

Ref: B06269



Prime Minister

Hope that Admiral Leach (Acting CDS) should attend the OD discussion on heavy torpedoes?

~~MR ALEXANDER~~

c Mr Hilton

Yes.

Paul

Attendance at OD

For the OD meeting on Heavy Torpedoes on 8th September, the Defence Secretary would like to be accompanied, in the CDS's absence, by the Acting CDS who is (rather conveniently for a naval item) the Chief of the Naval Staff. This seems a reasonable request, to which you will wish to seek the Prime Minister's agreement. When OD considered lightweight torpedoes in July and September 1979 the then CDS and the then Chief of Defence Procurement were present on the first occasion, and all four Chiefs of Staff (but not the Chief of Defence Procurement) on the second occasion.

2. In general there tends to be tension between the wish of the Chiefs of Staff to attend OD on all possible occasions and the natural desire of Ministers to conduct what are essentially political discussions on their own. It is a useful compromise between these positions to invite the CDS (or Acting CDS) on his own when there are reasonable grounds for doing so.

*R L Wade-Gery*

3rd September 1981

R L WADE-GERY

I should like to have a word with S.O.S. before this discussion - and possibly with Chief Secretary there as well.