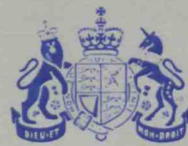


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Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 June 1991

Dear Stephen,

Anglo-French Summit : 24 June

The bilateral with President Mitterrand will start at 1340. It will be followed by a working lunch at 1415 and the Plenary at 1525. Time will be at a premium, especially as, given the President's style, it will be difficult to treat the lunch as a full working session. The Prime Minister as guest will have the opportunity to decide on the opening subject. It will be important to get the President to focus on the Luxembourg European Council. The highest priority is to put across a clear political message about how far we can move, and in what timescale, on the major IGC subjects. The other major topics will be European defence and security and the London Summit. Other subjects could be tackled over lunch.

France Internal

Mme Cresson's government has been in place for some six weeks. It has been confronted by industrial unrest, a resurgence of immigration-related problems and a wave of violence in poor housing estates across the country. The new-found unity of the Right is a further cause of concern for the government. The only bright spot is an undertaking from the Communist Party not to vote for any Parliamentary censure motion. The Government survived one such motion on 17 June by 14 votes. President Mitterrand's overriding concern is to avoid a second period of "cohabitation" between the 1993 legislative elections and the 1995 Presidentials.

Bilateral Relations

Bilateral relations are good. Consultation is becoming the norm; this makes occasional French failure to consult all the more disappointing.

Meetings at Ministerial and senior official level have proliferated in recent months, including the valuable contacts between personal representatives (most recently on 3 June) following the Prime Minister's meeting with the President in Paris on 14 January. There have also been fruitful meetings between officials on EC matters and the Middle East. Interior Ministers met in London on 4 June, with further talks planned

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for the end of July; and Mr Lilley is hoping to arrange a bilateral before the summer break. The Queen will pay a State Visit to France in June 1992 (but this has not yet been announced).

Relations with Germany

The success of the Anglo-German Summit in March has been an important factor in French planning for this meeting. The Summit is an opportunity to demonstrate that it is possible to have excellent bilateral relations with France and Germany simultaneously. The 57th Franco-German Summit was held in Lille on 29/30 May. Twelve French and eight German ministers were present (that is the way both sides like it); there were no major surprises and press coverage was low key.

EC Issues: European Council

Our objective is to show that we are contributing positively to the development of the Community, but to warn against over-ambitious plans for Luxembourg and rushing IGC fences on crucial issues such as Treaty structure.

What did Summit say?

On Political Union the French would be prepared to go further at the European Council than the neutral stock-taking we want. Dumas' argument in Dresden against Delors' proposed unitary structure was helpful, as was his insistence at the IGC Ministerial on 17 June that the European Council should not be listed as an institution of the Union. But the French are willing to recognise a 'federal goal', which we are not. We should aim to bolster their views on structure, while ourselves continuing to argue that the existing draft is far from perfect and blurs the distinction between Treaty of Rome and inter-governmental co-operation too much. The Prime Minister will want to explain to President Mitterrand the impossibility of selling in the UK a treaty with an explicit federal objective.

How?

On co-decision for the European Parliament, the French are potential allies. We need to convince them that it may not be necessary to go all the way to a substantive co-decision procedure in order to satisfy German demands. We should work instead to build up a package of other proposals for enhancing the EP's role. We welcome the French interest in enhancing the role of national parliaments: we have an open mind about their proposals for a joint MP/MEP Congress.

On areas of difference, the Prime Minister might want to repeat that we remain unconvinced of the need for substantial extensions of competence or QMV; and could make a pitch for our scrupulously communautaire proposals for strengthening the rule of law in the Community: the French are not keen on financial sanctions for the ECJ.



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On EMU, the French are likely to be among those Member States trying to reaffirm the Rome I Conclusions at the European Council. The French are known to be less than happy with the Presidency Text (it is nearer to the German position), and, like the UK, may be reluctant to endorse it at the European Council. However, they also want to keep up the EMU momentum, and have few real sticking points.

The Prime Minister could say:

- Believe that the Luxembourgers have made a good start to EMU discussions. But concerned that they may try to be too ambitious and try to get broad endorsement for the Presidency non-paper in general and to the content of Stage 2 and transition to Stage 3 specifically. ✓
- A number of difficult issues remain outstanding, for example how should a European Central Bank be made democratically accountable and when should it be set up? Much negotiation still to be done. Do not see these issues being resolved until the end of the year. ✓
- For the UK, it is important that no attempt is made to reach Conclusions which try to settle the 'British problem'. Do not think this is the major outstanding issue for the IGC. Know that remarks by Beregovoy/Delors in May intended to be helpful but mixed UK press/parliamentary reaction. Any attempt at premature agreement at the European Council would provoke critical response. ✓
- Hope European Council can concentrate on areas where there is emerging consensus, in particular importance of convergence and principle that national monetary policy should remain in national hands in Stage 2. Do not want to see divisions of Rome I re-opened. Must avoid endorsing Presidency text, but could commend it as a useful contribution to future discussions. ✓

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We will want the European Council to underline the liberal and deregulatory thrust of the Single Market programme and to identify key UK priorities in financial services (where we are at loggerheads with the French), transport and public procurement as well as technical areas such as pharmaceuticals and animal and plant health. The Prime Minister should avoid giving any commitment if President Mitterrand raises the EC Electronics/IT industry, where the French favour a more interventionist line to help out the troubled European Industry.

The Prime Minister could make clear his hope that ECOFIN will agree a package on indirect tax on 24 June. We want to avoid this issue coming up for discussion at the European Council. ✓

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Interior Ministers discussed the External Frontiers Convention (EFC) on 13/14 June. The key outstanding issue is the type of frontier regime to be applied at airports. The French, although members of Schengen, are trying to compromise; they share our fears of Commission intervention, and are concerned that if inter-governmental cooperation stalls, there will be increased pressure to move frontier issues into Community competence. The Foreign Secretary wrote to Delors and Bangemann on 6 June, urging restraint, and suggesting that the European Council should have a wide-ranging political discussion on the immigration threat to member states. The French and Germans agree with this: President Mitterrand faces particularly strong immigration pressures.

Chancellor Kohl agreed with the Prime Minister on 9 June that a tough external EC frontier would enable us to deal with the relaxation of internal frontier controls. The Prime Minister may therefore wish to seek President Mitterrand's support in avoiding a divisive debate at the European Council on internal frontier abolition, which would increase the risk of a Commission initiative. He might say that we are grateful for French cooperation in seeking a compromise solution on the External Frontiers Convention, and hope agreement will be reached this month: we value continuing co-operation with the French towards keeping frontiers work on an inter-governmental basis.

EC External Issues

The Prime Minister agreed with Santer on 5 June that there was a good case for a European Council declaration on external relations. We have since put a text to the Presidency and discussed the idea in general terms with other member states. The French remain difficult on agriculture in the Uruguay round: whether Mitterrand will recognise the benefits to France will be crucial. The Council is unlikely to discuss the EC/EFTA negotiations on a European Economic Area but we want a reference in the conclusions to the need for early agreement. We hope the European Council will add impetus to the EC Association Agreement negotiations with Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

- Important that the Community should demonstrate that it is open to the world outside and ready to play an active role internationally. Good case for substantial declaration on External Relations.

- No need for substantive discussion at the Council. But conclusions must send a positive message to our partners of the Community's commitment to the GATT Uruguay Round, particularly on our willingness to negotiate constructively on agriculture. Will discuss further at London Economic Summit.



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- Useful opportunity to assess negotiations on Association Agreements with Eastern Europe. Improvements to these countries' trade access to Community markets are vital especially areas where they can benefit from comparative advantage.

European Security and Defence

French defence policy is at the moment more than usually centralised on the Elysée. President Mitterrand seems undecided on several key issues:

- France's role in the reformed NATO; how many issues can be decided by all 16 rather than 15? ✓
- the long term aims to be specified in the IGC: how should the concept of a common defence policy be defined? ✓
- the concrete elements of a European defence identity; should there be a European Reaction Force? Separate European structures within NATO? Or simply specific projects such as a WEU satellite? ✓

The only clear theme to have emerged from Paris is the need for a common defence policy to build a 'political Europe'. The French have not been prepared to discuss what this would mean in practice or how it would relate to NATO. Their own uncertainty and wish to keep all European options open probably best explain why the French reacted badly to NATO's decision to create a Rapid Reaction Corps (RRC).

One of our principal aims is to avoid any language at the WEU Ministerial and Luxembourg European Councils which could pave the way for a separate EC-based defence policy, and to prepare for work between Luxembourg and Maastricht on treaty language which will guarantee compatibility between European defence and NATO. We should leave President Mitterrand in no doubt that we will agree to long-term goals only if this compatibility is made explicit and the ground rules for European defence (decision-making, structures and membership) are clarified.

Exchanges with the Elysée have brought us no closer to agreement on European architecture, but have identified possible areas for closer nuclear co-operation. We have made clear that a decision on a stand-off missile is still some way off, but have stressed that we attach importance to closer co-operation in operational planning. It has been agreed that the detailed nuclear discussions should concentrate on exploring:

- the scope for operational co-operation and joint targeting;

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- concepts and operational requirements for TASM and technical aspects including the timing of required deployments. ✓

The WEU Ministerial on 27 June will take decisions on French proposals for a long-term WEU satellite capability and linked photo-interpretation centre. ✓

The Prime Minister could draw on the following points:

- vital to narrow our differences on European defence. For a successful IGC, our respective priorities - your concern to spell out the long term concepts and our concern to clarify what they will mean in practice in the near term - must be reconciled. Suggest we instruct our officials to work on this in the Autumn so that we can go into Maastricht with the UK-French agreement which is essential to the success we both seek; ✓

- you have frequently referred to the need not to weaken NATO. However French approach in IGC and WEU sometimes seems to us to involve building Europe at the expense of NATO. UK wishes to strengthen both. A healthy NATO, with a stronger European input, is the key to our security for this decade. Any IGC treaty language must express both the principle of a greater European cohesion in defence, and the reality that our security will continue to depend upon a strong transatlantic link. We cannot take the latter for granted; ✓

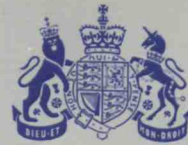
- to build defence policy on the Twelve (as enlarged) would seriously undermine security in the longer term. Neutral countries will either be excluded from the Union or will work for a separate and weaker structure which is not compatible with NATO. The Twelve cannot give defence guarantees to non-NATO members such as Austria or Poland. How could we avoid marginalising the important flank countries? Most important, how could we prevent a gradual cleavage between the NATO and Union structures for defence?

- consider the role of Germany; NATO is also a factor anchoring Germany in a common European defence. If NATO were in time to be overtaken by a purely European defence system, what would Germany's role in that be? What answer would Europe be able to give to the nuclear question? ✓

- the ambitions of Commission and European Parliament in defence and the implications, particularly for UK and French deterrents, of putting CFSP into a Community-type structure, as in the latest Presidency proposal, make us even more chary of bringing defence fully into CFSP and the Union; ✓

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- all these problems are manageable if we adopt the WEU as a nucleus, with organic links to European Union, but also to the Alliance. We see this as a viable long term model, which recognises that defence is different from agriculture, finance and foreign policy. But prepared to leave the longer term outcome to history;

- suggest we work for agreement on basis of certain principles:

- a stronger European defence identity, with its own operational capabilities;

- compatible with NATO's role as the structure taking decisions about and assuring the defence of NATO territory;

- a stronger European input into NATO;

- the WEU as the defence component of European integration and vehicle for organising our cooperation within NATO and out of area;

- no early change in WEU membership but a readiness to associate all European allies with our work.

- we are positively interested in seeing more European defence cooperation, so long as it is compatible with NATO and affordable. Tom King will discuss with M Joxe the question of ERF, logistical cooperation in WEU and WEU satellite projects. We are happy for the latter to go ahead and wish to participate in the satellite feasibility study, but the satellite centre does not fulfil any UK need, and in current budgetary circumstances, we cannot take part;

- deepening cooperation in the nuclear area is also important from a long-term European perspective. Main discussions between Defence Ministries and officials. Glad that we have been discussing aligning more closely our positions on US-Soviet START talks. Aim should be jointly to resist public and Soviet pressure for Anglo-French involvement.

Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

The Prime Minister could say:

- CFSP issues not ripe for decision at Luxembourg. Most non-security issues in Presidency text hardly discussed yet. Hope Presidency will not press for substantive conclusions.

- Understand you are not opposed to two-tier approach to decision-making on CFSP. Seems impractical to us. Foreign policy not static or susceptible to compartmentalisation.

/- Agree

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- Agree on need to work by unanimity in framing CFSP. But majority voting on implementation sure to be divisive and reduce flexibility. Also introduces risk of important national interests being overridden. Where in practice would France be prepared to accept majority voting?

UNSC Permanent Membership

It is important to stay close to French thinking on how to respond to the potential threat to us both as Permanent Members of the Security Council. The most immediate problem is the IGC discussion of CFSP; but further down the road there is the growing pressure for Security Council reform, led by the Japanese and increasing Commission ambitions at the expense of EC Member States.

The Prime Minister could say:

- We remain concerned that a CFSP should not be allowed to compromise our (and French) independence of action as members of the Security Council;
- An Anglo-French declaration reserving our position remains the best way forward; we hope we can now agree on this;
- On the wider question of Security Council reform, we should resist opening this Pandora's Box: it would prompt a long list of bids for permanent membership from others, and ruin the present highly effective set-up on the Council.
- Commission ambitions to secure membership for the EC in the UN agencies raises major issues about future representation in the UN system. Would expect France to agree.

Japan

President Mitterrand is against UK/US attempts to involve the Japanese more closely in Western decision-making by holding more meetings of G7 political directors. The Prime Minister might point out that: - Japan will be an increasingly important political and economic force and should be better integrated into the Western consensus;

- the UK and France have a particular interest in a more active G7 as a way of deflecting Japanese ambitions for permanent membership of the Security Council.

Depending on the outcome of the Presidency's negotiations with the Japanese, the European Council is expected to approve the final text of the EC/Japan declaration. We have argued for a text which will boost EC political relations with Japan. The French have insisted on more emphasis on trade issues.

/Soviet Union

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Soviet Union

The Prime Minister might draw on the following points on the internal situation:

- Some hopeful signs (Gorbachev/Yeltsin relations; 9+1 agreement; Yavlinsky's economic reform proposals). West should use its limited influence to push Gorbachev towards further reform. ✓
- Yeltsin's election as RSFSR President a significant boost for reformers though he does have demagogic tendencies which could cause problems. Hope he will use his position responsibly and avoid confrontation with Gorbachev. ✓
- Economic assistance not a question of some "grand bargain" between the West and the Soviet Union; but of help for self-help. If serious reform measures are introduced in the Soviet Union, should be ready to consider Western/IFI assistance. Important that West should do what we can to encourage growth of market sector.

At the 17 June Foreign Affairs Council Poos proposed European Council discussion of the Soviet Union, including EC aid, in preparation for the G7 Summit. We should seek French support for our view that the EC should not pre-empt discussion at the Economic Summit (as partly happened in 1990). The Prime Minister might say:

- Welcome thorough discussion of Soviet Union and its prospects. But we should wait to hear what Gorbachev has to say to G7 in July before taking any decision about any assistance which might be offered. (If raised) It would be helpful if the Political Committee and Foreign Ministers were to consider detailed ideas in the future of EC/Soviet relations, including your proposal for a major new agreement.

As to the presence of President Gorbachev at the London Economic Summit, the Prime Minister could take the following line:

- Glad President Gorbachev has accepted invitation to session with Heads immediately after the Summit proper. Need to present the meeting as: ✓

a) Recognition of Soviet Union's desire to be integrated into world economy, which can only happen on basis of confidence in continuation of reform. ✓

b) Opportunity for Gorbachev to brief G7 leaders on efforts directed at reform; for G7 to confirm their support for reform process; to spell out requirements (eg credible policies leading to market-based economy). No question of financial ✓

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aid. But will need to look closely at possibilities for co-operation with IFIs.

c) Chance for Gorbachev to demonstrate support for Summit's approach/conclusions eg on conventional arms transfers.

- Believe Gorbachev has taken ground rules on board. But Summit message should spell out criteria for future co-operation (including human rights, treatment of Balts etc), and try to bind him more closely to reformist policies.

London Economic Summit: 15-17 July

On economic issues to be addressed at the London Summit, the Prime Minister might draw on the following:

- Uruguay Round: essential that Heads of government make commitment to successful conclusion of Round; give impetus to negotiations; and remain personally involved, ready to intervene with one another if differences can only be resolved at the highest level.

- Eastern Europe: Summit should send clear message of support for reforms; increased access to Western markets will be key.

- Environment: Summit should make firm commitment to successful outcome of UN Conference on Environment and Development (June 1992).

- Developing Countries/Debt: Hope Summit will be able to encourage/endorse [to be updated in light of Paris Club discussions] agreement on increased debt reduction for the most heavily indebted countries.

Middle East

If President Mitterrand raises defence co-operation in the Gulf, the Prime Minister might say that the initial enthusiasm for the Damascus Declaration has faded, but the need for some Egyptian/Syrian involvement may be gaining ground. We hope the G8 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Kuwait next month will help steady the relationship. In the meantime individual Gulf states are seeking bilateral defence agreements with major players (the UK, France and US). We must keep in touch.

On Iraqi refugees, we and the French are concerned that the US might want to withdraw from Northern Iraq too quickly and undermine the achievements of Operation Haven. The Foreign Secretary, M Dumas and Mr Baker discussed this at the CSCE meeting in Berlin on 19-20 June. Important elements include the effectiveness of UN operations; warnings to the Iraqis against further persecution; an over-the-horizon



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military deterrent and the underpinning of any Iraqi/Kurdish agreement.

Arab/Israel

The Americans are still trying to reconcile Israeli and Syrian positions on the nature of any peace conference. Israel is showing no signs of flexibility: the Syrians hinted to Mr Hogg in Damascus on 13 June that they might compromise. Israel has agreed to EC Presidency participation at any conference. This is encouraging as far as it goes. President Mitterrand is likely to agree on the need to maintain the unity of the Twelve in support of the American initiative. The Prime Minister may want to emphasise our identity of interests and our concern to stay close to France on this.

Non-Proliferation and Conventional Arms Control

We gave a general welcome to President Mitterrand's initiative of 3 June on these issues: in particular the French decision in principle to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty. France will also host the first meeting of the Permanent Five on 8-9 July, to follow up President Bush's proposals. Our approach is close to that of the French; President Mitterrand has given public support to the Prime Minister's proposal for a UN Register of arms sales. The Prime Minister could:

- Reiterate our welcome for the French decision to join the NPT. An important step in international efforts to persuade others to adhere to NPT principles. ✓
- Hope that the UK and France can work closely together within the new P5 dialogue, and in taking forward the idea of a UN Register of arms sales at the next General Assembly. ✓

Yugoslavia

The situation in Yugoslavia remains serious, with little sign of real progress. Slovenia and Croatia are set on declaring independence by 26 June. We shall shortly be circulating by COREU our ideas on how partners should deal with this. The key point is that we should avoid recognition as long as possible and do or say nothing to reduce the Slovenes' and Croats' incentive to negotiate a new Confederal relationship with the rest of Yugoslavia. CSCE Foreign Ministers issued a declaration on Yugoslavia in Berlin on 19 June.

/South Africa

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South Africa

French officials doubt the desirability of a declaration on sport at the European Council. Mr Mandela argued against the lifting of sanctions in Paris in early June, but did not mention sport. The Prime Minister might say:

- Chancellor Kohl and I believe that the European Council should build on an area of emerging consensus in South Africa: sport.
- ANC now regard the sport boycott as separate from sanctions. They want to encourage unified sport, as a way of building a new South African nation. We should support the ANC - and the IOC.
- At Luxembourg we should endorse the principle that sports integrated in South Africa may rejoin international competition.

Cyprus

The French may raise Cyprus. The UN Secretary General is aiming to achieve an outline agreement between the two communities by July, leading to a resumption of direct talks. But prospects are not good. Each side has put forward its own proposal for a multilateral meeting and rejected the other's. Substantial progress on territory, displaced persons, security and political equality is essential first. The Prime Minister may like to underline our continuing support for the Secretary General's efforts, and invite the French to take any opportunity to impress upon the two sides the need for ^a more constructive approach.

Suggested Elements for Press Statement

Much will depend on how the talks go. But the following could be highlighted.

EC Issues

- Commend the Presidency's efforts in the IGCs, look forward to discussion in Luxembourg.
- Agree on the importance of the political role of the European Council in giving direction to all the activities of the union, inside and outside the Treaty of Rome.
- Agree on the need for the Community to reaffirm at Luxembourg its active, open international role.
- Agree on the desirability of a serious political discussion in Luxembourg on immigration problems.

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/Middle East



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Middle East

- A final decision on the withdrawal of forces from Northern Iraq has not been made.

London Economic Summit/President Gorbachev

- Welcome Gorbachev's acceptance of invitation to London. Excellent opportunity to discuss prospects for economic reform in the Soviet Union.

- (if asked) financial assistance not on the agenda.

I enclose personality notes on the French Ministers participating. I am copying this letter to Simon Webb (Ministry of Defence), Jeremy Heywood (HM Treasury), David Rossington (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,
Christopher Prentice.

(C N R Prentice)
Private Secretary

Stephen Wall Esq CMG LVO
10 Downing Street

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ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT : PERSONALITY NOTES

FRANCOIS MITTERRAND GCB, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

1. Born 1916. He opposed de Gaulle's return to power, describing his 1958 Constitution as a "permanent coup d'état". But he inherited and has used the Institutions of the fifth Republic since his election as President in 1981. After 10 years as President, Mitterrand's popularity remains high, but has fallen from a peak of 85% in March, following the French participation in the Gulf War. His tactical skills honed during the long period of opposition have served him well in his dealings with the Communist Party and the tendencies within the PS, now the dominant force of the French left. The appointment of Mme Cresson in succession to his rival Rocard was intended to galvanise the Socialist Party in the run-up to the 1993 legislative elections in the hope of avoiding a second period of "cohabitation" with a Right Wing Prime Minister before the 1995 presidential elections. President Mitterrand does not speak English.

ROLAND DUMAS GCMG, FOREIGN MINISTER

2. Born 1922. Like Mitterrand, Dumas fought in the Resistance and is one of the President's closest political allies and rare confidants (he is his personal lawyer). Dumas has combined politics with a successful career at the Paris bar, and is passionately interested in art and music. His closeness to Mitterrand and his competent and confident handling of the Gulf crisis have enhanced his standing. Rumours that he might resign his post have diminished recently; his position was not called into question during the recent reshuffle. Speaks reasonable English (and fluent German).

PIERRE JOXE, MINISTER OF DEFENCE

3. Born 1934. The son of the late Louis Joxe, Gaullist Ambassador and Minister, Joxe has moderated his earlier Marxist views. He is considered a Mitterrandist. In his tenure of the Interior Ministry he was very open to

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co-operation with the UK both in policing matters and over issues such as immigration and frontiers. Almost his first act as Defence Minister was to travel to London for talks with Mr King in January. However, his understanding of defence issues is still incomplete and he is sometimes cool towards the US. Hard-working and authoritarian, he is lively and enjoys serious discussion. Speaks good English.

PIERRE BEREGOVY, MINISTER FOR THE ECONOMY, FINANCE AND BUDGET

4. Born 1925. Another member of the wartime resistance, Bérégovoy was a founder member of the revived PS in 1970. Despite being one of the few members of the PS with working class credentials, he was energetic in promoting the modernisation and liberalisation of France's financial markets and pursued a policy of pegging the Franc to the Deutschmark which bore down successfully on inflation. In the May reshuffle he acquired authority over the industry and external trade, post and telecommunications and small trades and crafts portfolios; unprecedented powers which make him virtually a deputy-Prime Minister for economic affairs. Speaks no English.

ELISABETH GUIGOU, MINISTER FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

5. Born 1946. Guigou is close to Mitterrand and has exerted considerable influence on Community matters since the mid-1980s when she became adviser at the Elysée. Her instincts are Federalist. She succeeded Mme Cresson, with whom she gets on badly, in this post in October 1990. Hard-working, ambitious and intelligent, with an analytical cast of mind, she is tough beneath the charm. Understands English well, but prefers to speak French.

LOUIS MERMAZ, AGRICULTURE MINISTER

6. Born 1931. A former President of the National Assembly and a member of the Executive Bureau of the PS, Mermaz has worked closely with Mitterrand through all the political vagaries of the Socialist leader's career. Mitterrand is

said to set great store by him, and his appointment as Agriculture Minister in the middle of a difficult period for French agriculture was seen by many as an attempt by the President to be seen to be taking a close personal interest in this troublesome dossier. A somewhat reserved man with an academic cast of mind, he has a reputation for patience, discretion, and hard work. He has gained popular support through his robust defence of French agricultural interests. His English is not good.

EDITH CRESSON, PRIME MINISTER

7. Born 1935. An economist by training, Mme Cresson has held three ministerial posts under President Mitterrand, to whom she has been very close. As Agriculture Minister she showed courage and determination in improving her relations with farmers after initial difficulties. She became Minister for European Affairs in May 1988, but left Government for business in October 1990 ostensibly because of disagreements with Prime Minister Rocard over economic policy, but mainly because she was being sidelined (among others by Dumas). Her first weeks in power have seen a resurgence of social unrest, and she still faces problems in getting legislation through Parliament, where she has no overall majority. Mme Cresson is energetic and determined, and able to master detailed briefs. Her English is very good.

MICHEL DELEBARRE, MINISTER FOR TOWNS (MAYOR OF DUNKIRK)

8. Born 1946. After holding a number of ministerial posts, Delebarre was appointed as Minister for towns with the status of Ministre d'Etat in December 1990 to spearhead the Government's effort to improve conditions in France's fast-growing suburbs; tackling housing, integrating immigrants and reducing violence and vandalism. He is associated with the traditional wing of the PS and has a reputation as a moderniser and a pragmatist. Regarded as a safe pair of hands, he is ambitious and has Prime Ministerial potential. Does not speak English.

FRANCE: PM's visits Pt 7