

SECRET



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

MR. HATFIELD

Ministerial Group on Nuclear Defence Policy (MISC 7)

Thank you for your minute of 21 March. As you say, the Prime Minister will wish Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr. Lawson and Mr. Heseltine to continue to be members of the Group. She has also confirmed that she would like Lord Whitelaw and Mr. Brittan to be members of it.

A. J. COLES

22 March 1984

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VCC PC

Prime Minister.

Do you want the group to include:-

= Lord Whitelaw ?

= Mr. Brittan ?

Ref. A084/910

MR COLES ✓

Yes not

A &amp; C. 2/3.

Ministerial Group on Nuclear Defence Policy (MISC 7)

This Group will need to meet within the next two months to take decisions on various procurement aspects of the Trident programme, in particular the number of missiles and warheads to be purchased.

2. The Group has not met since the Election and the Prime Minister may wish to review its composition. Before the Election its membership comprised:

Prime Minister

Home Secretary

Chancellor of the Exchequer

Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary

Secretary of State for Defence

Sir Robert Armstrong believes that the Prime Minister will certainly wish to have Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr Lawson and Mr Heseltine as members of the Group. But she may wish to consider retaining Lord Whitelaw in place of Mr Brittan (or conceivably in addition to him).

3. I should be grateful if you could let me know the Prime Minister's wishes in this respect.

R.P.

R P HATFIELD

21 March 1984