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Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Lord Hailsham
 of St Marylebone, CH, FRS, DCL
 The Lord Chancellor
 House of Lords
 London
 SW1A 0PW

19 December 1985

De Quint,

TSRB EVIDENCE: JUDICIAL SALARIES

I understand that your Department is planning to submit evidence to the TSRB on judicial salaries at the end of this week, to meet the TSRB's request that the Government's evidence should be submitted by the end of this year. My officials will be letting you have a number of minor drafting comments. My concern is with timing.

As you know, we are due to discuss the future of the TSRB at a meeting under the Prime Minister's chairmanship on 16 January. It will not, in fact, be possible for quite genuine operational reasons to submit evidence, of the type requested by the TSRB, for either the higher civil service or senior armed services officers before that meeting.

I am concerned that if we submit the evidence on the judiciary earlier than that and decide soon after to abolish the TSRB we may be accused of bad faith. The TSRB would feel that they have been treated in a cavalier and discourteous manner. They might argue that they should be allowed to finish preparation of a report on which they will have already started work.

I am anxious that colleagues should be able to consider the proposals Nigel has put forward for winding up the TSRB without such presentational problems overhanging the discussion. I would therefore be most grateful if you too could agree to delay submitting your Department's evidence until after the Prime Minister's meeting.

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Obviously, I am not intending by this request to pre-empt in any way the discussion on 16 January. If colleagues did decide to keep the TSRB, all the evidence could then be put forward immediately. Taking account of the holiday period the delay would be only two weeks and I am sure that the TSRB could live with that.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, Richard Luce and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yes, we,
JH

JOHN MacGREGOR

