



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

7 May 1981

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 1981/82

When they met this afternoon, the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary discussed the proposals for the legislative programme for 1981/82 set out in Mr. Whitelaw's papers C(81)22 and 23 which Cabinet are due to discuss next week.

The Prime Minister said that she was generally content with the proposed programme, though it was far from exciting. The main gaps in it were the lack of provision for legislation on trade union law reform and reform of the rating system. Ministers had not yet considered collectively their policy on the future of the rating system, and it would probably not now be possible to have a Rates Bill until the start of the 1982/83 Session. This made it all the more necessary to do something in the forthcoming Session about trade union law reform.

The Home Secretary said that the other omission from the proposed programme for 1981/82 was the lack of legislation which abolished entire functions of Government and thus made possible the saving of large numbers of staff. As regards trade union law reform, he would introduce his papers at Cabinet next week in such a way as to prompt discussion of the need for such a Bill.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office). I should be grateful if you and he would give this letter only a very limited circulation.

C A WHITMORE

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Home Office.