



CONFIDENTIAL

HOUSE OF LORDS,  
LONDON SW1A 0PW

23 December 1985

NSRB.

My dear John:

Evidence to TSRB

Thankyou for your letter of 19 December.

I do not agree that the submission of my evidence to TSRB should be delayed. We are to meet on 16 January under the Prime Minister's Chairmanship to discuss the future of TSRB, but, as you already know, I and several colleagues have considerable reservations about your suggestion that TSRB should be abolished. We should not therefore act as if that decision had already been taken.

TSRB ask me each year to submit evidence on judicial recruitment by 31 December. They did so in early October this year. TSRB's secretariat have spoken to my officials about the evidence several times since then, and were told only a few days ago that it was virtually complete and that there should be no difficulty in submitting it by the end of the year. My officials know from the OME secretariat that TSRB have already started work on their next Report. Submission of my evidence now will not therefore allow them to commence work they would not otherwise have done. Rather I shall be accused of bad faith if I do not submit now evidence which TSRB have been led to believe they can expect. TSRB know, moreover, from the evidence submitted in previous years that evidence on recruitment is not particularly voluminous. It would therefore be virtually impossible now to tell TSRB convincingly that there will be a delay of several weeks in submitting this. The Review Body would be bound to be very suspicious; and I am sure that the last thing you would want is for there to be any chance of the Review Body getting the impression at this stage that their future is now in doubt.

Accordingly, although I will take account in the evidence of any drafting changes suggested by your officials, I must arrange for my evidence to go forward to TSRB in the ordinary way.

Copies of this letter go to the Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, Richard Luce and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

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From THE RT. HON. LORD HAILSHAM  
OF ST. MARYLEBONE, CH. FRG. DCL.

The Right Honorable  
John MacGregor  
The Chief Secretary to the Treasury  
Treasury Chambers  
Parliament Street  
London  
SW1P 3AG

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