



PRIME MINISTER

Agree arrangements at X
for annual scrutiny of
Cabinet Office costs?

MAR 81

Ref. A02108

MR. WHITMORE

See
Govt. Mach
Rayner:
Pt 5.

Following the Cabinet decision last autumn that it should have an annual statement on the cost of running central Government, the Minister of State, Civil Service Department, wrote on 22nd April to departmental Ministers, with a copy to the Prime Minister, outlining the information he would require to enable him to carry out his remit from Cabinet. The new procedure requires departmental Ministers to scrutinise the cost of running their Departments and to submit an analysis of the cost with a commentary summarising the nature of the scrutiny which has been carried out. The scrutiny exercise for the current year is to be regarded as a pilot run, and departmental returns are to be submitted until the end of September. For future years, the returns will have to reach the Civil Service Department by the beginning of June.

X 2. Since the Prime Minister is the responsible Minister for the Cabinet Office, I am sure that she will wish to be involved in the scrutiny of the Cabinet Office's costs. I propose, if she is content, myself to undertake the detailed scrutiny, and to provide her with a statement about the scrutiny I have undertaken and about any proposals I have for more detailed scrutiny of particular areas before submitting the return to the Civil Service Department.

LONDON
RE A

(Robert Armstrong)

7th May, 1980

Free

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Court Mail

MR. WRIGHT

CABINET OFFICE

The Prime Minister has seen Sir Robert Armstrong's minute (Ref: A02108) to Mr. Whitmore of 7 May, about the scrutiny of annual costs exercise in respect of the Cabinet Office.

She is content with Sir Robert's proposals for handling this.

M. A. PATTISON

9 May 1980

KAB