

CONFIDENTIAL
FM PARIS
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 217
OF 201848Z FEBRUARY 90

CONFIDENTIAL
R. file
C/S

VISIT BY THE FRENCH PRIME MINISTER
SUMMARY

1. AT PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S REQUEST, ROCARD WANTS TO VISIT LONDON FOR TALKS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, YOURSELF, THE CHANCELLOR AND THE DEFENCE SECRETARY. PROPOSES 28 OR 29 MARCH.

DETAIL

2. IN HIS TALKS WITH YOU LAST WEEK, DUMAS REFERRED TO ROCARD'S WISH TO MAKE A VISIT TO LONDON BEFORE LONG FOR TALKS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, THE CHANCELLOR, THE DEFENCE SECRETARY AND YOURSELF ON THE ISSUES ARISING FROM GERMAN UNIFICATION, EC QUESTIONS, THE ENTRY OF THE POUND STERLING INTO THE ERM, ETC.

3. WE ASKED HIS DIPLOMATIC ADVISER, PHILIPPE PETIT, IF HE COULD GIVE MORE INFORMATION. PETIT SAID THAT PRESIDENT MITTERRAND HAD ASKED ROCARD TO MAKE THIS VISIT, WHICH FLOWED FROM THE RECOGNITION AT THE TOP IN BOTH COUNTRIES OF THE NEED TO REINFORCE CONTACTS. THE FRENCH HAD BEEN GOING TO INSTRUCT THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN LONDON TO TAKE ACTION BUT, GIVEN THE PACE OF EVENTS, HAD NOT YET GOT ROUND TO IT. ROCARD WOULD BE FREE TO COME TO LONDON ON 28 OR 29 MARCH. 28 MARCH BEING A WEDNESDAY, WITH THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IN MORNING, HE WOULD BE ABLE TO MANAGE ONLY TALKS IN THE AFTERNOON. HE COULD STAY ON FOR DINNER AND COULD IF NECESSARY STAY OVERNIGHT. AS DUMAS HAD INDICATED, HE WOULD LIKE TO TACKLE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ISSUES, ESPECIALLY MONETARY, AND NON-COMMUNITY ISSUES, ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATING TO DEVELOPMENTS IN GERMANY, AND SOME BILATERAL ISSUES. HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PRIME MINISTER, THE CHANCELLOR AND YOURSELF. WHEN WE EXPLORED WHAT BILATERAL QUESTIONS ROCARD WANTED TO ADDRESS, IT TURNED OUT THAT HE HAD IN MIND BILATERAL DEFENCE COOPERATION, AND THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE ALSO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE ABOUT THIS.

4. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR MAY GET INSTRUCTIONS TO APPROACH YOU BUT GIVEN THE PRESSURE ON DIARIES, WE HAVE AGREED WITH PETIT THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO TIE DOWN A DATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

5. I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO

THIS FURTHER SIGN OF INTEREST IN DEVELOPING STRONGER BILTERAL LINKS,
AND LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER
MINISTERS CAN RECEIVE ROCARD ON ONE OF THE DAYS HE HAS SUGGESTED.

6. PLEASE ADVANCE TO POWELL NO 10 DOWNING STREET, PS/CHANCELLOR OF
THE EXCHEQUER AND PS/SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE.

FERGUSSON

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DISTRIBUTION 7

ADVANCE 7

PS
POWELL NO 10 D/ST
PS/CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER
PS/S OF S FOR DEFENCE

PS/MR MAUDE
MR P J WESTON
MR RATFORD

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