



Prime Minister ⁽²⁾
Agree?

AT 6/11

PRIME MINISTER

STANSTED PLANNING INQUIRY

I really wonder whether
6 miles from the end of the runway
(and it's close to it now) - would really

^{oust} your duties as S of S. Would the A-G
We expect the Inspector to submit his report on the Stansted admin.
Inquiry this Spring - probably in May. The ultimate decision
is the joint responsibility of the Secretary of State for
the Environment and the Secretary of State for Transport.
ms

I have to declare a personal interest in the case - my home
is 6 miles from the end of the runway. There is no basis
on which I can formally transfer or delegate my statutory
responsibilities in relation to Stansted but I must clearly
distance myself from all the processes of reaching a decision.
I intend therefore to ask Ian Gow to oversee all the Departmental
aspects of the case, and, with your agreement, I would ask
him to represent the Department in discussions with Ministerial
colleagues (the case has all the importance that would call
for a discussion with Cabinet colleagues before reaching
a decision). In effect the DOE Ministerial decision would
then be taken by Ian, though promulgation of that decision
must be formally in the joint names of the two Secretaries
of State.

If you endorse what I propose, then it also appears advisable
that I should make the position known publicly, as far as
possible in advance of the Inspector's Report reaching my
Department. I would intend making an announcement in the
terms of the attached draft PQ and answer which has been
cleared with Sir Robert Armstrong and the Attorney General's
Office.

I would be grateful for your approval to this course of action.

I am copying this note and the enclosure to Nicholas Ridley,



Michael Havers and Robert Armstrong.

PS

P J

6 January 1984

CONQUEROR
LONDON



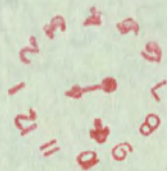
To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment what administrative arrangements have been made for reaching a decision on the proposals to develop a Third London Airport at Stansted.

My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Transport and I expect to receive copies of the Inspector's report in the Spring. However, because my home, where I and my family have lived for the past 4 years, is only 6 miles from Stansted I have concluded that it would be wrong for me to be personally involved in the matter. With the approval of the Prime Minister, therefore, I am making special arrangements for the handling of the case in my Department. The Minister for Housing and Construction will oversee all departmental aspects of the case, and will act for me in the decision-making process. Legally and constitutionally the decision will be mine and that of the Secretary of State for Transport. This statement is to make clear that I shall take no personal part in the processes leading up to the announcement of a decision.

LONDON



6 JAN 1984



COMMERCIAL

LONDON