

5/6
"For Information"



Parliament
wh
14/12

CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-233

15 December 1982

Dear Private Secretary

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 1983-84

I am writing to ask you for your Minister's proposals for legislation in 1983/84.

2. You will have seen a copy of the Home Secretary's minute of 25 October to the Prime Minister. The Home Secretary drew attention to the fact that a General Election must be held in or before the Spring of 1984, and suggested that Departments' proposals for legislation in 1983-84 would have to be framed in a way that would enable the Government to plan for two possible situations:

- (a) an election in the Spring of 1984, which would mean -
 - (i) a short Session of up to six months starting in October/November 1983, followed by
 - (ii) the first Session of a new Parliament, starting in the Spring of 1984 and presumably continuing until July 1985; and
- (b) an election in or before the autumn of 1983, followed by the first Session of a new Parliament starting in October/November 1983.

The Home Secretary therefore proposed that Departments should be asked to divide their legislative proposals for 1983/84 into the following three categories:

Category A. Bills considered suitable for a Session starting in October/November 1983, whether this turns out to be a short or a normal session. (Bills in this category must therefore be capable of passing through Parliament in a maximum of six months.)

Private Secretary to -

The Prime Minister

Enc

1

Category B. Additional Bills considered suitable for a Session starting in October/November 1983 if this turns out to be a normal Session (ie the first Session of a new Parliament);

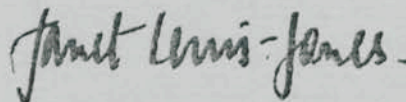
Category C. Bills not included in category A or B which are considered suitable for a long Session starting in the Spring of 1984.

The Prime Minister has agreed to the Home Secretary's proposals.

3. I should accordingly be grateful if you would let me have four copies of your Department's summary of proposals for Bills in each of these three categories, set out in the form at Annex A, together with four copies of the form at Annex B for each Bill. I enclose notes for guidance on the completion of the forms. We should be grateful if you would follow these closely.

4. I should be grateful to receive replies not later than Friday, 21 January 1983, and earlier than that if possible.

Yours sincerely



JANET A LEWIS-JONES

CONFIDENTIAL

ANNEX A

(Please provide a separate list for each of the Categories A, B and C described in the covering letter)

DEPARTMENT'S BILLS PROPOSED FOR THE
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 1983-84

Please list each Bill in its proposed category of essential, programme, contingent or other, and in its order of priority within that category.

CATEGORY (essential, contingent etc)	TITLE OF BILL	LENGTH
---	---------------	--------

CONFIDENTIAL

OUTLINE FORM FOR EACH BILL PROPOSED FOR 1983-84 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

1. DEPARTMENT
2. TITLE OF BILL
3. LENGTH OF BILL
4. PURPOSE OF BILL
5. PROPOSED CATEGORY (ESSENTIAL, CONTINGENT, ETC))
6. DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITY
7. STATE OF READINESS
8. TIMING
9. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE
10. THE POLITICAL DIMENSION
11. PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND MANPOWER IMPLICATIONS
12. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) IMPLICATIONS

NOTES ON COMPLETING THE FORMS FOR EACH BILL PROPOSED FOR
1983-84 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

1. DEPARTMENT

2. TITLE OF BILL

3. LENGTH OF BILL

An estimate of the length of the Bill is needed so that the demands on drafting capacity and Parliamentary time can be assessed at the earliest possible stage. An accurate forecast of the number of clauses and schedules will not normally be possible, but some indication such as "very short" (not more than 3-4 clauses), "short" (up to 12 clauses), "medium" (12-25 clauses), "substantial" (25-50 clauses), or "long" (over 50 clauses) would be useful. Where a Bill would cover more than one distinct topic, please give some indication of what proportion of the Bill would be devoted to each topic.

4. PURPOSE OF BILL

Please list the various topics in the Bill (with a brief indication of the purpose of each). The list should cover all the topics likely to be included in the Bill. There is likely to be resistance by the business managers and other members of Legislation Committee to substantial additions at a later stage to the Bill as described in the form.

5. PROPOSED CATEGORY (ESSENTIAL, CONTINGENT, ETC)

Where a Bill would cover more than one distinct topic, the appropriate category should be indicated separately for each topic.

The categories for proposed Bills are -

I Essential. Bills which must be enacted during 1983-84 - eg because existing powers or finance would otherwise expire or because of treaty obligations. Please give the reason(s). This category should not be used simply to reflect a high political priority. Additional non-

essential items can sometimes be included in an essential Bill, but consideration will need to be given to the length of the Bill and to the need to avoid controversial provisions which might affect the Bill's enactment by the required date.

II Contingent. Bills which might during 1983-84 become Essential as defined above.

III Programme. Bills which can already be identified as being desirable and likely to be ready for enactment during 1983-84. The reasons for enacting the Bill in 1983-84 should be stated and any specific disadvantage in delay made clear. (See also 10 below).

IV Other. Bills which do not have sufficient priority for the Programme category but which there would be advantage in enacting in 1983-84 if Parliamentary time could be found. Any which might be suitable for a Private Member should be separately identified.

6. DEPARTMENT PRIORITY

Please mark each of your bids for legislation with the strict order of priority within each category.

7. STATE OF READINESS

We need to have the best possible estimates of the date by which -

- a. Ministers' collective policy clearance will be sought (ie from the appropriate Ministerial Cabinet Committee). Please indicate specifically those policy areas which remain to be settled or on which policy decisions may be protracted;
- b. complete instructions will be ready for Parliamentary Counsel;
- c. the Bill is expected to be ready for introduction.

It is important to have accurate estimates in order to plan for the best use of Parliamentary time. Over-optimistic timetables are unhelpful all round. Please be as specific as you can, eg indicating, where possible, "early", "mid" or "late" when naming a month. In cases of doubt, earliest and latest dates for each stage of the Bill's preparation should be given. Account should be taken of Parliamentary Counsel's absence on leave (normally the whole of August).

8. TIMING

Please give, with reasons, the date by which Royal Assent is needed for Essential and Contingent Bills and target dates, if any, for the enactment of Bills in other categories. It would be helpful to distinguish between Bills for which early Royal Assent is desirable and those for which Royal Assent by a certain date is likely to be essential, eg because borrowing limits will otherwise be exceeded.

9. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

A Bill may be suitable for special forms of Parliamentary procedure. Please state whether it might be suitable for any of the following -

- a. Second Reading Committee procedure in the Commons - that is, the Bill is likely to be accepted on all sides of the House as uncontroversial and of little or no political significance;
- b. Special Standing Committee Procedure - that is, consideration by a Standing Committee empowered to hold up to three evidence-taking sessions within a limited period before detailed consideration of the Bill. Would the Bill be a suitable candidate for this procedure? Bills for Special Standing Committee Procedure should be of some significance, but should not be controversial in a party political sense;

- c. Scottish or Welsh Grand Committee procedure in the Commons;
- d. Offering to a Private Member successful in the ballot - that is, short, simple, non-constitutional, non-controversial in party political terms and without significant financial implications;
- e. Lords introduction

If it is known that a Bill will be hybrid, please say so.

10. POLITICAL ASPECTS

Please state whether any firm public commitments have been given by the Government about the Bill's introduction or timing. Please also cover briefly -

- its likely reception in the House;
- whether there is pressure from groups representing particular interests;
- whether it will be controversial politically or for any other reasons;
- whether it will appeal to or be strongly opposed by any particular sections of the community;
- what the attitude of the official Opposition to it will be;
- whether it will arouse particular interest in the House of Lords.

11. PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND MANPOWER IMPLICATIONS

Please indicate the effect on central and local government expenditure and manpower of the proposed Bill for the PESC period, and whether PESC provision has been made for any necessary expenditure. Any separate implications for the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (PSBR) should also be mentioned, especially if they affect the date by which Royal Assent is required (see 8 above).

12. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) IMPLICATIONS

Please say whether the Bill is required to fulfil any European Community (EC) commitments. If so, any relevant timing considerations should be mentioned under 8 above.