



no DA

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

28 January 1983

PERSONAL

Dear Harold,

Thank you very much for your letter of 21 January about the intelligence section of the Franks Report.

I should be glad to have a further word with you about this when we have an opportunity. You will have seen that I announced in my speech on the Franks Report that I agree with the Committee's suggestion that the Chairman of the JIC should be appointed by the Prime Minister and should be a member of the Cabinet Office who is engaged full-time on intelligence matters. I am very grateful to you for your advice about this.

I also agree with what you say about the care with which we should discuss these matters in public. You will have seen that I made this point in my speech too.

My office will telephone to find a time when we can discuss these things

Yours sincerely  
Margaret

The Rt. Hon. The Viscount Watkinson, C.H.

B

After despatch —

Caroline

Pl. will  
you organise  
a date.



10 DOWNING STREET

~~Prime Minister~~

It would probably  
be useful for you to hear  
from Lord Watkinson what he  
has to say about intelligence.  
Shall we fix a time for  
him to come in?

hs

FERS

27.1.

ms



Private & Personal

FROM VISCOUNT WATKINSON, P.C., C.H.

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21/1/83

Re Rt-Hon Margaret Thatcher M.C.  
Prime Minister

Dear Margaret

In the light of re-iterated statements from the FCO that the intelligence section of our report is, "a little thin", I must write to you & say that I felt (I do not speak for anyone else) that it would be wrong, in the national interest, to wash too much dirty intelligence linen in public in the report.

This does not mean that I do not feel anxiety & alarm at the way in which the SIC appears to operate.

So in my view it is essential that the chair of SIC should no longer be held by a part time FCO official.

You should appoint the chairman. He should be independent - full time - capable of exercising political judgement - determined to play "devil's advocate" to concentrate minds and dedicated to missing no tricks so far as this is humanly possible.

He should come from inside the public service  
but once appointed he is his own man without  
departmental ties or loyalties.

Very best wish

f -

Harold