



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minutes.

re the minute by Hugh below.

There is more than a suspicion that the French are working for a situation whereby, if they fail to get agreement in Deal, they can blame us. They will no doubt then cite examples of approaches like this.

A.S.C.  $\frac{10}{2}$ .

Conversation with Monsieur de Margerie

The French Ambassador rang me up a week ago in a state of what seemed considerable anxiety. He wanted to see me as soon as possible. This telephone call came late in the evening and I naturally thought that it might be something extraordinary. I therefore went to see him the next day. He still seemed fairly agitated but his message was in the circumstances suprisingly usual.

He wondered whether we realised quite how important the meeting of the European Council in March would be, and whether we knew that for that meeting to be a success, the appropriate work had to be done now. He thought we were at a cross roads in the History of the European Community. His President believed that his recent "concessions" should be appreciated as a great step forward. He did not know whether we fully realised how difficult this had been for Monsieur Mitterand. Monsieur de Margerie than spent quite a long time explaining to me how much Monsieur Mitterand loved England because of the war primarily, and he was again not certain whether everyone here appreciated that fact.

I would not trouble to report this conversation had it not been for the evident agitation of Monsieur de Margerie who seems normally such a balanced and calm person. He told me that he had ill recently, I do not think this was the reason. He told me that he was going to be working continually on the problems of the Community until March and would spend half his time in France.

Hugh Thomas  
Feb. 10 1984