

TOP SECRET

1. Mr Alexander. *Am*
2. File. *8*
Am
20xii

Ref. A01003

Copy No. 2 of 2 Copies

NOTE of a Meeting in the Oval Office, The White House, Washington DC, on Monday, 17th December, 1979

PRESENT

President of the United States

Prime Minister

Secretary of State

Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary

Dr. Brzezinski

Sir Robert Armstrong

THE SUCCESSOR TO POLARIS

THE PRESIDENT said that, as he had already warned the Prime Minister, if and when she put a request to him on a successor to Polaris, he was committed to a positive response. He hoped, however, that no such request would be put to him until SALT II had been ratified by the Congress. He feared lest, if a request was made and answered before then, that would give rise to new Soviet demands or conditions for the conclusion of SALT II. He had made it clear privately that agreement in SALT II left the United States at liberty to help the United Kingdom with the successor to Polaris. He understood that the delay could create timing problems for the British Government; the United States Government could, he thought, alleviate those. In the meantime he hoped that no proposals would be put to the British Cabinet. He would wish to be in a position to say, if asked, that no request had been received from the British Government.

THE PRIME MINISTER expressed her gratitude to the President for his positive commitment, and her understanding of his wish to delay a formal request. She asked whether in the meantime contingency planning would proceed on the drafting of the exchange of letters that would be required.

DR. BRZEZINSKI indicated that this would be negotiable, provided that discussion was confined to the same restricted group of people as had been involved hitherto. It would not, however, be possible for technical discussions to proceed without extending the circle of those involved, which the President did not wish to do.

THE PRESIDENT said that he understood that we were concerned at the possibility that in the interval before a request was made a production line for certain long-lead items for the missile concerned would close. He said that there would be no problem on this score. He understood that there was a problem about supplies of plutonium: this could be discussed with the Secretary for Defense.

TOP SECRET

In answer to a question from the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, THE PRESIDENT said that, if the Congress failed to ratify SALT II, there would then be no obstacle to his acceding to a request from the United Kingdom Government on a successor to Polaris.

Cabinet Office

19 December 1979

Copy No. 1 - Mr. Wade-Gery

130

SECRET

FM WASHINGTON 180700Z

TO PRIORITY FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
 TEL. NO. 4255 OF 18 DECEMBER 1979
 INFO PRIORITY UKDEL VIENNA, MOSCOW AND UKDEL NATO.

FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY.

CTB.

1. MR VANCE RAISED THE CTB NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE THIS EVENING. HE ASKED WHETHER THE U.K. COULD ACCEPT THREE ADDITIONAL NSS STATIONS, IF THE U.S. COULD PROVIDE THE FUNDS, IN ORDER TO BREAK THE DEAD-LOCK IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE AFFAIR OF THE SUSPECTED SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION HAD SHOWN THAT THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF FACILITIES IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC. LORD CARRINGTON SAID THAT OUR DIFFICULTY HAD BEEN IN JUSTIFYING TO PARLIAMENT EXPENDITURE ON REDUNDANT NSS. BUT HE THOUGHT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIND PLACES, SUCH AS ASCENCION ISLAND, FOR THREE ADDITIONAL STATIONS. STRESSING THAT HE HAD NO AUTHORITY YET FOR FUNDING, MR VANCE SAID THAT HE WOULD LOOK AT FINANCE IF WE WOULD LOOK AT LOCATIONS.
2. UKDEL VIENNA SHOULD NOT MENTION THIS TO THEIR AMERICAN COLLEAGUES AT THIS STAGE.

HENDERSON

F I L E S

ACDD
 ES & SD
 N AM D
 EESD
 DEFENCE D
 NEWS D
 LEGAL ADVISERS
 PLANNING STAFF
 PS
 PS/SIR I GILMOUR
 PS/MR HURD

PS/MR BLAKER
 PS/PUS
 SIR A DUFF
 MR BULLARD
 MR P H MOBERLY
 MR FERGUSSON
 CABINET OFFICE

COPIES TO:

MR CARTLEDGE
 NO 10 DOWNING STREET
 DR R PRESS, CABINET OFFICE
 MRS ALEXANDER, TREASURY

S E C R E T

POLARIS SUCCESSOR - MEETING WITH PRESIDENT

for [unclear]

9

Grateful for President's letter of 15 October in which he said that question of "modernising your strategic forces - including the option of the C-4 missile system will be affirmative and fully in keeping with our traditional relationship in the strategic nuclear field". In passing comment that NASSAU meeting took place from 18-21 December 1962.

2. Note President's reservations in his letter about LRTNF and timing of successor. Point out that LRTNF now agreed and we have worked hard to secure it!

3. Inquire how President sees relationship of Polaris successor with SALT II? Point out you have worries of your own about timing - Parliamentary and practical.

4. Ask President to confirm now that when you ask - and subject to detailed negotiation - he will:-

- a. Supply Trident C-4 including MIRV
- b. Agree to updating POLARIS SALES AGREEMENT for this purpose
- c. Allow the necessary technical negotiations and drafting to proceed
- d. Accept/some amendment to the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement will be needed particularly to cover supply of plutonium and highly enriched uranium.

5. Suggest it would be useful if officials could discuss text of exchange of letters that would take place when you put your request to him. Mention need for suitable communique language now.

6. Lastly, stress your whole-hearted support for NATO Long Term Defence Programme - with emphasis on strengthening conventional forces - and point to increase in defence spending in UK.