



CNO  
Civil Service

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

Dr Rhodes Boyson MP  
Minister of State for  
Social Security  
Department of Health and  
Social Security  
Alexander Fleming House  
Elephant & Castle  
London SE1 6BY

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5/9.

2 September 1983

Dear Minister

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS: DRAFT WHITE PAPER

Thank you for your letter of 13 August.

Paragraph 5 deliberately avoids any undertaking to publish the products of high-level information systems. What it envisages is that the greater clarity about priorities which those systems help to create within the Government should inform the presentation to Parliament of each department's plans for expenditure. That seems to me wholly in accordance with our policy of restraining public expenditure and promoting better public and parliamentary understanding of the need to select priorities within a limited total.

I do not think that we should have a whole series of annual reports. But I believe, and the Prime Minister has agreed, that it will be worth doing it at least once more. It will help to keep up the impetus if all concerned know that a further report will enable those who are interested to compare the promises in Part 2 with what is actually achieved.

Copies of this letter go to the recipients of yours.

Yours sincerely

J. R. G. R.

J. R. PETER REES

[Approved by the (Chief Secretary)]

Civil Service  
Henry Tom  
Management  
Rt. 13

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*From the Minister of State for Social Security*

The Rt Hon Peter Rees QC MP  
Chief Secretary  
HM Treasury  
Parliament Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 3AG

13, August 1983

*Dear Peter,*

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS: DRAFT WHITE PAPER

Thank you for the copy to Norman Fowler of the draft of part 1 of this White Paper. I am content with publication on 22 September as you suggest, but there are two points in the text where I think change may be needed.

The first concerns publication of the products of the various high-level information systems. Paragraph 54 makes plain that it is for each departmental Minister to decide what information will be disclosed. However, paragraph 5 seems to pre-judge that decision by promising Parliament information about priorities. I suggest you should delete from paragraphs the phrase "and Parliament is assessing the resulting decisions".

The second concerns publications about the FMI as a whole. I think it is a mistake to commit ourselves to publishing a further report in July 1984, as is done in paragraph 40. The FMI is a long-term project, whose success hinges on changing attitudes. That cannot be done to a precise timetable, nor will it lead to a series of neat achievements to be recorded in an annual report. Hence I suggest deleting the second sentence in paragraph 40.

I am copying this letter to recipients of yours.

*All good wishes  
Yours  
Rhe*

DR RHODES BOYSON

Civil Service  
Long Term  
Pt 13

15 AUG 1983





*With the Compliments of  
the Minister for Social Security*

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