

PRIME MINISTER

REVIEW BODY REPORTS

You may like to see the attached note by Willie Rickett on the precedents for statements on TSRB Reports.

I agree that you may like to discuss the Parliamentary handling of these statements with the Lord President and the Chief Whip on Monday.

We have considered whether the solution would be for you to make a written statement on the Armed Forces, Doctors and Dentists and the Top Salaries (for which there are several precedents); and for the Lord President to make a written statement on Ministers and MPs. But I do not think that this would work, both for the reasons given by Willie Rickett and because any statement about the Cabinet's attitude to the recommendations about their own pay ought to come from you.

I am afraid that there does not look to me as if there is any escape from your making an oral statement: any alternative could well lead to charges that you were trying to cover the Reports up, which would make it worse.

R.E.R.B

6 May 1983

MR BUTLER

REVIEW BODY REPORTS

You asked what statements had been made in the past about Review Body Reports.

In 1982, the Prime Minister made a written statement covering the award of the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal and the reports of the Review Bodies on the pay of the Armed Forces, the Doctors and Dentists, and Top Salaries. (Written Answer to Mr. John Ward, 6 May, 1982). The Lord President made a written statement the same day on the salaries of Members of Parliament. (There was no TSRB report on MPs pay last year).

In 1981, the Prime Minister made a written statement on the reports of the AFPRB, the DDRB and TSRB, which also covered the question of MPs and Ministers pay. (Written answer to Mr. Edward Du Cann, Friday, 15 May 1981).

In 1980, the Prime Minister made an oral statement on 17 July on the reports of the Top Salaries Review Body on the pay of civil servants, senior officers in the Armed Forces, members of the Judiciary, chairmen and members of boards of nationalised industries, and Members of Parliament and Ministers.

In 1979, the Leader of the House made an oral statement on 21 June about the report of the TSRB and the pay of Members of Parliament and Ministers. He appears to have made this statement on behalf of the Prime Minister who was attending the European Council in Strasbourg (the Home Secretary answered Prime Minister's Questions that day). Mr. Foot replied for the Opposition to the Leader's statement.

On reflection I think that the argument that the Lord President might make a separate statement on MPs pay does not really hold water since the Review Bodies report to the Prime Minister; last year there were no Review Body recommendations covering MPs pay, and in these circumstances a statement by the Lord President was more justifiable. There are arguments for letting the Opposition

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know through the usual channels the day of the publication of these reports, if only because the TSRB report makes recommendations on their own pay. You agreed that it would be sensible for the Prime Minister to take the opportunity at her Monday meeting with the Lord President and the Chief Whip to have a preliminary discussion of the Parliamentary handling of these reports.

CM

6 May, 1983

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH COLLEAGUES AT 1215 ON MONDAY

Apart from any business left over from Chequers on Sunday, there are three subjects which you may like to cover at this meeting:-

1. Handling of the statements on the TSRB Reports and the Security Commission's Report on the Prime case (papers below):
2. Recommendations for Life Peerages and Privy Counsellorships in the Birthday Honours (papers below);
3. Perhaps - the principle of hereditary Peerages (papers in the Hot Box).

*Papers with Honours*

*P.R.B.*

6 May 1983