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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 February 1984

John [unclear]

Visit of President Mitterrand: 5 March

We have discussed with the French Embassy the arrangements for President Mitterrand's visit, which you referred to in your letter of 17 February.

The President will arrive at RAF Benson at 1100 for talks from 1130 until 1300 followed by a working lunch. We have told the Embassy that only notetakers will be present. This will be M. Jacques Attali on the French side.

However, the Embassy have told us that President Mitterrand wishes to bring with him also M. Pierre Morel, Adviser at the Elysee on European Community questions, and M. Michel Vauzelle, his spokesman (we believe he may wish to speak to the French press at RAF Benson before departing). It is not envisaged that these two should be present at the talks, but it would be convenient to the President if they could be present at Chequers in case they are required.

I should be grateful to know whether this is acceptable, and whether you will be providing anyone, or wish us to do so, to help field M. Morel and M. Vauzelle.

The President's party is now expected to consist of:

M. Jacques Attali, Special Adviser to the President
M. Morel
M. Vauzelle
Aide de Camp
Doctor
M. Christopher Thierry, Interpreter
(Possibly) Chef de Protocol of the Elysee

I confirm that there need be no guard of honour at the airport, though there will be a carpet-lining detachment of a small number of RAF personnel. Since

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this is a working visit, and no Minister will be present at Chequers, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary thinks it would be acceptable if the Prime Minister did not see the President off. In this case, unless the Prime Minister wishes a Minister to be tasked to do so, the President will be seen off by Sir Geoffrey Howe's Special Representative.

The French Ambassador is likely to be present at RAF Benson to greet the President, but would play no further part. Will the Prime Minister wish to travel from RAF Benson to Chequers with the President (in which case given the presence of a security officer and an interpreter, conditions would be cramped) or in her own car separately?

Tom
R B Bone

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France : Visits of Pres Mitterrand: 143

28 FFR 1984

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