

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

FRANKS REPORT

At a meeting of Ministers at 12.15 pm today, the Prime Minister had a further discussion about the handling of the Franks Report, at which the following points were agreed:

- i) The Report would be made available to MPs in the Vote Office at 3.30 pm on Tuesday 18 January and should be put on sale and made available to the press at the same time. Could you please inform HMSO.
- ii) The Report should be provided to the Leaders of the minor Opposition parties at about 2.30 pm on Tuesday 18 January with the copy of the Prime Minister's statement normally provided to them.
- iii) The Prime Minister would like the Report circulated to members of the Cabinet this evening under strictly personal cover. Copies were handed at this morning's meeting to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Lord President, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Chief Whip, who do not therefore have to be included in this circulation. I will arrange this circulation.
- iv) The Prime Minister decided to send copies under a personal letter to the Rt Hon Harold Macmillan and Lord Home, and I will make arrangements for this.
- v) The arrangements for debating the Report would be discussed through the usual channels. The Lord President reported that it now looked likely that the Opposition would provide the second day out of their own time, but the arrangements would not be made firm until the Opposition had had a chance to study the Report. If there was a two day debate, it was envisaged that the Prime Minister would open on the first day and close on the second day, that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would open on the second day and that a Defence Minister would close on the first day.

You may also like to know that the Leader of the Opposition's office have told me that Mr Foot does not at present think it necessary to take up the offer that he should see the unamended version of the Report. Copies of this minute go to David Heyhoe and Murdo Maclean.

17 January 1983

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F.E.R.B.

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Subject

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of

2.6 AH

cc LPO
CWO

Bernard Lyhan
Willier