

010

SECRET

14 ~~14~~ <sup>14</sup>  
2



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB  
Telephone 071-21 82111/3

MO 6/17/15D

11<sup>th</sup> September 1990

*Eric Rintin*  
COP 12/9

*Dear Charles*

I am writing to let you know of the Defence Secretary's plans to deploy three Royal Navy ATTACKER class patrol craft to the Cyprus Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs).

The deployment will be made, on a temporary basis, in the light of the increased terrorist threat to the SBAs from pro-Iraqi/Libyan terrorist groups, which has arisen as a result of the Gulf crisis. The SBAs have good defences to landward already, but the ability of the garrison to carry out sea patrols of the lengthy SBA coastline is limited. The ATTACKERS, which will be manned by RN crews and armed with machine guns, will provide a 24 hour sea patrol capability and act as a useful deterrent while the threat remains high. We are discussing with HM Customs and Excise whether additional Customs Officers could be deployed to SBAs so as to allow increased routine searching of vessels (for which only they and police have legal powers).

The vessels to be deployed are currently serving with University Royal Naval Units. There will be no significant penalties arising from their withdrawal from these duties, and they will return to the Universities when they are no longer required in Cyprus. The additional cost for a six month deployment is estimated at about £250K.

We are considering how to make this public, perhaps grouping up with announcements on further deployments to the Gulf area itself.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Gozney (FCO), John Gieve (HM Treasury), Colin Neilson (Energy), Juliet Wheldon (Attorney-General's Office), and to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

*Eric Rintin*  
*Eric Webb*

(S WEBB)  
Private Secretary

Charles Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

SECRET