

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD  
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From the Minister

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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4 June 1985

**LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 1985/86: AGRICULTURE BILL**

We will be discussing in Cabinet on Thursday the legislative programme for the next session. In advance of the discussion I think it would be helpful to you and other members of the Cabinet if I explained how my thinking has developed on the Agriculture Bill.

The Bill has two main purposes. The first, to implement an agreed Community measure on conservation, is relatively straightforward and will be generally welcomed. The second is more important and more controversial. It is to give effect to the decisions we took in the last PES round to look to the industry to meet a significant part of the cost both of the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS) and the Government's expenditure on agriculture and food research. The Bill must be included in the 1985/86 programme if our PES targets are to be achieved. And in any case since it is bound to be unpopular with the industry and some of our own supporters it is not the sort of Bill which should be left over for the 1986/87 session. I therefore want to press on. But I should warn you that, if it is not to attract the outright opposition of the industry, it will need to offer the kind of funding arrangements which the industry is prepared to work with. This will mean, for example, altering the existing powers of bodies like the Meat and Livestock Commission and the Home Grown Cereals Authority so that they can be the instruments for raising and directing industry funding. It will also have to include some contingent powers to charge, e.g. for statutory work, if our financial targets are to be realised. I shall shortly be putting a paper to H Committee setting out in detail the measures which I shall need. But I thought Cabinet colleagues should be aware that, in order to present a saleable package to Parliament in the next session, I shall need a medium size Bill and one which goes somewhat wider than the strict terms of our earlier Cabinet discussion.

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I am copying this to the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*James E. ...*  
*Michael*

MICHAEL JOPLING