

Prime Minister:

11/3/87



Lord Whitelaw proposes the dropping of the Social Security Bill (a contingency provision) from the 1986/7 programme and no advance places for the 1987/8 session.

PRIME MINISTER

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME: 1986/87 AND 1987/88 SESSIONS *proposes?*

At the conclusion ^{attached} of the discussion on future legislation at Cabinet on 27 February, QL was invited to review the proposed programme for the 1986/87 Session in the light of Cabinet's discussion and decisions - in particular the addition of two new Bills on Dartford Crossing and Marine Pilotage. We were also invited to consider the allocation of advance places for the 1987/88 Session.

W
30/4
Yes
m

1986/87 Session

2. While the proposed number of Bills is smaller than in recent Sessions, the proportion of large Bills within it means that the programme will be a very heavy one for this stage of a Parliament. Taking into account the two additional Transport Bills, the programme now includes seven large Bills and seven medium Bills. That is the same as at the beginning of this Session, which we had considered to be an exceptionally heavy one. Parliamentary Counsel are heavily committed in servicing the Bills currently before Parliament and this will cause delays in preparing Bills for next Session.

3. Against that background we were bound to look for ways of lightening the load, but we found that only one Bill was a serious candidate for deletion. This is the Social Security Bill, which had been included in the programme category, but was by way of contingent provision against the need for legislation either for the full implementation of the social security review or to carry out further expenditure decisions flowing from this year's PES round. Norman Fowler very helpfully agreed that the Bill might be dropped from the programme on the understanding - which QL naturally endorses - that it should be restored if either



of those contingencies comes about. He also mentioned another point. Power must be taken in the 1986/87 Session for a rebating scheme to apply to the community charge that will be established in Scotland by the Local Government Finance Reform (Scotland) Bill. Both Malcolm Rifkind and Kenneth Baker would prefer that this was done in a separate piece of social security legislation that would also extend to England and Wales, as they are concerned that anomalies might creep in, and their Bills be overloaded, if the rebating power was taken in the substantive local government finance legislation for Scotland and subsequently for England and Wales. QL are more optimistic on those points and take the view that the balance of advantage lies in ensuring that the whole Scottish local government finance reform exercise should so far as possible be a self-contained operation, confined to Scottish issues and kept within the Scottish Grand Committee. In any event, to have a separate Social Security Bill providing for a rebate of a charge that did not yet exist in England and Wales would be bound to give rise to parliamentary and drafting difficulties. QL therefore believe that the right decision at this time is to drop the Social Security Bill from the 1986/87 programme. Taking account of two recent additions to the uncontroversial category, the revised programme would be as at Annex A.

4. This remains a heavy programme and I must emphasise the critical importance of avoiding slippage. I would, therefore, be grateful if colleagues would personally look at the timetable for preparation of their Bills, ensure policy clearance of measures at the earliest possible date, exercise maximum restraint about seeking to add to the content of a Bill, and ensure that adequate resources are being devoted to preparation. If serious slippage should occur, I cannot rule out the possibility that we may need to return to Cabinet later in the year to seek further deletions. And it goes without saying that QL will have to look very hard indeed at any bids for further additions.

BILLS PROPOSED FOR INCLUSION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 1986/87ESSENTIAL

1. (D/En) Coal Industry Short

PROGRAMME

7. (MOD) Ministry of Defence Police Short
- L 14. (D/En) Petroleum Medium
16. (DOE) Water Authorities' Privatisation Long
17. (DOE) Local Government Medium
18. (DOE) Broads Medium
- L 20. (FCO) Diplomatic Premises and Consular Premises Control Short
- L 21. (FCO) Territorial Sea Short
26. (HO) Criminal Justice Long
- L 27. (HO) Fire Precautions and Crowd Safety Substantial
- L 30. (LCD) Family Law Reform Substantial
35. (NIO) Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) (Amendment) Medium
37. (LPS) Parliamentary Pensions Medium
38. (SO) Local Government Finance Reform (Scotland) Substantial
- L 39. (SO) Debtors (Scotland) Long
- L 40. (SO) Criminal Justice (Scotland) Substantial
- L 41. (DTI) Consumer Goods and Services Substantial
- L 42. (DTI) Copyright and Intellectual Property Long
- L 45. (D/Tp) Marine Pilotage Medium
46. (D/Tp) Dartford Crossing Substantial
47. (HMT) Banking Long

UNCONTROVERSIAL

33. (MPO) Parliamentary Commissioner (Extension of Jurisdiction) Short
49. (MAFF) Fisheries Amendment Short
- 49a. (DOE) Birmingham Olympics Short
- L 49b. (FCO) Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust Short
- L 51. (LCD) Recognition of Trusts Short
- L 52. (LCD) Minors' Contracts Short
- L 53. (LCD) Rights of Reverter Short
- L 54. (PCO) Chevening Estate Short
- [L 49c. (HO) Cable and Broadcasting (Amendment) Bill Short]

Note: The numbers used are those identifying the Bill in Annex B to C(86)8.
'L' indicates that the Bill may be suitable for Lords introduction.

