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CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-233 8319

From the Secretary of the Cabinet: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO

Ref. A05506

14 September 1981

You will remember that on Thursday we received a message about the visit that Mr Owen Carron MP and Sean Sands were paying to Paris.

When I saw Monsieur Beregovoy on the evening of 10 September, I referred to the reports of this visit in Le Monde, and expressed the hope that Carron would not see any members of the Government. Monsieur Beregovoy said that the six communist members of the Government would be at the Fete de l'Humanite which was an annual CPF gathering; but he said that he would speak to Monsieur Fiterman to ensure that none of the six met Mr Carron.

The following morning, on 11 September, there was a second message quoting from Liberation the fact that Carron and Sands would be meeting Jospin, the First Secretary of the French Socialist Party. Accordingly, I spoke again to Monsieur Beregovoy after the plenary session at 10 Downing Street. He took note of what I said, but expressed the view that it would be very difficult to stop Jospin seeing Carron and Sands: members of the Government was one thing, but the Secretary General of the Socialist Party was another. I said that I understood that, but that, if the visit took place, there would be some risk of misunderstanding in this country, in view of the close links between Monsieur Jospin and the President. We left it at that; but I was left with a clear feeling that Monsieur Beregovoy did not expect to be able to stop the meeting from taking place.

I am sending copies of this letter to Philip Woodfield (NIO) and Michael Alexander (No 10).

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Sir Michael Palliser GCMG

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M O'D B Alexander Esq



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With the compliments of  
Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO  
*Secretary of the Cabinet*

*Reference please*  
*RA 29/9/81*

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