

CR
I assume

22.15



Delivering
Thurs
pm

11 Ford = ?
11 February?

10 DOWNING STREET

CDP 3/2
Charles ☒ yes

arranged
to 1600
on 11 March.
CR 3/2

A message from J Howe (M.O.D.)

He would like to suggest
a meeting next week to
discuss Westlands (+ support
helicopters. The meeting should
be informal with: Mr Younger,
Mr Channon, the Chancellor, &
the chairman. L. Pres
his diary Secretary will
phone Tessa/Caroline in
due course.

45
mins

Sue
2-2-87.

CONFIDENTIAL

(2)

cc/c
on



Prime Minister

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1

Telephone 01-~~830 7022~~ 218 2111/3

Here we go

MO 22/8V

2nd February 1987

again! I have arranged
a meeting with Defence,
Treasury, DTI, and Responsible
Chairman.

Dear Charles,

CDP
2/2

ms

WESTLAND HELICOPTERS - ARTICLE IN THE "INDEPENDENT"

I attach a line to take on the article in today's "Independent" suggesting that Cabinet Ministers are considering a multi-million pound plan to save Westland from financial crisis. Although some of the points made in the article are factually based, the chronology is muddled and the conclusions drawn are inaccurate.

As I have already mentioned to your office over the telephone, my Secretary of State would find it helpful to have a preliminary informal discussion with the Prime Minister next week, if possible, on the results of the work carried out here on future defence requirements for support helicopters and their possible implications for Westland. He would hope to circulate a minute later this week together with a paper setting out the conclusions of this work, on which we are in close touch with the DTI.

I am copying this letter and the attachment to Alex Allan in the Treasury, Timothy Walker in DTI, Andrew Lansley in the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's office, and to Trevor Woolley in the Cabinet Office.

Yours sincerely,
John Howe

(J F HOWE)

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing Street

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LINE TO TAKE ON ARTICLE IN "INDEPENDENT", 2ND FEBRUARY 1987

- It is not the case that "Cabinet Ministers are considering a multi-million pound plan to save Westland from financial crisis".
- As is well known, the Ministry of Defence has been studying for some time the role of support helicopters in the land/air battle in the Central Region, and in other tasks, and how these might develop in future years. This work involves complex military considerations as well as needing to address procurement options and affordability. As has been planned for some time, the aim is to bring the work to a conclusion within the next few weeks. Westland have been kept in close touch with these studies and are fully aware of the timetable for decisions which also meets their requirements.
- The work is addressing a number of options involving different helicopter types including, amongst others, utility EH101, Black Hawk, and Lynx. The suggestion in the article that a rescue package is being considered by Ministers is not correct.
- An announcement will be made before Easter.