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**CONFIDENTIAL**



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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

TOP SALARIES REVIEW BODY: SENIOR PUBLIC SERVANTS

This is just to record briefly for the sake of keeping the papers straight that when you saw the Prime Minister this morning, she had a word with you about your minute A04111 of 28 January 1981 about your meeting on 27 January with Lord Plowden and about the proposal that you should send him a personal letter to confirm what was agreed in your discussion with him.

The Prime Minister said that she was content with the draft letter attached to your minute, subject to only one point. Against the possibility that the letter would leak, she thought that it should make it clear that rather than the TSRB offering to provide advice privately on how a sum of money which fell short of what was required to implement the TSRB 14 recommendations in full should be distributed, it should be for the Government to request such advice from the Board. The letter should therefore not include phrases like "the Review Body would be willing to advise privately upon the distribution of whatever amount the Government did feel able to make available" and "both the offer to give advice and the provision of it would be private .....". The draft letter should be revised in this respect to safeguard Lord Plowden's position.

You said that you would re-draft the letter accordingly. It might be appropriate to include a sentence on the lines of "You thought that the Review Body would be willing to receive a request from the Government to advise on how the amount which the Government felt able to make available should be distributed". You would discuss the letter further with Lord Plowden and report back.

9 February 1981

C. A. WHITMORE

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