

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

C(84) 24

COPY NO 79

27 September 1984

CABINET

THE QUEEN'S SPEECHES ON THE PROROGATION AND OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

Memorandum by the Lord President of the Council

The attached drafts of The Queen's Speeches on the Prorogation of the present Session of Parliament and the Opening of the 1984-85 Session have been prepared by The Queen's Speeches and Future Legislation Committee (QL) on the basis of texts suggested by Departments. The draft Opening Speech reflects the legislative programme approved by the Cabinet on 1 March (CC(84) 8th Conclusions, Minute 5), although, following past precedent, reference is not made to every item of legislation. Both drafts take account of helpful comments made by colleagues on earlier versions.

2. There are two passages in the Opening Speech which are in square brackets and to which I should draw the attention of my colleagues -

a. Paragraph 11. There is, at the time of drafting, an unresolved dispute about the content of the Nationalised Industries Bill which might affect its importance. If the issue has been resolved at the meeting of the Ministerial Steering Committee on Economic Strategy Sub-Committee on Nationalised Industries (E(NI)) on 3 October in favour of a larger Bill, I propose that the square brackets be removed. If the dispute has not been resolved, Cabinet must decide. There would be no need for a reference to a minimal Bill.

b. Paragraph 14a. The Home Secretary wishes to include a reference to legislation on scientific procedures on living animals which could not be brought forward before the 1985-86 Session. Although there is no objection in principle to referring to future legislation, QL felt on balance that this particular proposal did not justify such treatment. The Home Secretary considers that a reference would help to allay the continuing uncertainty and concern about the Government's determination to fulfil its Manifesto pledge to introduce new legislation.

3. Subject to decisions on these points and any further revisions which might be required in the light of developments before the Speeches are delivered, I invite the Cabinet to approve the attached drafts.

W

Privy Council Office

27 September 1984

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

The Duke of Edinburgh and I were pleased to receive the State Visits of His Highness the Amir of Bahrain in April and the President of the French Republic and Madame Mitterrand last week.

2. We look back with much pleasure to the visits we have made over the past year. As Head of the Commonwealth I was in New Delhi on the occasion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in November. We paid State Visits to Kenya, Bangladesh and India in November and Jordan in March. We visited France in June, to attend the commemoration of the 40th anniversary of D-Day. We were in Canada in September and October for the bicentenary celebrations of New Brunswick and Ontario, and to visit Manitoba.

3. My Government welcomed the independence of Saint Christopher and Nevis, Brunei's resumption of full responsibility for its own external relations, and the decision of both countries to join the Commonwealth.

4. My Government have sustained Britain's contribution to Western defence, playing an active part in the Atlantic Alliance. They welcomed Lord Carrington's appointment as its Secretary-General. In the absence of an arms control agreement, my Government fulfilled their undertaking to begin the deployment of cruise missiles by the end of 1983.

CONFIDENTIAL

5. My Government, with the United Kingdom's allies, have worked vigorously for balanced and verifiable arms control and disarmament and have sought to improve relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. They fully supported the United States' efforts to achieve nuclear arms reductions and their readiness to resume the negotiations suspended by the Soviet Union.

6. My Government agreed with other Member States on a fair sharing of the European Community's budget burden and on control of Community spending. They have made proposals for new Community policies.

7. My Government were hosts to the London Economic Summit in June and welcome its conclusions.

8. My Government have continued fully to discharge their obligations to the people of the Falkland Islands, while seeking more normal relations between this country and Argentina. They have conducted talks with China on the future of Hong Kong and published the text of a draft agreement. They have been helping with the conversion of the Royal Naval Dockyard in Gibraltar to commercial operation.

9. My Government have continued to support efforts to restore the independent and non-aligned status of Afghanistan and to settle the tragic conflict between Iran and Iraq. They have welcomed moves to reduce tension in Southern Africa, and continue to support peaceful change there and the early independence of Namibia. They supported United Nations efforts to settle the Cyprus question.

CONFIDENTIAL

Members of the House of Commons

10. I thank you for the provision which you have made for the honour and dignity of the Crown and for the public services.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

11. My Government have maintained the policies necessary to reduce inflation and sustain economic recovery. Inflation remains low and the output of the nation continues to increase. Steps have been taken to increase incentives and to improve the climate for enterprise, the creation of wealth, and adaptability and efficiency in industry and commerce. Measures have been taken to help the unemployed into jobs, to launch a comprehensive foundation training scheme for young people starting working life, and to improve vocational education and adult training.

12. In order to promote economic efficiency and growth, my Government have continued their policies of exposing state-owned businesses to competition and returning them to the private sector where appropriate. Legislation has been passed to end British Telecom's exclusive privilege of running telecommunications systems, to establish arrangements for the licensing and regulation of telecommunications systems, and to prepare the way for the sale of British Telecom's shares. An Act has been passed to enable the introduction of private finance into the Royal Ordnance Factories. The disposal of oil assets of the British Gas Corporation has been successfully completed.

13. Legislation has been passed to provide for reforms in the tax system, especially for companies, in the interest of greater economic efficiency, to encourage the further development of United Kingdom oil and gas resources by abolishing royalties for certain new fields, and to provide a framework for the development of cable programme services and direct broadcasting by satellite. An Act has been passed to ensure continued funding for the Co-operative Development Agency and to introduce a new scheme of Regional Development grants.

14. Legislation has been passed to give trade union members greater democratic control over their unions.

15. An Act has been passed to protect ratepayers by limiting rate increases by high-spending local authorities, and to provide reserve powers for general limitation of rates. Legislation has been passed making interim arrangements for the Greater London Council and the metropolitan county councils pending a decision by Parliament on the abolition of those authorities.

16. Acts have been passed to extend the right of public sector tenants to buy their homes, to reform the system of building control in England and Wales, and to assist purchasers of public sector houses which have proved to be defective. Legislation has been passed to make more farming tenancies available in England and Wales, and to make other improvements in the law relating to agricultural tenancies.

17. An Act has been passed transferring control of London Transport from the Greater London Council to the Government.

18. Legislation has been passed to modernise and clarify the law of England and Wales governing the investigation of crime and evidence in criminal proceedings, to strengthen the ties between the police and the community there and to extend powers to prevent acts of terrorism and increase safeguards for people subject to such powers.

19. An Act has been passed to introduce important new safeguards for individuals about whom information is held on computers.

20. Legislation has been passed to improve family law and its administration in England and Wales, to clarify the liability of occupiers of premises to persons other than their visitors and to amend the law concerning limitation of actions.

21. My Government has continued to work for higher standards in education, announcing proposals on the school curriculum, examinations and increasing the influence of parents over their children's schooling. Legislation has been passed to enable grants to be paid to local education authorities in England and Wales for improvements and innovations.

22. Legislation has been passed to replace non-contributory invalidity pensions with a severe disablement allowance. My Government has also embarked on a series of fundamental reviews of the social security system, seeking to ensure that this large programme operates effectively and in ways suited to present day needs.

23. My Government has taken further action to ensure that patients receive the best value for money spent on the National Health Service.

24. My Government has encouraged Northern Ireland's elected representatives to seek arrangements, acceptable across the community, whereby responsibilities can be returned to local administration. A high priority has been given to the maintenance of law and order and support for the Northern Ireland economy.

25. For Scotland, measures have been passed to extend the rights of public sector tenants, and to improve the legislation governing rating and valuation, promotion of tourism overseas, roads and inshore fisheries.

My Lords, and Members of the House of Commons

26. I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may attend you.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT 1984

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

I look forward with great pleasure to receiving the President of Malawi, the President of Mexico and His Highness the Amir of Qatar on State Visits during the next twelve months, to paying a State Visit to Portugal in March, and to visiting the Caribbean in the autumn on the occasion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in the Bahamas.

2. My Government consider, as their highest priority, the maintenance of national security and the preservation of peace. They will accordingly continue to play an active part in the Atlantic Alliance. They will promote Western defence interests outside the NATO area. They will make vigorous efforts to combat international terrorism.

3. With the allies of the United Kingdom, my Government will contribute to arms control and disarmament negotiations and will work for the resumption of negotiations where these have been broken off. They will work continually for a greater atmosphere of trust between East and West.

4. Following the agreement at Fontainebleau on the fairer sharing of the Community's budget burden and on the overall control of Community spending, my Government looks forward to the further development of the European Community. They will continue to press for improvements in the Common Agriculture Policy and for completion of the common market in goods and services. They will work for the early conclusion of the negotiations to enable Spain and Portugal to join the Community, and to conclude a new agreement to succeed the Lomé Convention.

5. My Government will continue fully to discharge their obligations to the people of the Falkland Islands, while seeking more normal relations between this country and Argentina. They will consider the views expressed by the people of Hong Kong on the draft agreement with China, and report to Parliament. They reaffirm their commitment to the people of Gibraltar and hope to see the early implementation of the Lisbon statement.

6. My Government will continue to work for a settlement in Namibia, a solution to the Arab/Israel dispute and the restoration of the independence and non-aligned status of Afghanistan.

7. My Government will continue fully to support the Commonwealth, to play a constructive role at the United Nations, to maintain a substantial aid programme, and to encourage investment in developing countries.

8. My Government will continue to work closely with other nations and international institutions to strengthen and spread economic recovery; and to co-operate on issues connected with the settlement of international debts.

Members of the House of Commons

9. Estimates for the Public Service will be laid before you.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

10. My Government will continue to pursue policies founded on sound money and lower public borrowing and aimed at securing a further reduction in inflation.

While noting that the numbers of people in work are steadily rising, my Government remains deeply concerned about unemployment and will continue policies designed to achieve better opportunities for employment and to help the unemployed obtain the training or work experience needed to fill them. Firm control of public spending will be maintained. My Government will work for a more flexible and competitive economy through lower taxation, further reform of the tax system, increased efficiency in the public sector and encouragement of initiative and enterprise which will sustain rising living standards.

11. In order to promote efficiency and growth, my Government will continue their policies of exposing state-owned businesses to competition and, where appropriate, returning them to the private sector. A Bill will be introduced to increase competition in the provision of local bus services in Great Britain and to transfer to the private sector the operations of the National Bus Company. [Proposals will be introduced to bring up to date the statutory framework for the control and operation of nationalised industries.]

12. Bills will be introduced to reform insolvency law in England and Wales, and in Scotland, and to remove the statutory levy on cinema admissions and establish an environment for the film and cinema industries free from regulation.

13. A Bill will be introduced to abolish the Greater London Council and the metropolitan county councils.

14. Legislation will be introduced to extend the franchise to certain British citizens resident abroad, to change absent voting arrangements in order to enable those on holiday to vote, and to increase the parliamentary election deposit but reduce the threshold for forfeiture.

A Bill will be introduced to establish a national prosecution service independent of the police in England and Wales and to enable the Attorney General to refer Crown Court sentences for the opinion of the Court of Appeal. A further Bill will establish a new and comprehensive statutory framework governing the interception of communications.

[14A. During this Session my Government will develop further its proposals relating to scientific procedures on living animals with a view to early legislation.]

15. Measures will be introduced for the administration of justice in England and Wales and making further reforms in the law following reports of the Law Commission. There will be a measure dealing with the international aspects of child abduction and the custody of children.

16. A Bill will be introduced to improve the occupational pension rights of people who leave schemes before pensionable age and to ensure that members are able to obtain information about their schemes.

17. Measures will be introduced to clarify the powers of statutory water undertakings and authorities to add fluoride to the water supply and for better protection of food and the environment.

18. A Bill will be introduced to give parents of children educated at public expense the right to exempt them from corporal punishment. My Government will continue to develop policies to raise educational standards.

19. My Government will encourage the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland to consider how powers can be restored to local administration on a basis acceptable to all sides of the community, and will seek to maintain good Anglo-Irish relations. The security forces will continue to receive my Government's full support. Legislation will be introduced to prevent personation at elections in Northern Ireland.

20. Bills will be introduced to establish trustee bodies to manage certain Scottish institutions, and to reform Scots law, including provisions on matrimonial property and financial provision on divorce, following Reports by the Scottish Law Commission.

21. Other measures will be laid before you.

My Lords, and Members of the House of Commons

22. I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.