



FROM THE AMBASSADOR

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BRITISH EMBASSY,  
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*CD*  
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*My dear Charles,*

I am delighted - indeed relieved - that the meeting between M. Chirac and the Prime Minister has now been arranged. It is a symptom of the heating-up of the pre-electoral atmosphere that he has decided, clearly, that it will be to his advantage in the game of one-upmanship with M. Mitterrand if Mrs Thatcher is seen to be coming to Paris to visit him, in contrast to his enthusiasm last July for flying to London, or wherever, to suit the Prime Minister's convenience.

I am obviously sorry that the "standard procedures" apply, since I got much out of being at the 29 July meeting, but there it is.

Although I had originally intended to be in the UK that weekend (and had received an oral message that you would not want me to change my plans) I should prefer to be on hand for the Prime Minister's visit. It is not yet clear whether M. Chirac will be at Villacoublay to meet her, but if not I should welcome the opportunity of a conversation in the car - *and if he is there, you and I can have a chat.*

*Best wishes,*

*Ewen*

Ewen Fergusson