

PRIME MINISTER

26 January 1986

WESTLAND SPEECH: 27 JANUARY

I have just read a draft of your speech for this afternoon. This is a helpful elaboration of your statement on 23 January.

I have a number of comments which might lead to a strengthening of the text:

1. As it stands, it gives the impression of a considerable reluctance on your part, first to raise the matter of the leak with your own officials, and second to set up an inquiry. In both cases, it looks as if the initiative came from the law officers. The question which will be raised is why there was such reluctance on your part. People will speculate on the reasons for such reluctance. Was it a suspicion that Leon Brittan might be involved? Or was it a hope that the whole affair might blow over?
Elaboration would be helpful
2. The draft ^{is} ~~this~~ weak on the misunderstanding between DTI and No 10 officials. As all of the officials involved are professionals at their business, people are bound to speculate on the kind of questions raised by John Mogg and Colette Bowe. Disclosing more information about what happened would strengthen your case.

3. At certain points, you could well express regret about what happened and adopt a posture of greater humility.

4. It was apparent at last week's statement to the House that the Opposition will attempt to ridicule this speech by laughter, which could seriously damage morale on your own back bench. The following lines look as if they may provoke such laughter and should either be deleted or amended:

p.4 "Accurate ... in no way misleading ... consistent."

"Because one member ... debating the whole matter today."

p.15 "It was important that the facts should be established."

p.22 "But they did not see any need to do so."

p.28 "The Government's ... concern."

BG.