

CONFIDENTIAL  
From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



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(2)

Michael Alexander Esq  
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*Ag.*  
*Primi Minister.*  
*This is essentially unchanged but*  
*you may wish to glance through*  
*9 November 1979*  
*it again before the fo. ahead is*  
*finally given.*

*[Handwritten signature]*

*[Handwritten signature]* 12/11

Dear Michael

The Secretary of State has asked me to send to you and to the Private Secretaries to the other members of OD a copy of the Consultative Document on the government of Northern Ireland in the form in which it has today been sent to the printers. He proposes to circulate copies to Cabinet colleagues on Thursday/Friday next and - subject to final approval from No 10 - to publish it simultaneously in London and Belfast on Tuesday, 20th November when it will be laid before Parliament as a Command Paper.

Mr Atkins explained to OD that the text before them was subject to drafting improvements and a number of these have been made. He wishes to draw attention particularly to paragraphs 25-28 which bring together, under a new heading of Administrative Costs and Feasibility, sentences bearing on this aspect which appeared in various paragraphs in the earlier draft. Mr Atkins considered that this aspect, and especially the importance of avoiding excessive bureaucracy, should be brought out more clearly given the weight which the Cabinet attaches to improving the management of government. There is nothing new in this material.

I am copying this letter and its attachment to Private Secretaries of all OD members, to the Private Secretary to the Paymaster General and to Martin Vile.

Yours sincerely  
Mike Hopkins

M W HOPKINS

Enc.

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT  
LONDON SW1A 1AA



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