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PS/

Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

31 December 1985

Charles Powell Esq
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

Dear Charles,

WESTLAND

Thank you for your letter of 30 December requesting a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to Sir John Cuckney.

... 2 The draft reply attached has been amended in the light of comments from the Ministry of Defence, who might be commenting further to you this afternoon. My Secretary of State has seen and approved it.

3 I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence), Richard Broadbent (Chief Secretary's Office), Len Appleyard (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Michael Stark (Cabinet Office). This is also being sent to Henry Steel (Legal Secretary) with a copy of your letter of yesterday.

Your sincerely,

C Bradley

CATHERINE BRADLEY
Private Secretary

Encl

JF2AQK

DRAFT REPLY FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO SEND TO:

Sir John Cuckney

Thank you for your letter of 30 December 1985.

It has naturally been the Government's concern that a British helicopter design, development and manufacturing capability should if possible be maintained, despite the present difficulties of your company. I understand that both the proposals Westland now have under consideration would achieve that objective. As long as Westland continues to carry on business in the UK, it will of course continue to be regarded as a British and therefore European company.

The Government is determined that Westland should play a full part in existing and future European collaborative projects, many of which are at present at a very early stage and all of which will of course require the agreement of the foreign Governments and companies concerned. But I can assure you that, whichever of the two proposals currently under consideration the company chooses to accept, the Government will not differ in its full support for Westland's efforts on behalf of Britain including supporting Westland's participation in European collaborative projects. The Government would resist strongly any attempt by others to discriminate against Westland.

JF2APS