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FRANCE : PM'S

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visits to France:

Part 5

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 March 1987

Dear Charles,

CDP 2/3

Prime Minister's Meetings with Chancellor Kohl  
and President Mitterrand, 23 March

/ I enclose separate briefing notes for these two meetings,  
/ including speaking notes on European Community financing.

/ The enclosed scene-setting telegram from our Embassy at  
Paris gives the political background to the meeting with  
Mitterrand. As an example of the difficulties which cohabitation  
presents to France's friends, the Prime Minister should be aware  
that the Embassy have had some hints from Chirac's office that  
they considered that Chirac rather than Mitterrand should be  
her French interlocutor. The Embassy made clear that the  
original suggestion had been Mitterrand's, and reminded  
Matignon that Chirac and the Prime Minister would have a chance  
to exchange views when he came to Chequers on 26 April (this  
visit may not be known to Mitterrand); and Chirac's office have  
not reverted to the issue. But, as their rivalry becomes more  
open, Mitterrand will not waste opportunities to score discreetly  
at Chirac's expense. Chirac's office, and the French press,  
will accordingly look at any public statement made by the Prime  
Minister on 23 March for indications of bias. The Delors  
proposal for an EC Summit on defence and security issues appears  
to have more to do with internal French politics than high  
strategy.

/ I also enclose a scene-setting telegram from our Embassy  
in Bonn, which covers the internal political scene in the  
Federal Republic following the recent formation of the new  
government (in which the FDP's influence has been increased),  
together with a recent despatch by Sir Julian Bullard reviewing  
Kohl's career and personality.

Yours ever,

L. Parker

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Private Secretary

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