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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

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SECRET

6th August 1979

MO 18/1

Dear Prime Minister,

SUPPLIES OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM

As you recognised from the report of my exchange with the US Secretary of Defense on 17th July 1979 (my Private Secretary's MO 25/2/1/2 of 20th July 1979), I was unable to extract a copper-bottomed American assurance about the availability of long-term supplies of highly enriched uranium (HEU) for our defence nuclear programme. Accordingly, as we discussed at our meeting of MISC 7 on 10th July, I now propose, subject to your concurrence and that of our colleagues, to authorise the programme for national self-sufficiency described in my minute MO 18/1 of 3rd July 1979.

As I explained previously, our plant has to be slotted into the commercial programme of British Nuclear Fuels Ltd and it would be very helpful if we could give them early authority to proceed for forward planning purposes. I would, therefore, be most grateful for your agreement to this.

I am copying this letter to the Home Secretary, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Energy Secretary and Sir John Hunt.

Yours etc
Francis Pym

Francis Pym

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2JF

17 AUG 1979

