



RESTRICTED

Pre Mark 2

Dr 1/10

QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

28 September 1984

Dear Willie,

mark

With TF

I have seen the Lord Chancellor's letter of 24 September setting out his views on my proposal to announce a decision in principle to introduce statutory time limits on the bringing of criminal proceedings.

I had discussed this matter with the Attorney General, and he raised no objection in principle to what I propose, though he has reservations on certain points in regard to the scheme outlined in the paper enclosed with my letter of 17 September. I am circulating today a further paper with more detailed proposals which take account, I think, of his anxieties and which I hope we shall be able to discuss in H Committee on 4 October.

I have now had a reply from the Lord Chief Justice. He expresses a lack of enthusiasm for the Scottish system and, like the Lord Chancellor, takes the point that time limits would not create additional court capacity and would not in themselves reduce delay overall. However, he thinks that when the national prosecution service comes into operation there might be some advantages in what I propose; and he says that he sees no objection to limited trials being instituted at this stage. I take this as offering us cautious encouragement to proceed in the way that I propose.

I hope, therefore, that in the light of these further consultations I can have colleagues' agreement to making an announcement at the Party Conference on the lines I have proposed.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, to the other members of H Committee and to Michael Havers and Sir Robert Armstrong.

2 en: 1 en

The Rt Hon The Viscount Whitelaw, CH., MC.

RESTRICTED

Home Affairs

Secretary, Police

June 78

28 SEP 1984

12 1
2
3
4
5