



**From: A G Moore Assistant Director Nuclear Accident Response**  
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To: Mr Chestnut  
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Your reference

Date  
15 Jan 98

Dear Mr Chestnut

I am in receipt of your facsimile letter dated 6 January, and I note that you have seen a copy of my letter to Mr Kevin Owen.

In that letter I said that, in the particular and simulated circumstances of Exercise SHORT SERMON, the decision to sink the submarine was considered to be the one that offered maximum public protection. This does not mean that this course of action would always be recommended.

A limited amount of further work was done within the timescale of exercise SHORT SERMON to investigate the steps necessary to stabilise the submarine. No significant difficulties were anticipated in achieving this.

I am not sure that I follow completely your "scenario" or quite what you intend in your "report", but I hope my comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely  
AG Moore

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19 January 1998

A G Moore  
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Sir,,

I have undertaken to do some research work with a particular interest in submarine reactor safety.

A final report will be sent to Eleanor Steele, Emergency Planning Officer at Argyll & Bute council as well as other councils with an interest in this area.

I recently received a copy of a letter sent to a colleague, Mr Kevin Owen, in which you state, in relation to Exercise SHORT SERMON, that "sinking the submarine was the course that offered the best protection of the public." This is confirmed in a letter from the HSE in relation to that solution for both Devonport and Faslane.

I believe that given the circumstances we are all agreed that this is the best option on offer. What I need to know is whether the scenario that I propose to use in my report holds water. Both your reply and the response from the HSE suggest this might be the case.

The scenario is as follows;

As part of the modernisation of HM NAVAL BASE FASLANE berth 6 was dredged to a depth over 10 metres. This was partly to facilitate the berthing of HMS VANGUARD late 1992. I believe that in the remote event of a submarine reactor accident sinking the vessel seems to be the most practical short term solution. However, that is only short term and the vessel would have to be sealed. This could not happen in open water. A 'trench' alongside a berth would give a platform from which to build a coffer dam around the sunken vessel, giving a more long term solution, including monitoring.

I would like to include that scenario in my report. Would that sort of approach be likely to be included in any plan? Any help you could offer would be very much appreciated

Yours sincerely,  
J Chestnut  
*J Chestnut*

Your name goes here