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## ADVANCE COPY

## IRAQ/KUWAIT : PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S VIEWS

1. I CALLED TODAY ON BIANCO, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ELYSEE TO RECEIVE AN ACCOUNT OF MITTERRAND'S VIEWS ON THE GULF CRISIS. THE FULL RECORD IS BEING FAXED TO WED. HERE IS A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE MAIN POINTS, WHICH WERE

(A) THE PRESIDENT WAS VERY HAPPY WITH FRANCO/BRITISH CO-OPERATION, IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, BETWEEN EMERGENCY UNITS AND ON THE GROUND (EG IN THE GULF AND BETWEEN EMBASSIES IN KUWAIT). I DREW HIS ATTENTION TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S HELSINKI REMARKS ABOUT THE FRENCH AND BRITISH CONTRIBUTIONS.

(B) BIANCO AS ONE OF THE PRESIDENT'S EMISSARIES HAD VISITED SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT IN AUGUST. IN BOTH COUNTRIES HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEADERS FELT THEY HAD BEEN DECEIVED BY SADDAM HUSSEIN.

(C) AS TO KING HUSSEIN'S CALL, BIANCO SAID THAT THE KING HAD OBVIOUSLY SPOKEN ON VERY MUCH THE SAME LINES AS HE HAD IN LONDON. THE PRESIDENT HAD REPLIED 'VERY DRILY' WHEN KING HUSSEIN TRIED TO SUSTAIN THE CASE FOR HIS EQUIDISTANT POSITION.

(D) THE TOP FRENCH PRIORITY WAS TO MAKE THE EMBARGO STICK. THE FRENCH WERE AWARE OF LEAKS, THROUGH JORDAN (IN SPITE OF THE KING'S PROTESTATIONS) AND FROM LIBYA AND YEMEN. THE FRENCH HOWEVER HAD NO EVIDENCE OF DELIBERATE EMBARGO BREAKING BY IRAN OR SYRIA.

(E) MITTERRAND REGARDS MAINTAINING THE FOOD EMBARGO AS THE NEXT PROBLEM. BIANCO EXPECTED FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION TO REACT BADLY WERE THE EMBARGO TO RESULT IN PICTURES IN STARVING IRAQIS OR WESTERNERS. EARLY DISCUSSION WAS REQUIRED IN THE EC AND AT THE UN.

(F) THE FRENCH REGARDED THE ONLY DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE THAT WAS INTERESTING OR REMOTELY WORKABLE AS THAT OF TUNISIA. I OUTLINED YOUR DISCUSSIONS DURING YOUR GULF VISIT AND HAVE SINCE GIVEN THE

ELYSEE A MORE DETAILED RUN-DOWN. I UNDERSTAND YOUR STRONG BELIEF IN THE NEED FOR A FORCEFUL INFORMATION CAMPAIGN, AND HANDED BIANCO A COPY OF WINNING THE PROPAGANDA WAR.

(G) IN A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON MILITARY OPTIONS, BIANCO SAID THAT ANY DECISION TO ATTACK WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT. IF SADDAM'S REGIME WERE NOT BROUGHT TO ITS KNEES QUICKLY AND SADDAM HIMSELF KILLED (BUT WOULD HIS REPLACEMENT BE BETTER ?) THINGS COULD DRAG ON A LONG TIME IN A VERY DANGEROUS MANNER.

(H) I RAISED AID TO TURKEY AND STRESSED THE NEED TO HELP A COUNTRY THAT WAS DOING A LOT TO MAKE THE EMBARGO WORK. BIANCO HAD NOT BEEN AWARE OF THE DETAILS, BUT SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF FRANCE NOT WANTING TO HELP TURKEY, THOUGH THEY WOULD PROBABLY REGARD EGYPT AND JORDAN AS HIGHER PRIORITIES BECAUSE OF THEIR DIRE ECONOMIC SITUATIONS.

(I) BIANCO MADE CLEAR THAT WALDHEIM'S INTERVENTION TO RESCUE AUSTRIAN HOSTAGES IN IRAQ HAD GONE DOWN BADLY AT THE ELYSEE: AUSTRIA'S EC APPLICATION WAS HARD TO RECONCILE WITH SUCH A LACK OF SENSE OF SOLIDARITY.

2. BIANCO MADE CLEAR THAT MITTERRAND WISHED TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE PRIME MINISTER. I AM PURSUING THIS POINT SEPARATELY.

FERGUSSON

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