



# Alasdair Morgan

*Member of Parliament for  
Galloway & Upper Nithsdale*

Mr John Ainslie  
Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament  
15 Barrland Street  
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23 December 1997  
Our Ref.: MGF/AM

Dear Mr Ainslie

Further to my letter of 2<sup>nd</sup> December I have now received a reply from Dr Reid at the MOD regarding nuclear accidents at sea. I enclose a copy for your information.

As you can see Dr Reid intends to withhold the information which I asked for – so much for open government.

I will bring this matter up once again as opportunities present themselves. Meantime if you would like to comment on the reply from Dr Reid, or if you feel that I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to get back in touch.

With best wishes for the festive season.

Yours sincerely

Alasdair Morgan

Enc.



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MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
THE ARMED FORCES

received - 19/12/97

D/MIN(AF)/JR/3/5/5

11<sup>th</sup> December 1997

Dear Alasdair,

Thank you for your letter of 2 December 1997 in response to mine of 31 October 1997 concerning Exercise **SHORT SERMON 97**.

You asked for a copy of submarine contingency plans in the event of a reactor accident. These are made up of a number of technical and procedural orders for relevant sections of the submarine's crew, including propulsion and communication. Given the nature of the subjects these orders cover, you will understand that they are classified documents. I am, therefore, withholding them under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

You went on to suggest that the principles behind Public Information on Radiological Emergencies Regulations (PIRER) should apply to nuclear submarines at sea. The guidance to the PIRER makes it clear that, whilst the regulations apply, in principle, to transport activities, they would in practice take effect only if an accident were reasonably foreseeable and an area were identified within which the public were liable to be affected. I made the point in my last letter that the length of time that submarines at sea spend in proximity to particular land areas is extremely small. We are satisfied, therefore, that the PIRER are not applicable to this situation.

I am aware that the Health and Safety Executive are preparing new regulations to replace PIRER in response to the revision of an EU directive. The subject of transport is being readdressed and my officials are involved in the discussions. In common with all such regulations, our policy is and will be to comply with them in all respects.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Kind regards

John

DR JOHN REID MP

Alasdair Morgan MP

