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MR WADE-GERY

c Mr Whitmore

Prime Minister

To see

AMH

24 July 81

Trident

The Prime Minister told me that she had not had an opportunity during the course of her bilateral meeting with President Reagan to raise the question of Trident. She asked me to have a word with Mr Meese.

2. I spoke accordingly to Mr Meese on Tuesday 21 July.
3. I said that we were aware that the US Administration had to take a decision about whether to go for D5. We had a considerable interest in this decision since, if they decided to go for D5, we should have to decide whether to do so as well. If we were to decide that it might well make sense to go for D5 once the Americans had done so, we should have to cancel orders for long lead items for C4. We were already spending money on these orders; the sooner we could take our decision, and (if necessary) cancel orders and stop unnecessary payments, the better. We, therefore, had an interest in the American decision being taken soon.
4. I went on to say that, if the Americans did decide to go for D5, there would have to be a further round of Anglo-American negotiations on the subject, certainly in the event of our deciding to follow suit and almost certainly in the more unlikely event of our deciding to stay with C4. On our side negotiations would be handled (as in the past) by the Cabinet Office, supported by the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office. I should be glad to know from Mr Meese in due course how he would like to handle these matters from their side; whether the Cabinet Office should look to a contact in the White House or to Mr McFarlane (the State Department official with whom I dealt on the renegotiation of the Anglo-US nuclear understandings); and which American Departments would be involved in the team on the American side.
5. Mr Meese took note of these points and promised to be in touch in due course.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG
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24 July 1981

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