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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

be: PC

MRS. RICHARDS

From the Private Secretary

13 November 1989

Dear Stephen,

EASTERN EUROPE

The French Chargé d'Affaires telephoned me this morning with an oral message for the Prime Minister from President Mitterrand. This was to the effect that President Mitterrand was of the opinion that the situation in Eastern Europe, and particularly the German Democratic Republic, was such that the twelve Heads of Government of the European Community ought to meet to discuss it in advance of the Strasbourg European Council. He was therefore issuing an invitation to the twelve of them to dinner at the Elysée Palace in Paris on the evening of Saturday 18 November. I said that I would convey this to the Prime Minister and we would reply in due course. I asked if he knew when this proposal was likely to be made public. He did not.

I dare say this is in part a ploy to prevent East/West issues dominating the Strasbourg European Council at the expense of discussion of the Social Charter and Economic and Monetary Union. I will consult the Prime Minister as soon as possible about her attendance. Meanwhile, you will want to make a contingency booking of an HS125 and alert the Embassy in Paris. I think we would send only a very small party, consisting of me, Bernard Ingham and one Garden Room girl. I am sure the Prime Minister's preference would be to return the same night if possible.

Yours sincerely,

C. D. POWELL

Stephen Wall, Esq.
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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