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ZZ FCO

Hd. WED (FCO/WH),

France

PP UKREP BRUSSELS

Ps

Ps/Lps,

Ps/Pus,

PP WASHINGTON

Siv E. Youde,

Mr. Bullard,

Mr. Ferguson,

PP UKDEL NATO

Ps/20.10, Downing St (for Duty, Clark),

D20 Cabinet office,

R.c. (10x).

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM PARIS 111808Z MAY 81

TO F L A S H FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 344 OF 11 MAY 1981

INFO PRIORITY UKREP BRUSSELS, WASHINGTON AND UKDEL NATO

INFO SAVING OTHER EC POSTS, UKDEL STRASBOURG AND HM CONSULS

GENERAL FRANCE

MY 2 IPTS: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: THE FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY

1. THE SOCIALIST PARTY, OF WHICH M MITTERRAND WAS FIRST SECRETARY FROM 1971 UNTIL JANUARY THIS YEAR WHEN HE RESIGNED TO BECOME PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, IS NOT A COHESIVE BODY. FACTIONS REPRESENTING THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS WHICH CAME TOGETHER IN THE EARLY 1970S TO FORM THE MODERN SOCIALIST PARTY HAVE MAINTAINED THEIR SEPARATE IDENTITY WITHIN THE PARTY. M MITTERRAND'S SKILL AS PARTY LEADER HAS BEEN TO MANOEUVRE WITHIN A CHANGING COALITION OF FACTIONS TO SECURE AND MAINTAIN HIS PREDOMINANCE.

2. M MITTERRAND'S OWN FACTION REPRESENTS ABOUT 40% OF THE PARTY'S STRENGTH IN THE COUNTRY (THERE ARE ABOUT 180,000 PAID-UP PARTY MEMBERS). IN THE IMAGE OF ITS LEADER, THE MITTERRAND FACTION IS UNDOCTRINAIRE IN ITS APPROACH. ITS POLICIES ARE ESSENTIALLY THOSE OF M MITTERRAND HIMSELF. SINCE THE CONGRESS AT METZ IN 1979, M MITTERRAND HAS BEEN ALLIED WITH THE LEFT-WING CERES FACTION LED BY M JEAN-PIERRE CHEVENEMENT. M CHEVENEMENT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR DRAFTING THE PROJET SOCIALISTE, THE MARXIST-FLAVOURED MANIFESTO OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY ADOPTED AT THE CONGRESS OF METZ. M MITTERRAND DISTANCED HIMSELF FROM THIS IN HIS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN SAYING THAT WHILE HE REGARDED THE PROJET SOCIALISTE AS ONE OF HIS SOURCES OF INSPIRATION HE WAS NOT BOUND BY ITS EVERY LETTER. AT METZ, CERES CLAIMED 14% OF THE PARTY'S MEMBERS, BUT IT HAS PROBABLY BEEN IN DECLINE SINCE.

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3. THE TWO MINORITY FACTIONS OF THE PS ARE LED BY M MAUROY, THE MAYOR OF LILLE, AND M ROCARD, WHO LAST YEAR UNSUCCESSFULLY CHALLENGED M MITTERRAND FOR THE PS' PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION. MESSRS MAUROY AND ROCARD WERE SUPPORTED AT METZ BY 14% AND 20% RESPECTIVELY OF THE PARTY'S MEMBERS. M MAUROY REPRESENTS THE TRADITION OF WORKING-CLASS SOCIALISM IN NORTHERN FRANCE. M ROCARD, WHO DID NOT JOIN THE SOCIALIST PARTY UNTIL 1974, IS CLOSER TO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT TRADITION ELSEWHERE IN NORTHERN EUROPE.

4. ALTHOUGH THE SUPPORTERS OF M MAUROY AND M ROCARD HAVE NO FORMAL POSITIONS IN THE PARTY HIERARCHY, M MAUROY HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN AS M MITTERRAND'S SPOKESMAN. HE IS LIKELY TO BE REWARDED WITH HIGH OFFICE. HE IS A POSSIBLE PRIME MINISTER. M ROCARD, WHO HAVING BEEN HELD ASIDE FROM THE EARLY STAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN, WAS MANDATED BY M MITTERRAND ON THE EVE OF THE SECOND ROUND TO ANSWER CRITICISMS FROM M GISCARD THAT THE MITTERRAND ECONOMIC POLICIES WERE EXTREMIST. ACCORDING TO THE OPINION POLLS, M ROCARD IS STILL WITH MME VEIL ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR POLITICIANS IN FRANCE. IN VIEW OF HIS CONTINUING RIVALRY WITH M MITTERRAND IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT HE WILL BE APPOINTED AS PRIME MINISTER. M MITTERRAND COULD PUT M ROCARD'S ECONOMIC EXPERTISE TO GOOD USE AT THE MINISTRIES OF FINANCE OR INDUSTRY.

5. ALL THAT M MITTERRAND HAS SO FAR SAID ABOUT AN INTERIM (PRE-LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS) GOVERNMENT IS THAT IT WOULD BE COMPOSED OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAD SUPPORTED THE OPTIONS THAT HE HAD PUT FORWARD DURING HIS CAMPAIGN. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER THIS WILL BE A GOVERNMENT OF TECHNOCRATS OR WHETHER HE WILL FROM THE OUTSET CONSTITUTE A GOVERNMENT IN WHICH PROMINENT SOCIALISTS TAKE THE LEAD.

FOO PLEASE PASS ALL SAVING ADDRESSEES EXCEPT HM CONSULS GENERAL FRANCE.

HIBBERT.

[James Lewis, as requested]

NNNN

PP UKREP BRUSSELS

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PP WASHINGTON

Ad. WED (FCO/WH),

PP UKDEL NATO

PS

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PS/LPS

CONFIDENTIAL

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FM PARIS 111735Z MAY 81

Sir E. Yorke,

TO FLASH FCO

Mr. Bullard,

TELEGRAM NUMBER 343 OF 11 MAY 1981

Mr. Ferguson,

INFO PRIORITY UKREP BRUSSELS WASHINGTON UKDEL NATO

PS/No. 10, Downing St. (for Duty Officer),

INFO SAVING BONN BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN DUBLIN THE HAGUE LUXEMBOURG

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ROME ATHENS UKDEL STRASBOURG HM CONSULS GENERAL FRANCE MOSCOW

R.C. (10x)

MIPT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

MONSIEUR FRANCOIS MITTERRAND

1. M. MITTERRAND'S ELECTION AS PRESIDENT CROWNS A POLITICAL CAREER SPANNING THE WHOLE PERIOD SINCE THE WAR. HE SUCCEEDS AT THE THIRD ATTEMPT, HAVING FAILED IN 1965 AND AGAIN, NARROWLY IN 1974. DOGGED PERSISTENCE HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS POLITICAL LIFE.

2. BORN IN 1916, THE SON OF A PROVINCIAL RAILWAY OFFICIAL, M. MITTERRAND HAS THREE BROTHERS WHO HAVE MADE SUCCESSFUL CAREERS: ONE AN AIR FORCE GENERAL AND NOW PRESIDENT OF AEROSPATIALE, ONE PRESIDENT OF HAVAS AND ONE A PROFESSOR AT THE SORBONNE. HE TRAINED AS A LAWYER IN PARIS. HE WAS WOUNDED IN ACTION DURING THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN AND CAPTURED BY THE GERMANS. HE ESCAPED, CHARACTERISTICALLY AT THE THIRD ATTEMPT, SETTLED IN THE UNOCCUPIED PART OF FRANCE AND BECAME AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE RESISTANCE. IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE RECENT CAMPAIGN M. MITTERRAND'S OPPONENTS QUESTIONED HIS RESISTANCE RECORD. BUT GENERAL DE GAULLE WAS SUFFICIENTLY SATISFIED WITH HIM IN 1944 TO MAKE HIM SECRETARY GENERAL FOR PRISONERS AND DEPORTEES. AT THE END OF THE WAR, M. MITTERRAND BECAME DEPUTY FOR THE NIEVRE, AN AREA OF NORTH CENTRAL FRANCE THAT HE HAS REPRESENTED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OR, BRIEFLY, IN THE SENATE EVER SINCE. IN 1944 HE MARRIED DANIELLE GOUZE, WHO HAD HERSELF A GOOD RECORD IN THE RESISTANCE. THEY HAVE TWO SONS.

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3. UNDER THE 4TH REPUBLIC M. MITTERRAND WAS A MEMBER OF SEVERAL ADMINISTRATIONS, SOME OF THEM FAR FROM LEFT WING. WHEN HE FIRST TOOK OFFICE, HE WAS THE YOUNGEST MINISTER TO BE APPOINTED SINCE THE 19TH CENTURY. AMONG HIS MINISTERIAL POSTS HIS PRINCIPAL ONES WERE MINISTER FOR EX-SERVICEMEN AND WAR VICTIMS, MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS FRANCE AND MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. M. MITTERRAND WAS ONE OF THE FEW FRENCH POLITICIANS TO OPPOSE GENERAL DE GAULLE'S RETURN TO POWER IN 1958, NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE HE DID NOT FAVOUR STRENGTHENING THE EXECUTIVE AT THE EXPENSE OF PARLIAMENT BUT BECAUSE HE CONSIDERED THAT GENERAL DE GAULLE HAD BEEN IMPOSED ON FRANCE BY THE ARMED FORCES.

4. SINCE 1958 M. MITTERRAND HAS BEEN THE DE FACTO LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION. HIS POLITICAL FORTUNES HAVE EBBED AND FLOWED BUT HE HAS NEVER GIVEN UP HIS ATTEMPT TO CREATE A MAJORITY THAT WOULD ALLOW THE LEFT TO ACCEDE TO POWER. FROM 1971 UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, WHEN HE GAVE UP THE POST TO RUN FOR THE PRESIDENCY, M. MITTERRAND WAS FIRST SECRETARY OF THE RENOVATED SOCIALIST PARTY (PS). UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP THE PS HAS GROWN TO BECOME THE DOMINANT FORCE ON THE LEFT OF FRENCH POLITICS. M. MITTERRAND, THE SUPREME PARTY TACTICIAN, HAS THE DISTINCTION OF HAVING HELD THE WARRING FACTIONS OF THE PS TOGETHER DURING ITS LONG PERIOD OF OPPOSITION AND OF DIFFICULT RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF).

5. M. MITTERRAND HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT THE ONLY WAY THE SOCIALISTS COULD HOPE TO COME TO POWER WAS WITH THE SUPPORT OF THOSE VOTERS WHO HAD TRADITIONALLY SUPPORTED THE PCF. FROM 1972-7 HE TOOK THE PS INTO ALLIANCE WITH THE PCF, BUT THE ALLIANCE COLLAPSED BEFORE THE 1978 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS WHEN M. MITTERRAND REJECTED THE PCF'S ATTEMPTS TO DICTATE THE TERMS OF THE REVISION OF THE COMMON PROGRAMME OF GOVERNMENT WHICH HAD BEEN DRAWN UP IN 1972. SINCE THEN, RELATIONS BETWEEN M. MITTERRAND AND THE PCF AT LEADERSHIP LEVEL HAVE BEEN STRAINED. BUT M. MITTERRAND HAS NEVER ABANDONED HIS BELIEF THAT THE PS COULD NOT AFFORD TO TURN ITS BACK ON PCF VOTERS.

6. M. MITTERRAND IS NOT A DOCTRINAIRE SOCIALIST. KEEN ON BOOKS AND PAINTING ADDICTED TO WRITING AND REPUTEDLY PLEASURE LOVING, HE SEEMS TO BE MOSTLY A HUMANIST WITH EGALITARIAN INSTINCTS AND A SENSE OF PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY. HE IS ON THE SIDE OF THE UNDERDOG AND IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE WELFARE OF PEOPLE IN GENERAL, BUT HE IS BY NATURE ALOOF. HE HAS FEW PERSONAL FRIENDS AND IS NOT MUCH INCLINED TO SHARE CONFIDENCES. HIS UNRIVALLED STATURE WITHIN THE PS HAS CREATED A COURT LIKE ATMOSPHERE WHERE

WITHIN THE PS HAS CREATED A COURT LIKE ATMOSPHERE WHERE THOSE IN FAVOUR RISE FAST, BUT THOSE WHO CROSS HIM ARE EXCLUDED FROM HIS COUNSELS. THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE ELEMENTS OF POWER AND HIS ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO USE THEM.

7. DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN M. MITTERRAND MANAGED TO APPEAR VERY CALM AND SELF-POSSESSED. THERE WAS A GOOD DEAL OF ART IN THIS, BUT ALSO A FAIR AMOUNT OF NATURE. HE HAS REMAINED A TOUGH AND RUTHLESS POLITICIAN CAPABLE OF BITING CRITICISM OF HIS OPPONENTS. BUT THIS SIDE OF HIS CHARACTER HAS BEEN LITTLE IN EVIDENCE RECENTLY. ON THE WHOLE HE SUCCEEDED IN PRESENTING A REASSURING IMAGE TO THE ELECTORATE.

8. M. MITTERRAND HAS RECENTLY GIVEN LITTLE HINT OF HIS VIEWS ABOUT BRITAIN. IN LAST WEEK'S TELEVISION DEBATE HE DID NOT RISE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT BRITISH MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMUNITY AND HE IS IN FAVOUR OF ENLARGEMENT. THERE IS NO SIGN THAT HE HAS THOUGHT VERY MUCH ABOUT RELATIONS WITH THE UK. M. MITTERRAND SPEAKS LITTLE ENGLISH AND BRITAIN DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE ATTRACTED A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION FROM HIM, BUT WHEN HE VISITED THE UK IN OCTOBER 1977 AS A GUEST OF THE LABOUR PARTY HE MADE A GOOD AND AMIABLE IMPRESSION ON THE LABOUR MINISTERS IN POWER AT THE TIME.

9. PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE POINT TO BE MADE ABOUT M. MITTERRAND IS THAT HE HAS FOLLOWED HIS OWN LINE OVER MANY YEARS AGAINST MUCH CRITICISM AND IN DEFIANCE OF MOST POPULAR WISDOM, BUILDING THE SOCIALIST PARTY UP BY THE UNION OF THE LEFT AND BUILDING IT STILL FURTHER WHEN THE UNION OF THE LEFT WAS SABOTAGED, AND FINALLY BEING REWARDED BY THE SWING OF THE LEFT-WING ELECTORATE AWAY FROM THE COMMUNIST PARTY A FORTNIGHT AGO. HE IS A FORMIDABLE 'LONER' AND HIS POLICIES ARE LIKELY TO ANNOUNCE THEMSELVES IN DUE COURSE BY DEEDS RATHER THAN BY WORDS.

FCO PSE PASS SAVINGS TO ALL EXCEPT HM CONSULS GENERAL FRANCE

HIBBERT

[Savings, as requested]

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