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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

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SAVING TO BRUSSELS, UKREP BRUSSELS, ROME, DUBLIN, BONN, LUXEMBOURG,  
COPENHAGEN AND THE HAGUE.

*MT*

Prime Minister

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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO PARIS: FRENCH PRESS COVERAGE.

1. THE PARIS PRESS TODAY GIVES A DISTINCTLY POSITIVE IMPRESSION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT. ('BRAVO MRS THATCHER' IS ONE OF THE HEADLINES). THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS AND THOSE OF THE ELYSEE ABOUT THE GOOD ATMOSPHERE ESTABLISHED ARE WIDELY QUOTED. TWO THEMES ARE STRESSED IN PARTICULAR: HMG'S INTENTION TO PLAY A MORE POSITIVE PART IN THE COMMUNITY AND THE EMPHASIS LAID IN THE TALKS ON ENERGY PROBLEMS. THE PRIME MINISTER'S DECISION TO VISIT TRICASTIN IS GENERALLY WELL RECEIVED, BEING SEEN AS A TRIBUTE TO THE FRENCH NUCLEAR PROGRAMME AND A POINTER TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR POWER. A NUMBER OF PAPERS ALSO TOUCH ON THE COMMUNITY ISSUES ON WHICH DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE UK REMAIN. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS REFLECT THE GENERAL FLAVOUR OF THE COVERAGE.

2. FOR THE FIGARO (RIGHT WING) ENERGY WAS THE DOMINANT THEME OF THE DISCUSSIONS: 'THE SUBJECT IMPOSED ITSELF'. THE PAPER SAYS THAT THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER AGREED ON THREE BROAD CONCLUSIONS: DISAPPROVAL OF BIDDING UP OIL PRICES, THE NEED FOR WESTERN COOPERATION ON ENERGY, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF NUCLEAR POWER AS THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO OIL. THE ARTICLE QUOTES (AS DO SEVERAL OTHERS) THE ELYSEE SPOKESMAN AS SAYING THAT THE PRESIDENT 'WELCOMED WITH SATISFACTION BRITAIN'S INTENTION TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE PART IN THE SEARCH OF SOLUTIONS TO EUROPEAN PROBLEMS'. THE PAPER ADDS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S 'DECLARATION OF INTENTION HAS BEEN APPRECIATED ON THE FRENCH SIDE AT ITS TRUE VALUE. NO-ONE DOUBTS THAT THE BRITISH WILL CONTINUE IN FUTURE TO DEFEND THEIR INTERESTS IN BRUSSELS WITH FIRMNESS'.

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3. LE MATIN (SOCIALIST) SAYS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER "DID HER BEST TO BRING FRANCE ROUND TO HER IDEA OF A EUROPE... WHERE BRITAIN'S BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTIONS WOULD BE DEMINISHED AND WHICH WOULD BE MORE UNITED IN THE FACE OF THE OIL CRISIS, POSSIBLY COOPERATING ON NUCLEAR ENERGY". IT ADDS THAT THE ELYSEE WILL HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE STOCK OF THE IRON LADY'S DETERMINATION TO DEFEND HER INTERESTS" BUT SUCH PRAGMATISM DOES NOT DISPLEASE THE PRESIDENT'S ENTOURAGE."

4. LES ECHOS (BUSINESS DAILY) HEADLINES ITS ARTICLE "ENCOURAGING PROSPECTS FOR FRANCO-BRITISH COOPERATION". AFTER NOTING THE DECLARATIONS OF GOOD INTENTION ON EUROPEAN QUESTIONS AND THE SCARCELY HIDDEN DIFFERENCES THAT STILL PERSIST BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS IT COMMENTS THAT THE AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL ON 18 JUNE WILL BE THE FIRST TEST OF THE REALITY OF BRITAIN'S NEW ATTITUDE. IT COMMENTS THAT BRITAIN IS NO LONGER INSISTING ON AN EXCLUSIVE FISHERIES ZONE OF 12 MILES BUT IS NOW TALKING OF AN "ADEQUATE EXCLUSIVE ZONE", THUS POSSIBLY OPENING THE DOOR TO A COMPROMISE.

5. REPORTING IN TODAY'S ISSUE LE MONDE'S DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT COMMENTS ON MRS THATCHER'S DETERMINATION TO EMPHASISE HER COMMITMENT TOWARDS EUROPE AND HER CONVICTION THAT THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF BRITAIN IS A PRE-CONDITION TO RECOVERING LOST INFLUENCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. ON BOTH POINTS DELARUE POINTS OUT THAT HER VIEWS COINCIDE WITH THOSE OF SIR N. HENDERSON IN HIS FAREWELL DESPATCH (WHICH LE MONDE REPORTED FULLY YESTERDAY). ON ENERGY THE ARTICLE QUOTES THE ELYSEE AS SAYING THAT THE VIEWS OF BOTH SIDES WERE "VERY SIMILAR".

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HIBBERT

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