

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH M. CHIRAC

You are seeing M. Chirac briefly after Questions tomorrow, largely for old times sake. He is in London to be presented with a Japanese sponsored prize, but I am afraid I am not clear what it is for. He is making a tour of Docklands and the City.

M. Chirac's political role has diminished in recent months and his position is threatened within his own party by a resurgent old-style Gaullist wing. One of the most difficult problems he faces is immigration, where the extreme right Front National has managed to woo away some of his natural electoral base. Fuller background on the French political scene is in the FCO letter in the folder.

The subjects which you might like to discuss with him are:

- Europe The Right in France is gradually moving towards your position, in particular on political union and the future of the European Community. Their views on EMU are less clear. You might smoke out M. Chirac's views;
- German Unification You will want to see how far he shares President Mitterrand's worries and whether he is prepared to say anything publicly about them;
- Defence/NATO Have Chirac's views changed as a result of the tremendous metamorphosis in East/West relations?
- Gorbachev Chirac will, I am sure, welcome an account of your recent meeting and your assessment of Gorbachev's prospects.

C.D.P.

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C.D. POWELL

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