

SLHAJE

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PRIME MINISTER

When Nigel Wicks reviewed the balance of your forward diary, you may remember that he identified the relevant infrequency of "think" sessions as a possible shortcoming.

You have, however, recently held meetings ("Seminars") on eg. crime prevention, education, and, going a little further back, South Africa. All of these seem to have been successful in their various ways: they gave you and other Cabinet Ministers an opportunity to discuss matters of current interest with outside experts; they can encourage outsiders to pursue their own work more vigorously; they ensure that Government, and you in particular, are seen as not always concerned with matters of immediate interest, but set aside time to take a longer term and strategic view on a range of issues.

Other pressures on the diary clearly impose limits on how frequently we could lay on meetings of this kind. To begin with, we might think in terms of every three months. If you agree that this is worthwhile, I list below a number of possible subjects for these meetings which you may wish to consider:

Health policy  
Special employment and training measures  
Agricultural policy  
Real wage costs and unemployment  
Wider share ownership

Charles also expects to be putting in a suggestion for a Foreign Affairs seminar to take place in July or September.

You may wish to discuss at our next diary meeting. Agree?

MARK ADDISON

6 February 1986

Mr Addison

I agree with X. I have ✓ there I  
that most interesting and X there I  
that are not right.

N.L.W.

5.2

WICKS

THE PRIME MINISTER'S DIARY

You will remember that I asked for ideas on possible subjects for seminars to bolster the "think piece" element in the diary.

My note suggested as starters:

- ✓ Health policy
- ✓ Special employment and training measures
- Agricultural policy
- X Management in the Civil Service.

Charles has mentioned that he normally lays on one major foreign policy/defence seminar a year, usually at Chequers. He did not have any specific ideas at present, but he will shortly be putting in a suggestion for a seminar in July or September. He is also, as you know from yesterday's diary meeting, working on a session on arms control.

(attached)

I have also now received a note from Brian Griffiths (listing a number of topics for discussion, some of which overlap with the other ideas mentioned above. One or two of these are I think non-starters. We should in any case need to get advice from Departments before setting anything up. But, if you agree, I think it would be worth drawing together a coordinated list and putting it into a weekend box to see if the Prime Minister is interested in pursuing any of these ideas.

MEA

MARK ADDISON

5 February 1986

SUBJECTS FOR PRIME MINISTER'S SEMINARS

After discussing the matter in the Unit the following have emerged as the leading suggestions of subjects for seminars - though not in any particular order:-

✓ Health

Change in family practitioner service; better running of hospitals; better links between public and private sectors.

X Black Economy

To be accepted, attacked or reduced.

✓ Real Wage Costs and Unemployment

Proposals to tackle reducing high real wages - linked with reform of trade union collective bargaining.

✓ Where do we stand in Education?

New directives for education policy.

✓ Wider Share-ownership

Scope for new initiatives following the success of

privatisation and the advent of 'Big Bang'.

Defence Procurement

A hard look at a soft subject. How successful is Levene? The scope for imports?

X Decline of UK Manufacturing Sector

Government policy is seen as too passive. Needs to be explained and developed.

✓ Training and the Education System

Recognition of the importance of training in a fast changing environment.

✓ ? Industrial Subsidies

The size of the problem - which areas can be tackled.

X Standards in Society

If it is desirable to have standards in society what part should Government play and what should it not attempt to do - a follow-up to the Disraeli Lecture.

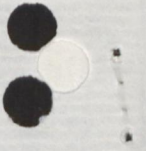


BRIAN GRIFFITHS

PM

DIARY

5/79



Defence Procurement

A hard look at a sore subject. How successful is Leven's  
scope for imports?

Decline of UK Manufacturing Sector

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environment.

Industrial Subsidies

The size of the problem - which areas can be tackled

Standards in Society

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should Government take and what should it not attempt to do  
a follow-up to the Marshall lecture.

MR. ADDISON

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THE PRIME MINISTER'S DIARY

Your note of 8 January asked about "general think sessions".

We normally go for one major foreign policy/defence seminar a year, usually at Chequers. I have nothing specific to propose at present but intend to put a suggestion to the Prime Minister in February for a seminar in July or September.

More immediately we are likely to need a substantial meeting with a small number of academics on arms control issues before the Prime Minister sends a further message to President Reagan on this subject. I shall be coming to you for a meeting of two hours at least, ideally in February. You might bear this in mind for the next diary meeting.

CDD

(C.D. Powell)

28 January 1986

DCAAYY

MR WICKS ✓

MR POWELL

MR NORRGROVE

MR FLESHER

PROFESSOR GRIFFITHS

✓  
NEA wishes  
this B/F on 13/1/86  
- see DN's copy  
below

THE PRIME MINISTER'S DIARY

As you know, we have been looking at how far the allocation of time in the Prime Minister's diary properly reflects the priorities she needs to give to different areas of work. We have concluded, generally, that the balance now is about right.

If there is a weakness, it seems to lie in the amount of time we are able to allocate to "general think sessions". One way of remedying this is to consider the possibility of further seminars, along the lines of the one on Education (in October), on Crime Prevention (today) and the Better Made in Britain campaign (coming up in February).

When we have had a chance to assess how the Crime Prevention Seminar goes, we shall have a better idea of the value of this kind of forum. But I think it would be helpful if each of us could consider possible topics for seminars which might be arranged later in the year. We are already thinking of a session on health policy. Other candidates might be: special employment and training measures, agricultural policy and management in the Civil Service. I should be grateful for other suggestions you may have to offer, and we shall then consider them when the Crime Prevention Seminar is out of the way.

MGA

MARK ADDISON

8 January 1986

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