



SECRET

Prime Minister.

37

All are agreed that we should go firm on the programme of two tests for 1981, together with the early financial commitment of \$5 million which the Americans want. Content?

PRIME MINISTER

Agreed  
mb.

British Nuclear Tests

- Play A.

The Secretary of State for Defence's minute to you of 3rd September (MO 28/5) recommends that we should now go firm on the 1981 programme of tests. Two tests are contemplated, one in the autumn and one (which we would have preferred earlier) in December. The Ministry of Defence need to commit themselves now to \$5 million as the eventual cost; they will of course meet this from within the agreed Defence Budget.

2. The tests will form an important part of our progress towards designing warheads for our new Trident missiles in the 1990s. Neither the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary nor the Chancellor of the Exchequer are expected to raise any objection. The Comprehensive Test Ban negotiations remain stalled and are unlikely to prove an obstacle. I therefore recommend that you give Mr. Pym the approval he seeks, once the Lord Privy Seal (in Lord Carrington's absence) has commented.

They are both content - see plays B and C

as he now has in his minute on play B.

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

9th September 1980