



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
 MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
 Telephone 01938 218 2111/3

MO 26/7/4

15th April 1985

Prime Minister
mb *EDD*
15/4

Dear Sir,

STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE - PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The Defence Secretary minuted the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary on 27th March enclosing a letter from Mr Weinberger about participation in the SDI Research Programme. In that letter, Mr Weinberger asked his colleagues to respond within 60 days giving an indication of their interest. We have today received via the US Embassy in London the attached self-explanatory further letter from Mr Weinberger essentially dropping the 60 day deadline.

Although the formal deadline has now been lifted it is still Mr Heseltine's intention to bring forward early proposals about how we should respond to Mr Weinberger's original letter.

I am copying this letter to Charles Powell (No 10), the Private Secretaries to other members of OD and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

*Yours etc,**Richard Mottram*

(R C MOTTRAM)

L Appleyard Esq
 Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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April 13, 1985

Dear Colleague:

Since extending an invitation to your Government to join with the United States in the Strategic Defense Initiative Research Program, I have noted that some -- both in the US and elsewhere -- have chosen to interpret the reference it makes to a 60-day initial response period as an "ultimatum" for Allied participation. This is of course totally untrue and I regret any misunderstandings that may have arisen over this point.

As you know, the United States is pursuing intensively the SDI Research Program which is an on-going, large research effort, with several contracts planned for signature in the near-term. The 60-day initial response period in the letter simply reflects our desire to ensure that the United States' allies and friends have an opportunity, as early as possible, to participate in this program, and our hope is that the SDI will realize the maximum benefit from such participation.

I wanted to emphasize that you should not feel constrained to respond within any set period of time. Rather, we hope you will respond any time and, indeed, continually throughout the program. You should feel confident that an indication of your interest in participating in SDI research will be welcome whenever it is received. We view the initial indication of interest as but the first step in a process which would develop in detail subsequently, and over a long period of time.

There are numerous issues concerning the SDI and its implications that merit serious analysis and dialogue, and we want to provide any information or briefings that you think will be helpful. I hope this can put any possible misunderstandings behind us.

Sincerely,

/s/

Caspar Weinberger

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US : FOREIGN Policy

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