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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 March 1986

**NUCLEAR TESTING: MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT REAGAN**

Thank you for your letter of 25 March enclosing a draft reply from the Prime Minister to President Reagan's recent message on nuclear testing.

The Prime Minister has signed a somewhat revised version which I enclose. I should be grateful if you could arrange for its early delivery.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

(C. D. POWELL)

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 March 1986

Dear Charles,

Nuclear Testing: Message from President Reagan

Thank you for your letter of 15^{at 1100} March to the Resident Clerk conveying the text of the President's message to the Prime Minister of the previous day.

I enclose a brief draft reply to President Reagan. It takes the opportunity of expressing our support for President Reagan's proposals and our disapproval of the unconsidered rejection given by the Russians. It does not seek to cover every detail of the overall American approach.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (MOD) and Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

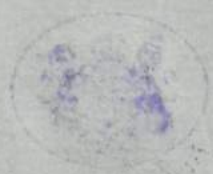
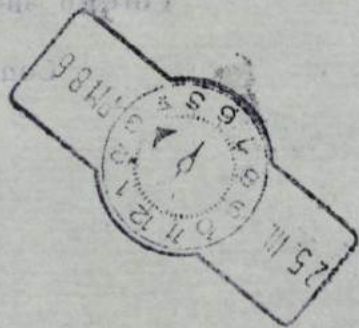
(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

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DEFENCE AND COMMERCE PT8.

FOR THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF DEFENCE AND COMMERCE

11/25/11



DRAFT: ~~memo/letter/teletype/dispatch/row~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

President Reagan

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Thank you for your message of 14 March about nuclear testing. I ^{was glad to have the} valued your full explanation of the new ^{which ~~seems~~ seems a very sensible practical one -} US proposal. This seemed to me to offer a useful way ^{though on I understood it} forward, although of course the problems in verifying a comprehensive test ban would be largely unaffected.

^{I am sure that you are right to try to} I very much welcome your attempt to engage the Russians in a dialogue on ^{effective} enhanced verification. And I strongly support the link you see ^{make} between progress in this area and ratification of the ^{Threshold Test Ban Treaty & Peaceful Nuclear Explosions} PTB and PNE treaties. Such a step should truly encourage confidence in new arms control ~~measures.~~ The swift Soviet rejection in ^{public} public of your proposals ^{by the Soviet Union} is disappointing, but perhaps predictable. I hope it will not be their last word, and indeed that your next meeting with Gorbachev will see real progress in this area.

//With warm regards.

Gorbachev had replied only the previous day to the leaders of the Six Nations/Five Continents appeal. But your own offer clearly demonstrates that for your part

/you

4 I am following with in the Gulf of Sirte closely & expressed our full support for the United States' right to operate in international waters & airspace, & to defend it help against attack.

you have genuinely serious ideas of how to make progress on these difficult issues. And I hope that the contrast between the approach of the West and that of the East will not be lost on those who criticise our policy.

The Soviet approach to verification seems to belie Gorbachev's fine words, when put to the test. We must of course keep pressing them on the point, and emphasising in public - as Geoffrey Howe did in a speech last week - the need for them to back up their rhetoric with practical and realistic proposals. We also need to ensure that our own ideas for verification across the board meet the same criteria, while preserving Western security interests. Your initiative on the TTBT/PNET sets a good example.