



*Dot
I would like
to discuss this with
[redacted] on Wednesday
next. Any until next?*

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London S.W.1

01-930-2323 [redacted]

6 November 1972

[redacted] MSc, PhD
Atomic Weapons Research Establishment
ALDERMASTON
Berks

[redacted]

PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

1. I attach a draft study on this subject, upon which I would be grateful for your comments, with a view to our issuing it as one of our regular series of ACDRU papers.
2. Like all such, it is simply a research study that does not purport to represent, or recommend, official policy. It has been designed both to meet the needs of departments concerned within the Foreign Office who have felt there to be a certain gap in their appreciation of the relationship between PNEs and arms control, and also to contribute to an eventual review of the whole issue of non-proliferation which we have in mind.
3. I am likewise seeking the comments of the Ministry of Defence and of [redacted] in the Cabinet Office, as well as of our Disarmament Delegation in Geneva.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted signature]

(Arms Control and Disarmament
Research Unit)

NB

Comments are desired by November 26 if possible.

[redacted]
9-11-72

Copied to [redacted]

D/91/08

UNITED KINGDOM ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY

ATOMIC WEAPONS RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT

ALDERMASTON,
BERKSHIRE.

TELEPHONE:

Ext. [REDACTED]

D/526/72

28th November, 1972

RESTRICTED

Dear [REDACTED]

PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

[REDACTED] will be sending some detailed comments on your draft position paper on Peaceful Nuclear Explosions but there are some general points which I would like to make. These deal with the later arguments in the paper relating to possible amendments to the Partial Test Ban Treaty etc.

I found the argument in the paper somewhat confusing and I believe it would make for greater clarity if the paper dealt with the position of fully contained applications separate from those which inevitably involve venting, e.g. surface excavation. As you will be aware, fully contained applications for gas stimulation or oil storage etc. promise to be the first to have real economic benefit and they would not conflict with PTBT aims to reduce atmospheric pollution. Some amendments to the PTBT might be needed to cover explosions outside nuclear weapon states but these might be easier to negotiate.

The use of PNEs for surface excavation in which venting of radioactive debris is an inevitable consequence presents a different picture and I note the points made in your paper relative to the pro and con of supporting amendments to existing treaties.

The overriding point to my mind is the need to give more thought at the right time (perhaps it is now) to the question of how PNE applications of both types should be controlled. Experience suggests that if the economic pressures become great enough, efforts to ban PNE altogether would be both wrong and unproductive. In many other spheres we have had to accept some disadvantages if the economic return is high enough. In such a case the practical objective should be to control what one cannot altogether prevent.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
DIRECTOR/AWRE

[REDACTED], Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
(Arms Control and Disarmament Research Unit),
London, SW1

[REDACTED] Cabinet Office