



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

3 May 1983

Dear Charlotte,

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS ON THE TSRB REPORT ON  
PARLIAMENTARY PAY AND ALLOWANCES

The following Parliamentary Questions on the TSRB Report on Parliamentary Pay and Allowances are currently down to the Lord President of the Council:

"Mr Arthur Lewis (Newham North West): To ask the Lord President of the Council, when Her Majesty's Government now expects to receive the report of the committee on salaries of honourable Members; and when he expects to make an announcement in connection with this subject."

"Mr Jack Dormand (Easington): To ask the Lord President of the Council, if he will make a statement on the Government's proposals on the report of the Top Salaries Review Body."

Mr Lewis's Question is for written reply and must be answered not later than tomorrow. The Question tabled by Mr Dormand (who is Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party) is for Oral Answer on Monday, 9 May.

The draft Answers and briefing for both Questions have been provided by the Treasury and are contained in the attached folders. The Answers proposed do not seem to us fully to meet the Questions, particularly in the case of Mr Lewis. We propose instead to give answers along the following lines:

Draft Answer to Mr Lewis's Question

"My Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister received the Report of the Top Salaries Review Body on Parliamentary pay and allowances at the end of last week. When the Government has considered the Review Body's advice it will bring forward proposals to the House."

.../...

Miss Charlotte Stevens  
Parliamentary Clerk  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1



2.  
will consider it  
other way  
has recently received  
is now considering  
considered

Draft Answer to Mr Dormand's Question

"The Government is currently considering the advice contained in the TSRB Report on Parliamentary pay and allowances and will bring forward proposals to the House in due course."

I should be grateful if you could let me know whether the Prime Minister is content with these proposed replies, along with the answers to the possible supplementaries to Mr Dormand's Question which Treasury have supplied.

*Yours ever*  
*any*  
A Bastian  
Parliamentary Clerk



MJ

3 May 1983

Thank you for your letter to Charlotte Stevens about the two Questions down to the Lord President about the TSRB Report on MPs' pay.

The Prime Minister thinks that the answer should be on the following lines:-

"The Government has just received the TSRB Report on Parliamentary Pay and Allowances and will now be considering it in the usual way."

MS

A. Bastian, Esq.  
Lord President's Office.





Prime Minister 2

To see the Lord  
President's remarks  
in the House today  
about MPS pay etc.

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE  
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

9 May 1983

After Peter,

MUS 9/5

MF

MP's PAY

.. I attach, as promised, a copy of the reply on this subject which the Lord President gave this afternoon to Mr Jack Dormand, together with a transcript of the subsequent supplementary exchanges.

I am also sending copies to Michael Scholar (No 10) and to Sir Robert Armstrong's office.

Jan. 1983

12/5/83

D C R Heyhoe  
Private Secretary

P L Gregson Esq  
Room 123  
Cabinet Office  
70 Whitehall  
LONDON SW1





PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION FOR ORAL ANSWER

NO: 27

DATE: MONDAY, 9 MAY 1983

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MR JACK DORMAN (Easington): To ask Lord President of the Council, if he will make a statement on the Government's proposals on the report of the Top Salaries Review Body.

MR JOHN BIFFEN:

As I explained to the hon member for Newham North West, in my Written Reply of 4 May, the Government have received the Review Body's Report and are <sup>now</sup> considering it.



MR DORMAND: Does the r h G agree that there <sup>should be</sup> ~~is~~ the greatest urgency <sup>in</sup> ~~in~~ improving some aspects of h Ms' conditions, not least ~~these of~~ severance and pension arrangements? Is he aware of the cynicism that exists among some h Ms about the lack of commitment by the Govt to implement recommendations <sup>that</sup> ~~which~~ have been arrived at after hard work and detailed investigation by an independent body? Will he use his influence to see that recommendations are agreed? In view of the urgency of these matters, will he arrange for a debate on the report this week?



Add to 27.

MR. BIFFEN: The value of the work that is undertaken by the Top Salaries Review Body is generally recognised throughout the Hse, particularly in the light of those factors mentioned by the h G, including pension arrangements. Those will all be matters for the Hse to consider at one time or another but sheer practical hard common sense compels me to say that it is unlikely that there will be a debate upon the rpt ~~Committee~~ this week.

SIR PETER EMERY: ~~During the next few days~~ Will my r h F try to obtain a joint agreement on the rpt between the Govt and the Opposition before the Hse is ~~disbanded~~ dissolved so that a commitment is made by this Parlt and we do not have to raise the matter for debate and new commitment in the new Parlt?

MR. BIFFEN: I think that the Hse <sup>will</sup> ~~would~~ appreciate it if I <sup>am</sup> ~~were~~ candid about this. I simply do not see <sup>how</sup> ~~that~~ it ~~will be possible~~ <sup>can</sup> for time ~~to~~ be made available during the next three or four days for the resolution of what is a contentious and complex problem.



Add to 27(2)

MR. JOHN SILKIN: Does the Leader of the Hse share my view that <sup>no</sup>~~any~~ h M should be prejudiced by the fact that there is likely to be a dissolution of Parlt? If so, should not the r h G accept the advice for of his h F the M for Honiton (Sir P. Emery) and perhaps allow some discussions through the usual channels to see whether we can come to some agreement before the next Parlt?

MR. BIFFEN: Those matters are ultimately for the authority of Parlt and not for an agreement between the usual channels <sup>[Interruption.]</sup> <sup>that would</sup> Yes, ~~they~~ set aside the ultimate authority of Parlt. I am certain that when the recommendations are studied there will be anxiety on whatever point Parlt has to take a view upon. Nothing will be done to prejudice the position of people now serving in this Parlt.

MR. JOHN SILKIN: I am glad to have the r h G's assurance that nobody should be prejudiced by the dissolution of Parlt. Is ~~not~~ the r h G aware that ~~the r h G's~~ <sup>r h G's</sup> the lead that he and I may give to our h Fs will have some degree of ~~pursuasiveness~~ <sup>pursuasiveness</sup> even though it may not be conclusive?



Add to 27(3)

[ MR. BIFFEN: Of course I accept that point.

[ SIR KENNETH LEWIS: On what basis can ~~it be putting~~  
into the category  
~~justified that~~ Ms of Parlt ~~come under the heading~~ of those  
receiving top salaries ~~be justified?~~

[ MR. BIFFEN: It was originally the decision of the  
Hse that these matters should be considered by the Top Salaries  
Review Body. Whether that is a matter that falls under the  
Trade descriptions legislation  
~~Misleading Merchandise Act~~ is another ~~qns~~ ~~It~~ It is not  
my fault; it is a decision of the Hse.

F follows