

288. Letter From Secretary of Defense Weinberger to British Defense Secretary Nott¹

Washington, May 24, 1982

Dear John:

In your letter of May 5, you asked if certain equipment could be provided on the basis that you would pay only for that used or retained.² As an alternative, you proposed a "sale and return" basis for the equipment's release.

I believe that the financing arrangement worked out between our respective staffs substantially accomplishes what you propose. This arrangement calls for us to position agreed-to items of equipment at U.S. facilities for subsequent draw-down by the UK. The UK would reimburse us for all costs of those items actually issued to you; in other cases if there should be any major costs required for us to position any items at U.S. facilities, I understand that our staffs have agreed that the UK would bear these costs. If this does not state your understanding, please let me know.

Your letter also addressed the immediate requirement for two specific items. The first, the two Vulcan/Phalanx guns, were delivered on 14 May. The second request for 300 AIM 9L Sidewinder missiles, formally came to us on May 13, as an immediate request for 100 missiles, with the likelihood of 200 more being required at a later date. On May 14, I approved the delivery of the 100 missiles, which were flown to Ascension Island that same night for delivery to the UK as you requested.³

Please let me know what else we can do.

Sincerely,

Cap

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330-86-0042, UK 1982. Top Secret. A copy was sent to Henderson. Iklé sent a draft of the letter to Weinberger under an undated action memorandum, requesting that Weinberger sign the letter. Both the draft of the letter, with Weinberger's handwritten revisions, and the action memorandum are *ibid*.

² See footnote 2, Document 233.

³ See Document 265.