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MAY 1 1983

DEAR MARGARET:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RECENT MESSAGE DELIVERED BY SIR OLIVER ON CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE GLCMS. I APPRECIATE VERY MUCH THE STRONG SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN GIVING TO GLCM DEPLOYMENT. I WANT TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO HELP YOU OVERCOME THE OPPOSITION YOU FACE.

IT IS FINE WITH ME IF IN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE YOU TAKE THE LINE CONTAINED IN YOUR LETTER TO ME ABOUT OUR REVIEW OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS, THEIR APPLICATION TO GLCMS, AND THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTERS ROLE IN DECISIONS CONCERNING U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. I WOULD ASK THAT YOU MAKE THESE POINTS IN A WAY DESIGNED TO MINIMIZE ANY COMPARISONS BY OTHER NATO ALLIES BETWEEN U.S.-U.K. ARRANGEMENTS AND THOSE COVERING THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE. IN ADDITION, I WOULD ASK THAT YOU STEER CLEAR OF ANY DISCUSSION OF THE PROCEDURES INVOLVED IN NUCLEAR CONTROL, SINCE THEIR COMPROMISE UNDERMINES DETERRENCE.

FOR OUR PART, U.S. GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN WILL, IF ASKED, CONFIRM BRITISH STATEMENTS THAT YOU AND I HAVE REVIEWED EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS AND FOUND THEM EFFECTIVE, AND THAT SUCH ARRANGEMENTS APPLY TO U.S. CRUISE MISSILES IN BRITAIN, WHETHER ON OR OFF BASE. IF ASKED TO COMMENT ON YOUR STATEMENT THAT THE EFFECT OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS IS THAT NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN BRITAIN WOULD BE FIRED WITHOUT THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTERS PERMISSION, U.S. SPOKESMEN WILL SAY: EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS PROVIDE FOR FULL PARTICIPATION BY ALLIES IN ANY DECISION TO EMPLOY NUCLEAR WEAPONS, GIVING PARTICULAR WEIGHT TO THOSE ALLIES IN TERRITORY OF WHICH SUCH WEAPONS ARE BASED. THE PRIME MINISTERS STATEMENT IS ENTIRELY CONSISTENT WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS. ALREADY, U.S. CABINET AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS HAVE, WHEN ASKED, CLEARLY INDICATED THAT YOU AND WE SHARE THE SAME UNDERSTANDING ABOUT PROCEDURES CONCERNING THE CONTROL OF U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS BASED ON BRITISH TERRITORY.

IF I MYSELF WERE TO SPEAK ON THE SUBJECT, I WOULD HAVE TO EMPHASIZE THE ALLIANCE DECISION MAKING PROCESS- I COULD NOT PERSONALLY REFER TO SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE UNITED

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KINGDOM. THREE OTHER NATO ALLIES HAVE ALREADY APPROACHED US TO SEEK CHANGES IN CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BASED ON THEIR TERRITORY. WE CANNOT AGREE TO SUCH CHANGES WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING THE CREDIBILITY OF THE NATO DETERRENT AND STRAINING RELATIONS AMONG THE ALLIES. WE WOULD BE UNABLE TO TURN DOWN THEIR REQUESTS IF I WERE TO GO ON THE PUBLIC RECORD EXPLICITLY CONFIRMING A SPECIAL STATUS FOR THE U.K. WHICH EACH OF THESE OTHER GOVERNMENTS SEEKS.

I APPRECIATE THE UNDERSTANDING YOU HAVE SHOWN FOR THE SENSITIVITY OF THIS MATTER, AND THE FIRMNESS WITH WHICH YOU HAVE WITHSTOOD DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES IN THE INTERESTS OF WESTERN SECURITY. WITH THE FORMULATION YOU HAVE PROPOSED, AND OUR SUPPORT, I TRUST THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO PUT THE NUCLEAR CONTROL ISSUE TO REST. LETS STAY IN TOUCH ON ALL INF ISSUES IN COMING MONTHS.

I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU NEXT MONTH FOR THE SUMMIT.

BEST WISHES,
RON

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