



Prime Minister

If you are content with these amendments, we will now arrange for submission to the Queen.

Ref. A05759

Agreed
no

PRIME MINISTER

MAJ

19/X

The Queen's Speech on the Opening of Parliament

attached - I attach for your approval the draft of The Queen's Speech on the Opening of Parliament, revised to take account of the changes agreed in Cabinet on 24 September and of subsequent discussions. The revisions are shown in manuscript on the attached draft.

2. The Cabinet agreed that a specific reference to the patriation of the Canadian Constitution might be needed if a formal request was received from Canada; since no formal request has yet been received, no reference has yet been included.

3. The Cabinet deleted from the earlier draft a reference to our close relationship with the Republic of Ireland. But the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Lord President of the Council and the Lord Privy Seal, at a recent meeting of the Defence and Oversea Policy Committee's Sub-committee on Anglo-Irish Relations, felt that a brief reference in the speech to Anglo-Irish relations would be appropriate as the Speech would be made only two days before the Anglo-Irish summit. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland feels that on this occasion the absence of a reference might be taken by the Irish to imply that our interest in Anglo-Irish relations is now less than it was when Mr Haughey was Taoiseach, even though Dr FitzGerald's Government, in a very difficult electoral position, has courageously given helpful support over the hunger strike both in private and publicly (in the Irish Foreign Minister's speech at the United Nations General Assembly). The Secretary of State also feels that, as this will be the first Queen's Speech after the joint studies were set up, that fact, and the proximity of the summit meeting, are distinctive; he would not expect a reference to Anglo-Irish relations to be repeated in future years. He suggests the inclusion this year of the following (with which the Lord Privy Seal agrees) at the end of the foreign affairs section -



Amend mt "My Government will seek to maintain close relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland."

4. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has looked again at the Northern Ireland section of the Speech in the light of recent developments on the prisons protest. Not all forms of protest have yet ended, but the Secretary of State does not think it necessary or appropriate for The Queen to mention relatively minor forms of protest in a short reference to Northern Ireland, and proposes that the last sentence should now read -

Amend "My Government will work for improvements in the security situation", thus omitting the words in the previous draft -

"and for a solution to the prisons protests which does not compromise essential principles".

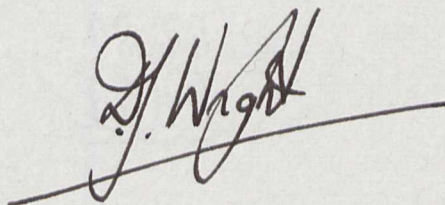
5. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office propose three changes to the foreign affairs section of the Speech -

i. the section in square brackets in the opening paragraph of the previous draft, which refers to a visit by The Queen to the Antipodes, should be omitted, since the visit will not have been announced by the time the Speech is made;

ii. the traditional position of Afghanistan (in the third paragraph of the first page) is better described as one of "independent and non-aligned status" than as "independence and neutrality", since the former wording is in accordance with the United Nations resolution on Afghanistan;

iii. the Government's commitment to the European Community might be emphasised by the insertion of "strong" after "their" in the fourth paragraph of the first page. This would lend the right contrast to the passage on the Commonwealth and the United Nations, where the emphasis is on the "greater importance" which the Government attaches to both organisations.

6. Finally, it is proposed that the reference to changes to the fixed penalty system, in paragraph 4 of the penultimate page, should be made more specific by the addition of the words "for road traffic offences" before the words "improved and extended".
7. I think that all these amendments are acceptable.
8. It is for your office to arrange for submission to The Queen. It will be necessary to obtain The Queen's approval immediately after her return to London (and at the latest by 28 October) so that final instructions can be given to the printer.
9. I will circulate for the information of the Cabinet and the other members of The Queen's Speeches and Future Legislation Committee a copy of the Speech as soon as it has been approved by The Queen.
10. A copy of this minute and the draft Speech goes to the Home Secretary.



ROBERT ARMSTRONG

(approved by Sir R Armstrong
& signed on his behalf)

19 October 1981