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*Handwritten initials and notes:*  
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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1982

I wrote to you on 2 April, about arrangements for reporting to Parliament the outcome of the Security Commission's Review of security procedures and practices in the public service, which I announced to the House on 26 March 1981.

As you know, I decided to delay the timetable which had been set out in my letter, because of Parliament's justified preoccupation with the Falkland Islands in recent weeks.

I should now like to proceed on these matters without too much further delay, so that new appointments on the Commission can take effect. I am, however, reluctant to take up the time of Parliament in present circumstances by making an oral statement in advance of publication of the planned White Paper.

In these circumstances, I have it in mind to publish the White Paper on Thursday 20 May, and to announce this by written answer the previous day. If the question of a debate were to be raised with the Lord President of the Council on 20 May, I hope he would be able to indicate his intention to find time in due course.

If you were ready to table a question for answer on 19 May on the lines of the enclosed draft, I should be happy to announce publication of the White Paper in reply.

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/ It would be

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- 2 -

It would be my intention to issue a press statement announcing the resignation of Lord Diplock, and the consequential appointments of Lord Bridges and Lord Justice Griffiths, on 20 May. I would also forward to you, on Privy Counsellor terms, an advance copy of the White Paper on 19 May.

(SGD) MARGARET THATCHER

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

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DRAFT QUESTION

To ask the Prime Minister whether she can yet make a statement about the recent report by the Security Commission into security procedures and practices in the public service; and whether the Commission's report will be published.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

From:  
Michael Foot MP

18 May 1982

*Dear Margaret*

Thank you for your letter.  
I am sorry that you are  
unwilling to make an oral  
statement about the Security  
Commission report. I think  
it would have been better to  
have followed the normal  
practice. If you intend to  
go ahead with a written reply,  
I shall quite understand if  
you invite a Privy Councillor  
to put down the Question.

*M. Foot*

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP

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HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

From:  
Michael Foot MP

18 May 1982

*Dear Margaret,*

Thank you for your letter about the publication of the Security Commission's Review of security procedures and practices in the public service and your proposal to announce the resignation of Lord Diplock and the appointments of Lord Bridges and Lord Justice Griffiths.

I can understand your reluctance to make an oral statement in advance of publication of the White Paper. However, life must go on. There is a great deal of interest on our side of the House in this review and I believe that to announce its publication by Written Answer might suggest that the Government and the Opposition, particularly if I am to put down the Question, did not regard it as important.

I should be grateful, therefore, if you would agree to follow the usual practice and make a brief oral statement in advance of publication.

*Michael*

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP



*From the Secretary of the Cabinet*

*Mr. Pattison.*

*Security Commission.*

*I attach below a somewhat revised version of the draft letter to Mr. Michael Foot. This has been approved by the Secretary of the Cabinet.*

*J. H. [Signature]*

*13/5*

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE LEADER OF THE  
OPPOSITION

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As you know, I decided to delay the timetable which had been set out in my letter, because of Parliament's justified preoccupation with the Falkland Islands in recent weeks.

I should now like to proceed on these matters without too much further delay, so that new appointments on the Commission can take effect. I am, however, reluctant to take up the time of Parliament in present circumstances by making an oral statement in advance of publication of the planned White Paper.

In these circumstances, I have it in mind to publish the White Paper on Thursday, 20th May, and to announce this by written answer the previous day. If the question of a debate <sup>were to be</sup> was raised with the Lord President of the Council on 20th May, I hope he would be able to indicate his intention to find time in due course.

If you were ready to table a question for answer on 19th  
- May on the lines of the enclosed draft, I should be happy to announce publication of the White Paper in reply.

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the whole way. In the end, you will find it to be a very

1. you have to, and that's what you have to do.

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MAY 1982



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