

Seems to not read
by P.M. No need
to look for later.



Prime Minister

486

MO 30/2E

REC
15/2

PRIME MINISTER

Only para. 5 of the letter has any major bearing on Mr. Clarke's planned statement ~~next week~~ this week; and even here Mr. Younger does not seem to quarrel with Mr. Clarke's conclusion that "we cannot commit ourselves to participation in the Columbus programme".

SPACE

REC 8/2

at flap
I have read the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's minute of 1st February with great interest. The policy judgement he has had to make is a difficult one. It is hard to fault his conclusions that there is little market-led demand for expanded space effort, that the running is being made by scientists and technologists (and, he might have added, the aerospace industry), and that a relatively small commitment now would draw us into ever larger commitments in the future. I particularly agree with his comments on HOTOL and I would only feel justified in pressing a different view if I could foresee a major expansion of our defence interest in space involving joint efforts by our two Departments and an increase in expenditure from my budget. But I cannot.

2. Space will remain important to our defence, probably increasingly so given the substantial co-operation we receive from the USA. But our interest is likely to be confined to selected fields, notably communications where the Skynet satellite programme is already in hand. The defence budget will continue to fund those programmes needed by the Armed Forces and the Chancellor of the Duchy's proposal to cut back support from public funds for communications projects should be seen in this context. I should be grateful for an advance sight of any public statement he may make to ensure that it conveys the right message about defence.

3. On specifics, I agree with his conclusions on Ariane V and HOTOL and can foresee no circumstances in which, as has sometimes been suggested, the defence budget could contribute to the latter. I also accept his conclusion on RADARSAT. I welcome his proposal to go ahead with the Earth Observation Data Centre, and would only add that



the Ministry of Defence is already a contributor to earth observation as well as a user, through the National Remote Sensing Centre at Farnborough.

4. As regards the national programme (paragraph 13 of his minute), I think it is premature to conclude firmly that the joint DTI-MOD R&D programme should concentrate primarily on earth observation and, exceptionally, communications. More consultation between our Departments and the BNSC is required on this.

5. I also think we need further consultation at official level about the COLUMBUS programme. The defence interest does not appear to be great, (though this assessment could change if interest develops in the Pentagon). Nor can I afford to make a financial contribution given other competing claims on the defence budget, not to mention the ceilings on defence R&D expenditure. But the Polar Orbiting Platform, which has been proposed as ESA's contribution to COLUMBUS, would be important for meteorology well into the next century and I think we need a little more discussion before finally closing the door on it; although I accept that that may be the eventual outcome.

6. I am sending copies of this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and to Mr Fairclough and Sir Robin Butler.

A.Y.

Ministry of Defence
8 February 1988



the Ministry of Defense is directly a commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State.

As regards the national defense (Paragraph 1 of the Law), it is the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State.

The Ministry of Defense is responsible for the defense of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State.

The Ministry of Defense is responsible for the defense of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State.

The Ministry of Defense is responsible for the defense of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State. It is also the Ministry of Defense that is responsible for the defense of the State.