

Perhaps we can consider this when a meeting arises

Prime Minister.

Ref. A04006

MR WHITMORE

MISC 7 - Membership

This is a good idea, but Mr Pym may be reluctant to be a member of yet another Committee. On the other hand, MISC 7 meets only rarely and should not impose a heavy burden on him. Sub 16i.

In my minute to you of 6 January about the implication of the Government changes for the membership of Cabinet Committees, I concluded by saying that apart from the Committees specifically mentioned in my minute, changes in the membership of other Committees would follow from changes in Departmental responsibilities.

2. On this principle Mr Nott will replace Mr Pym as a member of the Ministerial Group on Nuclear Defence Policy (MISC 7). I think it is for consideration whether Mr Pym might be invited to continue as a member of this Committee, as well as Mr Nott. The knowledge which he has already acquired on nuclear defence policy, coupled with the close relationship with the House of Commons which stems from his new post, are arguments in favour of this course of action. Mr Pym will not have the support of any staff in this field, and we should have to make arrangements like those we have made for Mr Whitelaw for the protection of papers and the provision of briefing.

3. I know that Mr Pym will have other heavy preoccupations, and it has always been considered desirable to keep this Committee as small as possible. Nevertheless the Prime Minister may like to consider inviting Mr Pym to remain a member of it.

RAH

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

16 January 1981

Spoke to the Prime Minister about the committee above. I would like to see a meeting of MISC 7 was planned for 3rd February. He would prefer to see Mr Pym and he wishes to remain a member of the Committee.