

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SYSTEM II:
90604

May 10, 1983

~~TOP SECRET~~
INFORMATION

SENSITIVE

102

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: WILLIAM P. CLARK *WPC*

SUBJECT: Reply from Prime Minister Thatcher Concerning
Control of U.S. Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles
in the U.K. (S/S)

Attached at Tab A is a second letter to you from Mrs. Thatcher on the sensitive subject of the control of U.S. GLCMs to be stationed in the U.K. Mrs. Thatcher basically accepts the offer you made in your last letter concerning public presentation of the nuclear control issue in debate in Parliament later this week. (S/S)

As you know, Mrs. Thatcher has been subjected to intense questioning concerning a British veto over use of the weapons. (In fact, she has a veto over the use of the weapons, under a top secret agreement dating from 1952 which you have reaffirmed.) A major debate in Parliament on the entire nuclear weapons questions is scheduled for later this week, when the subject will be raised again. In her last message, Mrs. Thatcher asked your permission to say that "no nuclear weapons would be fired or launched from British territory without the British Prime Minister's agreement." In your reply, you gave your permission for her to use that formulation. You said that U.S. spokesmen would confirm her statement.

[REDACTED]

You explained that

[REDACTED] we need to retain some ambiguity

in our public statements

(TS/S)

If you are asked in public about the arrangements for the control of nuclear weapons in any NATO country, it is best to say that procedures have been agreed which are satisfactory to both the United States and the European countries, and these procedures protect both the sovereignty and security requirements of all the NATO countries. Beyond that statement, you should decline to discuss the arrangements any further. (TS)

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Prepared by: Dennis C. Blair

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By WJ, NARA, Date 3/31/09

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