

THE GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY LIMITED

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24th November, 1980

Dear Prime Minister,

When we last met, I mentioned the importance of the Sting Ray programme, which is three months ahead of schedule. The cost is below budget, and the trials have gone extremely well. The design of the "acceptance" weapons to be supplied to the Royal Navy was released for manufacture in September. The U.K. has now begun to build a generation of underwater guided weapons capable of adapting their tactics to counter enemy reactions during an attack. No comparable weapon exists in the western world. Our next major effort must be to sell this weapon abroad, principally to the U.S.A.

It would be of immense value to our export efforts if you could find the time to visit our Portsmouth factory and see at first hand the weapon's capabilities. I believe you would find the technology of considerable interest,

and the 4,500 people employed there would be greatly encouraged.

Sting Ray is to be assembled at a new factory at Neston in the Wirral. The first production weapon is due to leave the factory at the end of April, 1981 and we are most anxious that this occasion should be marked with a formal opening, particularly in view of its major contribution to new employment in the area. Would you do us the honour of opening the factory on that occasion ?

We will of course be very happy to make any arrangements you wish and to provide any facilities, such as air transport, which would minimise the demands on your time.

*Yours sincerely,
Lord Weinstock*

Lord Weinstock

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,
10, Downing Street,
LONDON, S.W.1.