

Security



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

2 April, 1982.

Dear Mr. Foot.

In my statement to the House on 26 March 1981 I announced, after consulting you, that I had asked the Security Commission to conduct a review of security procedures and practices in the public service and to consider what changes, if any, were required.

As you know, the Commission has now completed its inquiry and submitted its report. After careful consideration I have accepted the view of Lord Diplock and his colleagues that it would not be in the national interest to publish their report in its entirety, since substantial portions of it concern the most sensitive details of procedures in the security agencies.

I have also considered Lord Diplock's advice that any published version of the report would need to be edited to such an extent that it would present a misleading picture, and I have decided to follow the precedent of the statement on the findings of the conference of Privy Counsellors on security in March 1956, and to publish in the form of a White Paper as many of the Commission's recommendations as is consistent with the needs of national security, with as full as possible an account of the thinking of the Commission which lies behind them, together with the Government's comments on them. This procedure, and the terms of the White Paper, have been agreed with Lord Diplock and his colleagues.

/ I will send you

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I will send you next week an advance copy of the White Paper, which we propose to publish on Wednesday 7 April, and of an oral statement which I propose to make in the House on 6 April.

I also propose to announce on 7 April the resignation of Lord Diplock as Chairman of the Security Commission and the consequential appointments of Lord Bridge as his successor and Lord Justice Griffiths, about which I consulted you on 28 February.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Storer

The Rt. Hon. Michael Foot, M.P.

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DRAFT OF A LETTER FOR THE PRIME MINISTER
TO SEND TO THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION ON
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