



uFW
∞

5

Defence

DOWNGRADED TO :
TOP SECRET UK EYES A
10 DOWNING STREET

17. AUG 79

From the Private Secretary

27 July 1979

Thank you for your letter of 20 July, in which you summarised the Defence Secretary's discussion with the US Secretary of Defense on 17 July, about the supply of nuclear materials for naval propulsion and nuclear warheads.

The Prime Minister has seen your letter and has taken note of these exchanges. Dr. Brown's replies to Mr. Pym do not, of course, constitute at this stage the "copper-bottomed assurances of long term supply" which MISC 7, at its meeting on 10 July, considered to be essential if the UK is to forego national self-sufficiency in HEU.

I am sending copies of this letter to George Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

Re

DOWNGRADED TO :
TOP SECRET UK EYES A

17 AUG 79

Roger Facer, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

TOP SECRET

ATOMIC

Copy No 1 of 10 copies

Page 1 of 2 pages



Prime Minister

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1

Telephone 01-~~9367022~~ 218 2111/3

This is not yet the copper bottomed assurances of long term supply which Mr. Pym was asked by OI to express.

20th July 1979

No 10. A.R. 27

Agreed in minutes on 25/2/1/2

TOP SECRET
ATOMIC

MO 25/2/1/2

*BM
2377*

Dear Bryan,

In Washington on 17th July the Defence Secretary raised with the United States' Secretary of Defense the supply of nuclear materials for naval propulsion and nuclear warheads.

Mr Pym expressed appreciation for the help we had received in the past from the United States. But we now had to consider our long term source of supply of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) for nuclear propulsion and decide whether to manufacture it ourselves, probably at Capenhurst, or reach some long term arrangement for obtaining it from the US. He asked whether it would be politically possible for the US to give an undertaking about future supplies. Dr Brown said that the US Administration were seeking to amend the 1958 legislation in order to extend the arrangements for material transfer to 1984, and perhaps they might be extended to 1989. But before each transfer within the programme was approved, US law required that there should be no detriment to US defence needs. He thought that in practice there would be no problem. The Defence Secretary said he appreciated the difficulties presented by the Congressional processes, and that future Congresses might take a different view. We also needed, for weapons purposes, about one tonne of plutonium and 10 tonnes of HEU. Dr Brown and other US officials in separate official talks, were helpful, but they told us that supply of plutonium might involve the Americans in considerable extra costs, since they might

/ have ...

B G Cartledge Esq.,
10 Downing Street

TOP SECRET
ATOMIC

TOP SECRET

ATOMIC

TOP SECRET

ATOMIC

TOP SECRET
ATOMIC



Page 2 of 2 pages

|| have to restart a reactor to meet British requirements.

I am copying this letter to George Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office), and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours sincerely,
Roger Facer*

(R L L FACER)

TOP SECRET ATOMIC

TOP SECRET
ATOMIC