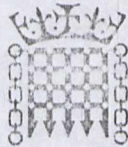


Jock Bruce-Gardyne, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

24th February 1981

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PRIME MINISTER

You should see this: the attached reply is a draft.

You might discuss with the Chief Whip on Monday?

MS  
27/2

Rt Hon John Nott, M.P.,  
Secretary of State,  
Ministry of Defence,  
Whitehall,  
London SW1

*Dear John*

I am very worried about the debate on March 3rd on Trident. As you know, I remain profoundly sceptical about our ability to absorb the cost of purchasing Trident and building the delivery system in the later years of this decade without a disastrous impact on the conventional equipment of the armed forces. I don't for a moment doubt that Trident is the most effective weapon-system available to us for the purpose. But I find it hard to believe that the defence of the realm is best secured by the preservation of one gigantic weapon to re-duplicate those already held by the US and France for use in extremis, and the stripping of the rest of our armed forces of proper equipment plus the imposition upon them of financial constraints which make it increasingly impossible for them to use the equipment they have got. I don't honestly see how I could support this on March 3rd.

*Yours  
Jock*

Copy of the chief Whip: