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23 August 1985

Dear Private Secretary

will request if req

QUEEN'S SPEECHES ON THE PROROGATION AND OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

I was very grateful for the prompt responses to my letter of 9 August and in particular to the Foreign Office and Northern Ireland Office for the considerable reductions which they were able to make in their contributions to the speeches.

I now attach a further revised draft which includes the Treasury contribution. As the latter is not as long as I had feared, I have been able to be more receptive to the requests for reinsertions from the Home Office and the Department of the Environment than might otherwise have been the case. However, the almost certain need to include material on bills not yet approved as part of the programme means that we have no room for manoeuvre, and I have not therefore felt able to include the passage on the Lord Chancellor's bills (most of which are Second Reading Committee Bills) or the changes proposed by the Department of Employment.

These and other issues will, of course, be considered by QL when they meet on 11 September and all Ministers will have an opportunity to comment on the draft as approved by QL when it is circulated to Cabinet.

If there are any further new comments I would be grateful for them by 30 August. If necessary, they can be telephoned to Simon Hickson on 29 or 30 August.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of all Ministers in the Cabinet, to the Law Officers, and to the Chief Whips of both Houses.

Yours sincerely

R WATSON
QL Secretary

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT 1985

1. My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

I look forward with great pleasure to receiving His Highness the Amir of Qatar, [their Majesties the King and Queen of Spain] and [the President of the Federal Republic of Germany and Frau von Weizsaecker] on State Visits during the next 12 months.

2. I also look forward to paying a State Visit to Nepal in February, followed by visits to New Zealand and Australia and [to paying a State Visit to China and visiting Hong Kong in October].

3. My Government's highest priority remains the maintenance of national security and the preservation of peace with freedom and justice. They will continue to play a full and active part in the Atlantic Alliance and to enhance the United Kingdom's own defences. They will make vigorous efforts to combat international terrorism.

4. With their Allies, my Government will continue to work for progress in arms control and disarmament negotiations and for greater cooperation and trust between East and West.

5. My Government will introduce a Bill on the accession of Spain and Portugal, which they greatly welcome, to the European Communities. They will continue to work for the further development of the European Community: reforms in the Common Agricultural Policy: early completion of the common market in goods and services: and close cooperation on foreign policy and security issues.

6. My Government will fully honour their undertakings to the people of the Falkland Islands while continuing to seek more normal relations between the United Kingdom and Argentina. They will continue to discharge their obligations to the people of Hong Kong; and will propose provisions to implement the nationality arrangements arising from the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

7. My Government will work for peaceful change in South Africa: for the restoration of peace and stability in Lebanon: and for solutions to the conflict between Iraq and Iran and the Arab/Israel dispute. They will seek to restore an independent and non-aligned Afghanistan. They will support United Nations efforts for a settlement of the Cyprus problem, and those of the Contadora Group to resolve peacefully the tensions in Central America.

8. My Government will give full support to the Commonwealth, and play a constructive role at the United Nations. They will maintain a substantial aid programme; play their part in the relief of famine and other disasters; and encourage investment in developing countries.

9. Members of the House of Commons

Estimates for the Public Service will be laid before you.

10. My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

Within the framework of firm monetary and fiscal policies designed to secure a further and continuing reduction in inflation, my Government will do all in its power to encourage the growth of new jobs. Firm control of public expenditure will be maintained, with a view to diminishing its share of overall national output and facilitating further reductions in the burden of income tax.

11. My Government will press ahead vigorously with its programme of privatisation, as a means both of improving the efficiency of the industries concerned, and of encouraging wider share ownership. Measures will be introduced to permit the transfer of all the assets of the British Gas Corporation to the private sector and to enable the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority to operate as a Trading Fund from 1 April 1986.

12. A Bill will be proposed to introduce private capital into the British Airports Authority, to require sizeable local authority airports to be formed into companies, and to regulate certain airport activities.

13. My Government intends to introduce commercial management to my Naval Dockyards, as a significant contribution to encouraging a commercial approach and securing value for money in its spending on Defence. Legislation will be introduced to give effect to this.

14. Legislation will be introduced to facilitate industry funding of agricultural research, advice and related services; and to implement European Community arrangements to protect areas of particular environmental sensitivity.

15. Measures will be introduced to establish a new regulatory framework for the financial services industry, which will enhance its efficiency and competitiveness whilst providing greater safeguards for the interests of investors, and to modernise and liberalise the law governing Building Societies.

16. Legislation will be brought forward to reform the operation of Wages Councils.

17. A Bill will be introduced to regulate certain practices in local government.

18. Legislation will be introduced to encourage the sale of public sector flats to their tenants and the privatisation of council housing estates, to improve the planning system and to provide greater control over the location of hazardous substances.

19. For Scotland, Bills will be introduced to extend the rights of public sector tenants and to facilitate the privatisation of public sector housing stock, to improve legal aid arrangements, and to reform the law relating to parents and children in the light of the Scottish Law Commission report on illegitimacy.

20. In Northern Ireland my Government will continue to support the security forces in enforcing the law and in working for the eradication of terrorism. They will seek widely acceptable arrangements for the devolution of power. They will seek to improve further their co-operation with the Government of the Irish Republic. Renewed efforts will be made to create and sustain employment, particularly by the encouragement of the private sector.

21. Legislation will be introduced to strengthen the powers of the police in England and Wales to prevent disorder and to modernise and codify the common law public order offences.

22. A Bill will be introduced to remove all statutory restrictions on shop opening hours whilst giving protection to existing shop workers who do not wish to work on Sundays.

23. A Bill will be introduced to reform social security in line with my Government's published proposals.

24. Legislation will be introduced to improve the management of schools and to promote the professional effectiveness of teachers.

25. Other measures will be laid before you.

26. My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT 1985

1. My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

The Duke of Edinburgh and I were pleased to receive the State Visits of the Life President of Malawi in April and the President of Mexico and Senora de la Madrid in June.

2. We recall with much satisfaction the State Visit to Portugal in March. I have also visited Belize, and was in the Bahamas for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Our tour of Commonwealth countries in the Eastern Caribbean is still in progress.

3. My Government welcomed the decision of the Maldives and of St Vincent and the Grenadines to become full members of the Commonwealth.

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4. My Government have maintained Britain's contribution to Western defence, and enhanced the United Kingdom's own defences through improvements in equipment and in the regular and reserve forces. They have played a full part in the Atlantic Alliance, and promoted British and Western defence interests outside the NATO area.

5. My Government have continued to work vigorously for agreements on verifiable arms control and disarmament, and to seek improved relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. They warmly welcomed the opening of talks in Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union and fully support the United States' efforts to reach concrete agreements.

6. My Government have signed the Treaty on the Accession of Spain and Portugal to the European Communities, and have signed and ratified the third Convention of Lomé. An Act has been passed implementing the Fontainebleau Agreement on the future financing of the European Communities, including the correction of the British budgetary contribution.

7. My Government share the widespread public concern for the victims of the famine in Africa. They have continued to provide substantial emergency assistance both directly and through the European Community.

8. My Government have continued fully to honour their undertakings to the people of the Falkland Islands, while taking positive steps to seek more normal relations with Argentina. The Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong was signed last December and an Act consequent upon its terms was passed. My Government have reached agreement with Spain on the implementation of the Lisbon statement concerning Gibraltar.

9. My Government have supported efforts to restore the independence and non-aligned status of Afghanistan. They have urged peaceful change in South Africa and the early independence of Namibia.

10. My Government welcomed to the United Kingdom in June the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. The great importance my Government attach to their relations with the Countries of South East and South Asia was marked by the Prime Minister's visit there in April.

11. Members of the House of Commons

I thank you for the provision which you have made for the honour and dignity of the Crown and for the public service.

12. My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

My Government have maintained the policies necessary to bring down inflation and sustain economic growth. Inflation remains low, the output of the Nation is at its highest level ever and continues to increase, as does the number of people in work.

13. Further steps have been taken to help the unemployed into jobs by extending the Youth Training Scheme and enlarging the Community Programme, and in other ways, including a reform of the structure of national insurance contributions.

14. To promote economic efficiency and encourage the spread of share ownership, not least among employees, my Government have continued their programme of returning State-owned businesses to the private sector, including the successful public flotation of British Telecom.

15. An Act has been passed to complete the transition of the Trustee Savings Banks to private sector status and to permit full public participation in their ownership.

16. An Act has been passed to increase competition in the provision of local bus services in Great Britain and to enable the operations of the National Bus Company to be transferred to the private sector.

17. Legislation has been enacted to make new provision for the payment of deficit grants to the National Coal Board and to abolish the British National Oil Corporation.

18. Legislation has been enacted to remove the statutory levy on cinema admissions, to provide for alternative financial assistance for film production and to reduce the regulatory burden on the film and cinema industries.

19. An Act has been passed for the better protection of food and the environment.

20. An Act has been passed to establish in England and Wales a Crown Prosecution Service independent of the police, and to enable time limits to be imposed on criminal proceedings.

21. An Act has been passed giving the right to vote at Parliamentary and European Parliament elections to many British citizens resident abroad, and extending postal and proxy voting to electors who cannot reasonably be expected to vote in person.

22. Legislation has been passed to establish a comprehensive statutory framework governing the interception of communications.

23. An Act has been passed to deal with the problem of drunkenness at designated sporting events.

24. Considerable advance has been made in the consolidation of our statute law; provision has been made to apply international Conventions on child abduction and for the administration of justice.

25. An Act has been passed to abolish the Greater London Council and the Metropolitan County Councils on 1st April 1986 and to transfer most of their functions to the borough and district councils.

26. In Northern Ireland, my Government has given high priority to the maintenance of law and order. They have continued the search for ways in which responsibility can be returned to a local administration on a widely acceptable basis. They have sought to develop a solid working relationship with the Government of the Republic of Ireland.

27. For Scotland, measures have been passed to introduce a rebate scheme following rating revaluation, to establish trustee bodies to manage certain Scottish institutions, and to make a number of reforms in Scots law.

28. Legislation has been passed to reform insolvency law in England and Wales, and in Scotland.

29. My Government have published proposals to improve the quality of school education, the effectiveness of teachers and the development of higher education into the next decade.

30. My Government have conducted a fundamental review of the social security system and published proposals for radical reform.

31. In addition, my Government have protected the real value of the retirement pension and other related benefits, and passed an act to improve employees' rights under occupational pension schemes, and to extend statutory sick pay.

32. My Lords and Members of the House of Commons

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may attend you.