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Ref. A08321

PRIME MINISTERTiming of announcement of TSRB decisions

You told the Cabinet on Tuesday that you thought that the Government's decisions on the TSRB recommendations should be announced this week along with the decisions on the CSAT award and on the recommendations of the AFPRB and DDRB. When the Cabinet discussed this on Thursday 29 April, some Ministers argued for postponement of the TSRB announcement on the grounds that this would have an adverse effect on the arbitration on the pay of schoolteachers in England and Wales and on the pay negotiations for the NHS groups, particularly the nurses' ballot. It was suggested that the right time for the announcement might be after these matters had been settled.

2. The hearing on the English and Welsh schoolteachers' arbitration is not expected to be on 19 May, and the best guess for the timing of the announcement of the award is the end of May. So far as the nurses are concerned, the Secretary of State for Social Services has himself made clear in his minute of 30 April that he does not expect the outcome of the nurses' ballot on the pay offer to be known until the end of May, the latest date fixed by the Royal College of Nursing for the return of ballot forms. The meeting of the Nurses and Midwives Whitley Council to consider the results of the ballot is being provisionally arranged for 6 June. If therefore the announcement of the TSRB decision were to be postponed until after the English and Welsh schoolteachers' arbitration and the nurses' ballot, it could not be made until early June. It must be very unlikely that the position could be held for so long; speculation would be greatly stimulated as soon as the Government announced that it was still considering the TSRB recommendations.

3. It is in any event improbable that the TSRB decision would affect the outcome of the English and Welsh schoolteachers' arbitration. It is much more

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likely to be influenced by the arbitration award for the Scottish schoolteachers, a flat rate increase of 6 per cent, which is likely to be announced tomorrow or on Friday. The Secretary of State for Education and Science has so far taken the view that the TSRB recommendations, even without abatement, would be unlikely to affect the schoolteachers' arbitration.

4. So far as the NHS groups are concerned the Secretary of State for Social Services is likely to continue to argue, as in his minute of 30 April, that the TSRB decision will have an impact on the negotiations. But some Ministers may argue, as they did last week, that the decisions on the DDRB, CSAT and AFPRB will in practice have a far greater influence on the negotiations.

he now does
so in his new
minute, of
5 May

M/S

REA

Robert Armstrong

5 May 1982