

From: REAR ADMIRAL R. M. BERGOYNE, MBIM, MNI

LETTERS FROM U.K.
TO BE ADDRESSED -
HMS SAKER
BFPO 2

CONFIDENTIAL
UK EYES A

62/1/6
9 (20)

COMMANDER BRITISH NAVY STAFF

and

BRITISH NAVAL ATTACHE, WASHINGTON

Post Office Box 4855
WASHINGTON, DC 20008

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28/10/12G

VCNS DLT

ACNS (OR)
ACNS (O)
ACNS (P)
SEC ISL
DN Plans *

BNS 110/10

* Dillane is requested to draft a reply for VCNS, covering the questions asked on Britain on page 4, by 20 Dec 79.

VCNS CIRC

CGRM
DNOR
DNOT
DNW
DNAW
Sec VCNS

Admiral Sir Anthony Morton, KCB
Vice Chief of the Naval Staff

10 December 1979

Dear Admiral Morton,

I have begun this "letter from America" four times in the last month. Each time I had hoped that a stage had been reached in the Iranian situation at which it would be possible to make some balanced judgement upon the United States' future intentions. However, each time a new convulsion in Tehran changed the setting. Whilst I do not believe that the future is much clearer today, I do believe that there are one or two things worth saying now and others that cannot wait. The reporting in the Times and the Economist has been fair and accurate and so I will confine myself to what I believe should be underlined.

PUBLIC OPINION

The Ayatolla Khomeini has united the American people as they have not been united since Pearl Harbor. Even students are demonstrating in support of the Administration. The country has been described as mentally prepared for "war" and Congress has, for a change, fully supported President Carter. The Shah will not be returned to Iran and the Administration, with full public support, has succeeded in keeping the seizure of their Embassy as the central and paramount issue.

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DIEGO GARCIA

There is frequent mention of the importance of Diego Garcia. This is not only in the context of the use being made of the island in the current crisis but also, as forecast by Admiral Long, its development as a viable forward base for the future. I understand that the State Department have agreed that all this should be kept "low key" at the request of the FCO. I am sure that there are good British reasons for this but I am personally sad that we are not able to show fulsome support for this example of the US stand against aggression. I believe that a delegation from the Senate Armed Forces Committee led by Senator Sam Nunn plans to visit the Persian Gulf in January to assess the need for additional US military facilities in the area, including Diego Garcia.

FY 80 DEFENSE BUDGET

The Congressional Conference has now completed its work and the final "Authorisation Bill" is expected to reach the President for signature before Christmas. Whilst nothing is certain until then, I expect monies will be provided this year for:

- a. A fourth Nimitz (90,000 ton CVN).
- b. Two Los Angeles Class SSN attack submarines instead of one.
- c. Full development of Pershing II.
- d. Keeping Mk 48 torpedo production line open by funding 121 more.
- e. 30 F14 fighters for the Navy instead of 24.
- f. Development of a small aircraft carrier. A hopeful sign for VSTOL development.

I will report further on the FY 80 Budget implications and on the Budget plans for FY 81-85 as soon as more details become available.

So much for what I believe to be true and for what effect I believe the Iranian crisis has had on current affairs here. For the future, I am in little doubt that "Iran" will have

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DECISIONS AND PRECEDENTS MUST BE KEPT

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UK EYES A

OK



D.R. Plans 21/9/13

Secretary, VCNS

Copy to:- Secretary, First Sea Lord
Secretary, ACNS(P)
Secretary, ACNS(O)
Secretary, ACNS(OR)

CBNS Washington December 1979 Letter from
America

Ref. CBNS(W) BNS 110/10 of 10th December

The attached draft reply is forwarded answering the two questions on the introduction of a successor system to Polaris in the Reference.

Director of Naval Plans
21st December 1979

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UK EYES A

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DRAFT

UK EYES A

CBNS Washington

Thank you for your Christmas "letter from America".
I am not surprised that the dominant theme is over the events in Iran.

2. In dealing with your understandable anxiety to have sound advice on several aspects of the much-debated replacement for the BNBMS, I have to admit that I cannot yet offer you any clear guidance. We ourselves do not yet know what the government will decide and in these circumstances we are not ready for any detailed discussion of the subject with anybody. Indeed, too much speculation about the future could be misleading to our friends. We have of course thought long and deeply about the possible implications of a decision to go ahead. In particular, we think we know how we would manage the programme - by following the successful example set by CPE when Polaris was introduced. But when it comes to the funding arrangements and the consequential effects on other parts of the defence programme, nothing has been decided and you should refuse to be drawn on the subject beyond pointing to the Government's assurances on meeting the NATO requirement for annual growth.

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UK EYES A