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Prime Min. ①

Content then an announcement should be made in a written answer from you, following the draft attached?

MEAT 30/1

PRIME MINISTER

GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS : TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITIES

You will recall that a review was carried out last summer of Ministerial responsibilities for civil defence communications. Following a recommendation in Sir Robert Armstrong's minute of 7 August, your private secretary's minute of 8 August gave your approval for responsibility for civil defence telecommunications to pass from the Department of Trade and Industry to the Home Office.

2 Officials have completed discussions on the detailed arrangements for the transfer, which it is proposed should take place on 1 April 1986. The transfer can be made administratively without a Transfer of Functions Order.

3 No formal statement on the transfer of functions has yet been made. However, the intention to effect the transfer has become known to Parliament through publication of the consequent increased Home Office financial provision in the Public Expenditure White Paper for 1986/87, on which 'The Economist' of 18 January has remarked.

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4 This is a relatively minor transfer of functions and details of the transferred functions are confidential. Nonetheless it would be wise to inform Parliament formally of the intended transfer of responsibilities and of the date that it is to take place. A draft Parliamentary Question and answer that you may wish to use for this purpose are attached.

5 I am copying this minute to Douglas Hurd, who agrees with these arrangements, and to George Younger, Malcolm Rifkind, Tom King, John MacGregor and Sir Robert Armstrong.

P.C.

PAUL CHANNON

30 January 1986

Department of Trade & Industry

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DRAFT ARRANGED PQ AND ANSWER

Mr Thurnham,
to table for answer
on 6 Feb. NR9₂

QUESTION

To ask the Prime Minister if she will state which Minister has responsibility for the provisions of civil defence telecommunications?

ANSWER

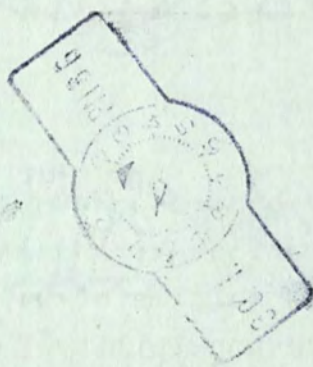
The Home Secretary has responsibility for a number of emergency communications arrangements which would support civil defence plans in time of war. As from 1 April 1986, he will also assume responsibility for other emergency communications services that are currently the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

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CIVIL SERVICE PT 18

Long Term Policy



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