

Prime Minister

1

Ref. A09463

FERS

MR BUTLER

Yes

It seems to me that Sir R. Armstrong's draft is all right but that it might be improved by incorporating the formula at X below which, as I understand it, captures exactly what you have in mind. Shall I suggest that he incorporate this in the draft?

FERS
14.9.

Item 6 of the Cabinet minutes of 29th July 1982 read as follows:

THE PRIME MINISTER asked every Minister in charge of a Department to arrange for the preparation of a report on a "forward look" at the Department's programmes for the next five years. The reports should be sent to her, to reach her not later than Friday 24th December 1982.

2. My Permanent Secretary colleagues tell me that they (or some of them) have sought guidance from their Ministers on this, but without any very positive result, beyond a suggestion that they should apply to the Secretary of the Cabinet.

3. My understanding of this request was that it would provide each Minister with material drawn from the ideas and experience of his Department on the basis of which he could consider what plans and proposals to suggest as an input into the Government's political thinking about its programmes for the next Parliament; its being collected in 10 Downing Street would help the Prime Minister to formulate a positive and coherent strategy for a second period of office.

4. Would the Prime Minister be content for me to write to my Permanent Secretary colleagues as in the draft attached?

Yes
MB

REA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

13th September 1982

Partners! should think
want to catch
reminding
this decision
MB



THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE HOME SECRETARY

DRAFT LETTER FROM SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG TO SIR DOUGLAS WASS, GCB

~~cc Permanent Secretaries in charge of Departments~~

cc. other members of the Cabinet

Sir Robert Armstrong

At the meeting of the Cabinet on 29th July the Prime Minister asked ^{each} every Minister in charge of a Department to arrange for the preparation of a report on a "forward look" at the Department's programmes for the next five years, ^{and to send me the reports} ~~reports to be sent to her, to reach her not later than~~ Friday 24th December 1982.

It may help ~~of~~ ^{out} colleagues if I set ~~up~~ what I had in mind in making this request. My hope was that this exercise would ~~The Prime Minister felt, and the Cabinet agreed, that the Government provide each Minister with material drawn from the ideas and experience had reached a stage in its life when Ministers should not only be considering of his Department on which he could consider what plans and the commitments to be fulfilled and the major decisions likely to be proposals to suggest as an input into our collective thinking required during the rest of this Parliament, but should also be able to about our programmes for the next Parliament a positive and see those commitments and decisions in the context of a longer term look coherent strategy for the next Parliament. With this in mind into the future. It was now desirable to look forward at the major I envisaged that the reports should cover :-~~ elements in Departmental intentions for the next Parliament, on the assumption

not only about the commitments to be fulfilled and major decisions likely to be required during the rest of this Parliament but also

~~that the Government was returned to power at the next General Election: this should include:~~

- what major commitments with which the Government entered office in 1979 will still remain to be met in the next Parliament;
- what major new proposals are in mind to carry forward in the next Parliament initiatives and reforms started in this Parliament (for instance, privatisation proposals);



- what major new initiatives are in contemplation, of a kind which would require significant legislation or structural change, whether in pursuance of the Government's major political objectives or in order to adapt to changing economic and social circumstances.

In each case it would be helpful that the "forward look" should indicate possible timings, and should also indicate expenditure and manpower implications, so far as those can now be foreseen.

~~I ask each Minister~~ ^{of My} ~~colleagues~~ ^{to} ~~to take a close personal interest~~
 The Prime Minister expects each Departmental Minister to be responsible ~~for~~ ^{the} the shape and contents of his report, and it will be for ~~each~~ ^{for} each Minister ~~to~~ ^{will want} to decide, in consultation with ~~his~~ ^{other Ministers within the Department} Ministerial colleagues and ~~the~~ ^{the} Permanent Secretary, how the work of preparation can best be done in his Department; but I ~~should be grateful if~~ ^{ask} each of my colleagues ~~to~~ ^{will want} to take a close personal interest in the shape and contents of the eventual report.

~~I am sending copies of this letter to all Permanent Secretary Heads of Departments.~~

I am copying this letter to all members of the Cabinet and Sir ~~John~~ Robert Armstrong.

