

Mr Wicks

R. A. Addin

~~Question~~ (~~wefted~~)

Ref. A086/2865

MR HEWES

Defence Committee Reports: Question and Answer Briefing

I am responding to Mrs Brown's minute of 10 October about the reply to question C4 in the question and answer briefing.

2. Her minute has prompted me to look again at all the questions listed in Section C of the briefing. I recognise that questions C1, C2, C3 and C4 are all questions which may be raised, following the Defence Committee's Report and the Government's Response. But answering any of them substantively would be inconsistent with the Government's decision in paragraph 28 of the Response, that it stands by the accounts already given, and sees no reason to qualify or add to them.

3. If any of these questions C1, C2, C3 or C4 - or indeed any other questions which invite additions or qualifications to the accounts already given - are put to press spokesmen this afternoon, they should say that the Government has nothing to add to the Response that has just been published and to the full accounts already given by Ministers in statements in Parliament, speeches and debates and answers to Parliamentary Questions, and by the Head of the Home Civil Service in his evidence to the Defence Committee.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to Mr Wicks and Mr Ingham (10 Downing Street), Sir Clive Whitmore, Sir Brian Hayes and Mr Michael Saunders (Law Officers' Department).

RTA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

13 October 1986