

**HOUSE OF LORDS APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of the Tenth Meeting: 26 February 2001**

**Present:**

Lord Stevenson (Chair)  
Lord Dholakia  
Baroness Dean  
Dame Deirdre Hine  
Lord Hurd  
Mrs Felicity Huston  
Mrs Angela Sarkis

Mrs Geraldine Alexander (Secretariat)  
Mr Jim Barron (Secretariat)  
Mrs Mary Grant (Secretariat)  
Mr Richard Heaton (Cabinet Office)

**Introduction:**

There were no apologies for absence.

**Minutes of the Ninth meeting held on 16 February.**

2. The minutes of the ninth meeting were agreed.

**Correspondence from the Prime Minister**

3. The Commission noted the Prime Minister's letter of 21 February. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the Prime Minister indicating that the Commission recognised his prerogative and was sympathetic to his proposal.

4. It was noted that any changes in these arrangements should be included in changes in the Information Pack and on the website.

**Legal Advice**

5. The Commission thanked Richard Heaton for his helpful paper. It was noted that

[REDACTED]. In discussion, the following points were raised

- The Commission would seek Richard Heaton's advice on [REDACTED]

- The Commission agreed Richard Heaton's advice that [REDACTED]
- Commission members would complete declarations of interests, in accordance with the Commission's Code of Practice, for all the nominees in the first round.

## **The List**

6. The Commission noted that a formal response from the Prime Minister on the number of recommendations had not yet been received. However, the Commission would consider the short-listed nominees on the understanding that the Prime Minister would invite it to put forward 15 names.

### *Northern Ireland*

7. The Commission noted the strengths of [REDACTED], but recognised the need to proceed carefully given sensitivities in Northern Ireland. For future rounds, the Commission would develop its approach to encouraging people from Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK to come forward.

### *Political independence*

8. The Commission had stated that membership was not a bar to consideration for appointment as a non-party political peer. However, nominees would need to satisfy themselves and the Commission that they would be able to operate outside a party political framework. The Commission was satisfied that all nominees it was considering recommending would be able to operate independently in the House.

9. During interviews, it had emerged that some nominees were members of political parties. These nominees had been reminded that membership was not a bar. However, most considered that they would be likely to resign their membership if appointed to the House of Lords. The Commission recognised that public perceptions were important to the Commission's credibility and that these could be heightened and caught up in political controversy in the run up to a General Election. It was agreed that further consideration would need to be given to communications about the list and that, possibly, this might be announced after the General Election.

### *Nomination and Self-Nomination*

10. The Commission recognised that, for future rounds, consideration should be given to those people nominated by others, if the nominee had agreed to this. This would help to encourage more people to come forward from wider backgrounds.

*Short-listed Nominees*

11. The Commission discussed the Chairman's memorandum of 23 February but did not reach a final conclusion. However, the following points were made

- Whilst the Commission hoped to attract outstanding nominations from groups currently underrepresented in the House, the final recommended list would be based on individual merit.
- The Commission would bear in mind the need to look at nominees who might also be considered for future lists.
- There was broad agreement in discussing the nominations of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
- The Commission would give further thought to the other nominees, taking into account their particular strengths and a balance of other considerations, such as current gaps in the House.
- Subject to further references obtained by Dame Deirdre Hine, the Commission might consider [REDACTED] for a future list.
- [REDACTED] was a man of considerable achievement, who would be able to contribute on [REDACTED] issues, where there were currently important gaps in expertise and authority in the House.
- It was agreed that arrangements would be made for other Commission members to meet [REDACTED]. Subject to this and further references, [REDACTED] might be considered for a future list.
- The Commission considered the nominations of [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. All were impressive nominees. However, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] might be considered for a future list.
- It was agreed that [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were all outstanding nominees. [REDACTED] would bring her [REDACTED] experience – an area where expertise was badly needed in the House.

12. The Commission would continue with its checks on [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Arrangements would be made with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to discuss their nominations further.