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DEPARTMENT OF TRADE

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From the Secretary of State

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph MP
Secretary of State for Industry
Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street
London SW1E

30 June 1981

Dear Keith

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GOVERNMENT REPLY TO SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT ON CONCORDE

Norman Tebbit sent me a copy of his letter to you of 22 June, with which he enclosed a draft reply to the Select Committee report. While I am quite content with the text of the reply, which has been discussed with my officials, I do not think it would be appropriate for it to be presented to Parliament, as Norman suggests, by you and me jointly. As is explained in the commentary, the reply deliberately concentrates on the first of the two alternatives recommended by the Select Committee: the ways of reducing the costs of the project. It says hardly anything about the other suggestion - the cessation of Concorde services - which would have engaged my Departments responsibility as sponsor of British Airways. Because of this emphasis (with which I am perfectly happy) I think it would be better for the report to be issued in your name.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of Norman Tebbit's.

John Biffen

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JOHN BIFFEN

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