

cc Mr. Lankester  
Mr. Gow

PRIME MINISTER

Treasury Select Committee

We gather from the Treasury that Mr. du Cann's Select Committee are to meet privately on Wednesday 24 September to consider whether to hold a special hearing in the week after the Party Conference to discuss the Government's monetary policy and the recent growth in the money supply. This plan is obviously not calculated to be helpful to the Government. Nigel Lawson wondered whether you would think it worthwhile having a word with Edward du Cann on the telephone this weekend, in an attempt to dissuade him from going ahead. Tim and I have doubts about this suggestion, not least because we have no reason to believe that Mr. du Cann would acquiesce. *It would be most undesirable*

If the Committee do go ahead Treasury Ministers are minded to attempt to field officials before the Select Committee rather than attend themselves. I do not know whether they will be able to get away with this, and I do not even know whether it is a wise course. The theory is that evidence from officials will be more guarded and will receive much less publicity than an appearance by Ministers, but it might not work out that way.

No Do you feel inclined to have a word with Mr. du Cann about all this, or to let the Committee do their worst, given that we have a little time to prepare for any meeting they may hold?

*ms*

*MS*

19 September 1980

From: Minister.

You will recall that we heard earlier this week that Edward du Cann was not going to seek to summon Treasury Ministers.

*MS 19.80*