



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
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From the Minister

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

REVIEW OF QUANGOS

I shall be reporting before 7 June on my proposals for reducing the number of Quangos in my Department's field. I have already found, however, as I expect colleagues have too, that many of the Quangos are set up under Act of Parliament and could only be abolished in the same way. This raises the question how to provide for their dissolution with the least expenditure of Parliament time, the minimum of controversy and the maximum impact.

There seems to me to be three theoretical possibilities. Departmental primary legislation, abolishing Quangos one at a time, is the worst option, taking a great deal of time and maximising the controversy over each abolition. A single machinery of Government Bill, making piecemeal provision for every Quango to be abolished, is better but would be very large and time-consuming. I would therefore favour the bold course of a short Bill which simply conferred on Ministers of the Crown a power to make Orders abolishing the Quangos in their fields. The bodies covered by the power would need to be comprehensively listed, and there would need to be enabling powers to cover the consequential provisions that might be needed in particular cases. I hope we can adopt this method.

I am sending copies of this minute to the other members of the Cabinet, Sir Ian Bancroft and Sir John Hunt.

PETER WALKER
24 May 1979