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United States Department of State

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June 16, 1986

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MEMORANDUM FOR VADM JOHN M. POINDEXTER
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: Draft Presidential Response to Gorbachev's
Statement on Nuclear Safety After Chernobyl

Per your request, the Department has prepared a detailed draft Presidential response to General Secretary Gorbachev's oral communication to the President on nuclear safety following Chernobyl. The Department of Energy, Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency concur with the Department in the attached response. The Department of Defense concurs in the draft response except for paragraph one at the top of page three.

DOD has stated its position as follows: "DOD has no objection to reaffirming in this letter what the President previously has said to Gorbachev on the issue of nuclear testing limitations. Indeed, DOD believes that it would be useful for the President to reiterate the statements contained in his March 1986 letter to Gorbachev, specifically that: (1) discussion of a CTB would not be productive under present circumstances, and therefore the U.S. cannot agree with Gorbachev's proposal to negotiate a CTB; and (2) the U.S. stands by its proposal for bilateral discussions between U.S. and Soviet experts on ways to achieve necessary verification improvements to the TTBT/PNET. DOD, however, nonconcurs with the paragraph referring to the comments made to Dobrynin. Those comments were based on an uncleared talking paper and easily could be misinterpreted to imply that the U.S. is prepared to change its policy and to discuss the Soviets' CTB agenda as well as our proposals for TTBT/PNET verification improvements."

The Department believes that the language in that paragraph should be retained. The President himself has used this formulation in describing the U.S. position to the Soviet leadership since his March 1986 letter. It is thus the most recent and authoritative statement of U.S. policy on nuclear testing.

Nicholas Platt
Nicholas Platt
Executive Secretary

Attachment
As stated.

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DECL: OADR

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