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PRIME MINISTER

cc Mr Coles

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ALP  
7/2

BRITISH ATLANTIC COMMITTEE

The BAC are re-issuing their brochure and have requested a message from you. You contributed (copy attached) to their existing brochure.

Agree the attached?

*IK*

IAN KYDD

7 July 1983



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

I am delighted to let you know of my continuing support for the work of the British Atlantic Committee.

NATO remains the cornerstone of British defence policy. The British Atlantic Committee has a vital role to play in furthering public understanding of the work of NATO, of the substantial British contribution to the Alliance and of the Government's support for fair and balanced measures of arms control and disarmament.

From: Mr J K Ledlie, Head of Defence Secretariat 19



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

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D/DS19/1/57

Ian Kydd Esq  
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6 July 1983

Dear Kydd,

BRITISH ATLANTIC COMMITTEE

1. Your letter of 21 June to Neville Taylor has been passed to me for reply. I suggest that the Prime Minister might send the BAC a message of the following kind (the text has been agreed with the FCO)

"I am delighted to let you know of my continuing support for the work of the British Atlantic Committee. NATO remains the cornerstone of British defence policy; and the British Atlantic Committee has a vital role to play in furthering public understanding of the work of NATO, of the substantial British contribution to the Alliance and of the Government's support for fair and balanced measures of arms control and disarmament".

2. I am sending a copy of this letter to Colin Imrie, Defence Dept, FCO.

*Yours sincerely,*

*John Ledlie*

BAC exists to promote knowledge and understanding of the North Atlantic Alliance and the central role that the Alliance plays in ensuring the security and the democratic freedom of the United Kingdom.

BAC is an advocate of increasing interdependence within the Alliance, of the twin goals of defence and détente, and of the maintenance of peace between East and West.

BAC was formed in 1952, when similar organisations were set up in each of the member countries of the Alliance, together constituting the Atlantic Treaty Association.

Associated with BAC and with representatives on its Council or Sub-Committees are such organisations as:

The Association of Headmasters  
The Headmasters' Conference  
The Directorates of Education of the Armed Services  
The English-Speaking Union  
The Confederation of British Industry  
The Institute of Directors  
The Trades Union Congress  
The European-Atlantic Group  
The Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies

BAC is a non-governmental body and a Registered Charity, on the Central Register of Charities.

BAC provides speakers and information and arranges seminars and conferences on security, arms control and disarmament issues, for Schools, Colleges, Clubs, Constituency Associations, Round Tables and similar bodies.

BAC's youth wing, British Atlantic Youth (BAY) maintains links with Universities and other educational institutions and with Youth Groups, organising talks, seminars and conferences both in the United Kingdom and in other Alliance countries.

BAC and BAY each produce publications. A BAC News Letter is sent to members and others; information on security matters and on NATO is circulated; essay competitions are arranged and visits of specialised groups to NATO political and military headquarters and installations are organised. Information and assistance is regularly provided to the media.

Contacts are kept with other groups working to support and enhance Atlantic links, with many national societies whose purpose is to promote relations between the United Kingdom and Alliance countries, and with sister Committees in the Atlantic Treaty Association.

BAC has received the following messages:

### **From the Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP**

The Prime Minister — *"I welcome this opportunity of sending my support and encouragement to the British Atlantic Committee. The North Atlantic Alliance is one of the great success stories of the last 30 years. It remains essential to the liberty and prosperity of the free world. But the Alliance's effectiveness depends on the will of its members to pursue their twin goals of defence and détente. The work of the British Atlantic Committee is of crucial importance in ensuring that the men and women in our democratic societies understand and support these goals."*

### **From the Rt Hon Denis Healey CH MBE MP**

Opposition Spokesman for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs — *"I am glad to send my support for the work of the British Atlantic Committee. The North Atlantic Alliance is the cornerstone of British defence and foreign policy; and it is important that there should be the widest possible understanding of the contribution which NATO makes to peace in the world. It guarantees Western security and it is through its strength that we can join in negotiations to relax tension between East and West."*

### **From the Rt Hon David Steel MP**

Leader of the Liberal Party — *"I am glad to commend the continuing work of the British Atlantic Committee. It is perhaps even more important at a time of economic restraints on our own defence budget that full encouragement be given to those who wish to develop and debate the value of the NATO alliance."*

### **From the Rt Hon Dr David Owen MP**

Former Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs and one of the founding members of the S.D.P. — *"As Europe develops through the European Community its own political personality, there are siren voices calling for a purely European defence identity and questioning the Atlantic link. Isolationist arguments in the United States are also present. It is vital now to reassert the undoubted strength of NATO and the absolute necessity of linking the US, Canada and Europe structurally and politically into a common defence strategy."*