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V Cabinet Order

3 June 1985

PRIME MINISTER

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 1985-86

QL has been finding it difficult to accommodate all the Bills departments require.

The overall balance of the programme

1985-86 should represent the core of this Government's Programme for this Parliament. The most meaty political issues should be tackled in this year, to leave the following year or two freer of contentious items, with less legislation. Ministers would then have more time to campaign around the country and to reap the benefits of the Bills that have been put through in 1985-86.

Deletions from the Programme

Cabinet has decided to delete Nationalised Industries and Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bills to accommodate Gas. You could accept this as given.

We agree that deregulation of business policy is not clearly formulated at the moment. David could add the important conclusions from his Reviews to existing departmental Bills: eg, employment measures to Wages Bill; planning to Local

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Government and Planning Bill; Nigel to take on VAT and
Inland Revenue matters in next year's Finance Bill.

It is a pity the Dockyards bill has fallen, given the
political damage in Plymouth that has already been done by
announcing the policy. But we see the force of the
argument.

The Consumer Goods and Services could be put off to the
following year. DTI have a long and complicated Bill
(Financial Services) to pilot through, and the Consumer
Goods Bill - whose policy is regulatory in thrust - is not
part of the core strategy of this Government.

Animals (Scientific Procedures) does depend on a temporary
alliance of moderates, but is still likely to encounter
difficulties both from those industrial interests, who
believe the new controls are too severe; and from the
animals lobbies, who believe the new measures endorse
cruelty. The Home Secretary will defend it vigorously, but
he has his Public Order proposals to see through, which are
of more political importance.

Scotland still retains 3 Bills. George Younger will argue
that this is quite a modest Programme for Scotland as a
whole, given that it has a separate legal system. But
Scottish Bills do take up valuable time - the Housing Bill
is likely to have its Second Reading on the Floor of the

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House - and all the Scottish Bills require time in the Lords, which is becoming an increasing constraint. The existence of the Scottish Grand Committee and separate Scottish legal draughtsmen is not in itself a sufficient reason for defending 3 Bills for Scotland. You could ask again whether one of the legal Bills could be deferred; or whether the Housing (Scotland) Bill is the right Bill for the task. Willie's office tell us it does not include deregulation, but does include home improvement grants which Patrick is now proposing to drop from the English legislation.

If colleagues were persuaded that Consumer Goods and Services, a Scottish Bill and Animals (Scientific Procedures) could be dropped, this would then enable the Programme to encompass the Deregulation of the Private Rented Sector Bill, which QL proposes; the Local Government and Planning Bill could be retained; as could Education and Wages. It would be a pity to lose Education, given the need for Keith to maintain the momentum of his reforms; and the absence of a Wages Bill will be strange indeed, after going to the trouble of politically explosive consultation on the Wages Councils.

The Local Government and Planning Bill should include simple proposals for contracting-out of local authority services. This would make a substantial inroad into inefficiency and waste in local authorities, and be part of the package of

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measures that Government is forming to gain better value for money in local government and to relieve some of the pressure on ratepayers or other taxpayers.

Suggestions - Summary

PU Recommendation

QL Recommendation

Drop:

Deregulation

Out

Dockyards

Out

Consumer Goods

In

Animals (Scientific Procedures)

In

One Scottish Bill

In

Include:

Housing Deregulation

In

Local Government and Planning

In

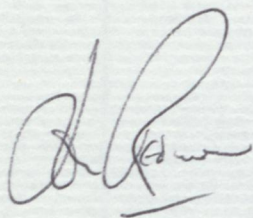
(including Contracting-Out)

M Wages

Out

Education

Out



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