

FROM: THE RT.HON. SIR KEITH JOSEPH, Bt. MP.



KJ/SMC

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ACB to desk

Rt.Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP.

15th May 1978

Dear Margaret,

Leslie Chapman's Book, "Your Disobedient Civil Servant" on the saving of public money.

As I told you, I invited Mr. Chapman for a talk after his two articles appeared in the Sunday Times well over a year ago. He had two long sessions with David Howell, Kenneth Baker and me. We decided to leave the next until the book should be published.

His book is admirable. It constitutes a draft of a programme to which we could work, which would enable us to save hundred of millions of pounds by the third year of your government.

I am about to start discussions with Edward Du Cann, David Howell and Kenneth Baker preparatory to a further meeting with Leslie Chapman.

I shall also, of course, be discussing the subject with Geoffrey Howe, to whom I am copying this letter, and I think that Willie will be interested because of the machinery of government implications in connection with the strengthened Exchequer and Audit Department and with dispersing more widely for smaller blocks of expenditure the responsibilities of Accounting Officers. I am, therefore, sending a copy also to Willie.

I hope to report to you again within a few weeks. You may then wish, after consulting with Willie and Geoffrey, to consult any one you think fit on the degree to which a more intensive and systematic search for economies by way of eliminating waste might be best injected into the Civil Service. The subject and the potential benefits are important enough, I believe, for you to have practicable instructions in mind to give Ministers and top Civil Servants on taking office. I am also copying to Adam Ridley because of the potential economies.

Keith Joseph