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FROM: N L WICKS  
DATE: 10 JULY 1989  
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MR C D POWELL

THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS AND THE PARIS ECONOMIC SUMMIT

You may be interested to have the following information which Attali gave Sherpas at the weekend on the arrangements for the Bicentennial celebrations. Some of this is, I think, not new.

i. The Presidents of Yugoslavia, Mali, Cameroon, Niger and Cyprus have now been added to the guest list. President Menem of Argentina was not now coming.

ii. The Presidents of Mexico, Philippines, Egypt, Bangladesh and a group of Latin nations had asked the French to arrange a joint meeting between Summit Heads and the Heads attending the Revolutionary Celebrations. Attali said that the French had declined to organise such a meeting on the basis that the Revolutionary Celebrations and the Summit were separate. The Presidents of Senegal, Egypt and Venezuela and the Prime Minister of India had asked the French to use the occasion to announce a North/South Summit. The first three had indicated that they could well raise this issue in any bilaterals with the Summit Seven though Mr Gandhi had, apparently, said that he would not raise this if there was no consensus for the proposal. Attali told Sherpas that the French had replied that they would not raise this question at the Summit. It was up to the guests to raise it, if they wanted. The French would simply take note.

iii. The Presidents of Gabon, Congo and the Cameroon had given notice that they would wish to raise at their bilaterals with Summit Heads the issue of public sector (presumably Paris Club) debt.

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iv. The Bicentennial Celebrations had given the French Protocol nightmares, not least of which was the fact that according to international precedence, President Bush was the most junior of the Presidents attending. Gallic ingenuity had solved this conundrum by dividing the world into five regions, into alphabetical order: Africa, America (North), America (South), Asia and Europe. Allotting protocol precedence to the first in each group, followed by the second and so on. This had the convenient result of putting President Bush second in protocol order after President Houphouet-Boigny!

v. President Mitterrand hoped that the Heads would use their intervention at the first session on Friday to give their priorities for the Summit as well as dealing with world economic issues. I will provide a paragraph or so as supplement to the speaking notes which I sent to you last week. Attali said that the President's present intention was to call speakers at this session in international protocol order - which, I think, puts Mrs Thatcher at No 3 after President Mitterrand and President Bush (which seems satisfactory).

I am sending a copy of this minute to Stephen Wall (FCO), Alex Allan (HMT) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

N.L.W.

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