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The Chairman,
National Security Committee of Cabinet.
The Hon. J. Howard
Parliament House
Canberra ACT

Thursday, 28th June 2007

Dear Mr Howard,

Re Air Combat Capability Plan: your reply 25th February 2007
My response and specific questions 6th March 2007

As I have not had a reply to my letter of 6th Mar '07 this is a follow up request.

Your committee colleagues must surely wonder why it is that no such similar challenge or criticism arose to their major decisions to buy, for example, the Spanish warships announced last week, or the C-17s or the Wedgetails or the Abrams tank... in contrast to such severe, prolonged and precise technical criticism from highly qualified specialists of the proposal to acquire the F-35 , a short range battlefield interdiction aircraft, without either supercruise or full stealth, as our **tier one, air dominance and deep strike aircraft**; particularly when our regional neighbours are taking delivery of sophisticated Sukhoi, and supersonic cruise missiles. And the folly of letting the formidable F-111s go prematurely. (aggravated by the panic purchase of the F/A18-F)

Above all, that the Minister wont even read the significant submissions to JSCFADT, which contain such compelling logic. Defence are unable or unwilling to refute these submissions ...“ trust us” they say. They need reminding whose money it is they are spending and that the taxpayer is entitled to detailed justification effecting Australia's future security for decades ahead. This is the most far reaching decision.

This is another sincere request for you and your Committee to explore this thoroughly, and use your considerable personal goodwill with Washington to have the F-22 released to us. Since writing in January, both Japan and Israel have requested the US Government to supply them the F-22...decision pending.

An expeditious reply to this and my earlier letter would be appreciated.
Yours sincerely