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Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon George Younger TD MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
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13 January 1986

*Dear George,***WESTLAND**

In our discussion of Westland this morning we focussed to a large extent on the government's precise position in relation to the NAD's recommendations and not on the underlying arguments for reaching this position.

I commented on these arguments in my minute to the Prime Minister of 17 December. However we have not ourselves had an opportunity to discuss this point before. I thought it worth writing therefore to emphasise that my concern throughout (which I mentioned briefly at Cabinet last Thursday) has been to ensure we do not put ourselves in a position where value for money is reduced because we restrict our ability to go out to international competitive tender when purchasing helicopters. This is an important reason why we have not accepted now or entered into a commitment to accept the NADs recommendation. I think it is essential that we are absolutely clear about the importance that competitive tendering plays in defence procurement and its significance in this case as in others.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Leon Brittan, John Wakeham, John Biffen, Michael Havers and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever,
JH

JOHN MacGREGOR

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