

From: The Rt. Hon. Sir Ian Gilmour, Bt., M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Acad 25/11
~~213/85~~
MO 26/4

Your ref: MO 26/4E

20th November 1986

Mr Ginn.

Thank you for your letter.

I have been surprised by the way you have sought to deal with this matter, and you still have not answered any of my questions. I trust you will soon do so.

What you say about David Trefgarne's meeting with Richard Ottoway is flatly untrue.

Of course it is right that the MOD should talk to Trafford Boughton. What is not right is that it should have sought to do so behind my back and without answering any of the points that had been put.

You can hardly be surprised that Tony Buck, Richard Ottoway and myself were not reassured by the presentation. You showed every sign of not being reassured yourself. And your refusal to let me see the transcript, despite what you had earlier said, does not suggest you have great confidence in its contents. To take one small example of its unreliability: we were told that the U.S. army had sent back the Boughton equipments and this demonstrated their inferiority. The U.S. army have in fact retained all 21 Boughton equipments and paid for them in full.

The argument about commercial-in-coincidence is profoundly unconvincing, since I have already seen the proposals of other selected competitors.

The inquiry by an unnamed official of the Ministry of Defence, hearing only one side of the story has no evidential value whatever. Incidentally, I take it that you are referring to the "enquiry" conducted by Mr Julian Walker, himself a former member of MVEE. In any case General Mans, as you know, came to the opposite conclusion.

The dissembling and duplicity, to put it no higher or lower for the time being, that I have consistently encountered in this case unfortunately inhibit me from accepting "the veracity" of what I have been told. But "conspiracy" is your word not mine. "Scandal" on the other hand is a word I have used and unfortunately you have not yet given me any reason to cease doing so. It is just as clear to me now as it was before that there are only two proper courses of action: an independent enquiry or a new competition.

your ✓
/a

The Rt. Hon. George Younger M.P.,
Secretary of State,
Ministry of Defence.

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