

PRIME MINISTER

Yes

MEETINGS WITH MINISTERIAL COLLEAGUES

When you came into Office you expressed the wish to hold meetings with your Cabinet colleagues in turn to go over with each of them the policy issues at the top of their agenda and to identify any changes in direction or emphasis they wished to make. You have now had meetings with most of your colleagues, and a meeting with the Home Secretary is arranged for next Monday, but there are still a number of gaps.

Mr Newton

You may like a general discussion with him on the tax/social security interface, and in particular how they affect women and children. You will, in any case, need to talk to him soon on pension equalisation.

Mr Rifkind

The policy discussion you had a few days ago identified a vacuum of policies in the transport field. Before long you will need to tackle British Rail, road congestion, the link to the Channel Tunnel and shipping. I would not be surprised, also, if the crisis in aviation didn't throw up some difficult regulatory problems.

Mr Waldegrave

You have had one discussion with him on funding in the current year but the crisis here seems to have passed, perhaps masked by the Gulf war. Mrs Thatcher was very concerned about the plans to reform the NHS and agreed that they should be launched from 1 April only after lengthy discussions with Mr Clarke. You could ask Mr Waldegrave how preparations are going. You can be sure that any shortcomings after 1 April will be blamed on the reforms. You can also ask him about progress on self-governing hospitals and practice budgets, though on the latter he is reported as soft pedalling. Before too long you will need to decide whether planning for the transfer of community care to local authorities should continue.

Mr Lilley

You could discuss with him the operation of monopolies and mergers policy, including the difficult issue of bids from foreign state-owned companies. DTI are holding a seminar in mid-March to review the full gamut of their policies, most of which were laid down in Lord Young's time. It might be best to schedule a meeting after this discussion has taken place. ✓

Agree we should set up bilaterals with the above? Once dates are set the Policy Unit will be able to advise in more detail on the agenda.

AT

ANDREW TURNBULL

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