

UNCLASSIFIED
GRS 420
FM PARIS 141630Z SEP 81

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 796 OF 14 SEPTEMBER 1981

INFO SAVING BONN, BRUSSELS, COPENHAGEN, DUBLIN, THE HAGUE,
LUXEMBOURG, ROME, UKREP BRUSSELS, ATHENS.

FRENCH PRESS REACTIONS TO ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT

1. IN THE BUILD -UP TO THE SUMMIT, BOTH PRESS AND BROADCASTING REFLECTED THE ELYSEE'S LINE THAT THIS YEAR'S ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT MEETING WAS TAKING PLACE AT A MOMENT WHEN BOTH SIDES WERE AIMING FOR WARMER RELATIONS. IN SUPPORT OF THIS, VIRTUALLY ALL STORIES SUGGESTED THAT PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S FIRM LINE ON EAST-WEST ISSUES WOULD BRING HIM CLOSER TO THE PRIME MINISTER. LE MATIN (SOCIALIST) AND LIBERATION (LEFT-WING) SUGGESTED THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAD MORE IN COMMON WITH MRS THATCHER'S GOVERNMENT THAN WITH THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT.

2. MOST PAPERS POINTED OUT BEFOREHAND THAT, WHILE BOTH SIDES HAD THE BEST OF INTENTIONS, THEY WERE LIABLE TO RUN INTO A NUMBER OF REAL DIFFERENCES OF INTEREST, PARTICULARLY IN THE COMMUNITY AND ESPECIALLY OVER BUDGET RESTRUCTURING WHERE ONE OR TWO PAPERS REFERD TO THE 30 MAY MANDATE AGREEMENT AS AN "UNREQUITED PRESENT" FROM FRANCE TO BRITAIN. PRESIDENT MITTERRAND, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS PORTRAYED AS TRYING TO OPEN BRITISH MINDS TO THE PROSPECT OF A FRENCH-LED REVIVAL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

3. THE MEDIA HAVE FOLLOWED MUCH THE SAME LINES AS THE BRITISH PRESS IN REPORTING THE MEETING ITSELF AND THE JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER IT. THERE HAVE BEEN REFERENCES TO A "LITTLE HONEYMOON" AND THE RBIRTH OF THE "ENTENTE CORDIALE". THE NEW CLIMATE IN ANGLO/FRENCH RELATIONS HAS BEEN CONTRASTED WITH THE COOLNESS OF RELATIONS IN PRESIDENT GISCARD'S TIME. SOME PAPERS HAVE NOTED AGAIN THAT THE SUMMIT WAS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE END OF THE EXCLUSIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BONN AND PARIS. LE FIGARO, FOR EXAMPLE, PICKED ON A REMARK BY THE PRESIDENT THAT THE EUROPEAN REVIVAL HAD TO BE APPROACHED THROUGH BILATERAL FRANCO-BRITISH COOPERATION. IT SEEMED TO BE THE PRESIDENTS IDEA THAT PARIS AND LONDON SHOULD BE THE DRIVING FORCE IN EUROPEAN AFFAIS FROM NOW ON .

4. MUCH PROMINENCE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE DECISION TO OPEN TALKS ON THE CHANNEL TUNNEL AS A SYMBOL OF THE RENEWED FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE PRESS NOTED EQUALLY THAT THERE WOULD BE TALKS ON THE FUTURE OF CONCORDE. COMMENT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO THROW ASIDE ENTIRELY THE SCEPTICISM SHOWN BEFORE THE MEETING. THE TUNNEL AND CONCORDE POINTS ARE PRESENTED AS THE ONLY TWO CONCRETE DECISIONS THAT EMERGED FROM THE SUMMIT. THERE ARE CAUTIONS ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES THAT ARE LIKELY TO ARISE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHEN THE COMMUNITY GETS DOWN TO DISCUSSION OF THE FUTURE OF EUROPE.

FCO PLEASE PASS ALL SAVING ADDRESEES.

HIBBERT

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED][THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT
ADVANCED]

FCO/WHITEHALL
WED