

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

C(85) 11

COPY NO 35

30 April 1985

CABINET

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 1985-86: CONSEQUENCES OF THE INCLUSION  
OF A GAS BILL

Memorandum by the Lord President of the Council

I was invited by the Sub-Committee on Economic Affairs to provide, for Cabinet's discussion of the possible inclusion of a Gas Bill in next Session's programme, the views of the Queen's Speeches and Future Legislation Committee (QL) on the consequences of such a decision for the legislative programme.

2. QL have concluded that, in view of length and timing of such a Bill, it would be essential to delete two significant Bills from the existing programme. They took the view that the Nationalised Industries Bill and the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill would provide suitable compensation in terms of size. I should say that the selection of the second Bill was a very difficult exercise and the Committee found it most unwelcome that they should have to make a renewed selection at this stage.

3. The Committee also considered the possibility that Cabinet would wish to include further legislation in the programme, in particular Bills on Housing, Dockyards and Deregulation. They are quite clear that none of these Bills can be incorporated in the programme without further equivalent deletions. In a preliminary survey, there were no obvious candidates for deletion and good reason for retaining all the Bills currently in the programme. The Committee did however agree to examine this aspect of the programme in more detail and to report back to Cabinet before the end of May. It is clear, however, that, if these three Bills are to be included, there will have to be further significant deletions.

CONCLUSION

4. In the Committee's view:
- a. If Cabinet wish to include a Bill to privatise the gas industry in the next Session of this Parliament, they should delete the Nationalised Industries Bill and the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill from the agreed programme.
  - b. Cabinet should agree that no further additions to the legislative programme can be made without consequential deletions.

SECRET

c. Cabinet should note that QL will be considering further what possible changes might be made if it is proposed to accommodate Bills not now in the programme and will report back before the end of May.

W

Privy Council Office

30 April 1985

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET