

PERSONAL

cc for information

Sir Derek Rayner
Mr Allen
Mr Pattison

Mr WHITMORE

THE RAYNER PROJECT AND QUANGOS, WASTE/EFFICIENCY AND CIRCULARS

1. Sir Derek Rayner is away and will not see his copy of your letter of 18 June to Mr Chilcot until the weekend; he contributed to the drafting of Sir Ian Bancroft's minute of the same date to the Prime Minister.
2. The purpose of this minute is to suggest that before Sir DR minutes at the end of June to the PM on progress with his project (cf last paragraph of Mr Stowe's minute to him of 31 May and para. 3 of Sir IB's minute of 18 June), he and I might meet you to go over the various strands (he looks forward in any case to renewing his acquaintance with you) or, if next week is a non-week for you, you and I meet this week.
3. The main point is how best to advise and help the PM on the various things in the offering and whether some or all of these should be pulled together in a programme, under the leadership of either the PM or a senior Minister (eg the Lord President).
4. The different parts of the "efficiency" issue are:
 - a. The Lord President's exercise on medium-term options for cutting the cost of the Civil Service. The potential savings include those attributable to improving efficiency and cutting out waste (cf C(79)12, para. 3a). The returns will be brought together by CSD during the summer.
 - b. The Cabinet decision of 10 May that Ministers should have a personal responsibility for (i) promoting efficiency, (ii) eliminating waste and (iii) reducing quangos - a "campaign" to be assisted by Sir DR's appointment to advise the PM on these matters. The returns are the subject of your letter to Mr Chilcot and Sir IB's minute of 18 June. Sir DR has seen the replies, most of which he thinks very poor. Presumably the PM thinks so too, hence the call in your letter to Mr Chilcot for "specific guidance". My minute to Mr Pattison of 8 June on Quangos is also relevant.
 - c. The Cabinet's decision of 10 May to reduce the issue of Government circulars to local authorities by two-thirds - with Sir IB monitoring progress. Sir IB minuted to the PM on 6 June. My minute to Mr Pattison of 11 June is also relevant. The PM has called for "details of progress later in the year", saying that she would like Sir DR "to take a continuing interest in this exercise" (cf Mr Pattison's letter to Mr Laughrin of 12 June).

d. The Rayner project (cf PM's Minute to Ministers of 4 June) is in three parts: (i) cutting government's forms and requests; (ii) general management of government business and ~~management~~ - to be carried out under the PM's direction; and (iii) examination of specific activities and functions in departments - which overlaps with a. above to a degree.

5. The points I think we should discuss with you are - although you may have additional or different ones:

a. Co-ordinating the various initiatives to an appropriate degree, to form a "programme" or "campaign", to be conducted and reported on an appropriate timescale.

b. The balance of responsibility for this as between the Lord President, Sir IB and Sir DR, who is technically an adviser - an immediate question which arises here is whether the PM wishes Sir DR to offer "specific guidance" to Ministers as they prepare their "efficiency/waste" contributions to the medium-term options exercise.

c. The best working relationship on all this between the staff in No 10 and Sir DR's office here which although located in the Cabinet is also part of the PM's office.

6. With regard to 5a above, you may like to know that Mr Leslie Chapman (Your Disobedient Servant) has withheld his seal of approval from the Rayner Project etc on the grounds that it does not match up to the need! So we can expect some flak from the media in due course

SP

C PRIESTLEY
20 June 1979