

PRIME MINISTER

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'H' on Wednesday discussed three items:

1. A DOE proposal to develop a new scheme to offer financial incentives to council tenants encouraging them to move out and buy, with the aim of tackling the problem of homelessness and reducing calls on expensive B&B accommodation. 'H' thought the scheme's cost effectiveness was in doubt and its value as a measure to tackle homelessness uncertain. Further work is to be done on the possibilities of setting up a pilot scheme.

2. The Home Secretary's amendments and additions to the Public Order White Paper. Hartley Booth has summarised the key points in his note attached. 'H' decided to proceed with introducing legislation to exclude football hooligans from matches, though the Home Secretary will be considering further, (and then reporting to you) on whether the provisions should be brought into force before the football authorities have moved ahead with their (50 per cent) membership card proposals.

3. A proposal by the Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Social Services to amend the Infant Life (Preservation) Act 1929, to change from 28 to 24 weeks the length of pregnancy providing prima facie proof that a child is capable of being born alive. 'H' concluded that that was not a Bill the Government, on its own initiative, should offer to a Private Member successful in the ballot, unless the member concerned proposed in any case to introduce a Bill on this topic.

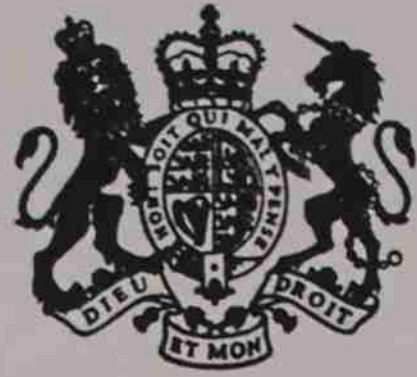
I think it may be a government matter because 28 week old children can

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now be saved. So in one part of hospital P.P. they are aborted in another part. Some efforts are made to save such premature children

MARK ADDISON

25 October 1985



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 October 1985

INFANT LIFE (PRESERVATION) ACT 1929

The Prime Minister has seen the minutes of H Committee on 23 October. She has noted the Committee's conclusions on the Memorandum by the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Social Services on a possible amendment to the Infant Life (Preservation) Act 1929.

The Prime Minister has commented on the importance of avoiding a situation whereby in one part of a hospital foetuses aged between 24 and 28 weeks are being aborted and in another part strenuous efforts are being made to save such premature babies. I should be grateful for your confirmation that the administrative action being taken by DHSS will be sufficient to prevent this state of affairs arising.

I am copying this letter to Joan MacNaughton (Lord President's Office) and Clare Pelham (Home Office).

(Mark Addison)

Miss Elizabeth Mothersill,
Department of Health and Social Security.

2

PRIME MINISTER

INFANT LIFE (PRESERVATION) ACT 1929

You were concerned that, following medical advances which mean that 28 week old children can now be saved, in one part of a hospital foetuses aged between 24 and 28 weeks could be aborted, while in another part strenuous efforts would be made to save such premature babies.

I attach a note from DHSS which explains that this should not happen. The eight private sector nursing homes approved to carry out abortions over 20 weeks' gestation have voluntarily agreed to cease carrying out terminations after 24 weeks; and practice in the NHS would mirror this. The DHSS note makes the point that it is unlawful to abort any foetus capable of being born alive, except where this is to preserve the life of the mother.

Mark Addison

Mark Addison

14 November 1985

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