



M.L. SAUNDERS
LEGAL SECRETARY

LAW OFFICERS' DEPARTMENT
ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE
LONDON, WC2A 2LL

J F M Tesh Esq.
Private Secretary to Minister of State
for the Armed Forces
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1

5 June 1986

Dear John,

DEBATE OF MR DALYELL'S MOTION -
FRIDAY 6 JUNE

ATTACHED

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter to Tim Flesher of 4 June enclosing a copy of the draft of the notes from which your Minister proposes to speak in answer to Mr Dalyell's motion concerning the conduct of the Prime Minister.

I have seen a copy of Nigel Wicks's letter to you of 4 June in which he suggests that as far as Westlands is concerned it would be best to avoid a paraphrase of the Prime Minister's speech in the debate on 27 January. In so far as the Solicitor General is concerned, I entirely agree with that approach. Should your Minister decide, however, to speak on the lines attached to your letter, may I suggest the following re-draft of the paragraph commencing "On 4 January" to ensure consistency with the Prime Minister's speech:

"On 4 January, the Prime Minister saw the correspondence of the previous day between the then Secretary of State for Defence and Mr Horne of Lloyds Merchant Bank. The letter from the Defence Secretary had not been cleared by the Department of Trade and Industry or by the Law Officers.

.../Mindful

- page two -

Mindful of the need for accuracy and consistency in the Government's statements on this subject, my Rt Hon Friend suggested that the Solicitor General be asked to give his opinion of the accuracy of the Defence Secretary's letter and its consistency with her letter to Sir J Cuckney. The Solicitor General on the basis of the evidence then available to him, formed the provisional opinion that the Defence Secretary's letter contained material inaccuracies which needed to be corrected. My Rt Hon Friend, through her office, asked the Solicitor General to consider writing to the Defence Secretary, to draw that opinion to his attention. After further consideration, the Solicitor General did indeed write to the then Secretary of State for Defence, on 6 January, advising him to write again to Mr Horne correcting the inaccuracies." (Suggested amendments underlined).

I am copying this letter to Nigel Wicks and to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours faithfully,
Richard Samuel

M L SAUNDERS

