

PRIME MINISTER

The Archway Inquiry

The Lord Chancellor has circulated a paper to members of H Committee about the next Archway Inquiry. The paper is mainly about the prevention of disorder, and it reaches the conclusion that the existing law is adequate if it is properly applied. (It emerges, for example, that Sir Michael Giddings had been offered police protection but declined much of it.)

I attach John Redwood's comments on the paper. He suggests - with Sizewell in mind - that an opportunity might be taken to seek a speedier form of procedure for public inquiries generally.

Any such proposal would no doubt evoke the response (with some justification) that the arrangements have already been thoroughly explored, and that there is little that can be done by way of fundamental reform which does not prejudice the rights of objectors to have their case heard.

Would you nevertheless like to propose a wider review of inquiry procedure?

Yes - I seem to remember that when the U.S. had their 'Concord' engine, it took 10 days only

DB

12 March, 1984.

Our procedures have got ridiculously long. I suggest we give each witness a specified time within which their case should be put out.

CONFIDENTIAL

12 March 1984

MR BARCLAY

H COMMITTEE: THE ARCHWAY INQUIRY


The Lord Chancellor's paper contains much common sense about how to proceed in the case of the Archway Inquiry.

However, some of the more important inquiries are unduly lengthy and often disrupted. The costs, aggravation and bad publicity that can flow from something like the Sizewell Inquiry are considerable.

Is there no more judicial procedure which could be adopted to ensure:

- (a) a fair hearing of the issues;
- (b) a speedier hearing;
- (c) a more imposing enforcement of rules of conduct?

Now would be the time to raise this general question if there is any general dissatisfaction on these matters.



JOHN REDWOOD

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