



Borough of Sunderland

Geoffrey Key
Chief Executive

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Our Ref: GPK/NH
Your Ref:

Extension: 2002
Date 16th May 1988

DPS

Dear Prime Minister,

Shipbuilding on Wearside

I have today sent the attached letter, by facsimile transmission, to the Minister for Industry.

Yours sincerely,

G. P. Key

Dictated by G P Key
- signed in his absence

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP,
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA



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Dear Minister,

Shipbuilding on Wearside

Further to my letter of 3rd May to the Prime Minister, copied to you, I am sure you will understand that my Council's anxiety for the future of Sunderland's shipyards is growing as resolution of the "Danish dispute" appears to be no nearer.

Irrespective of the outcome of the specific matters involved, the forthcoming Parliamentary debate provides an opportunity which we urge you to take to defend publicly the reputation of the Borough's workforce, so damaged by the Danish allegations.

Mrs Thatcher herself commended the quality of work on the "Stena" series when visiting Sunderland. Unless you have evidence to the contrary in relation to the Danish Ferries, it would be both timely and greatly supportive to reinforce the Prime Minister's comments.

Could I also ask that before any irrevocable decisions are taken or announcements made, this Council is given the opportunity, together with representatives of the local shipyard workforce, to present to you the case for and the means whereby an appropriate volume of merchant shipbuilding capacity could and should be retained on Wearside.

You did, I believe, offer further discussions on the crisis during your recent visit to Sunderland. I think we have some constructive proposals meriting your consideration. The Council is motivated by a genuine belief that the nation's interests are best served by the continuation of shipbuilding on Wearside. It

Kenneth Clarke MP
Minister for Trade and Industry
Victoria Street
London SW1

obviously also fears the consequences of job losses on the scale implied by closure.

I would be grateful if you could let me know when we may meet you.

Yours sincerely,

G. P. Key

Dictated by G P Key
and signed in his absence

c.c. The Prime Minister
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry