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10 DOWNING STREET
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From the Private Secretary

12 June 1989

FUTURE REQUIREMENT FOR SUPPORT HELICOPTERS

Thank you for your letter of 7 June about the delay now foreseen in making a recommendation on the choice of a helicopter for the medium support role. The Prime Minister has noted this.

(C. D. POWELL)

John Colston, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

KK



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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Telephone 01-218 2111/3

MO 26/16/1E

7th June 1989

Ric Hunter

*I sense an atmosphere of
doom over this project.*

CB 576.

Dear Charles,

FUTURE REQUIREMENT FOR SUPPORT HELICOPTERS

minutes attached
At the conclusion of the OD meeting on 24th November last, the Defence Secretary was invited to submit a further report, with a recommendation on a choice of helicopter for the medium support role, by the end of 1989.

The Defence Secretary believes that OD colleagues will wish to be aware that it will be necessary to delay this recommendation by about three months. As a result of the project team's insistence on reaching a satisfactory prior agreement with the contractor (EH Industries) on the statement of work and a firm price for the contract, the beginning of the initial phase of project definition was necessarily delayed. Moreover EHI have made clear that they would wish to undertake a thorough appraisal, and that they could not complete this until the end of December 1989. Allowing time for assessment of the data on the various options, it is unlikely that my Secretary of State will be able to put the matter to OD colleagues until about the end of the first quarter of 1990. If the choice is not clear cut, even this may not be achievable. Mr Younger believes however that, given the importance of ensuring that the eventual decision is soundly based, this further short delay is acceptable.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries of OD members, and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

John Colston.

(J P COLSTON)
Private Secretary

Charles Powell Esq
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