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Subject.

US Foreign Policy: USA March '81

TEXT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MESSAGE OF
19 AUGUST

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T133/83

Dear Ron,

Thank you for your message of 19 August about comprehensive nuclear safeguards. I too regard effective co-operation between suppliers as essential. We have, as you know, played a leading role recently in developing proposals for improved export control for equipment and materials relating to centrifuge enrichment.

I entirely agree with you that we must ensure that legitimate competition for nuclear trade does not weaken the non-proliferation regime. It was for this reason that the United Kingdom acted as host and chairman to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (the so-called "London Club") which achieved agreement five years ago on the present "guidelines". After this lapse of time it is certainly desirable to review the situation.

I also agree with you that we must strengthen the framework for peaceful nuclear co-operation within a sound and effective safeguards regime. As I suggested in my previous message to you in April, we should endeavour to develop a clear, consistent Western strategy which lays emphasis on the benefits which Non-Proliferation Treaty membership can give to both supplier and recipient countries. This is, in our view, a necessary corollary to the achievement of broad agreement on the acceptance of controls.

We are therefore very happy to support your proposal for a meeting of our representatives, together with those of other major supplier countries, to develop concrete proposals for advancing our common goal. Our officials will, of course, be in touch on the details.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,

Margaret.

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