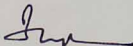


PAYMASTER GENERAL

BUDGET PRESENTATION

I held a meeting on Friday afternoon with the main economic Departments to:

- plug them into Treasury presentation plans;
  - get a rundown from the Treasury on the arrangements for Budget Day and the following day; and to
  - ensure that such good news as exists in the package of material to be published on Wednesday is not buried.
2. The substance of the Budget, the White Paper or the medium term monetary tariffs were not, of course, discussed.
3. The present media arrangements are set out at Annex I.
4. I emphasised the need to:
- i Give Treasury Ministers a clear run on Budget Day;
  - ii Keep in close touch with No 10 on the broadcasting plans of their Ministers so that we might have a chance to co-ordinate the effort; and also to notify Treasury of their broadcasting plans;
  - iii Adopt a positive approach to requests from the media; it would be very important effectively to argue our case. The Prime Minister would not understand or appreciate a reluctance on the part of Ministers to put over Government policy, subject, of course, to the right format;
  - iv Ensure that Ministers, especially in the following Departments DHSS, Energy, DES and Employment (which should help to neutralise the trade union counter punch) - were on standby on Budget Day plus 1.
  - v Fully brief specialist correspondents if we are to get the good news out, given the sheer weight of material which would emerge at around 5.00 pm;
  - vi Arrange for D/Industry and the Scottish and Welsh Offices to make good regional use of the enterprise zones announcement;
  - vii Take stock soon after the Budget to identify strengths and opportunities and to repair weaknesses - eg 'Any Questions' and 'Newsnight' (Friday), 'World This Weekend' etc.
5. On the last point you might feel we should regroup, if possible, before lunch on Thursday, to assess the situation, especially as I shall have to leave for the Anglo/German talks at Chequers early afternoon.



B INGHAM  
24 March 1980

BUDGET MEDIA DIARY AS AT 21 MARCH 1980

Budget Day

- i When the Chancellor has finished speaking, the Lobby will be given the Budget speech with a summary, the Public Expenditure White Paper, the Financial Statement Budget Report (Red Book), a full Treasury press notice on the White Paper and the departmental press notice - all as a package.
- ii The Chancellor will brief the Lobby between 5.00 and 6.00 pm then return to No 11 Downing Street to make the Budget broadcast (goes out at 9.25 pm).
- iii The Chief Secretary will do the ITN Budget Special programme (the wind-up) and then the 'Nationwide' Budget programme between 5.15 and 5.30 pm; IRN at 6.00 pm; ATV Midlands 'Today' programme; Granada Reports; BBC World Service and both BBC and ITN 9.00 pm and 10.00 pm news programmes.
- iv The Financial Secretary will do 'The World Tonight' and 'Newsnight'.
- v Mr Rees will take the press conference for overseas correspondents.

27 March

- i The Financial Secretary will take the press conference at 11.30 am followed by briefing for specialist correspondents.
- ii The Chief Secretary will be on 'Question Time'.
- iii The Chancellor will give a reception at No 11 for financial and political correspondents, Treasury Ministers, economists etc.
- iv Bid for Treasury Minister from the 'Today' programme.

28 March

The Chancellor is on the Jimmy Young Programme.

PAYMASTER GENERAL

cc. Mr. Lankester

I am grateful to you for a sight of the CRD report on the ORC survey of reactions to the June 1979 Budget (which I return).

Much of it is, of course, predictable. Indeed, I find most research very useful in supporting one's own judgments. However, research also tends to sharpen perceptions of what needs to be done next time round.

In this connection, the survey has led me to the following conclusions on the action needed this week:

- (i) let us decide what is the main message and hammer it home on Budget Day and BD plus 1 in all broadcasts; is there one sentence encapsulating the overall purpose?
- (ii) given the ability of people to swallow basic points put simply, we ought to prepare a list of positive bull points for one sheet of paper, perhaps with an intro which says that, whatever else Ministers do, they should get over the main one sentence message (point (i) above) and, where possible, hammer home the following subsidiary points;
- (iii) we need to put over a few bull points which illustrate the essential fairness of the exercise; "fairness" comes through in the survey as one of the main plus/liability points;
- (iv) Ministers should pay special attention to getting the message over in Scotland

/(presumably

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presumably Wales) and the industrial North where class is more polarised. If millions of trade unionists voted for the Government in 1979, you cannot afford to ignore this constituency. It is also in this context that the main message; the positive bull points; and the fairness angle are particularly important and useful. Would it be possible for you to put out a note to Ministers urging them to seek and take every advantage of opportunities in these areas?

You may care to have a word with the Chancellor or Brendan Sewell. I am also copying to Mr. Lankester who, at my suggestion, asked Mr. Sewell on Friday to prepare a grid bringing out the extent to which Budget measures are in line with manifesto commitment. Mr. Sewell has this in hand.



B. INGHAM

24 March, 1980

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