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House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Peter Hain M.P.
Secretary of State for Wales
Welsh Office
Gwydyr House
Whitehall
LONDON SW1A 2ER

14 March 2007

Dear Peter,

It is with great regret that I am writing to tender my resignation as your Parliamentary Private Secretary.

We have discussed this extensively over the past few weeks, and as you know, I am unable to support the Government's proposals on the replacement of the Vanguard class Trident submarine.

I supported and put my name to the amendment tabled by Alan Whitehead, John Denham and Fiona Mactaggart. The amendment recognised the changing and uncertain nature of threats to global and British security in the post cold war world and supported sufficient steps to maintain the UK's minimum strategic nuclear deterrent beyond the life of the existing system. However, it also noted the recommendations of the Defence Select Committee and called for further consideration of the strategic case, costs, and design of the system be undertaken. It also called for further steps towards meeting the UK's disarmament responsibilities under Article VI of the non-proliferation treaty, and for the approval of the House be required before main contracts are laid.

I was disappointed that this amendment was not called and have supported the John Trickett amendment as a way of registering my concern.

This was not a decision I reached lightly. I am not a unilateralist, but I do hope that the world can work towards the reduction of nuclear weapons. I believe the Government's proposals on Trident, at this stage, would work against the long-term goal of reduction in nuclear capability. I could not therefore support the resolution.

I do this with regret. I have enjoyed being part of the Wales Office team with you and Nick, and I have consistently been a loyal member of this Government. I will continue to support the Government in implementing our Labour policies for the benefit of everyone in my constituency and beyond.

I remain a strong supporter of your deputy leadership campaign, and despite standing down as your PPS, I will continue to work to ensure that you are elected as the next deputy leader of our party.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Ruane', with a stylized, cursive script.

Chris Ruane



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Thank you for your letter. I am sorry that you have decided to resign from your position.

You have done a fantastic job as my Parliamentary Private Secretary over the past four years, and have shown tireless work and dedication.

You are an absolutely first class local MP, as I have seen firsthand on the many occasions I have visited your constituency.

Although I regret your decision to resign, I understand and respect it, and I welcome the measured way in which you have carried out your decision.

I know how difficult this decision was for you. You have never voted against the Government in ten years. Despite your decision to step down, I know that you will remain one of the most vocal and loyal supporters of this Labour government and the progress that we have achieved, both in your constituency and beyond.

Once again, thank you for all the unstinting hard work and dedication that you have shown during your time as my PPS.