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CABINET

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

Memorandum by the Lord President of the Council

I attach a draft of The Queen's Speech on the Opening of Parliament in the form in which it has been agreed by The Queen's Speeches and Future Legislation Committee. The text will have to be submitted to The Queen on Thursday 18 June.

2. The draft is built on our Manifesto and on the legislative programme that was provisionally agreed by the Cabinet on 26 March (CC(87) 12.5). It takes account of the fact that the Criminal Justice Bill, the Finance Bill and the Local Government Bill, most of which fell at the Dissolution, will need to be reintroduced.

3. The order of the Speech follows the conventional arrangement but it is, at some 1,100 words, appreciably longer than any Speech in recent years. We should not allow it to grow any longer.

COMMITMENTS TO LEGISLATION

4. We shall need to settle the details of the legislative programme in the light of the decisions that we take on The Queen's Speech. At this stage, the main points to which I draw my colleagues' attention are as follows -

a. Even if no substantial additions are made to the programme that was provisionally approved in March, this is an exceptionally heavy burden of legislation. We shall be in an impossible position if many of our larger and more contentious Bills cannot be introduced until the New Year.

b. Work is still needed to settle the policy on some of our most politically important Bills. Since these are the Bills that will take up most time in both Houses, however, we must do our utmost to ensure that they are ready for introduction as soon as possible. I believe we shall need to take a view on the way in which legislation on housing should be distributed between the coming Session and the following one.

c. The Secretary of State for the Environment has now obtained colleagues' approval for the modified approach to water privatisation.

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that was foreshadowed when Cabinet last considered the legislative programme. The letter of 15 June from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's office explains his reasons for wishing to see the main Water Privatisation Bill included in the forthcoming Session. Under the provisionally approved programme, however, the Department of the Environment already have three major Bills. The letter of 16 June by the Secretary of State for the Environment makes it clear that he does not believe that enacting this Bill in the 1987-88 Session is a realistic timetable. We shall need to take a clear decision on this.

d. We noted in our earlier discussion that there were arguments both ways on proceeding quickly with legislation to implement the Warnock Report on the alleviation of human infertility. We should settle that question now.

e. The Cabinet noted on 26 March that further proposals might be coming forward on matters affecting the City. The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has now told us, however, that the only City matter on which he sees a need to legislate in the forthcoming Session is the highly technical question of clearing arrangements in financial markets, which would not be appropriate for mention in The Queen's Speech.

CONCLUSIONS

5. I invite my colleagues to approve the draft Speech attached to this memorandum.

Privy Council Office

17 June 1987

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THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT 1987

My Lords and Members of The House of Commons

1. I look forward with great pleasure to receiving His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco, and His Excellency President Cossiga of Italy on State Visits this year. I also look forward to being present on the occasion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Canada in October and to visiting Australia in connection with the Bicentenary next year.

2. My Government will stand fully by their obligations to the United Kingdom's European and American allies in NATO. They will sustain Britain's contribution to Western defence by modernising the independent nuclear deterrent through the introduction of the Trident submarine programme and by increasing the effectiveness of the nation's conventional forces.

3. My Government will continue to strive with Britain's allies to achieve balanced and verifiable measures of arms control. They strongly support the United States' proposals for the elimination of intermediate range nuclear missiles, and 50 per cent reductions in American and Soviet strategic nuclear weapons. They will strive to achieve a worldwide ban on chemical weapons. They will seek balanced reductions leading to lower levels of conventional forces

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throughout the whole of Europe and the elimination of disparities which threaten Western security.

4. My Government will work for greater trust and confidence between East and West and for progress, especially on human rights, at the Vienna Review Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

5. My Government will play a leading role in the development of the European Community while safeguarding Britain's essential national interests. They will work for reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. They will press for strict controls on Community spending and the opening of the market in financial and other services. They will work with our European partners to defend our trading interests and to press for freer trade among all nations.

6. My Government will sustain the fight against international terrorism and trafficking in drugs. They will stand by their pledges to the people of the Falkland Islands, while seeking more normal relations with Argentina. They will fulfil their responsibilities to the people of Hong Kong and will continue to co-operate with the Chinese Government to carry out the Sino-British Joint Declaration. They will play their full part in the United Nations and the Commonwealth. They will seek peaceful and lasting solutions to the most difficult international problems, including those of the

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Middle East and Southern Africa. They will work for the restoration of an independent and non-aligned Afghanistan.

7. My Government will maintain their substantial aid programme. They will pursue proposals for international action on debt to help some of the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Estimates for the Public Service will be laid before you

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

8. My Government will continue to pursue policies of sound financial management designed further to reduce inflation and to promote enterprise. They will maintain firm control of public expenditure so that it continues to fall as a proportion of national income and permits further reductions in the burden of taxation. Legislation will be brought forward shortly to implement the tax changes proposed in the last budget but not yet enacted.

9. My Government will give high priority to the special needs of the inner cities. Action will be taken to encourage investment and to increase enterprise and employment in these areas.

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10. Action will be taken to provide a comprehensive employment service for unemployed people. Young people and others will be encouraged to take full advantage of work and training opportunities.

11. My Government will encourage the wider ownership of homes, shares and pensions. The former British Airports Authority will be privatised. [Legislation will be introduced to privatise the main functions of the water authorities in England and Wales.] [Action will be taken to facilitate the privatisation of the main functions of the water authorities in England and Wales.] Proposals will be brought forward for privatising the electricity industry. My Government's remaining shareholding in British Petroleum will be sold this year.

12. Legislation will be introduced to improve the rights of individual members with respect to their trade unions and to provide further protection against trade union enforcement of closed shops.

13. My Government will take action to raise standards throughout education and to extend parental choice. Legislation will be introduced to provide for a national curriculum for schools, delegation of school budgets and greater autonomy for schools. It will also reform the structure of education in Inner London, and give greater independence to polytechnics and certain other colleges.

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14. A Bill will be introduced to abolish domestic rates in England and Wales and to make new arrangements for the finance of local government.

15. Measures will be introduced to promote further competition in the provision of local authorities' services.

16. Measures will be brought before you to improve the provision of rented housing in England and Wales.

17. My Government remain deeply concerned about the problem of crime. They will carry out their plans to increase the resources available to the police and will establish a national organisation to promote crime prevention. A Bill will be introduced to improve the working of criminal justice.

18. A Bill will be introduced to reinforce the system of firm but fair immigration control.

19. Legislation will be introduced to give greater flexibility in licensing hours.

20. A Bill will be introduced to reform the law of copyright and intellectual property.

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21. My Government will maintain and improve the health and social services and will complete the introduction of the reformed social security system. [A Bill will be brought before you on human fertilisation and embryology.]

22. My Government will continue to support farming. They will help farmers to diversify, and will introduce legislation to encourage the planting of farm woodlands.

23. Legislation will be introduced to encourage private renting in Scotland, [and to create a new Scottish Housing Agency]. Measures will be introduced to strengthen schools councils in Scotland and to improve the management of Scottish education institutions.

24. In Northern Ireland, my Government will seek an agreed basis on which greater responsibility can be devolved to representatives of the people. They will work unremittingly for the defeat of terrorism. They will build upon the constructive relations established with the Republic of Ireland in security and other matters.

25. Measures will be introduced to strengthen the efficiency and competitiveness of our ports and to assist the merchant shipping industry.

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26. My Government will bring forward legislation to improve the arrangements for legal aid.

Other measures will be laid before you.

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.