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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 July 1989

Dear Stephen,

## ANGLO FRENCH RELATIONS

When the Prime Minister presented President Mitterrand with her bicentennial gift of a first edition of Charles Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities" this morning, the President drew her aside and said that he would very much like to come over to Britain for a private talk with her fairly soon. He felt that the press were trying to create artificial differences between Britain and France over quite a wide range of issues. Of course there were some genuine differences and those must be respected. But he would like to clear out of the way those which were not real and tackle the few which did exist. If the Prime Minister agreed, he would hop into his plane one day and come across. The Prime Minister said that he would be very welcome at any time and they might meet at Chequers. The President said this would be very agreeable.

We now need to take this forward. I rather doubt that the President will want to come before the summer holidays. But we might look for a date at the end of August or the first few days of September. I will try to let you have a suggestion or two as soon as I am back in the office and Ewen Fergusson might then have a word with M. Attali.

// BF

I am copying this letter to Alex Allan (HM Treasury), Neil Thornton (Department of Trade and Industry), Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence), Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office) and to Sir Ewen Fergusson in Paris.

Yours sincerely,  
C. D. Powell

(C. D. POWELL)

Stephen Wall, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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