



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

14 May 1980

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Dear Don,

As the Prime Minister made clear to your Secretary of State and his Departmental colleagues at the end of today's lunch, she found the occasion a valuable one.

A number of points arose which we here will need to follow up, and on three of them we shall need your help. The first concerns the procedures for providing office machinery in DHSS local offices. It was said in discussion that your offices are unable to change their machinery without getting CSD approval and indeed sometimes find that the CSD disagree with the choice of machinery made by your Department and impose upon them some other kind of equipment. The Prime Minister would find it helpful if your Secretary of State could let her have a note on this explaining the problem more fully. She will then decide whether to pursue the matter with the Lord President.

CS has been arranging this.

Second, your Secretary of State suggested that if a suitable occasion, preferably before the Summer Recess, could be found, the Prime Minister should make a major speech on the social services. The Prime Minister welcomed this suggestion. Since the lunch I have had a look at Mrs Thatcher's diary between now and the end of July and she has no engagements which would provide an obvious platform for the kind of speech which Mr. Jenkin has in mind. I wonder therefore whether you could identify an appropriate occasion in the next ten weeks or so and we can then see whether it could be fitted into the Prime Minister's diary.

Third, the Prime Minister suggested that she should give a reception here at No. 10, again before the beginning of the Summer Recess if possible, at which most of the guests would be drawn from the field of social services and voluntary organisations. Mr. Jenkin and his colleagues thought this an excellent idea. We shall need your help in drawing up a guest list. The maximum numbers that we can invite are about 200. I shall be grateful if you could let me have a list of names in the next fortnight.

Yours sincerely,

John Whitman

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