



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

14 March, 1984

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 2 March.

Mrs. Thatcher has asked me to explain that as a matter of principle she prefers not to supply third parties with the names and addresses of people who write to her, unless she is able to obtain their prior consent. In the case of the letters you refer to from Soviet citizens, it is I am afraid impractical to seek such consent. Nonetheless, the Prime Minister thought that you and your fellow members of the Linlithgow Churches Peace Concern would be interested to know that she received approximately 40,000 printed slips from Soviet citizens. She has asked me to let you have the enclosed translation of the reply which she sent via the Soviet Embassy.

(David Barclay)

W. Ross, Esq.

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You and many of your Soviet fellow citizens have written to me about your wish for peace. We in Britain share completely your horror of war. That is why our first priority is to avoid the possibility of it ever happening.

I want to make one thing absolutely clear: NATO does not threaten you. It threatens no-one. It is a purely defensive alliance. Together with the other Heads of State and Governments of the NATO countries I declared in June 1982 that 'Our purpose is to prevent war, and while safeguarding democracy, to build the foundations of lasting peace. None of our weapons will ever be used except in response to attack'. I repeat: none of our weapons - nuclear or conventional - will ever be used except in response to attack.

The circular which you sent me asked us to stop the deployment of long-range intermediate missiles in Europe. Let me ask you to put yourself in our place. A year ago we were faced with over a thousand warheads on Soviet medium range missiles. How many did we have in Western Europe? None. That was a profoundly disturbing situation, and it explains why our deployments have begun. But I repeat that none of these missiles will ever be used if NATO is not attacked. Not only this; we have offered that all such weapons on both sides should be eliminated by agreement. Agreement cannot be reached without negotiations; and for the moment the Soviet side has walked away from the talks with the Americans. We want negotiations on nuclear disarmament to be resumed as soon as possible, and without preconditions. We are willing to put all our efforts into achieving the sort of reductions that will reduce East/West tensions and give both sides the security which they want, and to which they have a right.

So, I vote for peace too: let us build on this common wish for a safe and prosperous future.



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Mr. Berley

I should prefer the reply to say that we do not, as a matter of principle, supply to third parties the details of people who write to the Prime Minister, except with their consent which we cannot obtain in this case. But he may be interested to see etc....

A.-J.-C. $\frac{13}{3}$.



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Mr Coles

We could in principle supply the names and addresses of those few to whom the PM wrote personally. But I am not sure that would be wise.

Agree I just sent a copy of the english text of the PM's reply, with a suitable covering letter saying that nearly all the slips were unsigned?

DMS
13/3

Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON.

CF

Russian 'Peace' Letters

Calwateg,
Friars Brae,
hinklithgow.

2nd March 1984.

Dear Mr^s Thatcher,

I read in today's paper that you recently received a large number of letters from Soviet citizens on the subject of Peace and that you replied personally to many of them

I wonder if you would supply me with the names and addresses of all those who wrote to you as members of the hinklithgow Churches Peace Concern would like to correspond with such people.

I do hope that you will be able to agree to this request.

Yours sincerely,

William Ross.

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