

The Germans have  
got further than  
we have.  
This won't  
do. We

SECRET



Prime Minister. SDP  
cc 10  
4

The truth is that  
very little has been  
done in two months.  
Agree to set a  
target date of say 20  
July for the Defence  
Secretary's report, to allow  
an OD discussion before the

MO 26/7/4

must have a  
paper by 3 weeks  
for today

PRIME MINISTER

25 May 1975 -

BRITISH PARTICIPATION IN STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE (SDI)  
RESEARCH

summer break? CDP  
29/5

I ought to report where matters stand on the Government's reply to Mr Weinberger's invitation to take part in US SDI related research, delivered at the NATO Nuclear Planning Group Meeting on 26th March. My minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary of 27th March and the subsequent correspondence refer.

2. Clearly we need to move quickly if the United Kingdom is to make the most of the opportunities. My Chief Scientific Adviser - Professor Norman - has already paid one visit to the United States and had a useful set of exchanges with those responsible within the United States Administration; but we do not as yet have sufficient information to assess the full implications of participation or to define the specific areas of our interest. Further detailed United Kingdom/United States bilateral exchanges are necessary over the next two months to establish the position more clearly.

3. In the light of this, when I met Mr Weinberger in the margins of NATO's Defence Planning Committee on 22nd and 23rd May (incidentally within a few days of the original 60 day deadline set by the Americans), I reaffirmed our intention to participate in research, as you had already made clear to President Reagan.

4. Work is now in hand to review the scientific and industrial aspects of participation and to consider the implications,



especially for the defence programme and the nation's use of scarce manpower resources, of various levels of commitment. This work will also assess the extent to which we should seek to cooperate or exchange views with other European countries who may accept Mr Weinberger's invitation, in addition to collaborating bilaterally with the United States on the basis of our close relationship and agreements with them. We are looking at the industrial issues involved in both forms of approach. It will, of course, be necessary to look also at the wider international and strategic dimensions.

5. This work will proceed in parallel with a series of bilateral official exchanges from which we should obtain the necessary supporting information which we now lack. I am also seeking to arrange briefings in the United Kingdom for our own defence industry by General Abrahamson, the SDI office and perhaps some American Prime Contractors, to explain the programme and the opportunities for taking part. As you know, a certain amount of low-key briefing along these lines has already been carried out by my officials.

5. I will report further once this work has been taken forward.

6. I am sending copies of this minute to our OD colleagues and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Wright*

Ministry of Defence  
28th May 1985

USA : Foreign Policy  
Pt 2



29 MAY 1985



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