

LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 11.00

date: 21/11/79

PRIME MINISTER'S ENGAGEMENTS:

The Prime Minister is working at No.10 this morning, she is giving a lunch for the Women's National Commission (guest list available); she is in the House this afternoon for the Debate on Security.

IN THE HOUSE:

We understood there would be a ten-minute rule bill from Mr Chris Price on Jurors.

Three written answers to the Prime Minister of interest:

Mr Robin Maxwell Hyslop to ask the Prime Minister whether Mr Anthony Blunt is in receipt of any pension from public funds, in respect of his public services.

Mr Michael Meacher to ask the Prime Minister how many persons were questioned as a result of suspicions aroused in the light of the Burgess-Maclean affair; how many of these worked in the Civil Service; what action was taken as a result of these questionings; and how many persons were asked to leave the Civil Service.

Mr Michael Meacher to ask the Prime Minister if she will publish the guidelines currently operated by the security services in respect of their relations with ministers.

These will probably be answered at 6.00 pm.

There will be a statement from Sir Keith Joseph on NEB/Rolls Royce.

3 PNQ's are running:

Mr Peter Shore to ask the Lord Privy Seal what discussions he has had about recent attacks on Zambia and if he will make a statement.

Mr W Shelton to ask the Lord Privy Seal if he will make a statement on reports that Zambia has mobilised its forces against Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and declared that the country is on a full -scale war alert.

Mr K H Proctor to ask the Secretary of State for Industry if he will make a statement on what action he proposes to take concerning the resignation of all members of the National Enterprise Board.

DEBATE ON SECURITY:

We could offer no guidance on the content of the speech. The Prime Minister would open with a statement, the debate would follow and we would see how things developed from there.

Correspondents could assume that the statement made by the Prime Minister last Thursday had been very carefully prepared and that the relevant Cabinet Office papers had been examined.

In the light of last Thursday's statement and subsequent written answers, we could not say how much further the Prime Minister would go in

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in the debate - nor whether there would be an enquiry.

We assumed that a number of people had been told on Privy Council terms of last Thursday's proposed statement.

NEB:

The lobby should speak to the Department of Industry for details. We are assuming that Sir Keith Joseph may announce some replacement names for the Board. Presumably he will also comment on the future role of NEB. The Industry Bill provides for the withdrawal of British Leyland. We do not know of any policy over and above the provisions of the Industry bill.

We expected the statement this afternoon to concentrate on NEB and Rolls Royce. It was important to remember that NEB had holdings in a substantial number of companies so it would obviously continue in being. It also had a role in fostering high technology.

JL