



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

25 November, 1982

Dear Mr. Price,

Thank you for your letter of 11 November in which you asked me for a copy of "the report of the Central Policy Review Staff relating to the future financing of the welfare state".

There was no such report. The CPRS prepared a confidential analysis for Ministers, outlining a number of possible ways of limiting the growth of public spending in the longer term, so that we could decide whether to commission further work on any of them. As I explained to the House on 11 November, that paper was not discussed and no further work is being done on it.

In view of your request I have considered whether the paper should be made available to the Committee but I have concluded that it should not. It is well established that advice by officials to Ministers on policy issues is not made available to the House itself or to Select Committees, whether in confidence or otherwise, save in the most exceptional circumstances. It does not seem to me that the circumstances in this case are so exceptional as to justify a departure from the rule.

C. Price, Esq., M.P.,

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

WJ



Ref. A082/0248

MR RICKETT *mgre* *cm* *24/11*

Select Committee on Education, Science and Arts: CPRS
"Report on Welfare State"

In your letter of 12th November you requested a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to the Chairman of the Education, Science and Arts Committee in response to his request to the Prime Minister to make available to the Committee a copy of the "report of the CPRS relating to the future financing of the welfare state". Similar requests have been made to the Prime Minister and to the CPRS in the past by the Chairmen of the Select Committees on Energy (PM's reply of 9th July 1980) and Transport (PM's reply of 14th December 1981).

2. In both previous cases the Prime Minister's refusal led to requests from the Committee in question that members of the CPRS should appear before the Select Committee to give oral evidence. In both cases the CPRS declined and the Committees decided not to press the matter any further.

3. It is recommended that the Prime Minister should take the same line as she took in these previous cases, arguing that it is well established that advice to Ministers is not made available to the House itself or to its Select Committees. If this refusal leads the Committee to follow up with a similar request to those made in previous years for the appearance of the CPRS members concerned in order to give oral evidence, this will have to be duly considered. It is also worth repeating the point made by the Prime Minister in the House on 11th November that the CPRS document was not a report as such but simply a paper suggesting further work which was not in the event pursued.

- 4. I attach a draft reply on the above lines which the Prime Minister may care to send to Mr Christopher Price.

RH
R P HATFIELD

24th November 1982



DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO CHRISTOPHER PRICE, MP

Thank you for your letter of 11th November in which you ^{asked} ask me for a copy of "the report of the Central Policy Review Staff relating to the future financing of the welfare state".

There was no such report. The CPRS prepared a confidential analysis for Ministers, outlining a number of possible ways of limiting the growth of public spending in the longer term, so that ^{we} ~~Ministers~~ could decide whether to commission further work on any of them. As I explained to the House on 11th November, that paper was not discussed and no further work is being done on it.

In view of your request I have considered whether the paper should be made available to the Committee but I have concluded that it should not. It is well established that advice by officials to Ministers on policy issues is not made available to the House itself or to Select Committees, whether in confidence or otherwise, save in the most exceptional circumstances. It does not seem to me that the circumstances in this case are so exceptional as to justify a departure from the rule.

① 22/11

Christopher PRICE MP 20



19/11

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

12 November, 1982.

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from Christopher Price, M.P. He writes as Chairman of the Select Committee on Education, Science and Arts, asking if she will provide the Committee with a copy of the CPRS report on future financing of the welfare state. I should be grateful for the draft of a reply the Prime Minister might send to Mr. Price by 19 November, if at all possible. I imagine the Prime Minister will wish to reply to Mr. Price in much the same terms as she replied to Alf Morris at Question Time last Thursday (Official Report Col. 667).

W. F. S. RICKETT

Richard Hatfield, Esq.,
Cabinet Office.

A handwritten signature, possibly 'JH', in the bottom right corner of the page.



to

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

12 November, 1982.

I write on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 11 November which you wrote in your capacity as Chairman of the Select Committee on Education, Science and Arts.

I will place your letter before the Prime Minister, and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

W. F. S. RICKETT

Christopher Price, Esq., M.P.

JP



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

Christopher Price writes as Chairman of the Education, Science and Arts Committee to ask if you would provide the Committee with a copy of the CPRS "report" on the welfare state. I imagine you will wish to reply in much the same terms as you replied to Alf Morris at Question Time on Thursday. *ms*

We will let you have a draft reply.

wh

ms

12 November, 1982.



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LONDON SW1A 0AA

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EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND ARTS COMMITTEE

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP
10 Downing Street
London SW1

11 November 1982

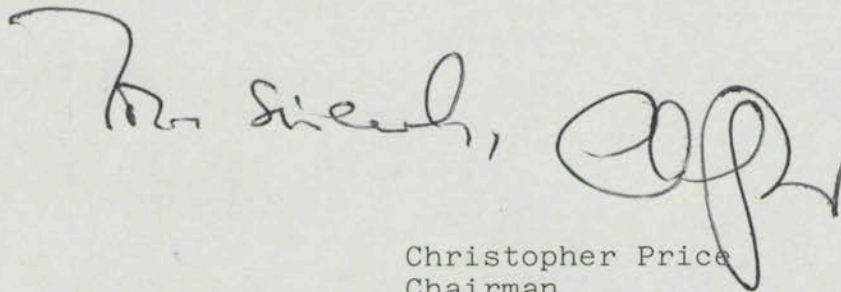
Dear Prime Minister

At their meeting yesterday the Committee directed me to ask you whether you would be prepared to provide them with a copy of the report of the Central Policy Review Staff relating to the future financing of the welfare state.

In view of the substantial comment there has been on the alleged contents of the report in the press and elsewhere, not least on the education expenditure options which are said to have been considered, the report is bound to be mentioned at our Expenditure meeting with the Secretary of State on 13th December.

In addition, the Committee are naturally concerned with any possible options that are considered by Government in the field of education, since this is closely akin to matters which it is the concern and duty of the Committee to consider also.

I very much hope that you will find it possible to give a favourable response to our request.



Christopher Price
Chairman