

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 7, 2006

The Right Honorable
Tony Blair, M.P.
Prime Minister
London

Dear Prime Minister:

Thank you for your letter regarding modernizing your independent nuclear deterrent. The United States Government continues to attach great importance to the maintenance of an operationally independent nuclear deterrent capability by the United Kingdom and values the deep and long-standing cooperation between our two countries in this area.

The United States Government accordingly welcomes the steps outlined in your letter to maintain and modernize the U.K.'s capability in this area for the longer term. We also attach importance to, and welcome, your intention to continue to assign this force to NATO.

The 1958 Agreement for Cooperation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defense Purposes ("Mutual Defense Agreement") and the 1963 Polaris Sales Agreement have provided a strong, enduring basis for cooperation between our two countries. We believe that these two agreements, the terms of which are not affected by this exchange of letters, will continue to provide a solid basis for ensuring mutually satisfactory cooperation in those areas where you have requested assurances. I can reaffirm the U.S. commitment to support the missile system and associated equipment deployed by the United Kingdom under the terms of these agreements.

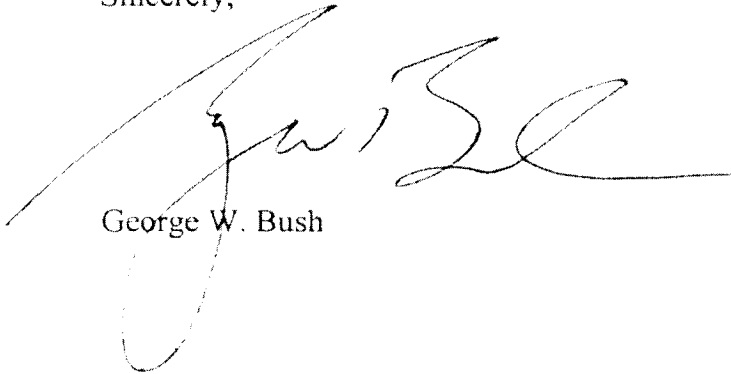
In this context, the United States fully supports and welcomes the intention of the United Kingdom to participate in the life-extension program for the Trident II D5 missile. We will work to ensure that the necessary components of the overall system are made available to the United Kingdom to support life-extended D5 missiles, under the framework of the Polaris Sales Agreement and the 1982 Exchange of Letters. I fully agree with your suggestion that, as in the past, these matters be taken forward by the executive agencies of our two governments to ensure mutually satisfactory solutions.

For the longer term, in accordance with your proposal and under the framework of the Polaris Sales Agreement and the 1982 Exchange of Letters, I would invite the United Kingdom to participate, at an early stage, in any program to replace the D5 missiles or to discuss a further life extension -- for your purposes -- of the D5 missile to match the potential out-of-service date of your new submarines. In this respect, any successor to the D5 system should be compatible

with, or be capable of being made compatible with, the launch system for the D5 missile, which you will be installing into your new submarines. The United States will also ensure under the framework of the Polaris Sales Agreement and the 1982 Exchange of Letters that the United Kingdom has the option to sustain an effective nuclear delivery system for at least the life of your successor submarine force as was done with the Polaris system. Again, I agree with you that, as in the past, close coordination should be maintained between the executive agencies of our two governments in order to ensure compatibility of equipment.

I agree that we should maintain our cooperation under the 1958 Agreement for Cooperation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defense Purposes ("Mutual Defense Agreement"). I also concur in your proposal that our two countries should also explore the scope for cooperation and collaboration on other aspects of future submarine platforms. We recognize the importance of this potential collaboration and will work to ensure that further cooperation in this area can be deepened accordingly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "GWB", with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the signature.

George W. Bush