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From: A R M JAFFRAY CB., Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Navy)

Ref: D/NLC/1/9/78/1 —

Commander in Chief Fleet
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8 December 1982

Sir

BOARD OF INQUIRY - REPORT INTO THE LOSS OF HMS SHEFFIELD

Reference: 520/237L dated 13 September 1982

1. I am commanded by the Admiralty Board of the Defence Council to inform you that they have taken note of your report and the Board of Inquiry proceedings forwarded under the reference.
2. The Admiralty Board made the following observations:-
 - a. The up-dating and enhancement of the Type 42 weapon fit including the fitting of a close-in weapon system, is being urgently studied. Progress will depend in part on the availability of dockyard capacity, the requirements for which are being reassessed in the light of changes in the Surface Fleet since Cmnd 8288 was published.
 - b. Action is also in hand to remedy other equipment deficiencies reported.
 - c. The factors that contributed to the rapid spread of black toxic smoke have been examined, taking account of the report of a special team from the Marine Technology Board. It has been concluded that in this particular incident the contribution from inflammable cabling, linings and furnishings was not critical having regard to the major effects of the missile break-up and the rupturing of the Dieso fuel tank. Nevertheless it is agreed

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that the questions of habitability and damage control need closer investigation. These and other important lessons are now being incorporated in the latest design work on the Type 23 frigate. So far as possible remedial action will also be taken in existing ships and ships building. When assessing the priorities for expenditure, however, a balance may have to be struck between measures designed to improve survivability in the event of a hit and measures designed to prevent a hit in the first place.

d. Following trials of AEW-fitted helicopters in HMS ILLUSTRIOUS, plans are being developed to provide a capability with converted Sea Kings for each operational CVS.

e. The importance of matching Commanding Officers and Executive Officers to appointments relevant to their experience is fully agreed, and measures to achieve this are being examined.

3. Your Report and the Proceedings have been taken into account in the "Lessons Learned" studies in the Navy Department. The detailed lessons in your Report and the Proceedings are being followed up by the staffs responsible. The Admiralty Board may wish to make further observations when all the lessons from Operation CORPORATE and in the Reports and Boards of Inquiry into the other ship losses have been fully examined.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant

