

Mr Whitmore

We have been checking what happened about referring the original decision to acquire Poland to the Cabinet.

2. The policy decision to go for Poland when Skybolt was cancelled was taken in a very small group of Ministers (the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Commonwealth Secretary and the Minister of Defence). Mr Macmillan went out to Nassau with the Foreign Secretary, the Commonwealth Secretary and the Minister of Defence; they negotiated a deal with President Kennedy; & presumably ad referendum

to the Cabinet. The terms of the agreement were telegraphed back to London into the rooms for accepting it; the Cabinet met under Mr Butler, and the conclusion was to send to the Ministers at Nassau an assurance of their unqualified support.

In effect, therefore Cabinet was invited to ratify the decision and the agreement, but played no part in arriving at the original decision or in laying down the negotiating brief.

RA

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