

PRIME MINISTER

Michael Heseltine's note (attached) asks for a co-ordinated approach to ensure that we get the maximum national advantage from a number of simultaneous developments in the high technology area viz SDI, Eureka, defence collaboration particularly the European Fighter Aircraft, and review of the Government's R & D. He wants to discuss it at OD on Friday.

I don't know what this means in practice. Obviously decisions in each area need to be taken in awareness of what is going on in the others. But an attempt to put all the decisions in a single framework is a recipe for delay, gigantism and more bureaucracy. Anyway a mechanism for keeping an over-view already exists in the Scientific Secretariat of the Cabinet Office and the person of the Chief Scientific Adviser.

Since he has circulated his minute to members of OD, you may want to let him raise his point briefly at the end. But you will want to avoid any commitment to further studies or new machinery.

C.D.P.

Agree to let him raise it if there is time?  
Yes — but this minute is nothing more than words  
no

(C.D. Powell)  
10 July, 1985