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 C&O  
 cc Richard Herfield

PRIME MINISTERBRITISH NATIONAL SPACE CENTRE

1. As you know, I strongly support the creation of a British National Space Centre (BNSC) as a means of securing better co-ordination of UK space policy and bringing together the various strands of space technology research in the UK. I have accordingly agreed that, subject to security constraints (which are important in a number of areas of MOD space involvement), the space-related technical research activities of my Department should in future be carried out under the auspices of the BNSC and thus co-ordinated as closely as possible with the civil space programme. I am content with the way ahead proposed in the Minister of State for Information Technology's minute to you of 8th August, but with one qualification.

2. The appointment of Director-General in the new organisation will be a most exciting challenge. I strongly believe that we should employ head hunters to comb the high technology world of US industry for British citizens who might be prepared to come back for a job such as this. The opportunity is a unique one and I am not convinced that a few months delay at this stage



would be critical. I think it would be wrong to accept the home bred solution in this case without a thorough look at the whole field of possible candidates.

3. I am sending copies of this minute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Minister of State for Information Technology, Sir Robin Nicholson, and the First Civil Service Commissioner.

*(Approved by the Secretary of State)  
and signed in his absence*

Ministry of Defence  
14th August 1985