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NOTE FOR THE RECORD

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR MCFARLANE:
STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE

The Prime Minister asked Mr McFarlane at their meeting today about progress with the SDI research programme. Mr McFarlane said that it was going very well. More work had been done on lasers powered by nuclear explosions. The Excalibur experiment had exceeded all expectations and appeared to offer a very promising solution for interception/destruction of offensive missiles in the boost phase. Work in the related area of mirror tracking systems was going well, although he personally was not convinced that this aspect of the SDI would prove practicable. He also commented that he rather regretted that strategic defence seemed likely to rely on a nuclear component. One of the most appealing aspects of the SDI was its claim to be leading towards a non-nuclear world.

C.D.P.

C D POWELL

28 September 1985

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