

# LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 4.00 date: 15.10.79

The main purpose of today's Lobby was to introduce Bernard Ingham, who would take over as Chief Press Secretary on 1 November and his Deputy, Neville Gaffin. Henry James would be leaving No. 10 on 1 November and, after a month's leave would rejoin Vickers on 1 December as Public Relations Adviser to the Main Board.

## PRIME MINISTER'S ENGAGEMENTS

Just for the record, it is nonsense that the Prime Minister had been on holiday in Portugal recently, as reported in one Sunday paper. Today Mrs. Thatcher had seen Lord Carrington this morning who had briefed her on the general situation regarding the Constitutional Conference.

## CIVIL SERVICE CUTS

We thought it unlikely that any Departments had refused to give options at the levels asked for by the Government. Correspondents must assume that all Departments had responded to the request to conduct the review of manpower. Whether or not they would be able to make cuts of x per cent and still maintain services specifically required by Ministers of them was another matter.

## SIR DEREK RAYNER

We confirmed that the Prime Minister had seen Sir Derek Rayner's preliminary Report and had approved it. Executive decisions to eliminate waste and improve efficiency had not yet been taken. The Rayner Project was still at the stage of identifying areas for enquiry within Departments. The executive work would in due course be done by the Departments themselves with Sir Derek Rayner acting as co-ordinator.

## ENERGY

The Government was considering the main aspects of our future energy resources and work on specific areas such as oil, gas and the nuclear programme would be considered inter-departmentally and in relation to each other. We thought it unlikely that the Cabinet would consider at its meeting on Thursday the future programme for building additional nuclear reactors.

## FUTURE LEGISLATION

One major and one minor Bill would be presented to the House next week but we could not offer any positive guidance on their contents - however, they would not cover housing, education or trade union reform.

## PUBLIC EXPENDITURE

The public expenditure forecasts for 1980/81 would be presented towards the end of this month or at the beginning of November.

CA.

CVA