committees so as to give people a chance to talk and we are having six such Committees this time on: defence and security, foreign policy, industrial competition, energy and the environment, education and training, and European identity. I think this should cover most of the appropriate fields. On Saturday evening Monsieur Raimond proposes to come to speak at the dinner and to attend the Session on the Sunday, and I know that Geoffrey is kindly trying to fit in with this arrangement. On Sunday, May 31st, Linda Chalker has kindly agreed to take the Chair at the final wind-up Session. So I think the programme makes reasonable sense and, of course, everybody understands that if an Election is called at that time we shall have to postpone the meeting.

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Thatcher, M.P. 6th February, 1987

As you will know, this will be the fourth major Conference run by the Franco-British Council (Bordeaux, Edinburgh and Avignon being the earlier ones) and I should much like, after the Conference is over, to take a few minutes of your time to discuss how best to proceed in the future. I think these major Conferences have been of real value because, of course, they are the only occasions on which the British and French Prime Ministers normally have the opportunity of speaking at a joint meeting and emphasising their interest in getting on well with each other, or at least understanding the problems. But it may or may not be appropriate to continue with these meetings in the future, although if we do not I think that some similarly high profiled occasion at fairly regular intervals is really rather necessary.

Finally, I enclose a list of the new members just elected to the French Section of the Council. You will see that they have managed quite a good level of participants.

On a quite different matter, I just wanted to say how touched I (and of course his family) was that you made the time to attend Harold Macmillan's funeral. I shall miss him very much - his wisdom and his wit. He was a great man - and a great admirer of yours.

Yours very sincerely,

Philip de Zulueta

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL

FRENCH SECTION

New members as from January 1987

M. Edmond ALPHANDERY	Député, maire de Longues-Jumelles. Président du groupe d'amitié France-Grande-Bretagne à l'Assemblée nationale.
M. Jean-Pierre BOUYSSONNIE	Membre de la Commission nationale de la communication et des libertés (CNCL). Président de la Société des ingénieurs scientifiques de France. Président d'honneur de Thomson-CSF, de Centrest et du Groupement des industries électroniques. Officer de la Légion d'honneur, Commandeur de l'Ordre national du mérite.
M. Hervé de CARMOY	Directeur de la division internationale et des grandes entreprises de la Midland Bank Plc. General Manager de la Midland Bank Plc à Londres.
Mme Michèle COTTA	Journaliste. Editorialiste à Europe I. Ancienne présidente de la Haute Autorité de la communication audiovisuelle.
M. René GROUSSARD	Conseiller-maître à la Cour des comptes. Ancien directeur général du Centre national pour l'aménagement des structures des exploitations agricoles (CNASEA). Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur, Officer de l'ordre national du Mérite, Croix de guerre 39-45, Croix du combattant volontaire de la Résistance, Commandeur du Mérite agricole
M. Gabriel VENTEJOL	Président du Conseil économique et social. Délégué du gouvernement au conseil d'administration du Bureau international du travail à Genève. Commandeur de la Légion d'honneur et des Palmes académiques.
M. Jacques VIOT	Ancien ambassadeur en Grande-Bretagne et au Canada. Officier de la Légion d'honneur, Commandeur de l'ordre national du Mérite.

.../...

.../...

M. Jean WAHL

Nouveau Trésorier de la section française (en remplacement de M. Jean DROMER). Président-directeur général de la Société européenne pour la reconversion, l'emploi et le développement international (Euredi) et de Coopers et Lybrand Associés. Professeur à l'Institut du commerce international. Officer de la Légion d'honneur, Chevalier de l'ordre national du Mérite, Croix de guerre 39-45, Médaille de la France libre, Chevalier du Mérite agricole, du Mérite maritime, Commander du Victorian Order, du Mérite de la République italienne, Officier de l'ordre national de la République de Côte d'Ivoire.

Sir A Acland
cc FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

5 February, 1987.

Dear Sir Philip,

You were kind enough to write to me in July last year about the next Franco-British Council Conference, which is to take place in Cardiff on 29-30 May, and to suggest that I might attend. My Private Secretary then replied that a decision on whether I would be able to take part would have to wait until nearer the time.

I am very sorry to say that I now find that I cannot be present on this occasion. This is a disappointment after three enjoyable and interesting Conferences. But I thought it better to let you know straight away while there is still reasonable time to find another speaker at the dinner on 30 May.

I hope that the Conference will prove as stimulating as its predecessors.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Sir Philip de Zulueta

PRIME MINISTER

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL

I have now clearly established that M. Chirac will, like you, not attend the Franco-British Council in Cardiff on 29-30 May. You ought now to warn Sir Philip de Zulueta that you will not take part. I attach a letter.

Agree to sign?

M. Chirac would nonetheless like to have a brief and informal meeting with you at some point between your visit to Moscow and his, which is likely to be in late May. Would you agree to my exploring the possibility of his coming over one day in that period for a working lunch, either at No. 10 or Chequers?

C D POWELL

4 February 1987

SLHAGB