

MR WICKS

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

NIMROD/AWACS

Cecil Parkinson rang me today to say that he has a very big constituency interest in the outcome of the issue.

"What I am trying to do is to make sure - as I am sure they will in any case - that Cabinet considers all the angles" he said. "I shall not give them (the media) any headlines about rebellion etc, hard though they are trying to get me to do so."

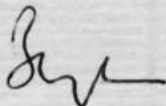
He said he had not discussed his Early Day Motion with anyone else, or canvassed support for it.

I noted that it contained the words: "acknowledges the paramount need of acceptability by the Royal Air Force and all the forces who use it".

I said I would be relying on that sentence. He said that of course the RAF must always have the best and he was telling people in interviews:

"We are not buying a toy. We are buying a central part of our airborne defence system and it goes without saying it must work".

Mr Parkinson said he did not have much time for Lord Weinstock or the way Jim Prior was playing it. But he did think GEC had done well in their handling of the project this year.



BERNARD INGHAM

15 December 1986