

cc Bep

PRIME MINISTER

## MEETING WITH M. ROCARD

You are to see M. Rocard briefly on Thursday afternoon.

M. Rocard is the leading figure of the right-wing of the French Socialist Party. He has declared himself a candidate in the Presidential election. Whether he has any chance at all depends on whether President Mitterrand decides to run. While that decision is pending, no one takes Rocard's prospects very seriously. But he is nonetheless an important and responsible figure and could well be Prime Minister under a re-elected Mitterrand. His position in the French political spectrum lies somewhere between that of Denis Healy and David Owen in the U.K. He has previously served as Minister for the Plan and Minister of Agriculture. He is visiting the United Kingdom as a Category I Sponsored Visitor.

You will find some weighty briefing in the folder. I don't think it matters very much what you talk about, more that you should give him a clear impression of your views. I suggest that you try to cover:

- European defence, drawing on the proposals which you put to President Mitterrand;
- European Community, concentrating on the prospects for the European Council; and
- East/West relations

You will also want to get his assessment of French politics and how the election campaign is likely to develop.

M. Rocard speaks good English.

e.d.?

(C. D. POWELL)

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