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CABINET

MINISTERIAL GROUP ON PUBLIC EXPENDITURE

MINUTES of a Meeting held in Conference Room A, Cabinet Office on TUESDAY 24 JULY 1979 at 8.30 am

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP Chancellor of the Exchequer (In the Chair)

The Rt Hon Lord Soames Lord President of the Council

The Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards MP Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon John Biffen MP Chief Secretary, Treasury

The Rt Hon George Younger MP Secretary of State for Scotland

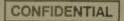
> The Rt Hon John Nott MP Secretary of State for Trade

Miss J Kellev Northern Ireland Office

Mr P Mountfield Mr T J Burr

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE 1980-81

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PUBLIC EXPENDITURE 1980-81

The Committee further considered the proposed reductions set out in Annex B to C(79)26 on expenditure within the responsibilities of the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER summing up a brief discussion, said that the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales accepted equivalent reductions in their expenditure to those agreed for corresponding English expenditure. Subject to minor revisions, these reductions would amount to £257 million for Scotland and about £109 million for Wales. Officials would settle the precise equivalent figures on the normal basis. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland had suggested that officials should agree the figures for his expenditure, but his officials were not authorised to accept the equivalent reduction of £96 million indicated by the reductions in corresponding English expenditure. The Chief Secretary, Treasury, should discuss and agree the figures urgently with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. He would himself minute the Prime Minister before the Cabinet meeting on 26 July to inform her of the Committee's conclusions.

The Committee -

Took note, with approval, of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's summing up of their discussion, and invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Chief Secretary, Treasury to proceed accordingly.

Cabinet Office 25 July 1979