

BOYD LINE LIMITED

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TWBJ/B

20th March 1980

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The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher,
MP., PC.,
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1.

Dear Prime Minister,

I should like to thank you most sincerely for so generously giving the Hull Fishing Industry representatives more than an hour of your time last Friday.

Your interest and genuine desire to understand the Industry's situation was most heartening.

I promised a follow-up letter on the content of our discussions.

1. The Hull Fishing Vessel Owners' Association Limited has been forced into liquidation, losing all of its assets, because of drastically restricted fishing opportunities. The UK's quota for Hull's freezer vessels was a mere 28 thousand tonnes of cod and haddock from 3rd country waters in 1979: 12½ thousand tonnes of cod and haddock in 1980.

By comparison we drew to your attention the nearly stable German Deep Sea fishing opportunities. In excess of 290 thousand tonnes for 1977 and 1978 (Annual Report, German MAFF, Mocklinghoff). In 1979 this fleet, as you know, has illegally taken in excess of 130 thousand tonnes of cod from Greenland waters alone.

UK Distant Water catches have fallen from 107 thousand tonnes in 1977, 43 thousand tonnes in 1978 to 24 thousand tonnes in 1979. In 1979 French trawlers illegally caught herrings in UK/EEC waters to the tune of 30 thousand tonnes!

The French have also "reserved" their entire negotiated catch at St. Pierre and Miquelon for themselves. The Dutch freezer vessels have no quantitative restriction at all in their mackerel fishing. In addition all our EEC competitors are maintaining their freezer fleet sizes in anticipation of the "carve up".

2. We knew you would wish to know the contribution to the EEC "funds" which the EEC is anticipating from the UK (under the currently tabled EEC Fishing Policy proposals). The UK's input is nearly 73% of the EEC's resource against a fishing "offer" of 23%.

MAFF estimates, based on the evidence of International Scientists, have calculated that EEC stocks, re-established by conservation, will yield 5.9 million tonnes a year.

At 1978 quayside prices (the most up-to-date MAFF statistics available), MAFF estimate this 5.9 million to be worth £577 million.

We mentioned that in 1978 the UK catch from the EEC pond and the Norwegian Sector of the North Sea was 904 thousand tonnes, valued at £230 million. We, therefore, consider that our contribution in 1980 to the EEC is most conservatively estimated at £500 million, such contribution increasing and ongoing.

3. To make matters worse in addition to the UK's enormous contribution to EEC fishery resources our imports (MAFF and Customs and Excise statistics) have increased from £82 million in 1977 : £122.5 million in 1978 : £157 million in 1979, and are currently running at an annual rate of £260 million. Much of this increased volume of imports has come from EEC vessels, been caught in the EEC pond in general and our sector in particular.

In order to emphasise our contribution I have taken the liberty of enclosing a small chartlet which shows the UK waters in red, Norwegian waters in green and the other members of the EEC's waters in blue.

The UK has no practical access to the Kattergat and Skaggerak. The EEC's share of these stocks being totally "reserved" for Denmark and Germany. Nor has the UK any practical interest in the waters south of Ushant, which the French and Spanish between them have fished out and which has nowhere near the potential of our own waters.

I would like to reiterate not only my personal thanks but also the tanks of the Hull Fishing Industry, for your genuine interest, concern and, hopefully, involvement in our Industry; these sentiments will be echoed throughout the entire United Kingdom Fishing Industry.

Yours most sincerely,

Thomas W. Boyde Junior

T. W. BOYD Junior
CHAIRMAN

Hull Freezer Trawler Owners
Company Limited.

