

PRIME MINISTER

Enoch Powell's Bill

Attached is the Lord Privy Seal's memorandum for Legislation Committee tomorrow setting out the line he proposes to take in the debate of Andrew Bowden's motion on Friday which would enable Enoch Powell's Bill to be discussed without time limit starting at 2.30 pm on Friday. Briefly what he suggests is that:

- i) in view of the implications for the conduct of Government and Private Members Business, he will advise the House to vote against the motion;
- ii) the matter should be referred to the Select Committee on Procedure; and
- iii) there should be a free vote on the motion.

I gather from the Lord Privy Seal's Office that they believe there is a good chance that a coalition of the Bill's opponents and strict constitutionalists will defeat the motion but it clearly must be right that there is a free vote. Nevertheless it would be slightly embarrassing for the Lord Privy Seal if senior Cabinet colleagues voted against his advice.

Do you

- a) wish to have a word with the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip after Legislation Committee; or
- b) are you content to let matters proceed as proposed?

4 June 1985