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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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18 April 1989

Dear Andrew,

GLOBAL CLIMATE

My Secretary of State is unable to attend the Prime Minister's meeting on 19th April to discuss Mr Fairclough's papers on the Global Climate: Research Priorities and Co-ordination and on UK Participation in the ERS-2 Programme. He notes, however, that Mr Fairclough invites Ministers to consider whether, if the UK is to participate in the project, the costs should be borne by DTI or shared between departments.

My Secretary of State believes that it would not be appropriate for the MOD to participate in funding this project. The Meteorological Office's existing budget could not contribute without severe damage to its basic tasks. We already have difficulty funding the UK's subscription to the European Meteorological Satellite Programme which is an operational meteorological satellite system essential for weather forecasting. This programme deserves much higher priority, even in terms of climate research, than ERS-2.

Nor do we consider that it would be appropriate for the wider defence budget to contribute to the project, since there is no defence policy interest in it.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, the Secretary of State for the Environment and to Sir Robin Butler and Mr John Fairclough.

Yours sincerely

John Colston

(J P COLSTON)
Private Secretary

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