



cc MOD

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 July 1984

Dear Air Marshal

When you and your colleagues came to see me on Wednesday to discuss the proposed reorganisation of the Ministry of Defence, I gave you my assurance that there is not, and never has been, any question of changing the right of the Chiefs of Staff, individually and collectively, to have direct access to the Prime Minister.

The purpose of this letter is to confirm formally what I said then.

I also said that I saw advantage in having a meeting once a year with the Chiefs of Staff. I propose to institute such an arrangement, beginning in 1985.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Air Chief Marshal Sir Keith Williamson, GCB, AFC, ADC

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 July 1984

cc MOD

Dear Field Marshal

When you and your colleagues came to see me on Wednesday to discuss the proposed reorganisation of the Ministry of Defence, I gave you my assurance that there is not, and never has been, any question of changing the right of the Chiefs of Staff, individually and collectively, to have direct access to the Prime Minister.

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Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Field Marshal Sir Edwin Bramall, GCB, OBE, MC

de

file

da



cc MOD

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 July 1984

Dear Admiral,

When you and your colleagues came to see me on Wednesday to discuss the proposed reorganisation of the Ministry of Defence, I gave you my assurance that there is not, and never has been, any question of changing the right of the Chiefs of Staff, individually and collectively, to have direct access to the Prime Minister.

The purpose of this letter is to confirm formally what I said then.

I also said that I saw advantage in having a meeting once a year with the Chiefs of Staff. I propose to institute such an arrangement, beginning in 1985.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse, GCB, GBE, ADC

da

DEFENCE RE-ORGANISATION

The re-organisation retains the separate identities of the three Services, and the legal position of the Defence Council and Services Boards.

It carries through the purpose of the Mountbatten re-organisation.

The main features are:-

- it consolidates and enhances the dominant position of the CDS;
- he is supported by a defence staff covering policy priorities, control of operations and equipment requirements;
- the Service Chiefs of Staff participate in policy-making through the Chiefs of Staff Committee and the Defence Council;
- budgetary control is strengthened by the creation of an office of management and budget under the Permanent Secretary.

/The Chiefs

The Chiefs of Staff were worried that the position of the individual Chiefs would be weakened so that over time they would no longer exercise effective responsibility for the morale and efficiency of their Services or to be able to give worthwhile advice.

The Government thinks these fears misconceived because:

- by giving them a share in overall responsibility, their influence is enhanced;
- the new arrangements had served well in the Falklands campaign;
- the Service staffs will continue to have direct access to the Prime Minister.

Following the meeting with you, the separate Chiefs agreed that they would do their best to make the new arrangements work. You agreed to review the arrangements when they had had time to settle down and in any way to have an annual meeting with the Chiefs.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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MO 20/22

6th July 1984

PI. type for the PM's
signature to each of the
four Chiefs of Staff.

New York

Many thanks for your letter of 4th July
enclosing records of the Prime Minister's
meetings with the Defence Secretary and the
Chiefs of Staff. As requested I enclose a
draft letter which the Prime Minister could
send to each of the Chiefs of Staff assuring
them of their continued access to her.

FRB
26-7-84

Yours etc,

Richard Mottram

(R C MOTTRAM)
Private Secretary

Robin Butler Esq

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO EACH OF THE CHIEFS OF STAFF

When you and your colleagues came to see me on Wednesday to discuss the proposed reorganisation of the Ministry of Defence, I ~~said that, as has never been in question, the Chiefs of Staff would continue to have, individually and collectively, the right~~ ^{gave you my assurance that there is not, and never has been, any question of} ~~to have~~ ^{changing the right of the Chiefs of Staff, individually ~~have~~ and collectively,} ~~of~~ ^{to the} direct access ~~to me as~~ Prime Minister.

The purpose of this letter is to confirm formally what I said then.

~~in any case~~
I also said that I saw advantage in having a meeting once a year with the Chiefs of Staff. I propose to institute such an arrangement, beginning in 1985.

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

4 July 1984

Dear Richard,

BF | I am sending with this letter records of the Prime Minister's meetings with your Secretary of State and the Chiefs of Staff yesterday. You will see that the Prime Minister offered to confirm in writing to each of the Chiefs of Staff that they would continue to have direct access to her. I should be grateful if you could arrange for me to have a draft letter which the Prime Minister could send to each of the separate Service Chiefs giving this assurance.

Yours ever,

Robin Butler

Richard Mottram Esq
Ministry of Defence.

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