



Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
1-19 VICTORIA STREET  
LONDON SW1H 0ET  
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GTN 215  
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20 January 1986

The Rt Hon John Morris QC MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

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to see  
file

Dear John,

You wrote to me on 16 January about the manuscript notes on which my Private Secretary's record of my meeting with Sir Raymond Lygo on 8 January were based. I have now consulted Ministerial colleagues.

It has been the practice never to make public the manuscript notes which lie behind minutes and records of such meetings, and the Government do not intend to depart from that practice.

Let me repeat that the record which my Private Secretary circulated is agreed not just by me but by Geoffrey Pattie and the two senior officials present to be a faithful record of what passed. And you will no doubt have seen from my exchange of letters with Sir Raymond Lygo on 17 January that the controversy that has arisen is now accepted by both of us to be due to a misunderstanding that has been cleared up to our mutual satisfaction.

Yours,  
Leon Brittan

LEON BRITTAN

cc  
Mr C Powell  
Mr M. Stark



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Discussed changes  
with RTH + told  
Hayes office

MW  
.7.1

70 WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AS

01-233 8319

From the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service

Sir Robert Armstrong GCB CVO

Ref. A086/174

17 January 1986

Dear Sir Brian,

We spoke about a reply to the letter which your Secretary of State has received from Mr John Morris.

As I told you, I had an opportunity of discussing this with the Prime Minister who was unambiguously clear that John Mogg's manuscript notes should not be made available. Apart from the general unsuitability of making such notes available, to do so in this case would simply fuel the argument about this particular meeting, at a time when there is some hope of it dying down. Nor do I think that it would be particularly helpful to the Secretary of State's argument to make the notes publicly available: they would be subject to close analysis for any signs of minor discrepancies, each of which would give rise to a new argument.

--- I promised to suggest a draft reply to Mr Morris. I attach a suggested draft herewith.

I am sending copies of this letter and the draft to Nigel Wicks and John Mogg.

Yours sincerely,  
Michael Stank  
for Sir Robert Armstrong

Sir Brian Hayes KCB

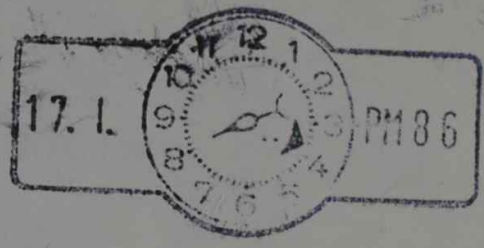
DRAFT LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE  
AND INDUSTRY TO THE RT HON JOHN MORRIS QC MP, HOUSE  
OF COMMONS

You wrote to me on 16 January about the manuscript notes on which my Private Secretary's record of my meeting with Sir Raymond Lygo on 8 January was based. I have now consulted Ministerial colleagues.

It has been the practice never to make public the manuscript notes which lie behind minutes and records of such meetings, and I do not intend to depart from that practice in this instance. It would be quite unfair to all concerned - participants as well as officials who record meetings - to do so. Officials are expected and can, as you know, be trusted to produce accurate and faithful records of meetings. The exact means they employ to do so vary from one to another. Notes made during meetings are not verbatim transcripts or shorthand notes; they are rough and often sketchy notes, often made in considerable haste if it is a fast-moving discussion, to serve as aids to the memory of the official when he comes to dictate or write the full record or minute.

Memory is just as important as the contemporaneous written notes when it comes to making the full record. It would be unreasonable to expect a perfect fit between the contemporaneous notes and the final record, and it would be misleading to assume that the contemporaneous notes are necessarily a complete and comprehensive account of what passed.

As far as that goes my Private Secretary's record of this particular meeting is perfectly consistent with his contemporaneous notes. <sup>but we repeat</sup> But the important point is that the record which my Private Secretary circulated is agreed not just by me but by Geoffrey Pattie and the two senior officials present to be a faithful record of what passed. And you will no doubt have seen from my exchange of letters with Sir Raymond Lygo today that the controversy that has arisen is now accepted by both of us to be due to a misunderstanding that has been cleared up to our mutual satisfaction.



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16 January 1986

Rt Hon John Morris QC MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

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~~NW~~ to all

EXP 16/1

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Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of this morning, following last night's debate on Westland plc.

In answer to your first point, I did not see the minute before it was finalised but it was read to me over the telephone.

In answer to your second point, the meeting concluded at 17.40 on 8 January, the note was dictated on 9 January, and signed, dated, and circulated about lunchtime on 10 January, following confirmation by all those present from the Department that it was an accurate record.

With regard to your subsidiary point I will reply when I have considered the matter with my ministerial colleagues.

*Handwritten signature of Leon Brittan*

LEON BRITTAN

cc:  
Mr C Powell, PS/Prime Minister  
Mr M Stark, PS/Sir Robert Armstrong





Ref. A086/165

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

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Mr John Morris MP has sent a letter to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry asking for information on various points concerning the Lygo meeting: and in particular has requested the release of the manuscript notes taken at the time by his Private Secretary. I understand that, in consultation with No 10, it is intended to respond to the letter immediately. I was asked to provide a draft on the last point. I have offered the following:

"You ask that the manuscript notes taken during the meeting by my Private Secretary should also be released.

[ I do not think this would serve any useful purpose. The notes would add nothing to the record which has already been released, and which I, Geoffrey Pattie and the three civil servants who were present <sup>confirm is an</sup> believe to be a full and accurate record of the discussion." ]

MS

M C STARK

16 January 1986

Mr Powell

I understand that SS/TI wd. prefer to say "that is not a decision for me to take".