



SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

MANAGEMENT - IN CONFIDENCE

PRIME MINISTER

4 April 1985

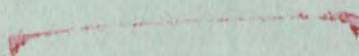
ASSASSINATION AND DEATH IN SERVICE

- with CDP ITE ?*
1. I refer to the minute of 27 March 1985 to you from the Chief Secretary covering a report by officials at the Treasury and the FCO on the benefits payable to the dependants of those who die in service.
 2. In his minute the Chief Secretary indicates that he and Baroness Young are agreed in recommending two improvements to the benefits that can be paid to such dependants. I too find these particular proposals acceptable.
 3. I do not, however, favour the other proposals. Those of us who are responsible for the public service pension schemes are under continual pressure for improvements in death-in-service cases. Any improvements made to the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme beyond those agreed between the Chief Secretary and Baroness Young would stimulate even greater pressure. We would find it very difficult not to introduce into other schemes improvements comparable to those made in the Civil Service Scheme. Certainly, the disparity of treatment between the dependants of those who were the victims of public outrage and the dependants of those who died in service and as a result of their service but from less violent causes would be brought into sharp focus.
 4. The question of the benefits payable to the dependants of those who die in service is emotive, and changes made in one scheme for particular circumstances, unless clearly defensible, tend to have a ripple effect. The problem of where and how to stop is not made easier by the fact that (as the Joint Report points out) widows of many private sector scheme members who die in service are markedly better dealt with financially than are widows of those in the public service. For these reasons I think we should go no further than the proposals set out in paragraph 9.(a) of the Chief Secretary's minute.
 5. A copy of this minute goes to Quintin Hailsham, Geoffrey Howe, Peter Rees, Leon Brittan, Michael Heseltine, Keith Joseph, Patrick Jenkin, Norman Fowler and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

G.Y.

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