

PRIME MINISTER

FINANCIAL REPORTING TO PARLIAMENT

Although you were content with the Chief Secretary's proposals to change the structure of public expenditure documents presented to Parliament, you questioned the proposal to replace the debate on Public Expenditure in January/February with a new Parliamentary debate in May/June.

This has led to further exchanges between the Chief Secretary and the Lord President:

Flag A: letter of 11 April from the Chief Secretary's office

Flag B: Lord President's minute of 15 April

Flag C: Chief Secretary's rejoinder of 22 April.

They now seem to have agreed an alternative approach. This would involve:

- (i) replacing the present one day Autumn Statement debate in December with a two day Autumn Statement debate in early January, with the second of those days devoted to public expenditure issues;
- (ii) getting rid of the present one day debate on the Public Expenditure White Paper in January/February;
- (iii) (only if necessary to secure the agreement of the Opposition and the Select Committees) upgrading the third reading of the Finance Bill into a full debate on the economy.

Content for the Lord President to negotiate a package on these lines and meantime for a holding response to be included in the memorandum?

Peace

PAUL GRAY

22 April 1988

Yes no