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CC(83) 20th  
Conclusions

COPY NO 77

CABINET

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet  
held at 10 Downing Street on

THURSDAY 23 JUNE 1983

at 11.00 am

P R E S E N T

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP  
Prime Minister

The Rt Hon Viscount Whitelaw  
Lord President of the Council

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs

The Rt Hon Nigel Lawson MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer

The Rt Hon James Prior MP  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP  
Secretary of State for Defence

The Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards MP  
Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon John Biffen MP  
Lord Privy Seal

The Rt Hon Norman Tebbit MP  
Secretary of State for Employment

The Rt Hon Lord Cockfield  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

The Rt Hon Michael Jopling MP  
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries  
and Food

The Rt Hon Lord Hailsham  
Lord Chancellor

The Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph MP  
Secretary of State for Education and Science

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MP  
Secretary of State for Energy

The Rt Hon George Younger MP  
Secretary of State for Scotland

The Rt Hon Patrick Jenkin MP  
Secretary of State for the Environment

The Rt Hon Norman Fowler MP  
Secretary of State for Social Services

The Rt Hon Cecil Parkinson MP  
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

The Rt Hon Tom King MP  
Secretary of State for Transport

Mr Peter Rees QC MP  
Chief Secretary, Treasury

SECRET

ALSO PRESENT

The Rt Hon John Wakeham MP  
Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury

SECRETARIAT

Sir Robert Armstrong  
Mr A D S Goodall (Items 2 and 3)  
Mr D F Williamson (Items 2 and 3)  
Mr D H J Hilary (Item 1)  
Mr R Watson (Item 1)

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SECRET

PARLIAMENTARY  
AFFAIRS

1. The Cabinet were informed of the business to be taken in the House of Commons during the following week.

Debate on  
Capital  
Punishment

THE HOME SECRETARY said that he proposed to announce that afternoon, during the course of the debate on the Address, that the Government would make time for a debate on capital punishment. He would make it clear that this would be a full debate, in a form which would enable Members to express a view on the restoration of the death penalty both generally and for different categories of offence. He would give no commitment about timing, but it was desirable that the debate should take place before the Summer Adjournment; otherwise the issue would feature strongly at the Conservative Party Conference.

The Cabinet -

Took note.

FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS

Poland

2. THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY said that the Pope's visit to Poland, which was ending that day, had had a major impact and risked arousing expectations among the Polish population which were unlikely to be fulfilled. The Pope had given explicit endorsement to the outlawed trade union movement Solidarity. As soon as the visit was over, there would be urgent consultations with Allied Governments to assess the outcome and to consider its implications for Western policy.

The Cabinet -

Took note.

COMMUNITY  
AFFAIRSCommunity  
Budget and  
United  
Kingdom  
RefundsPrevious  
Reference:  
CC(83) 19th  
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3. THE PRIME MINISTER said that the European Council of 17-19 June had been difficult. Before the Council there had been no arrangement on the United Kingdom budget refund in place for 1983. The French and Italians were unwilling even to discuss figures. The Federal German Chancellor, Herr Kohl, however, had been determined to get a settlement and had been both effective and helpful. The agreement that there should be a 1983 refund to the United Kingdom of 750 million ecu (£437 million) net to be included in the Community's 1984 draft budget ensured that on average over the four years 1980-83 the United Kingdom would have obtained refunds equivalent to about two-thirds (65.4 per cent) of the net unadjusted contribution. Over the four year period the total amount refunded would amount to over £2,500 million. The French had refused a risk sharing formula for 1983, but the United Kingdom was not taking any great risk in its absence. On the long-term solution to the problems of Community financing, the European Council had agreed on a reasonable set of directions for a negotiation, including strict control of agricultural and other expenditure and fairer sharing of the budgetary burden. There were, however, many problems ahead both on the negotiation of a long-term solution and in relation to 1984.

In discussion it was pointed out that on the 1983 refund there might still be a struggle to ensure that the money was included, as agreed by the European Council, in the Community's 1984 draft budget and to avoid unjustified links being created with the long-term issues. At the European Council in Athens on 6 December there would no doubt be pressure for an immediate decision to increase the Community's own resources, which the Prime Minister had successfully refused to concede at Stuttgart. A meeting of the Council of Ministers had now been arranged for 8 July in order to get the long-term negotiation moving. It was important to convince the President of the European Parliament, Mr Dankert, who was now visiting the United Kingdom, that the Government really wanted a long-term settlement, in order to reduce difficulties in the European Parliament about the United Kingdom refund in the 1984 budget.

THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY reported that at the Council of Ministers (Foreign Affairs) on 21 June agreement had been reached on a regulation providing 100 million ecu (£60 million) for urban renewal in Belfast, which should have a favourable impact.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD said that at the Council of Ministers on 20 June some progress had been made on the total allowable fish catches and quotas for 1983. There would be a difficult negotiation at the next meeting on 4-5 July, particularly on herring.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY reported that at the Council of Ministers meeting on 21 June the steel quota regime had been extended for one month. In bilateral discussions with the Commissioners he had taken a strong line on further restructuring, since the United Kingdom had already contributed 47 per cent of the Community's capacity reduction.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, reporting on the Council of Ministers (Environment) of 16 June, said that progress had been made in establishing principles of assessing pollution from chemical works. On lead in petrol other member states were continuing to move in the United Kingdom's direction.

The Cabinet -

Took note.

Cabinet Office

23 June 1983