



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 October 1983

John T. ...

Noted.

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Exchange of Messages with Andropov

We owe you advice about the question of publicity for the Prime Minister's reply to Mr Andropov's message of 27 August. *P4 3*

Although the fact, and general sense of, Mr Andropov's messages to various Heads of State and Government in late August is widely known, the Russians have not published the contents of these messages as such. Our view is that unless they were to do so there would be little to gain in publishing the Prime Minister's reply. There may be times when we would not wish to encourage publicity about an exchange of messages with the Russians at the highest possible level through diplomatic channels; and it would therefore seem prudent to avoid unnecessary precedents to the contrary. This of course need not exclude public references by Ministers as appropriate to the fact that we have made the Russians aware through correspondence at the highest level of British views about the INF negotiations. In particular it may be useful and timely at some juncture to indicate that our position on the British deterrent and arms control is something which the Prime Minister has conveyed personally to Mr Andropov. Such a reference could be useful in rebutting any ill-directed criticism that the Russians do not know where we stand on this issue. Parliament would probably be the best forum for this and officials will bear the point in mind in drafting Ministerial speeches or statements for use in the House of Commons.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram in the Ministry of Defence and David Goodall in the Cabinet Office.

John T. ...
R B Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540



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Exchange of Messages with Andropov

Thank you for your letter of 13 October.

I have noted its contents.

AJL

R.B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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