

US Declassified

9.5.83 3

SECRET

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 60 / 83

Dear Ron,

We are announcing today that there will be a General Election in the United Kingdom on Thursday, 9 June. I wanted to be in touch with you at once.

I am convinced that it would not have been right in the national interest to delay the Election any longer. But the date I have chosen has implications for my plans to visit Washington on 26/28 May and Williamsburg on 28/30 May.

I had been much looking forward to my meetings with you in Washington on 27 May but I know you will understand that it is simply not possible for me to be away from the United Kingdom for several days in the middle of an Election campaign. I am afraid, therefore, that I must postpone my visit to Washington. With your agreement I would propose to make this known publicly on Tuesday, 10 May.

In answer to questions about Williamsburg we are at present saying that the United Kingdom will of course be represented but that decisions on the composition of our delegation have yet to be taken. I shall let you know as soon as I have been able to decide whether I should personally attend. I very much want to come ~~and to help you make the Summit a success~~ but I have to weigh this against the requirements of the Election campaign and possible criticism here if I attend. I shall be in touch again about this as soon as possible.

The Government will, of course, continue to exercise full responsibility during the electoral period, not least with regard to our obligations towards the Western Alliance.

Meanwhile, my very best wishes to you and my warm thanks to you for everything you have done for our two countries during the period of my present administration.

MM 9/5

Yours ever
Margaret