

PRIME MINISTER

Local Government Conference next Saturday, 10th March

Bernard Ingham has suggested to me that, although you are speaking only privately and informally at the lunch, you might put out a short press release to place on record your support for rate-capping etc.

I am opposed to a press release for the following reasons:-

- (a) Patrick Jenkin and five other Ministers are speaking at the Conference (see attached programme).
- (b) I see little point in putting out a short press release with nothing particularly new to say.
- (c) There is a danger of devaluing speeches if you put out odd little snippets for no more than a marginal benefit.
- (d) The press will think you are speaking on the record and will no doubt be tempted to enter the Hall (where you are speaking) which simply cannot accommodate the press.

Do you agree that we should stick to present plans and not put out a press release?

Stephen
STEPHEN SHERBOURNE
6th March, 1984

*We will be
if anything needs
to be said on
Saturday
not*

PRIME MINISTER

Local Government Conference - Saturday, March 10th

You are visiting the Conservative Local Government Conference on Saturday, March 10th at lunch, after which it is hoped that you will make a very informal speech. I understand this follows past practice. Both Michael Alison and I will be accompanying you. I am visiting Kensington Town Hall on Monday to get a 'feel'.

1. Patrick Jenkin is speaking on the Saturday afternoon. There is every reason therefore for you not to put out a press release which would otherwise steal his thunder. This then leaves you free to make an "off the cuff" speech. Are you happy with this? - *even though it is a year with major legislation?*
2. For various reasons, the press are not normally present at lunch itself when you speak. Indeed, because of pressure of numbers, it would anyway be difficult to accommodate them. Are you happy with this? *Yes not*
3. I will prepare speech notes for you which may serve as a better basis for your informal speech. Are you happy about this?
4. As in the past, they would like to take you round the private sector stalls at the Conference. The theme is privatisation and contracting out. The press and photographers will be present for this. Are you happy to do this again?

Stephen

Yes not

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

22nd February 1984