

cc Miss Holmes.

19

Mr. Whitmore

I agree full 25 in

If you agree, to send French if nothing heard -
GJM
25/7

10/15 14/8

PRIME MINISTER

Annual Anglo/French Consultations

As you know, consultations with the French at Head of Government level take place approximately every 12 months and the next round will be due in November. It is the UK's turn to be host. It will, in fact, be useful to have had bilateral consultations with both the Germans (we are trying to arrange these for late October) and the French before the European Council meeting in Dublin at the end of November.

You will wish to avoid the middle of November for the Anglo/French talks, since you will be preoccupied at that time both with your Guildhall speech and with the Rhodesian sanctions problem. May we therefore offer the French 5/6 November for President Giscard's visit? *Does the French receive him as Head of State?*

✓
MS

A possible pattern for the visit would be to begin with a small working lunch on Monday, 5 November, preceded by a short tete-a-tete discussion: to devote the afternoon of 5 November to more talks, with Foreign Ministers (or M. Barre, if he comes) present, while other French Ministers accompanying President Giscard could have separate discussions with their UK counterparts (eg Finance, Industry and Energy): and to finish the day with a large dinner party. On Tuesday, 6 November, there could be a short pleaaary session of talks at the beginning of the morning, followed by the usual joint press conference. President Giscard could leave before lunch, leaving you free to prepare for Questions in the afternoon. If you agree with this outline, we shall suggest it to the French.

When President Giscard last came to the UK for these consultations, the programme took place at Chequers. This has some some advantages but increases the administrative complications. Would you be content to base the programme on No. 10 this time? If you wished to make a splash with the dinner, it could of course be held at Lancaster House if you would prefer this, in order to increase the numbers.

Yes - but we must decide on the venue very carefully.

GJM

11 July 1979