

From: George Foulkes, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

*Please reply to:*  
Fenwick Lodge Gatehouse  
18a Ewenfield Road  
Ayr KA7 2QB  
Telephone: 01292 265776  
Fax: 01292 287914

27th September, 1997.

Mr Peter Jardine,  
146 Afton Bridgend,  
New Cumnock.  
KA18 4YY.

Dear Mr Jardine,

Thank you for your letter of 23rd September. I have already written to George Robertson on this following representations from Scottish CND. Thank you also for writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George Foulkes'.

GEORGE FOULKES M.P.



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/3928/97/M

25<sup>th</sup> October 1997

*Dear George,*

Thank you for your letter of 2 October to George Robertson enclosing a letter from Mr Tony Southall, Joint Secretary of Scottish CND, who has asked you for details regarding Exercise **SHORT SERMON**. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility as Minister of State for the Armed Forces.

Exercise **SHORT SERMON**, which will be held in the Faslane area between 18 to 20 November 1997, is being designed to test the response of the MoD and Royal Navy, in dealing with an accident involving the reactor of a nuclear powered submarine berthed in the Clyde Naval Base. A key aspect of the exercise will be the coordination of activities between MoD and other agencies. The response will be based on the plan described in the Clyde Public Safety Scheme.

Legislation on nuclear safety and accident response requires that an estimate is made of the probability of accidents occurring. We expend considerable effort in studying this issue, and our work is overseen by the Department's Nuclear Powered Warships Safety Committee. Discussions are also held with the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate. Our contingency plans are based, in accordance with the legislation, on responding to the effects of reasonably foreseeable accidents, (i.e. those with estimated probability greater than 1 in 100,000) but they can also be adapted to cope with even less likely events which might have more significant consequences.

It is planned that potassium iodate tablets would be distributed before any release of radioactive material had occurred at a time determined by monitoring the condition of the reactor. Medical advice is that these tablets should be taken as early as possible, but there is still benefit even if they are

George Foulkes Esq MP





taken several hours after exposure to radioactive iodine. We are confident that the plans for the distribution of potassium iodate tablets would be adequate in the extremely unlikely event of a nuclear submarine reactor accident.

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, as Mr Southall has demonstrated, 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.

Finally, I should say 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.

I hope you will find the above both helpful and reassuring.

Neil Rye  
John

DR JOHN REID MP



From: George Foulkes, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

2 October 1997

Mr Tony Southall  
Joint Secretary  
Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament  
15 Barrland St  
Glasgow G41 1QH

*Dear Tony*

Thank you for your letter of 18 September about the 3 day exercise at Faslane on 17 to 19 November.

As I am now a Minister I cannot, of course, ask Parliamentary Questions of other Ministers. However I will pass on your concerns to my colleague, George Robertson.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Foulkes', with a stylized flourish at the end.

GEORGE FOULKES

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Mr Tony Southall,  
Joint Secretary,  
Scottish CND,  
15 Barrland Street,  
Glasgow G2.

Dear Mr Southall,

Further to the matter which you raised with me I have now received a letter from the Ministry of Defence, a copy of which I enclose.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George Foulkes'.

GEORGE FOULKES M.P.