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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 March 1982

*The Americans and French have  
already taken action on their own  
account with the Greeks.*

*A.S.C. 26/3.*

*Dear John,*

Papandreou's Statement about the British Deterrent

Since Mr Papandreou is expected to attend the European Council on 29 March, the Prime Minister may wish to be aware that in a public statement on 18 March welcoming Brezhnev's SS20 moratorium offer, Mr Papandreou said that British and French nuclear systems should be included in the current INF negotiations at Geneva.

We have already summoned the Greek Ambassador to express our serious concern that the Greek Prime Minister should have spoken in this vein. Sir Michael Palliser spoke similarly to the Greek Ambassador at a social function last night. We have instructed Sir Iain Sutherland to take parallel steps in Athens. This may give the Greeks pause before contemplating a public repetition.

It might nevertheless be useful if the Prime Minister could take an appropriate opportunity in the margins of the European Council to bring home the point to Mr Papandreou personally. As the Prime Minister will be aware, the exclusion of British and French systems from the INF negotiations has been a cardinal element in the Alliance position since the double-track decision of December 1979. It has been reaffirmed on numerous occasions since: the North Atlantic Council last December issued a declaration, to which Greece subscribed, expressing full support for the US negotiating position. Quite apart from the aberration in substance, it is reprehensible that the Greek Government should make a public statement on a matter touching Britain's vital interests without any prior consultation with us through either bilateral or multilateral channels.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Omand at the Ministry of Defence.

*Yours ever,*

*Francis Pichard*  
(F N Richard)  
Private Secretary

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