

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

*B/F28-4-80  
to check with Caroline  
for dates for proposed meeting?*

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

I showed the Prime Minister your minute A01836 of 31 March 1980 over the Easter holiday, and you and I had a brief word earlier this week about her reaction to your proposals. As we agreed then, I have now discussed the matter further with the Prime Minister and can let you know what she has decided.

She is firmly of the view that Foreign Policy and Defence must be discussed together. She has therefore agreed that we should aim to have a meeting of OD in two parts. The first part, which will be attended only by members of OD, will be devoted, on the basis of the paper which the FCO are preparing, to a discussion of Foreign Policy. The second half of the meeting, which should be attended, as you proposed in your minute, by Sir Keith Joseph, Mr. Atkins and the Chiefs of Staff as well as by members of the Committee, will be a session on Defence. Given its structure, this meeting might best be held at Chequers, with the Foreign Policy discussion taking place before lunch and the discussion on Defence in the afternoon. But if that proves impossible, we might instead have the meeting here in 10 Downing Street, making a start at, say, 9.15, breaking at the end of the Foreign Policy session for coffee at 11.00 and then moving on to the Defence half of the meeting from 11.15 to 13.15. This would be heavy going, but I think is on balance preferable to breaking up a London meeting into pre-prandial and post prandial sessions.

The Prime Minister wants the meeting to take place in mid May. We will try to identify one or two possible dates early next week: this is not going to be easy.

/The Prime Minister

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- 2 -

The Prime Minister agrees with your suggestion that there should be a discussion on economic strategy at Chequers in early July. This would be a meeting of the full Cabinet, with Mr. Burns and Mr. Ibbs taking part. The discussion would be planned to last all morning and could run on into the afternoon, though this should probably not be necessary. Again, we will pick a couple of possible dates.

I should like to have a word with you about how we might best let Ministers know about both of these meetings.

C. A. WHITMORE

18 April 1980

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MR. WHITMORE

*Prime Minister.*

*Apr 8 Sunday & June ? Yes  
M 2v. not*

Special OD Meeting on Foreign Policy and Defence

As requested in your minute of 18th April, we have been trying to find a suitable day for a special meeting of OD for a full and informal discussion of foreign policy and defence questions.

2. Since 21st May is no longer possible, because of the visit of the Irish Prime Minister, we are left with two alternatives: Wednesday, 28th May and Sunday, 8th June, both at Chequers: the other two dates which you suggested, Saturday and Sunday 24th and 25th May, are not possible for either the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary or the Secretary of State for Defence. The likely attendance on these two dates is as follows:-

(a) 28th May

The Foreign Secretary, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State for Defence and Lord President would all be available as also would be the Chiefs of Staff. The Home Secretary and the Lord Chancellor could only be there in the morning. The Lord Privy Seal, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Secretary of State for Trade would all be on holiday and would have to be brought back specially. This could create difficulties, particularly for the Lord Privy Seal who will be abroad. The Secretary of State for Industry would not be available since he is to be in the United States. (I hope myself also to be abroad (on holiday), although Mr. Wade-Gery could be present.)

(b) Sunday, 8th June

The Home Secretary, Foreign Secretary, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State for Trade, Secretary of State for Industry and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland would all be available, as would all the Chiefs of Staff apart from the Chief of the General Staff. The Secretary of State for Defence would also be available, although

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he would only just have returned from a week's visit abroad. The Lord Chancellor, the Lord President and the Lord Privy Seal may have some problems but for all but the Lord President these should be soluble.

3. This suggests that Sunday, 8th June is likely to be the best date. It should leave just sufficient time before the Venice Summit meeting on 22nd and 23rd June, for which we need a clear view of how we intend to handle political discussion in Venice. It will be a little difficult for Mr. Pym to come straight into this from his week's visit abroad: it means that he will have to all intents and purposes to have prepared himself for the meeting before he leaves. But it should be possible for him to do that - he would have had to be prepared for a meeting on one of the earlier dates. I therefore recommend that we go for Sunday, 8th June.

4. I will minute you separately about the proposal for a Chequers day on Economic Strategy.

(Robert Armstrong)

1st May 1980

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ETI MAY 1980

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1980



CABINET OFFICE

Caroline Stephens  
- as requested

With the compliments of  
The Private Secretary to the  
*Secretary of the Cabinet*

Barry Hilton  
B/s

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
Telephone 01-233 3000



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ATTENDEES AT MEETING OF OD AT CHEQUERS ON  
SUNDAY 8 JUNE 1980

MEMBERS

Prime Minister  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Lord Chancellor  
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Secretary of State for Defence  
Lord President of the Council  
Lord Privy Seal  
Secretary of State for Trade

INVITEES

Secretary of State for Industry  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland  
Chief of the Defence Staff  
Chief of the Naval Staff  
Chief of the General Staff  
Chief of the Air Staff

SECRETARIAT

Sir Robert Armstrong  
Mr R L Wade-Gery  
Mr R M Hastie-Smith  
The Secretary, Chiefs of Staff

Cabinet Office

8th May 1980



CABINET OFFICE

With the compliments of  
The Private Secretary to the  
*Secretary of the Cabinet*

C. A. Whitmore, Esq

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
Telephone 01-233 3000



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CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-233 8319

From the Secretary of the Cabinet: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO

Ref: A02123

8th May 1980

1. ~~Mr Alexander~~ *Phil*  
This of course precludes  
this morning's meeting of Dep Secs  
which has now cast doubt on  
the need for the meeting at all.  
2. *Miss Stephens*  
To me.

*feh*  
*9v.*

OD Meeting at Chequers

You have already been contacted by the Cabinet Office to ask you to reserve Sunday, 8th June, for a special meeting of OD at Chequers to discuss foreign and defence policy. This is to confirm that the Prime Minister has now agreed this date. Relevant papers will be circulated before the meeting which will begin at 10.30 am and deal with foreign policy until lunch. After lunch, to which the Secretaries of State for Industry and Northern Ireland and the Chiefs of Staff are invited, the meeting will consider defence policy.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of all the Ministers involved and should be grateful if you and they could ensure that this meeting is now firmly included in Ministers' diaries. I should also be grateful if Brian Norbury could ensure that the Chiefs of Staff are informed that this date has now been finalised. A copy of this letter goes to Clive Whitmore.

**D. J. WRIGHT**

(D. J. Wright)

J. A. Chilcot, Esq

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19 MAR 1980



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Sup



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

BF 6. 6 to

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

SPECIAL OD MEETING ON  
FOREIGN POLICY AND DEFENCE

I have shown the Prime Minister your minute A02063 of 1 May 1980, and she agrees that we should hold the special OD meeting on foreign policy and defence on Sunday, 8 June at Chequers.

C. A. WHITMORE

6 May 1980

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*Defence*

CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-233 8319

From the Secretary of the Cabinet: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO

25th April, 1980

Ref. A02027

In my letter of yesterday's date, I gave a number of dates for a special meeting of OD to discuss Foreign Policy and Defence. I have now heard from No. 10 that this meeting cannot take place until after 19th May. I should therefore be grateful if you and the Private Secretaries, to whom I am copying this letter, could let me know which of the following revised set of timings Ministers and the Chiefs of Staff could manage:

Wednesday, 21st May at No. 10 -

2.00 pm to 6.00 pm

Saturday, 24th or Sunday, 25th May at Chequers -

Morning and afternoon

Wednesday, 28th May at Chequers:

Morning and afternoon

The arrangements for the meeting will be as in my original letter: namely foreign policy would be discussed by OD members in the first part and defence in the second, with the Secretaries of State for <sup>Industry</sup> ~~Defence~~ and Northern Ireland and the Chiefs of Staff present for the second part.

X |

I am copying this letter also to Clive Whitmore (No. 10).

**D.J. WRIGHT**

(D.J. Wright)

J.A. Chilcot, Esq.

*Spoke Sir Robert Armstrong to ask how the discussion on defence is being prepared. He said that he was in touch with the MOD who were planning to give a presentation and might also involve a paper.*

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*AWJ.  
28/4.*

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B 112  
25 APR 1980



CABINET OFFICE

With the compliments of  
The Private Secretary to the  
*Secretary of the Cabinet*

C.A. Whitmore, Esq.

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
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*Defence*

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70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-233 8319

*From the Secretary of the Cabinet: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO*

24th April, 1980

Ref. A02014

The Prime Minister has decided that, in the aftermath of Afghanistan and also as a follow-up to the OD discussion on defence on 20th March (OD(80) 9th Meeting Minutes), she wishes to have a special meeting of OD to discuss future foreign and defence policy. The meeting would be in two parts: the first attended only by members of OD would be devoted to discussion of foreign policy on the basis of a paper being prepared by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The second part of the meeting would deal with defence; the Secretaries of State for Industry and Northern Ireland and the Chiefs of Staff would be invited to attend this part.

No. 10 have suggested that this meeting could take place on the following dates:

Wednesday, 14th May at No. 10 -

9.15 - 11.00 am Foreign Policy

11.15 am to 1.15 pm Defence

Saturday, 17th May or Sunday, 18th May at Chequers -

am Foreign Policy

Lunch

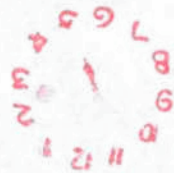
pm Defence

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the other members of OD and to the Secretaries of State for Industry and Northern Ireland. I should be grateful if you and they could let me know by close of play on Friday, 25th April whether any of these dates are inconvenient. I am also copying the letter to Clive Whitmore.

**D. J. WRIGHT**

(D.J. Wright)

J.A. Chilcot, Esq.



24 APR 1960



NOTE FOR THE FILE

x1

I spoke to David Wright and offered him:

14 May in London or 17 or 18 May at  
Chequers for OD and OD plus Defence

5 or 6 July or 13 July for all day Cabinet  
at Chequers

ef.

x1 Meeting now dealt - take  
place until night May 19  
So have offered plan of  
21st in London; 24/25 at  
Chequers & 27<sup>th</sup> in London.

23 April 1980

ef.

24/4