

file SK

CF/A 17/12
Speech file



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 December 1980

We have spoken about the Prime Minister's speech to the Women's Royal Voluntary Service on 19 January. I enclose a copy of a letter from Lady Pike, together with some notes on the DHSS outline for the speech and some notes on WRVS initiatives, following Lady Pike's talk with the Prime Minister.

As I told you earlier, the Prime Minister is unhappy with the title suggested at present for the speech. She is also inclined to focus attention on the actions of the voluntary sector, whilst warning of the risks of voluntary organisations becoming bureaucratised themselves. She is impressed by the size of the total national workforce and social services departments, and is inclined to make something of the figure of 196,000. She would also like to make something of the theme of mutual help among older people who are not working - she sees real scope for small mutual trading organisations to develop. Her own recent constituency experience has underlined in the Prime Minister's mind the poverty trap problem: she sees supplementary benefit entitlement as an entry card to the numerous other benefits, which emphasizes the gulf between claimants and those whose basic income is only slightly higher but who strive to remain independent.

I am sure it would be helpful if those of your colleagues who have been thinking about the Prime Minister's speech could come across here to have a word about the next step in drafting. 1600 hours on Friday afternoon would be a convenient time. Perhaps you can ask somebody to get in touch with me direct to confirm that that would be convenient, or to suggest an alternative.

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