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My dear colleague,

I very much valued our discussion on defence nuclear matters when we met on September 15th and am now writing to elaborate on what I then outlined to you about developing exchanges between our two Governments.

You will remember that I suggested that there were two broad areas in this field where we might build on past exchanges; general politico/military and strategic matters on the one hand and technical matters on the other. British and French officials have of course had discussions on aspects of each area in the past.

A programme of exchanges on politico/military and strategic issues might cover such matters as national nuclear force structures and progress on modernisation, deterrence philosophies, sub-strategic concepts of operations and the practical and organisational aspects of nuclear weapons security and survivability. In the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster, there might also be merit in exchanging views on our respective nuclear accident response arrangements. There are several ways in which such subjects might be handled. Some of them are clearly suitable for the agenda of our regular politico-military talks, led by the two Foreign Ministries, or for defence

Monsieur Andre Giraud



staff talks; while others, such as nuclear accident response, would almost certainly require some kind of ad hoc group.

Our technical discussions in the past have included useful exchanges on blast and thermal effects of nuclear weapons and on flash x-ray diagnostics. Our exchanges could be extended to cover other subjects of common interest in the key areas of nuclear weapon safety and security and supporting technology. The contact in these fields would be between your technical experts and mine.

While, as we both recognised, we may not have reached full agreement on the scope and modalities of a dialogue by the time of the next Anglo-French Summit. I should like to suggest that our officials should start exploring possible future agendas and how best to organise the exchanges. I understand that M. de la Fortelle will be calling on Mr Nicholls, my Deputy Under Secretary (Policy), early in October and this might afford a good opportunity to take things forward.

I greatly appreciate your initial and positive reactions and now look forward very much to your further views on what I have proposed.

Yours sincerely,
George Younger

George Younger