

SECRET

has seen + written 'Poppycock!'



Prime Minister

8

KS.

Ans

8 1/2

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
01-233 3000

PRIME MINISTER

TPM
AFGHANISTAN: THE NEXT STEPS

In his minute of 1st February to you under the above heading, the Foreign & Commonwealth Secretary said that he was commissioning various studies and would make more detailed proposals for further action by ourselves when these studies were complete; and he added that his proposals would seem to be bound to cost money but that it would be possible to give only rough figures pending further discussion with our allies.

2. Some of the measures already taken in the agricultural field, including those by the Americans, may themselves involve expenditure for us. I need hardly stress, in the light of recent Cabinet discussions, the objections to adding to public expenditure in present circumstances; and I should have to ask that any new expenditure which may be proposed should be found from within the reduced programmes on which we have just agreed. I take it that no new proposals for action by ourselves in the Afghanistan context will be advanced in discussion with our allies before we have decided whether, and how, such costs could be met.

3. More widely, I wonder whether it would not be preferable to leave much more of the initiative on matters likely to make additional demands on our economy to our allies. All experience would seem to suggest that for us to take any

/sort of

SECRET



sort of lead in discussing proposals with other countries would involve an element of commitment on our part to incur a share - perhaps a disproportionate one - in the costs involved.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to the members of the OD Committee, to the Secretary of State for Energy, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "G.H." with a flourish underneath.

(G.H.)

6 February, 1980

-7 FEB 1960

11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

130

COMMUNICATIONS