



DMB
27/10

David

NBPM

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

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T J Flesher Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

27 October 1983

Dear Mr Flesher,

I spoke to David Barclay at the end of last week to give him some background about the debate on the Civil Service which will take place in the House this Friday and during the course of which the Minister of State will speak. I said I would let you have some more information this week, particularly in view of the Prime Minister's interest as Minister for the Civil Service.

There has, for some time now, been interest expressed by Members in having a debate on the Civil Service and the Minister regards Friday's debate as, primarily, an House of Commons occasion. The Minister has deliberately not finalised his speech until now, wanting to take account of the interests of Members' on their return and of the likely order of speakers. On the latter, Mr du Cann will open the debate and, depending upon its course, the Minister hopes to intervene between 11 o'clock and 12 o'clock, offering to take 5 or 10 minutes at the end to deal with any further points. Alan Williams will be the main Opposition Speaker and hopes to follow the Minister immediately.

The Minister will set his speech against the background of rapid and considerable growth in the public services as a whole before honing in on the growth in the Civil Service. In doing so, he will remind the House of the huge range of activities undertaken by the Civil Service, but his intention is to provide a context for the Government's aims on coming to office in 1979 to reduce the burden of the public sector and to promote better management and greater economy and efficiency.

The Government's achievements on manpower and the search for efficiency and effectiveness will form the core of the Minister's speech. He will emphasise that the Government is not content to rest on its achievements and that its aim is not just to cut costs. Rather, it is to secure more value for money and to provide a better service while, at the same time, reinforcing and promoting changes in attitudes and approaches which are taking place and will continue - as was said in the context of the FMI: "It is a programme for the life of a Parliament and beyond".

The core of the speech, then, will discuss manpower - without, of course, prejudging decisions about manpower after 1984 - the efficiency programme, MINIS, leading up to the Financial Management Initiative in general and the recent White Paper on "Financial Management in Government Departments" (Cmnd 9058). The Minister will refer to the TCSC and their recommendations on efficiency and effectiveness in the Civil Service. Beyond that, there are a good many points on which the Minister might speak (for example, privatisation and the reduction in Quangos; the Machinery of Government; pay, conditions of service and personnel policies) and there are a good many issues on which he is prepared to speak should they arise. But much will depend upon the course of the debate.

In conclusion, the Minister will want to underline the value the Government attaches to the Civil Service and its work; to underline the changes already taking place in attitudes and practices; and to repeat that the Government's aims are to reinforce and promote trends, already running inside and outside the Service, which are producing a more effective Service and one more relevant to present conditions as well as a better service to the public at a lower cost.

I am copying this to Mary Brown, David Heyhoe and Murdo Maclean.

Yours sincerely

Debbie McCambridge

P.P.

M E CORCORAN
Private Secretary

27 OCT 1983



Sir Robin Ibbs

cc ✓ Mr Flesher (No 10)
Mr Hatfield
Mrs Flanagan

DR
19/10

CIVIL SERVICE DEBATE

1. There is to be a debate on the civil service on Friday morning, 28 October. I understand that it will be a low-key affair. Nevertheless, it seems likely that efficiency and effectiveness in the civil service will be a prominent theme and Mr Hayhoe, who will be speaking on behalf of the Government, will want to put the case reasonably forcefully for what is being done to reform the service.
2. The speech and briefing material are being put together by the MPO and the Treasury. Those responsible have asked me whether it would be possible to quote from the Prime Minister's commission to you of last week as hard evidence of renewed determination.
3. Subject to advice from Mr Flesher and Mr Hatfield I have agreed with Mrs Flanagan that we should not use directly the ammunition provided by the commission on this occasion. It is too unimportant an event to justify that. I would much prefer to reserve the material, possibly for use at a Select Committee appearance.
4. Nevertheless, I think would be appropriate for Mr Hayhoe to draw on two thoughts in the commission, paraphrasing as necessary. These are:
 - "Public servants generally must be convinced that the only way forward is to get more output, year by year, from the resources at their disposal."
 - "..... the [scrutiny] technique might be applied to securing better value for money in Government policy, with the aim of achieving really significant

contributions to maintaining the quality of Government services within what the taxpayer can afford."

I judge that it would be useful for the Government's spokesman to make both of these points, so providing a leadership statement to the civil service as well as an indication to the wider world that the momentum is not slackening. He might want to go on to say that you will be helping the Government achieve these goals. But I do not think that he should refer, at this stage, to the existence of a commission, still less to quote from it.

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IAN B BEESLEY
14 October 1983