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1,

Prime Minister

Ref: A03909

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Agree these proposals - and in particular that the Attorney General should become a member of the Ministers Committee on the House of Lords?

Yes

No

Would you like Mr Brittan to become a member of OD? He would, I am sure, make a valuable contribution to the Committee's discussions. On the other hand, it would bring the size of OD up to 11 (it is now 9). JMB 7.1.89.

MR. WHITMORE

Government Changes: Cabinet Committees

You told me that the Prime Minister had already made some decisions about the implications of the Government changes for the membership of Cabinet Committees. This minute confirms these points, and seeks approval for other changes.

Defence and Oversea Policy Committee

2. Mr. Pym remains a member; Mr. Nott stays on the Committee as Secretary of State for Defence. I suggest that Mr. Biffen should come on to the Committee as Secretary of State for Trade. That would bring the numbers up to 10. Some months ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested that the Chief Secretary, Treasury, should be added as a member in his own right; at that time the Prime Minister decided against the suggestion, but she may like to reconsider it now.

Against

Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy

3. Mr. Nott remains a member; I suggest that Mr. Biffen should continue on the Committee in his new capacity, and Mr. Brittan be added in his. That brings the numbers up to 13.

Agreed

4. Mr. Pym is not to come on to the main Committee. But as Paymaster General Sir Angus Maude was on the new Sub-Committee on Public Service Pay; as Mr. Pym takes over Sir Angus Maude's responsibilities for public presentation of Government policy, he should presumably take his place on this Sub-Committee.

Doubt whether he will wish to.

Legislation Committee

5. Mr. Pym will take over the Chairmanship of the Committee; Lord Hailsham remains a member.

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Committee on the House of Lords

6. Mr. Pym was appointed to this Committee ad hominem rather than as Secretary of State for Defence. He should no doubt remain on the Committee as Chancellor of the Duchy and Paymaster General. But Mr. Stevas's departure





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will leave the Committee one short of members of the House of Commons, and the balance of four members of the House of Lords and four of the House of Commons will be thrown out unless another Minister in the House of Commons is appointed in his place. I think that the balance should be maintained. The Prime Minister may like to consider inviting the Attorney General to serve. He has in fact made representations to me that the terms of reference include consideration of measures which will involve legal and constitutional issues on which his advice will be needed; and, given his sensitivity vis-a-vis the Lord Chancellor (who is a member of the Committee) it would, I think, be worthwhile to take advantage of this opportunity to add him to the membership of the Committee.

Other Committees

7. Changes in membership will follow from changes in Departmental responsibilities.

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

6th January 1981