

Mr James



H M Treasury

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P G Davies  
Press Secretary and  
Head of Information Division

Mr Tim Lankester  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street  
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Dear Tim,

BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON THE BUDGET

You spoke to me yesterday about the Prime Minister's wish that MPs should be provided with "background briefing" on the Budget at least as full as that received by the press.

We in the Treasury - that is, IDT, EB and Parliamentary Section - supply no background briefing on the Budget to the press in advance of the event. Nor does the Privy Council Office.

Immediately after the Chancellor has made his Budget Statement, MPs and the press alike receive the standard documents, namely the Red Book (FSBR), White Paper material and press notices. All that the press gets but MPs don't is a summary of the Budget speech, the 'snapshot' (a summary of the Summary) and the full text of the speech. We could not undertake to provide Members with the speech in full because this would strain our facilities beyond breaking point: but, if the Prime Minister wished, we could arrange for 700 copies of the summary or the snapshot to be placed in the Vote Office along with the documents already provided.

Flag A  
Flag B

Yours etc,  
Peter

P G DAVIES

The important things are

the press notices which

are quite detailed. They usually spell out the

effects of any changes giving quite extensive

figures. I don't think a summary speech is

necessary. The 'snapshot' would be useful

cc

- Mr Hall
- Mr Ridley
- Mr Cropper
- Mr Unwin
- Mr Bottrill
- Mr Dyer
- Mr Chambers
- Mr Godfrey
- Mr Prescott - Privy Council Office

Prime Minister

Treasury say they will be hard-pressed to provide the summary of the speech and the 'snap-shot'. (They have limited reproduction facilities, and these documents cannot be finalised until pretty late). I think the 'snap-shot' (Flag B) is the more useful. Shall I

5 June 1979  
arrange for the Vote Office (and Library) to get copies of that?

TZ

5/6



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

6 June 1979

Thank you for your letter of 5 June about background briefing on the Budget, which could be made available to MPs.

I have shown this to the Prime Minister, and she has confirmed that she would like the "snap-shot" made available to all MPs with the necessary number of copies placed in the Vote Office, and a copy in the Library of the House as well. She has also commented that it is most important that copies of the press notices are available to MPs; but I understand from your letter that they would be in any case.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Martin Hall (HM Treasury) and Richard Prescott (Paymaster General's Office).

T. P. LANKESTER

P.G. Davies, Esq.,  
H.M. Treasury.

KRB