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From the Private Secretary

7 February 1991

ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS

Pierre Morel, the new Diplomatic Adviser to President Mitterrand, telephoned me at lunch time today. He had three points to make.

First he wanted me to know that President Mitterrand would be speaking on television this evening and answering questions, principally about the Gulf. In response to an expected question about how France would retaliate for a CW attack, he would make clear that France itself had no chemical weapons and did not envisage use of nuclear weapons in the context of the Gulf. (Morel cautioned that he did not know exactly what the President would say but believed it would be on these lines.) I said this was not dissimilar from what the Prime Minister had said in the House of Commons, although the Americans had preserved a greater degree of uncertainty.

Secondly, Morel said that he would like to come and talk to me on Tuesday next week about the Gulf situation, while en route to Washington. I said that he would be very welcome.

Third, Morel said that the President had been grateful for the Prime Minister's message about the organisation of contacts between the Elysée and senior British officials. It might take them a little time to organise a reply, but basically they were well content with what was proposed.

I am copying this letter to Simon Webb (Ministry of Defence) and to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

(C. D. POWELL)

Richard Gozney, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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