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ANGLO/FRENCH SUMMIT: FRENCH PRESS REACTIONS
SUMMARY

1. POSITIVE, IF INSIDE-PAGE COVERAGE. AGREEMENT TO STRENGTHEN DEFENCE COOPERATION HIGHLIGHTED.

DETAIL

2. THOUGH PUSHED OFF THE FRONT PAGE BY EVENTS ELSEWHERE, COVERAGE OF THE 4 MAY SUMMIT IN THE FRENCH PRESS WAS UNANIMOUSLY FAVOURABLE. THE CHOICE OF WADDES DON MANOR WAS INTERPRETED AS A WELL JUDGED MARK OF RESPECT FOR MITTERRAND, AND A COMMENT BY 'LONDON SOURCES' THAT THE MEETING WAS TAKING PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF SERENITY BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS WAS WIDELY QUOTED.

3. REPORTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS THEMSELVES DREW HEAVILY ON THE JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE AND THE DEFENCE COMMUNIQUE. AGREEMENT TO STRENGTHEN ANGLO/FRENCH DEFENCE COOPERATION IS SEEN AS THE SUMMIT'S MAIN ACHIEVEMENT, AND HIGHLIGHTED IN ALL THE MAIN PAPERS. PRINCIPAL HEADLINES INCLUDE:

- PARIS AND LONDON INTEND TO STRENGTHEN DEFENCE COOPERATION (LE MONDE, LEFT OF CENTRE)
- MITTERRAND AND THATCHER: AN ATMOSPHERE OF ENTENTE CORDIALE. FAR FROM FRANCO-GERMAN POMP, THE MEETING FORESHADOWED A CONVERGENCE OF DEFENCE ISSUES (LIBERATION, LEFT OF CENTRE)
- THE SUMMIT OF CONVERGING VIEWS: THATCHER AND MITTERRAND AGREE ON THE ATTITUDE TO TAKE TO MOSCOW (LE FIGARO, CONSERVATIVE).

4. ALL PAPERS QUOTE MITTERRAND'S COMMENT THAT NO DOMAIN (OF DEFENCE COOPERATION) IS EXCLUDED, BUT ALSO REFER TO HIS DESIRE FOR FASTER PROGRESS ON NUCLEAR COOPERATION (WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ASMP/ASLP). THE IDENTITY OF VIEW ON LITHUANIA AND GORBACHEV IS NOTED.

5. WHERE MENTIONED AT ALL, EXCHANGES ON POLITICAL UNION ARE DESCRIBED AS RESTATEMENTS OF WELL KNOWN POSITIONS, BUT WITHOUT ACRIMONY.

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