

FILE SH

PRIME MINISTER

cc: Mr. Ingham

East/West Relations

Cardinal Hume's office have asked me whether you would have any objection to the publication of the attached correspondence between yourself and the Cardinal. He wants to publish it, together with similar exchanges with the Americans, on 29 January which is apparently "Peace Sunday".

I see no objection to this and will so inform Cardinal Hume's office if you agree.

A. J. COLES

6 January, 1984

John: Re yw min. of
6 Jan.

Press office have asked
if Cardinal Humel
may release the
exchange of
correspondence?

Skete Andrew M. in P.O
PE
10/11 ✓ I have told the

Peter
10/11

Cardinal's office that the
Prime Minister has no
objection to his releasing
the correspondence on 29
January. A.F.C. 10/11.

CK 103? NT
GR?



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 December 1983

Dear Sir,

Type letter pl.

A.S.C 2/12.

Thank you for your letter of 1 December enclosing a copy of the letter of 29 November from Cardinal Hume to the Prime Minister. I enclose a draft reply, agreed by Ministers here (Mr Luce), and in the Ministry of Defence.

I am copying this to Richard Mottram (MOD).

[Handwritten signature]

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

THE PRIME MINISTER

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

The Archbishop of Westminster

A. C. My...

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Thank you very much for your letter of 29 November about the current state of East/West relations. ~~I was most interested to read your perspective on the present situation.~~

I welcome the fact that you accept the moral validity of deterrence for the time being and that the Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have noted the recent decision of NATO Governments to make a major cut in the number of United States warheads held in Europe. This decision, taken at the end of October, has not yet received sufficient public attention; it will reduce the number of US nuclear weapons in Europe to their lowest level for 20 years and is proof of NATO's determination not to hold more weapons than we need to support deterrence.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

You expressed concern at the technical modernisation of nuclear arms. I do not believe that modernisation programmes are taking place unchecked. These programmes are necessary if we are to maintain an effective deterrent. Our own programme to purchase the Trident

/system

system, for example, will be tailored to our need to maintain the minimum force level for a deterrent to be effective and credible at all times. Despite allegations to the contrary the number of warheads we shall deploy on our Trident missiles, for example, has not yet been decided. The modernisation of American strategic forces affects all three types of US strategic nuclear weapons, the land-based missiles, sea-based missiles and the strategic bombers, but there has been little or no modernisation of American forces for many years and over that period the threat posed to them, and to NATO as a whole, by Soviet strategic weapons has increased enormously. ^{nevertheless} But I ~~should~~ emphasise that our commitment to the search for balanced and verifiable arms control agreements remains as strong as ever.

I agree with your call for a reduction of hostility, friction and mistrust between nations. Given the nature of the Soviet system and its political aims the challenge which the Soviet Union makes to Western societies is likely to be with us for many years and it would be foolish to belittle the threat we face. But our aim is to strive to achieve a more constructive relationship with the Soviet Union, taking account of the wide difference of views on many important questions. We are ready to pursue, in the right circumstances, a sensible dialogue with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. In that spirit I shall be visiting Hungary ^{early next year.} ~~in the New Year.~~

File
Archbishop of

WESTMINSTER

Arms Control

7/12

DSC

1 December 1983

Reminded FC0 - it's coming shortly.
8/12

ARMS CONTROL

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from the Archbishop of Westminster. I should be grateful if you would let me have a draft reply by Wednesday 7 December.

I am sending a copy of this letter and its enclosure to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

A. J. COLES

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

ML