

PRIME MINISTER

This letter from Geoffrey Pattie provides some more information about our efforts to sell an air defence system to Qatar and the need to support these efforts with some form of Ministerial involvement.

It is not easy for us here to do much more about this. The most effective way for you to intervene would be for me to take the matter up with Mr. Pym's office; but Mr. Pym is unaware of Mr. Pattie's private line to you, and it would rapidly become clear to his office from any enquiries I made that we had been given some detailed information by someone in the know.

Moreover, I have established that Mr. Pattie has not done anything to pursue the Ambassador's complaint using the normal machinery eg by minuting Mr. Pym suggesting that a Minister should go out to Qatar. I do not know why he is neglecting the orthodox channels. This would in fact be the best way of sorting the matter out, and if you agree, I will suggest to Mr. Pattie that that is what he should now do.

The point about Rapier for Greece is covered in your briefing for your visit.

*Agreed if he
does. we can present
it
not*

JWW.

16 September 1980



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PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE FOR THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

12th September 1980

Dear Clive,

You may see my office with reference
to the 'charter house' phrase & my letter
to the Prime Minister.

As I indicated in the letter the country
in question is Qatar and the Qataris have just
agreed a price with Westlands for 4 Commandos
Helicopters. The major future opportunity concerns
provision of an 'integrated air defence system'
including Rapier surface to air missiles plus Marconi
and Plessey bidding for radar and data handling
aspects. This scheme is estimated to be worth
over £200 million and it is this which our

Ambassador in Qatar was hoping would be supported
by UK Ministers, Defence or otherwise. I have
taken further soundings and this information is
sound.

I would be grateful if you could
mention to the Prime Minister that it would
be timely for her to raise the possible
acquisition of Rapier with the Greeks. They
are very interested and I have seen the Greek
Chief of Air Staff but input from the PM would
be excellent. My office can organise a brief
if required as I will be away next week.

Yours sincerely

James Pattie

From: Geoffrey Pattie, M.P.

Done. Spoke to Mr. Patten's
Secretary, who said
yes. He will
House of Commons,
LONDON, SW1A 0AA.



Clive ① would you ask
about the Qatar Point

not 4th September 1980

② have the F.O.

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Defence Sales Sept 80

take account of
receiving arrangements. The P.M. 2

He was 6 weeks
by N. Ward.
H.M.

Dear Margaret,

between is correct

Although it is not open to me to

make any comment about the content of your

flying display dinner speech, I can tell you from

my discussion with the chaps afterwards that

they received the speech enormously well.

You were so right when you said that

our defence exports were not enough, particularly

when our £1,200 million this year is compared with

the French of 2,604 million last year.

I thought you might like to see a

copy of a report prepared by Frank Cooper for

Michael Palliser which contains many telling

passages, none more so than paragraph 33 - it

calls for a positive strategy. The French give

their industries far more support Ministerially than

we do - it is interesting to note from the list
of Ministerial visits to the Middle East that there is
not a Defence Minister from Britain among them.

It is my belief that we Defence Ministers
should be giving a lead, as happened with Russia,
but my initiatives are squashed by the Foreign
Office. I met one of our Ambassadors to a
Middle East country at Farnborough who was
almost begging for support Ministerially to secure

£200 million - helicopters - and air defence contracts in
the face of French competition. Chertis - to visit
on request. Alternatively send for our man in Qatar - to ask
him directly.

It is all rather frustrating when one knows
that the opportunities are there - and that we can
seize them if we try hard enough.

Congratulations again on the speech.

Yours ever

John