



cc MOD

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 July 1984

Dear General,

When your colleagues came to see me on Wednesday to discuss the proposed reorganisation of the Ministry of Defence, I gave an 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

General Sir John Stanier, GCB, MBE, ADC

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GENERAL SIR JOHN STANIER GCB MBE ADC Gen

Prime Minister <sup>2</sup>  
A nice letter.



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The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

9<sup>th</sup> July 1984

Dear Prime Minister,

You will appreciate how very upset I was to have been out of the country at the time when you were kind enough to see the Chiefs of Staff last week. Although I had an aircraft standing by, I could not have returned in time for the meeting.

I should like you to know how much I appreciate the opportunity that we were given to offer you our views and I know that my Vice Chief represented my views exactly.

I was most grateful for the assurances which you gave at the meeting as to our position in the future as advisers to the Government on matters of Defence Policy and for your proposal to meet the Chiefs of Staff from time to time to discuss such matters.

You may be sure that all of us in the Army will now give our fullest support to the plans proposed by our Secretary of State.

Yours sincerely

John Stanier



10 DOWNING STREET

Fee KB

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

16 July 1984

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 9 July and to say how sorry she was that the meeting with the Chiefs of Staff had to be arranged so quickly, for reasons you will understand. The Prime Minister was very sorry that you could not be present, but she greatly appreciated your writing to her in the terms in which you did.

You will by now have received her letter to you about the continued access of the Chiefs of Staff to the Prime Minister.

Fee KB

General Sir John Stanier, G.C.B., M.B.E., A.D.C.Gen.

Fee KB

## 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.

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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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