

Labour  
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(16)

Ref. AO92/1003

PRIME MINISTER

The Queen's Speech on the Opening of Parliament and the  
Legislative Programme

The Government will need to decide, as a matter of some urgency, the terms of the Queen's Speech on the Opening of Parliament, which is due to be delivered on 6 May and must go to the Palace for approval by 30 April at the latest. They will also need to settle, as rapidly as possible, the legislative programme for the first Session of the new Parliament.

2. It is usual to set up a Committee, the Ministerial Committee on the Queen's Speeches and Legislation (QFL), for this purpose and in view of the overall timetable I advise you to give this a high priority. I suggest that its terms of reference should be:

"To prepare and submit to the Cabinet drafts of the Queen's Speeches to Parliament, and proposals for the Government's legislative programme for each Session of Parliament".

3. The exact composition of the Committee will depend to some extent on the appointments you will be making. The Chairman might be the Leader of the House of Commons, or a senior Departmental Minister. It is customary for the members to include most or all of the following Ministers:

Lord Chancellor  
Leader of the House of Commons

Leader of the House of Lords  
Attorney General  
Lord Advocate  
Chief Whip, Commons  
Chief Whip, Lords  
A Treasury Minister.

4. This has the advantage of reflecting legal and business management interests, and avoiding Departmental Ministers who can all too easily be subject to conflicts of interest. You may nevertheless wish to appoint one or two senior colleagues to give the Committee additional weight: there will be a need at the outset to make some difficult political judgements, particularly about matters to be included in the Queen's Speech, in the light of competing pressures from colleagues wishing to take forward their own Departmental aspirations. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs might be a member, or be invited to attend for discussion of the Queen's Speeches.

5. In most Parliamentary Sessions, the drafting of the Queen's Speech and the drawing up of the legislative programme are separate processes, with the decisions on the legislative programme taking place before the drafting of the Queen's Speech begins. That will not be possible on this occasion: the timetable will require the Cabinet to settle the terms of the Speech by Thursday 30 April. Taking account of the long Easter weekend, from Thursday 16 April to Monday 20 April, it would be desirable for QFL to meet on Tuesday 14 April to take a preliminary view of the draft Queen's Speech before Cabinet have an initial discussion of it on Thursday 16 April.

6. At the same meeting the Committee would discuss the general strategy for the first Session's programme, and, in particular, consider what urgent Bills might be needed for introduction immediately after the Queen's Speech, on which detailed policy

and drafting work would need to begin at once. The timetable thereafter should permit decisions on the legislative programme as a whole to be made before the Queen's Speech is delivered, at least so far as the main programme Bills are concerned, in order that reasonably comprehensive supporting briefing can be made available to the Lobby, in the usual way.

--- 7. I attach at Annex A a draft minute to the Chairman which would be copied to the other members. We aim to circulate a draft Speech to the Committee, as a basis for discussion, together with a paper on the strategy for the legislative programme, in the course of the weekend.

8. If you are not yet ready to set up the actual Committee, you may wish to appoint an ad hoc group to consider the Queen's Speech. This might meet under the chairmanship of the Home Secretary, Lord Chancellor or Leader of the Commons. It would need to comprise members who could speak from the points of the view of the Treasury, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the business managers of the Lords and Commons. A draft minute to a Chairman is attached at Annex B.

--- 9. I attach an Annex C an initial draft of the Queen's Speech. This has been prepared using Departmental contributions based on the Labour Party Manifesto.

--- 10. The points on which the draft Speech makes commitments to legislation in the first Session are, for convenience, set out at Annex D. The fact that a measure is not mentioned in the Speech does not, of course, prevent it being brought forward in the first Session, though you would doubtless wish the Speech to mention most of the major early measures about which you are certain.

11. If you agree, we will show the draft Speech to the Chairman of the Ministerial Committee on the Queen's Speeches and Future Legislation (or of the ad hoc group) and circulate it at the earliest opportunity.

R.R.B.

ROBIN BUTLER

9 April 1992

## ANNEX A

DRAFT MINUTE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE  
MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON THE QUEEN'S SPEECHES AND FUTURE  
LEGISLATION

We need to take immediate steps to settle the terms of the Queen's Speech on the Opening of Parliament and to agree on the legislative programme for the forthcoming Session of Parliament. I propose to appoint a single Committee to deal with both subjects, and I should be grateful if you would act as its Chairman.

The Committee's terms of reference will be:

"To prepare and submit to the Cabinet drafts of the Queen's Speeches to Parliament, and proposals for the Government's legislative programme for each Session of Parliament."

I propose that the following Ministers should serve on the Committee under your chairmanship:

Lord Chancellor  
Leader of the House of Commons  
Leader of the House of Lords  
Attorney General  
Lord Advocate  
Chief Whip, Commons  
Chief Whip, Lords  
A Treasury Minister  
[other Ministers?]

with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs being invited to attend when the Queen's Speeches are being discussed.

The Secretariat will be provided by the Cabinet Office.

The terms of the Queen's Speech must be settled by 30 April at the latest. Given the proximity of the Easter holidays, there is a need to make urgent progress: I envisage that the Cabinet will have a preliminary discussion of a first draft from the Committee on Thursday 16 April. Members of the Committee should therefore hold themselves ready as a first priority to attend a meeting on the morning of Tuesday 14 April so that this timetable can be met.

I am sending copies of this minute to other Ministers concerned and to Sir Robin Butler.

## ANNEX B

## DRAFT MINUTE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE CHAIRMAN OF AN AD HOC GROUP ON THE QUEEN'S SPEECH

We need to take immediate steps to settle the terms of the Queen's Speech on the Opening of Parliament. I should be grateful if you would act as a Chairman of an ad hoc group to prepare a draft for the Cabinet's consideration.

I propose that the following Ministers should serve on the group under your chairmanship:

Lord Chancellor  
Home Secretary  
Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
Leader of the House of Commons  
Leader of the House of Lords  
Attorney General  
Lord Advocate  
Chief Whip, Commons  
Chief Whip, Lords

The Secretariat will be provided by the Cabinet Office.

I envisage that the Cabinet would have a preliminary discussion of a first draft of the Queen's Speech on Thursday 16 April. Members of the group should therefore hold themselves ready as a first priority to attend a meeting on the morning of Tuesday 14 April so that this timetable can be met.

I am sending copies of this minute to the other members of the group and to Sir Robin Butler.

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ANNEX C

Draft of 10 April 1992

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE OPENING  
OF PARLIAMENT

WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 1992

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1. [I look forward with great pleasure to receiving the State Visits of the Sultan of Brunei and Her Majesty the Raja of Isteri in November, and His Excellency the President of the Portuguese Republic and Senhora Soares in 1993.]
2. I look forward to my forthcoming visit to the European Parliament and the Council of Europe at Strasbourg, and to my visits to Malta later this month, France and Canada in June, and Germany in October.
3. My Government will strive to enhance peace and cooperation in the world while safeguarding the defence of the United Kingdom, based on the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation with a stronger European contribution. With the Allies they will seek to adapt NATO to changed requirements following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.
4. My Government will work to reduce the world's stock of nuclear weapons, and will help the Russian Federation in the task of dismantling surplus nuclear weapons. They will promote tight national and international controls on conventional arms sales. They will work for a strengthened Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty backed by a comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, for a global ban on chemical weapons and to prevent proliferation of ballistic missiles. Meanwhile, they will join Russia in ending nuclear tests.

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5. To reflect the changes necessary in adjusting to the end of the Cold War, my Government will establish a Defence Diversification Agency to assist workers, companies and communities affected by the change.
6. My Government will strengthen the commitment to the European Community. They will opt into the Social Chapter agreed by our eleven Community partners at Maastricht last December. They will lay before Parliament the Treaty of Maastricht and introduce legislation to implement it. They will seek progress towards economic and monetary union.
7. My Government will work for a successful Presidency of the European Community. Priorities will include preparations for enlargement, the completion of the Single Market, and progress on the Social Action Programme. They will promote budget discipline and better value for money in Community spending. They will press for the early conclusion of the GATT trade negotiations, and seek fundamental changes to the Common Agricultural Policy.
8. My Government will encourage the development of democratic institutions in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and press within the Group of Seven and the Community for a major programme of assistance for the former Communist countries.
9. They will work for a stronger United Nations. They will pursue a peaceful settlement in Yugoslavia. They will require full Iraqi compliance with the Security Council Resolutions. They will support moves to bring lasting peace in the Middle East.
10. They will play an active part in the Commonwealth. They will support efforts to build a democratic society in South Africa.
11. My Government will fight world hunger and poverty, and promote environmentally sustainable development, democracy and respect for human rights. They will aim to meet the United Nations' aid target for developing countries of 0.7% of GNP

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within five years, and encourage new approaches to reduce debt and greater and fairer trade for developing countries.

12. The United Kingdom will work for a successful outcome to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

13. Estimates for the Public Service will be laid before you.

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

14. My Government will develop a programme for national economic recovery. Early action will be taken to stimulate investment, particularly in industry, housing and transport and to tackle unemployment. Resources for the NHS and for education and training will be increased.

15. My Government are committed to the Exchange Rate Mechanism and will in due course move sterling to the narrow bands at the current parity of 2.95 Deutschemarks. Within this framework they will pursue policies that will promote economic convergence in the Community.

16. Firm control on public borrowing will be maintained. Investment in public services will be increased as borrowing and other resources allow. Plans for the current year will be announced shortly.

17. My Government will make income tax and national insurance fairer, and channel extra resources to pensioners and families.

18. Legislation will be introduced to improve rights at work, and to guarantee all young people adequate training or education, and to establish regional development agencies. A National Investment Bank will be established.

19. Measures will be introduced to raise education standards and modernise schools. They will end selection at eleven plus, extend nursery education, create an Education Standards Commission, and

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integrate grant-maintained schools within the local school system.

20. My Government are committed to a modern, efficient National Health Service free at time of need, and better community care. Legislation will be introduced to reform health and community services, and establish a Health Quality Commission.

21. My Government will prepare for the introduction of fair rates at the earliest opportunity. [They will take immediate steps to remove the requirement for students and income support recipients to pay 20 per cent of the community charge, to amend the non-domestic rate transitional arrangements, and to establish new arrangements for local taxation from 1st April 1993.]

22. As a first step towards a Charter of Rights, My Government will introduce a Bill on freedom of information to open up government to the people. Legislation will be presented to strengthen the law against discrimination on the grounds of sex. My Government will protect the rights of consumers of public and private services, and enhance their quality.

23. For Scotland, legislation will be introduced to establish an elected Scottish Parliament.

24. Action will be taken to reduce crime and to promote law and order.

25. My Government will maintain the fight against terrorism in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. A Bill will be introduced to replace the Prevention of Terrorism Act with a more effective measure.

26. Legislation will be introduced to ensure that refugees in the United Kingdom are protected and unfounded applicants refused.

27. My Ministers will work with local government to secure the

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effective provision of local services and promote local democracy. Local government structure in England and Wales, and local government electoral arrangements, will be reviewed. Proposals for an elected Greater London Authority will be brought forward.

28. My Government will take steps to provide decent homes for those in need and to improve the quality of life in the inner cities.

29. They will introduce measures to support efforts by local authorities to reduce congestion and improve public transport in urban areas, and to regulate bus services.

30. A Bill will be introduced to establish Environment Protection Executives.

31. My Government will bring forward legislation to promote the Welsh Language in Wales.

32. In Northern Ireland, My Government will fight terrorism by every means within the law, while taking steps to strengthen measures against injustices, discrimination and deprivation. They will seek political progress through tri-partite talks. They will seek close and positive relations with the Irish Government, working with them through the Anglo-Irish Agreement to promote, in the long term, the conditions for consent to Irish unity.

33. Other measures will be laid before you.

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

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

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ANNEX D

COMMITMENTS TO LEGISLATION

Implementation of the Maastricht Treaty Finance Bill

National Insurance Contribution Bill

• Employment and Training

Regional Development Agencies

National Investment Bank

Education

National Health Service and Community Care

Fair Rates

Possible urgent local government finance measures

Freedom of Information

Sexual Equality

Quality Commissions

Scottish Devolution

Prevention of Terrorism Act

Asylum

Local Government, including London and Wales

Transport

Environment

Welsh Language

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**COMMITMENTS TO LEGISLATION**

Implementation of the Maastricht Treaty  
Finance Bill  
National Insurance Contributions Bill  
Pensions/Child Benefit  
Employment and Training  
National Investment Bank  
Education  
National Health Service and Community Care  
Fair Rates  
Possible urgent local government finance measures  
Freedom of Information  
Sexual Equality  
Quality Commissions  
Scottish Devolution  
Prevention of Terrorism Act  
Asylum  
Local Government, including London and Wales  
Transport  
Environment  
Welsh Language

Ref. A092/1004

Labour  
Not Sent.

PRIME MINISTER

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Authentication of the Seal of the Minister of the Civil Service

Under the Ministers of the Crown Act 1975, the Prime Minister, as Minister of the Civil Service, is required to give his authority to enable the Minister(s) and officials in the Cabinet Office (OMCS) to authenticate the Official Seal of the Minister for the Civil Service and sign documents on the Minister's behalf. I should therefore be grateful if you would  
--- sign the attached authentication.

R.R.B.

ROBIN BUTLER

8 April 1992

AUTHORITY TO AUTHENTICATE THE OFFICIAL SEAL OF  
THE MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE AND TO SIGN DOCUMENT

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In accordance with paragraphs 5 and 6 of Schedule 1 to the Ministers of the Crown Act 1975 as applied by section 6(2) of that Act, I hereby authorise any Minister who is appointed to be in day-to-day charge of the Cabinet Office (Office of the Minister for the Civil Service), any other Minister to assist me in the affairs of that department, and any person who is appointed to the Office of Second Permanent Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, or Senior Principal in the Cabinet Office (Official of the Minister for the Civil Service) to authenticate my Official Seal by his signature and to sign documents.

Dated this            day of April 1992