



SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

Rt Hon Francis Pym MC MP
Secretary of State for Foreign
and Commonwealth Relations
Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AL

Prime Minister (2) Incl Pd
ms 1/10
NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

1 October 1982

ms.

Francis Pym

I am approaching you on a matter which is of very real importance for employment in Northern Ireland, and which involves a large potential export order from Korea.

For the past year or so Short Brothers, the Belfast plane-makers, have been very actively involved in promoting the sale of a large number of their Skyvan multi-purpose STOL aircraft to the Republic of Korea Army. The Company have had a permanent representative based in Seoul for the last six to eight months who has worked very closely with our Embassy there in attempting to secure this contract. The initial phase of the contract would be for 30 complete aircraft, to be followed by an assembly programme under licence within Korea involving a further 120 aircraft.

The competition for this contract has been intense, the primary competitor to the Skyvan being the Spanish CASA 212 aircraft. Recently Shorts had been expecting a decision in its favour to be announced at any moment.

It came as a complete surprise, therefore, when on 22 September, Shorts were officially informed by the Ministry of National Defence in Korea that the Army requirement was being deferred indefinitely. It has been suggested that this may be due to pressure from the Canadian Government for a de Havilland aircraft to be allowed to enter the competition and that the whole programme has been deferred as a way of relieving that pressure.

The Shorts management understand that HM Ambassador at Seoul has made the strongest representations to the appropriate authorities about this sudden change of heart by the Koreans and is sending a brief to you on the situation.

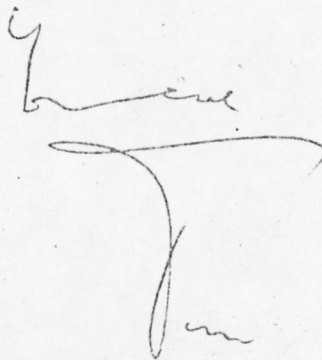
I understand /...

I understand that the Korean Foreign Minister is visiting the UK on 4 October and my purpose in writing to you now is to emphasise the importance of securing this vital order for Short Brothers and Northern Ireland, and ask you to use all your good offices to see what pressure can be brought to bear by HMG to persuade the Korean Government to proceed with the procurement of this British aircraft without further delay.

Short Brothers tell me that the total value of the aircraft and kits which would be produced in Northern Ireland through the life of the complete programme would be approximately £65m and that an average of some 250 jobs would be created annually by this contract up to 1990, peaking at some 375 jobs in 1985/86. This is obviously very significant not only in employment terms but also in export value.

My officials will be in touch with yours today with supporting information in case you require further details.

I am copying this letter to John Nott and Arthur Cockfield, as well as the Prime Minister.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'John Nott', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned centrally on the page, below the main body of text.