

MINUTES OF THE 37TH MEETING HELD ON 9TH MARCH 2006

Present: Lord Stevenson (Chairman)
Lord Hurd
Baroness Dean
Lord Dholakia
Mrs Felicity Huston
Ms Angela Sarkis

Mr Jim Barron – Secretariat
Ms Geraldine Alexander – Secretariat
Mrs Paula Adshead – Secretariat
Ms Louise Blundell – Secretariat
Mr Peter Fish – Treasury Solicitors
Ms Maggie O’Boyle – Press Adviser

Apologies

1. There were no apologies.

Chairman’s update

2. The Chairman noted the reports [REDACTED]. No such loan had been declared to the Commission and it was therefore agreed that the Commission would write to the Labour Party to request further information. While the Commission had not specifically asked for details of loans between nominees and parties, it was agreed that non-disclosure of loans went against the spirit of the declaration.
3. The Commission considered the letter from the [REDACTED]. It was agreed that the Chairman would draft a reply to the letter. He would explain that the Commission’s role was to come to a conclusion on the issue of propriety; while it had considered the arguments raised by [REDACTED], it had also taken into account other points of view; and had concluded that it would advise the Prime Minister not to appoint [REDACTED] now.
4. The Chairman reported that one of the party-political nominees, [REDACTED], had called the Secretariat on 6 March to air his distress about leaks to the press. On behalf of the Commission, the Secretariat had expressed sympathy for any distress he had suffered and had emphasised that the Commission was not the source of the leak. The Chairman had subsequently contacted [REDACTED] on the 7 March to express his personal sympathy.