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PRIME MINISTER

CIVIL SERVICE MANPOWER REDUCTIONS: DEPARTMENTAL TARGETS

PEB with

Thank you for your Private Secretary's letter of 13 November. I am glad that you agree that we should press ahead with this and make an announcement early in the new session. In spite of the hesitation which some colleagues are bound to have with the targets for 1984 this is the best breakdown we can get for the total figure of 630,000. An announcement is necessary if only to avoid speculation, leaks and uncertainty, and I say in the Answer that detailed plans will have to be developed by each Minister over the next 3½ years.

I agree that we should show the contingency margin separately. I also agree that, for the purposes of the Answer, the departmental targets can be rounded to the nearest 100 although this of course in no way changes the targets which we agreed in Cabinet. I have also met the Northern Ireland Secretary's wish and included his figures in "Other Departments".

I therefore now propose to answer this Question along the lines of the enclosed revised version next week, on 27 November.

I am sending copies of this to Cabinet colleagues, including the Minister of Transport, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

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19 November 1980

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HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN ANSWER

To ask the Lord President of the Council what plans the Government has for reducing the size of the Civil Service.

DRAFT ANSWER

My Rt Honourable Friend the Prime Minister announced on 13 May that the Government intended to reduce the size of the Civil Service to about 630,000 over the next four years. Unforeseen demands are bound to arise over the years ahead, and we are therefore allowing for a contingency margin of 15,000. The Government has now settled manpower targets for individual departments for 1 April 1984. These figures, and those of the staff in post on 1 April 1979 and 1 October 1980, are given below.

Each departmental Minister has his general plans which will be developed in detail over the period as circumstances evolve.

DEPARTMENT	STAFF IN POST AT 1 APRIL 1979	STAFF IN POST AT 1 OCTOBER 1980	TARGET STAFF IN POST AT 1 APRIL 1984 (Rounded to nearest 100)
MAFF	13,956	13,406	11,600
Chancellor of the Exchequer's Departments	126,905	115,938	102,600
Defence	247,660	235,226	200,000
Education and Science	2,647	2,571	2,200
Employment Group	53,652	50,912	49,000
Energy	1,267	1,222	1,100
Environment and Ordnance Survey	56,039	49,360	41,400
FCO/ODA	12,078	11,605	11,100
Health and Social Security	98,369	97,917	87,700
Home Office	33,490	34,924	34,900
Industry	9,514	9,120	7,300
Lord Chancellor's Departments	16,518	16,370	16,000
Lord President's Departments	12,957	12,289	9,100
Scottish Office	11,119	10,911	10,000
Trade, Office of Fair Trading and Export Credits Guarantee Department	9,940	9,458	8,400
Transport	13,908	13,291	10,700
Welsh Office	2,607	2,388	2,200
Other Departments	9,723	10,167	9,700
Contingency margin	-	-	15,000
<u>Totals (rounded)</u>	732,300	697,100	630,000