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PRIME MINISTER

## ANGLO/FRENCH SUMMIT: BRIEFING MEETING

We have a briefing meeting for the Anglo-French Summit tomorrow evening. I attach a list of those attending, together with the programme for the Summit itself.

1 You might start by asking Sir John Fretwell to give an account of the situation in France and likely French priorities at the Summit.

2 I suggest that you then take the main issues in order, and ask each Minister to give a concise account of what we hope to achieve from the Summit, so you know what we are aiming for when you come to the plenary session and the press session. It is hard to justify these summits unless there are specific objectives. Otherwise they just become waffle sessions. You might observe that the briefing fails to say what might be made of this Summit. It's just a list of points. We want the occasion to reflect the closer working relationship we have with France.

3 You might start with agriculture. Attempts to agree reforms to the milk and beef regimes collapsed in Brussels yesterday. Should the problems now be tackled at the European Council? What should you say to Mitterrand and Chirac about them? Are there specific points on which the French are the main obstacle? What should you say about lamb?

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4 Then defence. The situation has changed since you saw Mitterrand in that we have an explicit confirmation from the Americans of the position on Trident. This will presumably signal clearly to the French that the idea of their missiles in our boats is not on. But we are ready to continue exchanges on strategic and technical issues. We await a formal French reply to our proposals on this. How should you handle this in your talks? With Mitterrand only? Or with Chirac as well? What should you say about

4a cooperation on NIMROD/AWACS?

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On the Trade and Industry side, the main issues are the internal market and the Community's R and D programme. You have sent messages to Community Heads of Government on the internal market. Are there specific points on which you need to extract commitments from the French? On Community R and D, we and the French agree in wanting only a limited programme and financial commitment. Ought you to raise aviation where the French are the main obstacle to progress towards lower air fares?

You might move on to terrorism next. This may be a tricky subject to handle when it comes to your press conference. You will probably be asked about Chirac's remarks to the Washington Times. What do we think the French are up to in their dealings with Middle East governments? Are they trying to buy themselves immunity? What can we realistically now expect of them? A commitment to closer cooperation in the Economic Summit Seven? An explicit commitment to the principle of no substantive concessions to terrorists?

Finally, on the Foreign Secretary's subjects, you will want to establish whether there are specific points you need to make about the European Council. Also to what extent it is appropriate for you, rather than the Foreign Secretary, to pursue the question of the forum for conventional arms control negotiations.

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(C. D. POWELL)

19 November 1986

LIST OF THOSE ATTENDING THE BRIEFING

Foreign Secretary

Mr. Thomas

Mr. Braithwaite

Defence Secretary

Sir Clive Whitmore

Trade and Industry Secretary

Mr. Williams

Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Mr. Andrews

Mr. Partridge - Home Office

Mr. Holmes - Transport

Mr. Williamson) Cabinet Office

Mr. Mallaby )

PRIME MINISTER

## ANGLO/FRENCH SUMMIT

You go to Paris on Friday for the regular Anglo/French Summit. The arrangements are faintly farcical, to fit in with the demands of cohabitation. You will be going to and fro from the Elysée to the Matignon like a yo-yo. The mind boggles at the effect on the traffic.

The attached briefs offer a bland diet for the meeting. I wonder whether they adequately reflect changes in the Anglo/French relationship. The advent of Chirac has brought us closer together politically. France's emergence as a net contributor to the EC has produced a closer identity of interest with us on many Community issues. Now Reykjavik has underlined the commonalty of our interests as military nuclear powers. We share a realistic approach towards the Soviet Union. There are still problems. The enduring French desire to be top-dog viz the condescending tone of Mitterrand's offer of military nuclear co-operation; their perennial inclination to be too clever by half, as over dealing with terrorism; their instinctive tendency to play dirty on agriculture, for instance over lamb. While there is no less need to watch them like hawks, we should recognise, welcome and make something out of the shift in our relationship which has occurred.

This suggests to me that you can use the Summit to bring out, both in your talks and publicly, the extent to which there is a closer Anglo-French working relationship than existed previously. This will characterize your discussion of East/West relations, defence, European issues, and