

*Commander Royal Navy Missile Submarine HMS Vanguard*

*Dear Commander*

*If you are reading this note you must by now be firmly convinced that the country you serve has been devastated by a massive nuclear attack,*

*Our green and pleasant land and with it all that we know and love must now be reduced to a radioactive cinder.*

*You may be thinking that since this terrible disaster has happened the theory behind our nuclear deterrent has been proved to be terribly wrong.*

*To some degree you would be correct in this conclusion.*

*However I would argue that there is a wider picture to see.*

*If this act of aggression is allowed to go unpunished the aggressor, like some playground bully will be encouraged to behave in the same way again.*

*Perhaps some other more defenceless nation will be the target next time, or just possibly, if we are able over the next few decades to recover and rebuild something of our country we will be seen as easy prey for some future attack decades from now.*

*My instructions to you are therefore that you should carry out a retaliatory strike using every weapon at your disposal to inflict the maximum possible damage on our aggressor. I want to be absolutely clear that I understand as well as you the effects of this action. I also want to be clear that this is not a choice I make lightly, but equally I want you to know that it is a choice which as Prime Minister is mine alone. You therefore have my authority to carry out the task which we all hoped that you would never have to complete. I will not interfere with your planning other than to urge you to use all your training and professionalism to carefully plan your attack to ensure that you maximise its effects.*

*There is no hurry, plan carefully and deliver the most devastating blow you are able to in your own time.*

*Good luck to you and your crew and may history forgive me for my decision.*

*Yours faithfully*

*Richard Drabble PM (probably deceased)*