

CONFIDENTIAL

Sub



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

MINISTERIAL GROUP ON MARITIME AFFAIRS

Thank you for your minute of 8 February (A084/434). The Prime Minister has agreed that the Secretary of State for Transport should take over the Chairmanship of this Group from the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and that the Lord Privy Seal should receive papers of this Group, retaining the option of attending meetings when appropriate.

E. E. R. BUTLER

9 February 1984

BR



Prime Minister

Agree x/ and y/?

Ref.A084/434

MR BUTLER

Yes no

FERB

8.2.

Ministerial Group on Maritime Affairs

The Ministerial Group on Maritime Affairs (MISC 19) has not met since November 1982 and there will be issues in the pipeline which may call for an early discussion.

2. There are two matters relating to the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference, one is provisional understanding on deep sea-bed matters and the other the United Kingdom position at the next session of the Preparatory Commission both of which may need to be discussed in the near future as well as the important question of the disposal of disused oil and gas installations in the North Sea.

x | 3. The Department of Transport, with its responsibility for shipping and marine matters, has a greater interest than any other single Department in these issues. I consider therefore that it would be more appropriate for the Secretary of State for Transport to be the Chairman of this Ministerial Group; the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry who is the current Chairman would not oppose the change.

y | 4. The Lord Privy Seal has requested that he receive the papers of this Group at the same time retaining the option of attending meetings when appropriate to cover any legislative implications. I support this view. I would be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister is content with these proposals in order that I can make the appropriate changes.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

8 February 1984