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14 December 1982

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AT

*Jan Willie,*

REPORT OF THE JOINT REVIEW GROUP ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

In 1980 a Joint Review Group was set up to review the development of employment opportunities for women in the Civil Service. The Review Group have now completed their work and I am enclosing a copy of their report, "Equal Opportunities for Women in the Civil Service", which is to be published on Thursday, 16 December. The accompanying Press Notice, in the form of a confidential final draft, summarises the main recommendations of the report.

The Joint Review Group was set up under the Whitley Council machinery, with both departmental and union representatives. They have achieved a very large measure of agreement. Their recommendations will need to be carefully considered in consultation with departments and inevitably there may be reservations about some of them. For my own part I shall need to be persuaded that the setting up of a Civil Service Nursery Council is a practical proposal or, indeed, that work place nurseries are the best form of child-care. I am, however, firmly of the view that we can and must take positive action to follow up the general thrust of the report.

Some action is already in hand. The report emphasises the importance of helping women to maintain the continuity of a working career, and earlier this year all departments began an examination of the scope for increasing opportunities for part-time work or job-sharing. The Treasury has recently completed a study of ways of improving career opportunities for its own women staff, and this offers valuable lessons for departments generally. In MPO we are about to start research (supplementing studies in other departments) to explore why women are less likely to achieve promotion than men. The Civil Service College has also initiated this year a course to prepare women for management responsibility.

There has been a long tradition of equal employment policies for women in the Civil Service, and I am sure it is right to maintain that. I hope very much, therefore, that you and all colleagues will take a close interest in the

follow-up to this report within your own department. We are all well aware of the constraints on resources but this is an area where, in my view, substantial gains can be made without excessive cost.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and other Cabinet colleagues, and to Sir Robert Armstrong and Sir Douglas Wass.

*Yours ever*

*Baroness*

BARONESS YOUNG

PUBLICATION OF REPORT ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

Baroness Young, Lord Privy Seal, today welcomed a report\* published by the Management and Personnel Office on Equal Opportunities for Women in the Civil Service.

Lady Young, the Minister in day-to-day charge of the Civil Service, said "The publication of this report illustrates the determination of the Civil Service to create the environment which will allow truly equal opportunities for all and enable women in particular to have the option of planning a long term career."

The Report stresses that a change of attitudes is needed at work - by both men and women - if equal opportunity is to be achieved. It proposes the adoption of a new policy, which would be fostered and monitored by joint management/trade union action, and calls for an imaginative awareness programme to bring home to all civil servants their individual responsibility to secure equality of treatment.

The Report considers ways of modifying traditional working patterns to enable more women civil servants to maintain the continuity of a working career and proposes:

- increasing opportunities to work part-time for a period
- experiments in job-sharing
- extending existing schemes for working flexible hours
- giving preference in reinstatement to women who have resigned for domestic reasons.

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\* 'Equal Opportunities for Women in the Civil Service' is the report of a Joint Review Group set up by the Joint Personnel Management Committee of the National Whitley Council.

The Report expresses concern that women are still overwhelmingly concentrated in the lower grades, about evidence that women are less likely to be promoted than men, and that there are too few women in some specialist areas such as engineering and technology. Among its proposals on career development are:

- research to identify the reasons why women are less likely to be promoted
- introducing training schemes to enable more women to achieve qualifications in engineering and technology
- the development of special courses for women managers
- greater flexibility in applying the 'mobility' rules for junior management staff; and on examination of scope for introducing interdepartmental career development in local areas.

Other recommendations include:

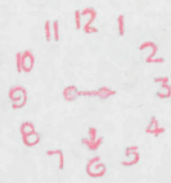
- investigating the possibility of setting up a Civil Service Nursery Council to encourage the provision of child-care facilities
- improving maternity leave provision and the adoption of a more liberal attitude towards the granting of special leave
- carrying out research where necessary and practicable into the extent and nature of sexual harrassment.

The Report is concerned to emphasise that improving opportunities for women in the Civil Service depends upon its recommendations, where appropriate, applying equally to men.

The recommendations will now be considered by management and trade unions.

All the recommendations are summarised in Chapter 9 of the Report which is attached to this Press Notice.

4 DEC 1982





Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG  
01-233 3000

14 January 1983

The Rt Hon The Baroness Young  
Management and Personnel Office  
Old Admiralty Building  
LONDON SW1

*Dr Jack*

*TJ*  
*17/11*

REPORT OF THE JOINT REVIEW GROUP ON EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 14 December to Willie Whitelaw, enclosing a copy of the report of the Joint Review Group on Employment Opportunities for Women in the Civil Service. Generally, I welcome the report, though I share your doubts about the setting up of a Civil Service Nursery Council. As you say, the Civil Service has a long tradition of equal employment policies for women, and we must be sure that this is maintained.

I note and share your view that this is an area where substantial gains can be made without excessive costs. Given that this is so, I should not expect departments to seek extra manpower or cash to implement recommendations in the report. Any extra costs that may arise should be met by a re-ordering of priorities within existing current and planned resource allocations.

I am copying this letter to recipients of yours.

*[Handwritten signature]*

GEOFFREY HOWE

17 JAN 1983





QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

6 January 1983

Dear Lady

JH

7/1

REPORT OF THE JOINT REVIEW GROUP ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

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I was interested to receive the copy of this Report which you sent me under cover of your letter of 14 December, particularly in view of my responsibilities for equal opportunities for women. The Report offers a very comprehensive survey of the issues in this area and, though I agree with you that there may be reservations about some of the proposals put forward by the Group, their recommendations certainly deserve careful and thorough scrutiny. Here as elsewhere it is vital that improvements in policies and procedures are secured in the most effective and economical way, bearing in mind constraints on resources.

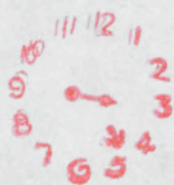
My Department is very ready to help in following up the Group's work, and in the meantime we shall certainly do what we can to take account of the concern reflected in the Group's Report, in dealing with particular problems.

Copies of this letter go to the Prime Minister, other members of the Cabinet and Sir Robert Armstrong.

The Rt. Hon. Baroness Young



... N 1983



PRIME MINISTER

MS

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Equal Opportunities in the Civil Service

Attached is the Report of a Joint Review Group with both official and union representatives on opportunities for women in the Civil Service. As you will see from her letter (Flag A), Lady Young wishes to accept the main body of the Report's findings. These are summarised in the Press Notice at Flag B. If the Report receives any publicity it is likely to be:

- (i) for its recommendation for research into the extent and nature of sexual harassment; and
- (ii) for its proposal of a Civil Service Nursery Council to encourage the provision of child-care facilities.

Lady Young is extremely sceptical about the latter.

IF

15 December 1982