

cc for information

Sir Derek Rayner o/r

Mr WHITMORE ✓

PA-  
ML

THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME: MOD BUILDING PROJECTS

1. Sir Derek Rayner is in Canada until the end of the month, but I am sure he will very much welcome the Secretary of State for Defence's minute to the Prime Minister of 20 March and, should the Prime Minister so wish, take a particular interest in it on her behalf.

2. I suggest that it would be helpful to import into the terms of reference two related thoughts, namely

- a. judging the capacity of the existing stock of buildings to meet HM Forces' requirements; and
- b. judging the need for particular new building projects.

3. This would free the study from the risk that it concentrates too much on building technicalities.

4. There is a wider question, namely whether the scrutiny should also include building projects other than those providing living accommodation. While the covering minute speaks only of the latter, the terms of reference are less specific; on enquiry at the working level, I find that the intention is to concentrate on mess and barrack accommodation, but to leave room for other types of building too. It might be worth clarifying this point.

5. The attached draft to Mr Norbury takes that point and also Mr Pym's reference to the review of the defence estate. In his minute of 23 November, Mr Pym simply noted that "my Ministers ..... are also leading studies aimed at improving economy in the defence estate, in movements, in our consumption of energy, and in our procurement processes". These studies had reached initial conclusions at the beginning of last month.

CP

C PRIESTLEY  
24 March 1980

Enc: Draft letter/minute to Mr Norbury

NOB.

Spoke to Mr (Norbury) & explained that his minute had missed the point and that I had, as he will have seen, done my own work to Mr Norbury. We agree that he should write to Mr Norbury, on Sir D. Rayner's behalf, making the above points.  
ML 25/3

DRAFT OF 24 MARCH 1980

B M Norbury Esq  
Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall SW1

cc John Wiggins Esq,  
HM Treasury  
David Edmonds Esq,  
DOE  
Geoffrey Green Esq,  
CSD  
David Wright, CO  
G B Spence Esq, CO  
Clive Priestley Esq, CO

THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME: MOD BUILDING PROJECTS

1. The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 20 March, proposing a study of Ministry of Defence building projects. The Prime Minister has asked me to say that she very much welcomes this study, in which she would like Sir Derek Rayner to take a particular interest, and to suggest that consideration should be given to adjusting the terms of reference proposed thus:

"To examine the need for and the standards, quality and cost of a sample of recent MOD building projects by reference to the capacity and state of the stock of existing buildings and to comparable local authority and private developments, with a view to securing economy in meeting the essential requirements for future buildings".

2. The Prime Minister was glad to be reminded of the studies of the defence estate, movements, energy consumption and procurement. She would be grateful if the Secretary of State would kindly arrange for her to be informed of the probable outcome of these.

3. I am copying this to John Wiggins (HM Treasury), David Edmonds (DOE), Geoffrey Green (CSD) and David Wright, Gerry Spence and Clive Priestley (Cabinet Office).



24 MAR 1980