

CONFIDENTIAL



*Prime Minister*

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PRIME MINISTER

REVIEW OF CONTINGENCY PLANNING

On 16 October the Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy (E(79)11th Meeting) asked me to consider further, in consultation with the Attorney General, whether any changes in the Emergency Powers Act were desirable in the light of certain apparent deficiencies identified by the Party when in Opposition.

Officials in the Home Office have consulted the Law Officers' Department but have been unable to find any practical deficiencies in either the 1920 or 1964 Emergency Powers Acts. I have no proposals to amend either.

We may perhaps have been concerned about the possibility of deficiencies in the Statutory Instrument containing Emergency Regulations which is brought into operation following the proclamation of a state of emergency. But the routine annual review by all Departments of those regulations has just been completed, and no proposals for changes of substance have been suggested.

I am sending copies of this minute to our colleagues on E Committee, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Wors*  
*29*

November 1979

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*GA Duguid*  
*Govt Machinery*

*12*  
*12/11/79*

ATTORNEY GENERAL

On 4 December the Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy (E(79)17th Meeting) asked me to consider with you whether any further changes were desirable in the existing emergency powers legislation.

My minute of 29 November to the Prime Minister recorded that consultation between our officials had not identified any practical defect in either the 1920 or the 1964 Act. Similarly, the routine review by Departments of the draft regulations to be made under the 1920 Act did not expose any need for substantive change. The question of the use of the TA is being considered separately by the Ministry of Defence.

As things stand, therefore, I still have no proposals to amend the legislation, but I should be glad if you could let me know of any point which you think would merit further examination.

I am sending copies of this minute to the Prime Minister and the other members of E Committee, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*[Handwritten signature]*

7 December 1979

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