



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 December 1983

Sir Antony Acland asked me this morning how the Prime Minister's message of 23 October to President Mitterrand about the attack on French soldiers in the Lebanon had been conveyed.

The evidence of my files shows that on Sunday, 23 October the Foreign and Commonwealth Office provided draft messages to both President Mitterrand and President Reagan.

These were despatched (the one to President Reagan in a slightly amended form) on the hot line. I confirm that the Cabinet Office has a teleprinter link with the Elysee.

The normal practice, whereby such messages are copied in their final form to the FCO, was not followed on this occasion - perhaps because it all happened on a Sunday. I shall take steps to ensure that this does not occur again.

A. J. COLES

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