

PRIME MINISTER

BILATERAL WITH THE DEFENCE SECRETARY

The Defence Secretary has asked for a meeting tomorrow. He wants to talk about a successor to the Chief of the Defence Staff.

The meeting will also be an opportunity for you to enquire how work is coming along on the papers on our defence policy commissioned at the Chequers seminar.

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Defence Policy Options

The Ministry of Defence were asked at Chequers to produce a paper on the future structure of our forces, and their equipment needs. I understand they are working up options for possible withdrawal of some of our forces from Germany and are concentrating on two

main options: reducing our forces in Germany to two-thirds and to one-third of their present level. The Defence Secretary was supposed to report to you on progress within one month (which will be 26 February). You may like to enquire about progress.

Submarine Operations

You will want to enquire about the latest position on the cracking discovered in the pressure vessel of the reactor in one of our nuclear-powered submarines, and the progress of the checks being carried out on the others.

C.D.P.

CHARLES POWELL
14 FEBRUARY 1990

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Charles

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