



Ref. A085/1614

MR POWELL

Future Fisheries Protection Arrangements And
Offshore Protection

Sir Robert Armstrong has seen the Ministerial correspondence on the subject of the Offshore Protection Force, most recently the Chief Secretary's letter of 23 May to the Secretary of State for Energy and Mr Walker's letter to the Home Secretary of 4 June.

2. Following a decision by Ministers last August an interdepartmental Group, chaired by the Cabinet Office, has been examining a proposal of the Fisheries Departments to civilianise and contract out the element of the "Offshore Tapestry" concerned with fisheries protection. The Group hopes to present its findings to Ministers early in July.

3. The Fisheries Departments' proposal will, of course, have implications for other elements in the "Offshore Tapestry", including Offshore Protection. Sir Robert believes that it is important that the uncertainty surrounding the future of Offshore Protection and its financing should be removed as soon as possible. He therefore suggests that a meeting of OD be convened during July at which this issue might be considered, together with the Report on Future Fisheries Protection Arrangements.

4. The Chief Secretary has suggested in his letter of 23 May that any outstanding difficulties regarding the provision of High Security Fences for the main oil and gas terminals should be discussed at the same time. While this is not strictly a matter

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for OD, discussion of it on the same occasion would clearly be convenient.

5. I am sending copies of this minute to the Private Secretaries to those Ministers who attend OD.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R P Hatfield'.

R P HATFIELD

14 June 1985

CONQUEROR



Fishing Industry:

Fishery Limits

PT 5.

COMPTROLLER

COZAPS file X16



10 DOWNING STREET

14 June 1985

From the Private Secretary

FUTURE FISHERIES PROTECTION ARRANGEMENTS AND OFFSHORE
PROTECTION

Thank you for your minute of 14 June. The Prime Minister has not so far been made aware of the exchanges on these issues. My judgement is that she would prefer another Minister, perhaps the Lord President, to take charge of efforts to settle the future of Offshore Protection and its financing. That would also keep open the option of being able to deal with Fisheries Protection without a meeting of OD.

But if Sir Robert Armstrong's considered view is that all the issues need examining in OD, I agree that we ought to arrange a meeting in July. In that case, perhaps the Cabinet Office could do a short paper setting out the issues on Offshore Protection.

CHARLES POWELL

Richard Hatfield, Esq.,
Cabinet Office.

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