

✓ 178

MR. ALISON

cc Mr Flesher

**DRUGS BILL**

Further to my minute of yesterday and to my receipt of your minute of yesterday, I have spoken to the Lord President's Private Secretary about the possibility of starting the Bill in the Commons.

The Private Secretary told me that she was sure that the Lord President would be "horrified" about any suggestion that the Bill should not begin in the Lords. Certainly the Law Lords will cause problems with certain parts of the Bill. But they will do this whether it starts in the Lords or the Commons. More important to the Lord President is the need for the Lords to have a major Bill early on, and I gather that the Drugs Bill is a good candidate here. The Private Secretary said that the Lord President would also probably take the view that the earlier the Lords have the Bill, the less problems they will make with it.

All in all, it seems to me that there is no support for Mr Mellor's wish to start the Bill in the Commons.

N.L.W.

**N L WICKS**

30 October 1985

MR. ALISON

MA 5/11

c Mr Flesher

The Drugs Bill

I took the opportunity of a discussion with the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip on another matter to raise the doubts expressed by Mr. Mellor about the advisability of introducing the Drugs Bill in the Lords.

The Lord Privy Seal agreed that the Lords would no doubt make very heavy weather of the "confiscation" provisions of the Bill. But he doubted whether their Lordships would cause any more damage in this respect than the Commons. Thus, he could see no strong argument for introducing the Bill in the Commons. The Chief Whip agreed.

N.L.W.

**NIGEL WICKS**

29 October 1985

STANDING some very nasty incidents in the Middle East of which the strike on the Palestine Liberation Organization's headquarters in Tunis and the laurel wreath can easily be seen as different of the same coin, the effort to achieve of a lasting and durable peace in the continues. Mr SHIMON PERES, the Israeli minister, whose country has just emerged a winner from the recent violence, not to drama, has declared his readiness to end of war with Jordan of some 40 years, and direct and immediate peace negotiations with HUSSEIN. He did not explicitly rule out support by the PLO, although he obliquely to PLO terrorism, and he was equally as about a United Nations or some other role in such peace talks.

er comes at a time when events appear extinguished Arab world hopes of towards a Middle East peace. Several to Egypt, Jordan and the PLO managed and launch, a peace strategy anchored agreement between King HUSSEIN and Mr RAFAT which has since, to all intents and run completely into the sand. This has grave disappointment to King HUSSEIN been enthusiastically and indefatigably about 1985 as being the Year of Decision. RCHER's readiness to hold talks with a -Palestinian delegation should have against this background. Had it come ld have enhanced the chances of a place Palestinians at the conference table. As it AFAT was seen to be at the centre of an ted defeat, and his already uneasy ip with King HUSSEIN is now at breaking has gone beyond it.

offer of talks is hedged with conditions can say what will happen before, and PERES hands over to the Likud leader, R, come next October. There are Israeli se any kind of compromise with Jordan West Bank and will do their best to it. There are growing signs, however, of hement between Jordan and Syria, a ment in the complex Middle East

## IRISH HYSTERIA

N HERMON, Ulster's Chief Constable, missioner Mr WREN, head of the South- Police, have not exactly been "birds on a some time. The result has been a ate of tension between the two forces, air practical cooperation continues. The has now blown up over alleged insults thern force in a talk delivered by Sir police convention in Houston, Texas, as raised this sad state of affairs to a arming plane.

of Constable is said to have accused the force of not giving a great enough to the fight against the IRA. He is ed of having remarked that more than Catholics in the North would prefer not incorporated in the Republic. The second n, if made, was a legitimate expression opinion and one which, in our view, ed merit of being right. All that can be the first is that it is a view which cers in the RUC have been expressing ng degrees of emphasis for years. To r FITZGERALD's Government has done, ng the British Ambassador for a for- of and, as Mr DICK SPRING (the Deputy Prime Minister) has done, by at Sir JOHN should be sacked is sheer is also ironic that Sir JOHN (who spent a summer alienating Protestants by the

per cent. of South Africa's popula- are of British origin and any- thing from 300,000 to one million of them might claim the right of entry to Britain if the country's political structure collapsed.

Rhodesia was a minor problem compared with South Africa, but the precedents it set were in the minds of many at Nassau. Dr Kissinger, drawing on the vast authority and power of the United States, tried and failed to end that crisis before Mrs Thatcher and Lord Carrington succeeded. Similarly, four years of "constructive agreement" between the Americans and South Africans have produced few favourable results. Can Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe succeed where Dr Chester Crocker failed?

## Peers set to oppose new drugs Bill

GOVERNMENT Ministers are being warned that they face a major rebellion in the House of Lords next session that will prove even more embarrassing than its attempts to force through the Bill to abolish the GLC.

Senior lawyers in both Houses have been lobbying hard against a proposal in the new drugs Bill which would freeze the assets of a person accused of drug trafficking before trial. They believe that the Bill offends against the basic right of being presumed innocent until proven guilty.

A businessman whose assets are frozen would, the lawyers point out, be shunned by his colleagues and could, as a result, lose his livelihood and home while eventually being acquitted.

David Mellor at the Home Office is determined that his Bill will end the ill-gotten gains of the men who finance the drugs trade.

But another - more senior - Minister told me last night; "Quite frankly all the signs are that we will never get this part of the Bill through the Lords."

## Early call

TAKE PITY on Martin Brandon-Bravo, the Tory MP for Nottingham South, who like many a "new boy" is anxious that the electors should hear his views.

Invited to take part in "Central Lobby," a regional current affairs programme, he asked what time he should turn up and was told to appear after the national news at nine.

He thus appeared before the Central television studios at 9 am—to be greeted with surprise by the cleaners. The programme is broadcast live at 10.30 pm.

*Following my story yesterday revealing Richard Luce's taste in office decor, I learn that he will soon have the opportunity to add to his furniture collection. Students at the Cardiff Film School are planning to present the Arts Minister with a canvas foldaway chair of the type favoured in Hollywood, which will read on the back "Richard Luce—Director."*

## Norman's conquest

NORMAN WILLIS, the TUC General

main areas of economic and political power will be tolerated. He may manage to subdue the present unrest but his success will be regarded in the West as providing an opportunity to effect political change, not for retrenchment.

Another glimmer can be seen in the position of the African National Congress. It may talk of expanding the guerrilla war, but it is in a difficult position. The South African terrain is not ideal for that sort of war and there are no safe havens on South Africa's borders. Zimbabwe will not harbour the ANC and its headquarters are in Lusaka, a long way from its theatre of operations. Zambia's President, Dr Kaunda, is one of the architects of the Nassau Accord and he has played host to

much more deadly as a ban on South- tural imports at invoked.

Mrs Thatcher's escape clause writ tract but it could explain why she and harder still if reached where m sanctions are called.

Anyone who has in South Africa can destroy any ment is the sheer that exists betw majorities of white was never like th even at the height war. The parallel is a gloomy one. It is Algeria.

## LONDON DAY BY

those hoping for biting political satire may be disappointed. He is more likely, I hear, to read his love poetry.

## In the wrong gear

UNION OFFICIALS at Vauxhall Motors' plant at Ellesmere Port last week were aghast, when Labour's Trade and Industry spokesman John Smith tactlessly arrived for talks on import penetration in a B registration Toyota.

Only a matter of days before thousands of Vauxhall workers had staged a protest against the company's policy of importing Astras from its European factories while the Ellesmere Port assembly line is working under capacity.

One of Smith's aides yesterday hastened to reassure me that the Japanese car belonged to a local party official, not Labour's rising star. Smith's own vehicle is a Ford Sierra—built, as far as he knows, in Britain.



"And this is just for you"

## Political stage

SHADOW Social Services secretary, Michael Meacher has been given a chance to display his histrionic talents before a wider audience than fellow MPs on Nov. 4 when he takes a bow in a BBC-2 drama—playing himself.

Meacher's own first love is number-crunching economic statistics, but the plot of "Edge of Darkness" must have appealed to his love of conspiracy theory. The murder thriller shows how "the obscure state security apparatus and interlocking business interests" promote all things nuclear.

Meacher himself addresses a student union meeting on ecological issues during the first episode. One prop he won't have is an Equity card but as it is only a real life appearance I suppose the actors' union hasn't taken exception.

## Car-nage

TORY MP Jim Pawsey is somewhat shamefaced after launching a blistering attack on Leyland cars for refusing to buy British electronics for their new factory in Swindon, Wiltshire.

Pawsey lambasted the BL chairman Sir Austin Bide in a lecture recently on the wickedness of a British public-funded company giving business to a Japanese rival—Mitsubishi. A noble sentiment, except that someone pointed out that it isn't Leyland who

ere is required to s plinary hearing into Saturday's match between the Welsh and the Irish — a Cheltenham Thornbury seconds Hayward sending a first time in his career

Hayward is conf Cope, Deputy Chief, his leave of request is troublesome match Cope's Northavon cor

## Missing treasure

J. CARTER BROWN Washington's National organising the "Tre Britain" exhibition, that only a handful owners had turned tions to take their fi United States.

The late Lord St C request for his ma House—now the ce exhibition—but after present Viscount wa part with it.

Brown said over dri that 95 per cent had t and only a few ins prized pictures should their shooting parties t