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PRIME MINISTER

The Directorate of Overseas Surveys was scheduled for re-location near Glasgow, offering 350 posts in addition to 650 ODA Headquarter's posts. This, however, was one of the less attractive dispersal options dropped when Cabinet considered the possibilities last year. None of the papers and discussions made specific reference to DOS.

You could re-open the possibility of using DOS to fill the gap. It needs a particular type of clean air and vibration-free environment, but this should be possible to find in the new premises. The problem is that you would be transferring existing staff, not transferring jobs for Glaswegians to fill. The staff are mainly cartographers, trained from school-leaver stage. There was a great deal of controversy over the original dispersal proposal and members of staff left in anticipation. Several MPs took up the matter at the time. Given that the dropping of DOS dispersal has already been made known, there could be a great row if it was now re-instituted. If you were to insist on dispersal to Glasgow, this would hasten the slow process of run-down now in progress - you might regard that as a satisfactory outcome.

Yes
Shall I ask that the matter come back to E and that the papers include consideration of resurrecting DOS dispersal to fill the gap?

3 March 1980

unless they have a better suggestion - MP they may have. We ought to fill the hole. non