

(3)



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 July 1987

Dear Charles,

Prime Minister's Visit to Paris, 29 July

Further to my letter of 27 July you asked for additional material on Anglo-French bilateral defence issues, which M Chirac in particular may raise.

On defence equipment, attention is focussed on a bilateral initiative for an Anglo-French defence equipment conference in September, and on a proposed reciprocal agreement to increase the scope for firms to bid in each nation's procurement programmes. We hope that these developments will improve our bilateral defence equipment collaboration in the longer term.

The main recent bilateral problem has involved difficulties over reciprocal visits by British and French nuclear powered warships. Existing French legislation limits liability in the case of an accident involving French warships in foreign ports to FF500 million. We need to ensure that the French agree to unlimited compensation if French SSNs are regularly to visit British ports. A solution to this question may now be in sight. The French Government have announced that they will amend their legislation on limits to French liability. The Prime Minister will wish to welcome this, expressing the hope that officials can now rapidly reach agreement on a framework allowing a fully reciprocal future visits programme.

On Anglo-French nuclear cooperation, CDS and his French counterpart, General Saulnier, confirmed at a meeting on 17 July that good, workmanlike progress was being made in establishing the machinery for talks between the two countries. I attach a list of the possible topics to be discussed and of the agreed channels on which some of the discussions will take place.

Both General Saulnier, and M Giraud in private talks on 23 July with Mr Younger (to which he brought no officials) spoke strongly in support of the ASMP, the short range air-launched cruise missile which the French are urging us to acquire as a successor to the WE177 free fall bomb. M Giraud attempted quite robustly to overturn HMG's well known view that the present French missile has too short a range and would be too expensive for our future TNW requirements. He argued that if the UK could afford to be in the nuclear business at all, we would certainly afford the ASMP; on range, if fitted

/to

M. Chirac intends to raise this.

[extracted]



to the right aircraft, it could attain near-LRINF capability. Mr Giraud also raised a question mark over the development of an ASMP of substantially longer range (a possibility on which we have said we wish to keep in close touch). In response, Mr Younger pointed out that we were not contemplating early replacement of our free fall bombs, and any suggestion that we should advance this as a priority would have considerable budgetary implications. It was also clear that the development of a new TNW warhead would take several years. Mr Giraud suggested that the UK should consider buying the warhead from France. The Ministers agreed to take up their discussions again at some point after a presentation on the ASMP which is to be given to British officials in France in September.

It is clear that, despite the reservations which we have made clear about the ASMP, the French are not deterred from acting lobbying. In the circumstances, should President Mitterrand or M Chirac raise the question of the ASMP, the Prime Minister might be advised to take the following line:

- welcome presentation which British officials are to receive in September;
- for reasons which we have explained (range, cost, timing, etc) we believe the present version of the ASMP is not the weapon to meet our future TNW requirements;
- but we remain most interested in the future development of the system; we see this as an important matter on which our two countries should keep in close touch.

/ I also enclose a scene-setting telegram just received
/ from Paris and two telegrams giving the state of play on France/
Iran relations.

I am copying this letter to John Howe in the Ministry of Defence.

Younger,
L Parker

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street



10 DOWNING STREET

It was attached
to Lynn Parker's
letter on the
PM's visit to

Paris. It was
too highly classified
to go in the
briefing folder.

OR

SUBJECT AREA	POSSIBLE TOPICS	MODALITIES/ REMARKS	TIMESCALE
Intelligence Assessments	a. ASW	a. Classification Continuing no higher than SECRET.	
	b. BMD	b. Normal bilateral intelligence links, but increase visibility to increase political impact?	
	c. Civil Defence		
Survivability & Security of Sub-Strategic Systems	a. Terrorist Threat	a. ACDS(Pol/Nuc)'s staff to lead.	Autumn 87?
	b. Site Security	b. Presentation to French by DNPS/D Nuc Sys?	
	c. Convoy Security		
	d. Site Surveys		
	e. Weapon Storage		
	f. Dispersal		
Nuclear Weapon Concepts	a. Deterrence Philosophy	a. Defence Staff Talks	Mid October 87
	b. Evolving Deterrence concepts	b. Pol/Mil Talks	November 87?

~~TOP SECRET~~
TOP SECRET

Page No 2 of 3

SUBJECT AREA	POSSIBLE TOPICS	MODALITIES/ REMARKS	TIME SCALE
Procurement and Equipment Trends for Strategic Systems	Progress on modernisation, including budgetary issues	a. ACDS(Pol/Nuc)'s staff; D Nuc Systems to lead. b. Defence Staff Talks c. CDS to CDS?	Mid October 87 December 87
Nuclear Science and Technology	a. Safety security and supporting technology b. Nuclear Test and Verification technology c. Nuclear Weapon Effects.	a. CSA's Staff to lead b. The headings cover a wide field which involve AWRE in the UK and CEA in France. c. Would suggest a meeting initially involving CSA personally to review existing exchanges (eg Nuclear Effects, response to IND, hydrodynamic technology) and identify areas of mutual interest and benefit for further exchange. d. Need for discussion and agreement on classification rules/procedures.	Early Autumn 87
TNW	a. UK TNW requirements b. French development	a. Technical briefing by French on ASMP & follow-on systems b. ACDS(Pol/Nuc)'s staff plus RAE, Farnborough & AWRE	July 87?

TOP SECRET

SUBJECT AREA	POSSIBLE TOPICS	MODALITIES/ REMARKS	TIMESCALE
Nuclear Accident Response	a. UK NARO b. French arrangements c. Equipment available d. Technical aspects of monitoring & decon- tamination e. MOU on SSN visits?	a. ACDS (Pol/Nuc)'s staff plus ACSA(N) contribution b. Presentation to French?	Late 1987?
Naval Operations	Waterspace management (SSN & SSBN)	a. Contingent on US agreement b. CDS to CDS c. Trilateral with US in due course.	July 87? Dec 87?