

The speech Philip Hammond needs to make tomorrow

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Completely bizarrely the Spring Statement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be delivered tomorrow. Whether we need a Spring Statement at all is not the point to discuss now. The fact that it will be delivered when the country is in constitutional crisis is what matters.

There is one speech Hammond needs to give tomorrow. It is this:

Mr Deputy Speaker, I have reflected on the obligations laid upon me today. In my opinion this is not the moment to present a statement to this House on this government's plans for the economy. There is too much we simply do not know at present to let me do that.

As such, with his permission and that of the House I propose to return to deliver my statement in May. By then matters relating to Brexit should have been resolved and the House will have had an adjournment during which it might have reflected on such matters, it will then be ready to look forward again.

I commend this decision to the House.

This will not happen of course. He will talk about all he proposes. And never will a Chancellor have spoken so purposelessly. He has no clue whether anything he says will be delivered. Less still does he know if he will be Chancellor. Or even be in government.

As such I will, by and large, be treating the event with the contempt it deserves.