

PRIME MINISTER

YOUR MEETING WITH LORD WHITELAW - THIS WEDNESDAY, 30th NOVEMBER
AT 11.00 AM

1. We understand that this meeting arises out of the Chairman's discussion with you last Monday (21st November) about responsibility for co-ordinating the presentation of Government policy.
2. The case for transferring this responsibility to Lord Whitelaw is that he would have the political skill and the will and the means (having sufficient clout among colleagues) to do it.
3. However, there could be disadvantages. To do the job effectively Lord Whitelaw would have to be so designated publicly. The lobby would then feel resentful if they continued to meet only the Lord Privy Seal, on Thursdays etc., and not the man who had taken over his "information" responsibilities. In addition, the Opposition Parties and some of the press would probably argue that Lord Whitelaw was being paid a full Cabinet Minister's salary, without the encumbrance of a Government Department, simply to carry out Conservative "propoganda".
4. There is a case for transferring this responsibility instead to the Chairman of the Party. He could be appointed, say, Paymaster General as a member of - or attending - the Cabinet but paid from Central Office funds. This would give him the weight to do the job, deflect any criticism of "misuse" of taxpayers' money and give him the time to run Central Office which badly needs an undisputed fulltime executive head. However, if you wanted to make such an appointment only after the current Trade Union Bill has left the Commons, it might have to be delayed until early next year possibly as late as April.

Not when he is leader of the words
No - he hasn't yet got the weight. And he must stay at the D.C. He can't do 3 jobs
FM *SS.*
Ferdy Mount and Stephen Sherbourne

28.11.83