

John Ledlie, MOD Deputy Chief of Public Relations, informs us that today's story by James Wellbeloved, M.P. (DT, page 18) about Britain's air defence is a mischievous article with some major mistakes, particularly regarding his suggestions that substantive decisions had been taken shortly before the Election about increasing the fighter strength of the RAF. These were not substantive, he says, but hollow.

MOD are therefore taking the following steps:-

1. Briefing has been sent to the Prime Minister, in case the issue arises in Questions this afternoon.
2. Alan Clark, M.P. has been briefed by Mr. Pattie, PUS, MOD, about the Department's views, as he proposes to write to the Daily Telegraph on his own initiative.
3. The Daily Telegraph defence correspondent will be given a briefing to set the record straight.
4. If the issue is not raised in Questions this afternoon, Mr. Pattie will seek to put the correct Departmental line.