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Mr DEREK THOMAS  
R.C.

Press office  
No. 10. DSR

PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEW ON FRENCH TELEVISION, WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER

1. THIS INTERVIEW WILL BE CONDUCTED AS AGREED BY CHRISTINE OCKRENT, CHIEF EDITOR OF THE MAIN NEWS PROGRAMME ON THE SECOND TV CHANNEL, ANTENNE 2. MISS OCKRENT HAS CONFIRMED THAT SHE WILL, AS ORIGINALLY AGREED, ASK HER QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH. THE CONVERSATION WILL BE PUT INTO FRENCH BY SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETERS IN THE STUDIO IN PARIS.

2. MISS OCKRENT HAS NOW TOLD US THAT THE THREE THEMES SHE HOPES TO EXPLORE IN THE INTERVIEW ARE:

- (A) THE STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN FRANCE AND BRITAIN;
- (B) THE STATE OF EUROPE;
- (C) PROSPECTS FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S POLITICAL PROGRAMME.

THE PRIME MINISTER WILL HAVE BEEN BRIEFED FOR THE SUMMIT, AVIGNON AND DUBLIN BEFORE THE INTERVIEW AND WILL THEREFORE BE VERY WELL PREPARED ON POINTS (A) AND (B). POINT (C) IS NOT A SUBJECT ON WHICH COMMENT FROM HERE SEEMS NECESSARY.

3. THERE ARE NEVERTHELESS ONE OR TWO POINTS WHICH YOU MAY WISH TO DRAW TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S ATTENTION:

- (1) WE ARE NOW IN THE OPENING STAGES HERE OF THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE 1986 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. IN ATTACKING THE OPPOSITION'S PRESCRIPTIONS FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN OCCASIONALLY SUGGEST THAT MONETARISM, REAGANISM (OR EVEN THATCHERISM) ARE NOT EXPERIMENTS TO WHICH THE FRENCH SHOULD EXPOSE THEMSELVES GIVEN THE DIRE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES PERCEIVED IN BRITAIN. AT THE SAME TIME, COMMENTATORS ARE NOW RECOGNISING THAT FRANCE IS SLIPPING BEHIND ECONOMICALLY IN EUROPE, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF INFLATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH. WE NEED TO EXPLAIN WHAT WE ARE DOING AND WHY, BUT WITHOUT IMPLYING THAT FRANCE SHOULD NECESSARILY FOLLOW SUIT. (CONDITIONS ARE VERY DIFFERENT EG THE

NECESSARILY FOLLOW SUIT. (CONDITIONS ARE VERY DIFFERENT EG THE WEAKNESS OF TRADE UNIONISM IN FRANCE AND THE GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF STATE CONTROL).

(II) ON EUROPE, THE FRENCH WOULD WELCOME CONFIRMATION THAT THE BUDGET PROBLEM WAS SATISFACTORILY DEALT WITH AT FONTAINEBLEAU. THEY DO HOWEVER FIND DIFFICULTY IN GRASPING THE NOTION THAT AGRICULTURAL SPENDING NEEDS TO BE DETERMINED BY AVAILABLE RESOURCES, RATHER THAN THE REVERSE, PARTLY IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR EG INDUSTRIAL MODERNISATION. THIS POINT COULD BE WORTH EMPHASISING.

(III) IN ANY DISCUSSION OF EUROPEAN UNION IT WOULD BE WORTH EMPHASISING THE NEED TO IMPLEMENT THE TERMS OF THE TREATY OF ROME, (EG BY REMOVING INTERNAL BARRIERS TO TRADE), SO AS TO CREATE THE GENUINE SINGLE MARKET WHICH ALONE WILL ENABLE EUROPE TO COMPETE WITH THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN.

FCO PLEASE ADVANCE TO PRESS OFFICE, 10 DOWNING STREET.

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