

MR MOUNT

*I am content with
the arrangements
fm 23/7*

THE FAMILY POLICY GROUP

Mr Flesher has shown me your minute of 21 July about the follow-up to the meeting which the Prime Minister held on 20 July.

I see no problem about Patrick Jenkin joining the Group and we will let him have copies of the paper and Mr Flesher's record of the meeting.

As regards your second and third points, I took the opportunity to raise these this afternoon with Sir Robert Armstrong and Mr Sparrow when I was seeing them on another matter. We all agreed that rather than establish a CPRS team on the lines suggested in Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 13 July to me, we should proceed in the way you proposed in your minute. Mr Sparrow will talk to Sir Brian Cubbon about the need for the CPRS to work closely with the Home Office Group and will suggest that the best way of accomplishing this would be for Mr Wasserman to become a member of the Group.

We thought that we should take stock once more of the best way of dealing with the work now in hand following the next meeting of the Prime Minister's Group.

We did not think, however, that the time was yet right to convert the Family Policy Group into a formal Ministerial Committee, whether a Cabinet Committee or a MISC Group. It seemed to us that while it was not yet totally clear how the work of the Group would develop, it was better to leave our organisational and procedural arrangements on an informal and flexible basis. A further consideration is that the existence of a formal Ministerial Group tends to come to the notice of the media rather more rapidly than does an ad hoc group, and we thought that we were not yet at a point where we wanted publicity - especially accidental publicity - for what is being done. Again, the thrust of the Family Policy Group's work should be a good deal clearer after the next meeting, and we thought that that would be the moment to decide whether to convert the Group into a more formal body or to leave it on its present basis.

If you are content with all this, I will reply accordingly to Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 13 July.

22 July 1982

AWW.