



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Please reply to:
Des Browne MP,
24 Portland Road,
KILMARNOCK,
KA1 2BS

Tel: 01563 520267
Fax: 01563 572815

17 October 1997

Our Ref:DB/AJK/A61

Your Ref:

Min
Same
J. S. Livingston,
18 Townhead,
KILMAURS,
KILMARNOCK
KA3 2RG

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed a copy of the replies to your inquiries from the Ministry of Defence.

Should you require further assistance in the future please contact this office where we are happy to help.

Yours sincerely,


Andrew Kerrigan
Assistant to Des Browne MP





MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-218 2216 (Direct Dialling)
0171-218 9000 (Switchboard)

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
THE ARMED FORCES

D/Min(AF)/JR 3731/97/P

14th October 1997

Dear Des,

Thank you for your letter of 19 September (reference: DB/AJK/347) to George Robertson on behalf of your constituent J S Livingston of 18 Townhead, Kilmaurs, Kilmarnock who has asked for details about Exercise SHORT SERMON. I am replying in view of my responsibility in this matter.

I should say first that there has never been an accident involving a nuclear powered submarine reactor which has led to, or come anywhere near leading to, any release of radioactive contamination to the environment. We are confident that the continued application of stringent safety procedures will continue to prove effective in preventing any such accident.

Nevertheless, we would consider it irresponsible not to have comprehensive contingency plans for dealing with all aspects of such an eventuality, and we test these plans in regular exercises at various levels including full scale events such as Exercise SHORT SERMON 97. An overview of these arrangements was given in the Statement on Defence Estimates 1995.

Plans for responding to defence nuclear accidents are derived in full consultation with all relevant government departments, agencies, and in particular with the emergency services and local authorities in the area concerned. The joint plan for responding to a submarine reactor accident at Faslane is a publicly available document. Furthermore, the public in the immediate area, who might be advised to take action, are sent leaflets under the provisions of the Public Information for Radiological Emergencies Regulations.

Exercise SHORT SERMON, which will be held in the Faslane area between 18 to 20 November 1997, is being designed to test the

Des Browne Esq MP





response of the MoD and Royal Navy in dealing with an accident involving the reactor of a nuclear powered submarine berthed in Clyde Naval Base. A key aspect of the exercise will be coordination of activities between the MoD and other agencies. We have been most pleased by the comprehensive support for the exercise that has been provided by all local emergency services and authorities and by the Scottish Office and other government departments.

The accident scenario will be simulated and no radioactive contaminants will be used during the exercise. There will be an evacuation of the Naval Base in accordance with the plan, but I would like to reassure you that the local community will not be affected in any way by the exercise.

I hope this explains the position.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'John Reid'.

DR JOHN REID MP





MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-218 2216 (Direct Dialling)
0171-218 9000 (Switchboard)

MINISTER OF STATE FOR
THE ARMED FORCES

D/Min(AF)/JR 3784/97/P

^h
14 October 1997

Dear Des,

Thank you for your letter of 19 September to Tony Blair (reference: DB/AJK/348) enclosing postcards from two of your constituents about Trident. I am replying in view of my responsibilities as Minister of State for the Armed Forces.

Our goal is the global elimination of nuclear weapons. We made clear in our Manifesto our intention to press for multilateral negotiations towards mutual, balanced and verifiable reductions in nuclear weapons. When satisfied with verified progress towards the goal of global elimination, we will ensure that the United Kingdom's nuclear weapons are included in multilateral negotiations. We believe that the Manifesto represents a contract with the people. As the Manifesto also made clear, pending the ultimate achievement of our goal of the global elimination of nuclear weapons, we will retain Trident in order to provide a minimum, but credible and effective, nuclear deterrent. Our nuclear deterrent posture is entirely defensive and consistent with international law.

We anticipate that the annual operating costs of Trident will amount to some £200M per year, less than 1% of the annual defence budget. Our view is that the pursuit of global disarmament while maintaining strong defences pending its achievement is ultimately the best way of achieving a sustainable reduction in the proportion of resources necessary for defence.

I hope this explains the position.

Kind regards

DR JOHN REID MP

Des Browne Esq MP





HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Please reply to:

**DES BROWNE MP
24 PORTLAND ROAD
KILMARNOCK KA1 2BS**

TEL: 01563 520267

Date: 30 September 1997

Our Ref: DB/AJK/397
Your Ref:

J.S. Livingston,
18 Townhead,
KILMAURS,
KILMARNOCK.
KA3 2RG

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed an acknowledgement from No. 10 Downing Street. I will forward the reply from the Ministry Of Defence when I am in receipt of said reply.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Kerrigan
Assistant to Des Browne MP



20 SEP 1997



**10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA**

From the Private Secretary

24 September 1997

Dear Mr Browne

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 19 September, with which you enclosed postcards from two of your constituents.

The Prime Minister has asked me to arrange for a reply to be sent to you from the Ministry of Defence.

Yours sincerely

RK Read

ROB READ

Des Browne Esq MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Please reply to:

DES BROWNE MP
24 PORTLAND ROAD
KILMARNOCK KA1 2BS

TEL: 01563 520267

Date: 19 September 1997

Our Ref: DB/AJK/346
Your Ref:

J.S. Livingston,
18 Townhead,
Kilmaurs,
KILMARNOCK,
KA3 2RG.

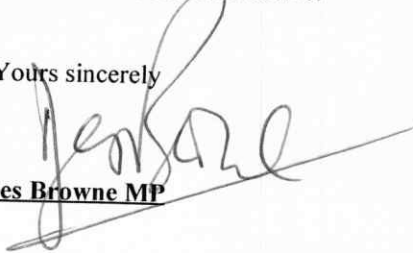
Dear Sir,

Thank you for your CND postcard. I have forwarded it to the Prime Minister along with a covering letter.

I also acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 16 September. I apologise for not answering your correspondence at an earlier date.

As regards your concerns about the Faslane base I have written to George Robertson seeking information about his departments plans for this area should an incident occur at Faslane.

Yours sincerely


Des Browne MP

