

PRIME MINISTER

AIDS

You were unhappy with Mr. Fowler's suggestion of a campaign to deliver an AIDS leaflet to every household and wish to see your colleagues' comments. These are attached. Kenneth Baker and Tom King support the idea, but Nicholas Edwards is concerned at the risk of causing offence, Peter Brooke considers it essential to estimate the impact of the proposal and John MacKay shares both their doubts. Lord Hailsham has stronger reservations and you might like to glance at his letter at "A".

Invite H to discuss this when a full draft text and professional advice on the likely impact are available?

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Yes no

PAB  
ANDY BEARPARK

8 September 1986



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 September 1986

*Dear Joan*

**AIDS - PUBLIC EDUCATION**

The Prime Minister has seen the letter of 21 August from the Secretary of State for Social Services to the Lord President. She has also noted the views of various of his colleagues. The Prime Minister is concerned that there are various risks attached to the proposal, and would like to propose that if he agrees the Lord President should arrange for 'H' Committee to discuss the proposal when a full draft text and professional advice on the likely impact are available.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of H Committee, the Ministerial Committee on AIDS and to Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever*

*Andy*

(P. A. BEARPARK)

Miss Joan MacNaughton,  
Lord President's Office.

*AM*

Ministerial Committee on Aids

Tony Newton Esq., OBE, MP.	DHSS
Mrs Edwina Currie MP, 1935	DHSS
Tim Eggar, Esq., MP.	FCO
The Lord Glenarthur	Home Office
Roger Freeman, Esq., MP.	MOD
Peter Brooke, Esq., MP	HMT
Bob Dunn, Esq., MP	DES
David Trippier, Esq, MP	D/Emp
Mark Robinson, Esq., MP	Welsh Office
Richard Needham, Esq. MP.	Northern Ireland Office
John Patten, Esq., MP.	D/Env
John MacKay, Esq. MP	Scottish Office
Michael Howard, Esq., M.P.	DTI.

As confirmed with DHSS by telephone - 10.9.86

PRIME MINISTER

AIDS

CP  
I have conveyed the just of the  
to DADS. PL b/f to new 28/8

MGT 28/8

Mr. Fowler's letter, attached, has two purposes:

- (i) informing colleagues that he intends to mount a further advertising campaign in September using the texts attached to his letter. The copy is very much along the lines used earlier.
- (ii) seeks colleagues' support for a proposal to deliver an AIDS leaflet to every household in the country. This is the important part of the letter.

The Secretary of State notes that the AIDS leaflet would be able to say more than has been possible in the advertising - he may or may not have in mind more explicit language than the advertising copy has so far contained. The Secretary of State also notes that the exercise would need careful preparation and piloting, and that it will generate some criticism. It would cost up to £2 million. He will circulate the text of the leaflet as soon as he can.

I do not think you would wish to give unconditional agreement to leafleting on this scale without knowing what the leaflet might contain.

Agree to indicate that you are content in principle with the proposal to leaflet, but you would not wish to give final approval without having an opportunity to agree the text itself?

Mark Addison

Mark Addison

22 August 1986

JA2ADE

Why unvised delivery  
of AIDS leaflet - but rather  
about changes? They  
=  
first reaction in general -  
the idea - but wait - other  
comments

FROM:

THE RT. HON. LORD HAILSHAM OF ST. MARYLEBONE, C.H., F.R.S., D.C.L.



RESTRICTED

The Right Honourable  
The Lord President of the Council  
Privy Council Office  
Whitehall  
LONDON  
SW1

HOUSE OF LORDS,  
LONDON SW1A 0PW

3 September 1986

PM (A)

16 pm at this stage

My dear Willie:

AIDS - EDUCATION

The more I reflect about Norman Fowler's letter on AIDS - Education of 21 August, the more doubtful I become of the wisdom of the policy proposed.

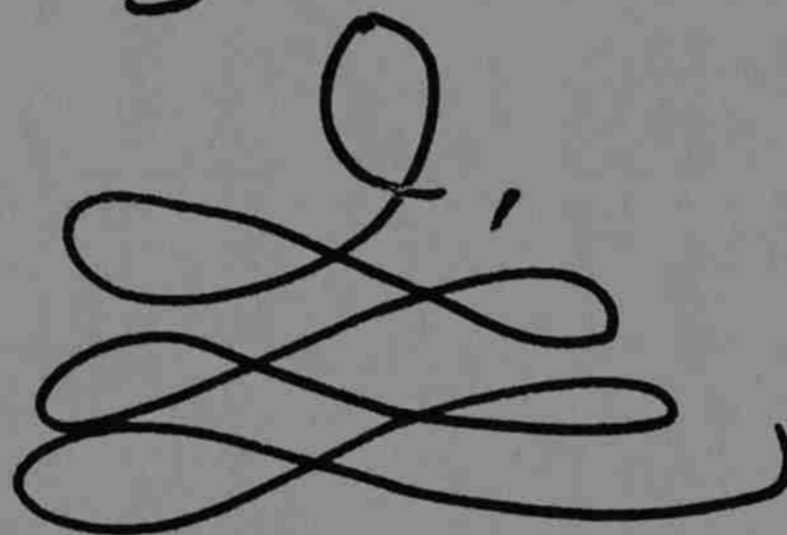
What is proposed as I understand it is that through the letterbox of every household in the UK should be dropped an unsolicited document.

AIDS is, of course, a matter we must take extremely seriously and education, properly understood, is no doubt one of our key weapons in combating its spread. But the classes at risk do not correspond with the entire population. Unsolicited correspondence is not universally popular, and not always effective as a means of communicating information or advice. The appearance on every doormat of the document in question is liable to cause controversy or even offence, and might well spread panic instead of creating a cautious approach to sexual practices and drug injections. Moreover, the proposed advertisement contains obvious omissions (eg no prohibition of persons at risk becoming blood donors), is expressed in language dangerously vague and sometimes almost ludicrous, and it does not reassure those who may need blood transfusion that the blood and plasma banks are now free from risk. It is essential that those shortcomings be not carried forward into any leaflet.

/I wonder

I wonder whether sufficient professional advice has been taken about all this. There are public relations experts and health advisers who might be prepared to give assistance. In any case I would suggest that more thought and wider consultation is required before embarking on what is undoubtedly an ambitious scheme, but one which needs careful and professional handling. I am copying this letter to those on the attached list.

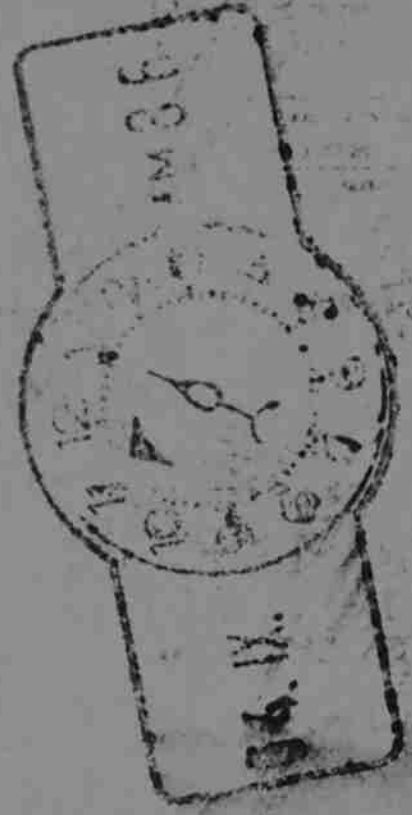
yrs:

A handwritten signature consisting of a large, stylized initial 'L' followed by a series of overlapping loops and a final flourish.

Copies to:

Members of H Committee  
The Ministerial Committee on AIDS  
The Prime Minister  
Sir Robert Armstrong

NAT. HEALTH: Aids: Aug. 1985





The Prime Minister

FROM THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS, HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK

ccBG



SCOTTISH OFFICE  
NEW ST. ANDREW'S HOUSE  
ST. JAMES CENTRE  
EDINBURGH EH1 3SX

pm

Norm at this stage

The Rt Hon The Viscount Whitelaw CH MC  
Lord President of the Council  
Privy Council Office  
68 Whitehall  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AT

1. September 1986

Dear Willie

#### AIDS - PUBLIC EDUCATION

In Malcolm Rifkind's absence on holiday I am responding to Norman Fowler's letter to you of 21 August proposing that we should step up considerably our public education campaign on the threat of AIDS. The aim would be to bring home to people the real magnitude of the risk from AIDS and after considering the options, Norman proposes that an AIDS leaflet should be delivered to every household in the UK spelling out in simple and explicit language what they need to know.

Norman asked for agreement to this proposal by the end of August. The draft text of the proposed leaflet only reached my officials on 27 August, however, and I have delayed my response until I had had a chance to see it.

Despite Norman's view that it should be possible to say more in the leaflet than in the newspaper advertising which we have undertaken already and which Norman proposes to supplement in England by a further round of advertising to commence in September, the draft leaflet circulated to officials on 27 August (on which there had been no prior inter-Departmental consultations) deals very superficially with the issues, and says nothing new about the threat of AIDS. We therefore run the risk of being heavily criticised both for delivering sexually explicit leaflets to every household in the country whether the occupiers wish to receive this or not, and for the inadequacy of the guidance in the leaflet, while at the same time we would not achieve any advance on what has been and can be achieved by public advertising.

If we are to contemplate delivering a leaflet to every household, I believe that we need to take time now to get it right. The questions arise whether it can be more informative than the advertisements on the medical issues; and also whether we should involve in its preparation our professional experts on health education, the Health Education Council,

the Scottish Health Education Group and the Welsh Health Education Advisory Committee. If these bodies are seen to be involved, the Government can to some extent distance itself from possible criticism of the exercise.

The substantial expenditure that would need to be incurred on the leaflet would leave me without any scope for further health education initiatives that may be required in the current financial year. The Scottish contribution would be of the order of £250,000, and we would need to be very sure that this expenditure could be fully justified. I would like to reserve judgement on that until officials have considered the content of the leaflet further.

While I acknowledge that we must do more to increase public awareness of the issues relating to AIDS, we should take time to get our publicity right if it is to have the desired effect.

I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of Norman's.

Yours ever

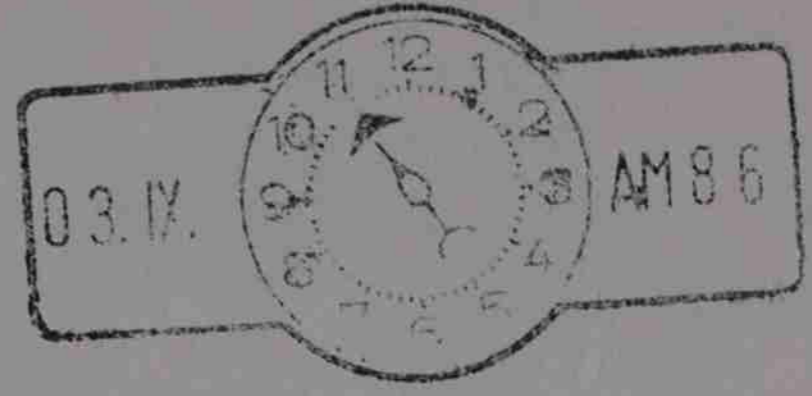
John

JOHN J MACKAY

NAS HEQUA

AIDS

8/25





SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR  
NORTHERN IRELAND

Rt Hon Norman Fowler MP  
Secretary of State for Social Services  
Department of Health and  
Social Security  
Alexander Fleming House  
Elephant & Castle  
LONDON SE1 6BY

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

CCBG

PM

*Norman at this stage*

1 September 1986

*Dear Secretary of State,*

AIDS - PUBLIC EDUCATION

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 21 August 1986 to Willie Whitelaw.

The incidence of AIDS in Northern Ireland is considerably less than in the rest of the United Kingdom. However I am most concerned to halt the spread of infection and recognise that the problem of AIDS must be tackled on a national basis.

I agree that we need to step up the public education campaign and would support your proposals for the distribution of literature on AIDS to every household in the UK. We would of course be prepared to contribute towards the cost of distributing the leaflets to households in Northern Ireland.

I am copying this reply to the Prime Minister, other members of H Committee, and Sir Robert Armstrong.

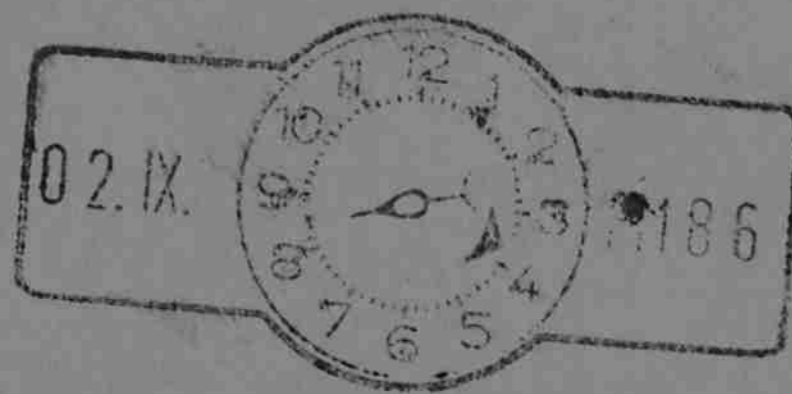
*Yours Sincerely*  
*N Howard*  
*Private Secretary*  
*fa* TK

(Approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence in Northern Ireland)

NAT HEALTH

ARDS

8/45





CCBG

PM

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Norman Fowler MP  
Secretary of State  
Department of Health & Social Security  
Alexander Fleming House  
Elephant and Castle  
LONDON SE1 6BY

NB PM chibi Jye

29 August 1986

Dear Secretary of State,

**AIDS - PUBLIC EDUCATION**

I agree very much with the points made in your letter of 21 August to Willie Whitelaw. There is still a great deal we need to do by way of increasing public awareness of the magnitude of the AIDS threat.

It is important, nevertheless, to make sure that we are applying resources to the maximum effect. To this end, I consider it essential that a proper evaluation of the leaflet drop you propose is carried out to ensure that it has the impact necessary to make it worth the investment.

I note that you expect the cost of the leaflet drop itself to be around £2 million, most of which at least you intend to find from within your central health programme. I hope that Tom King, Nicholas Edwards and Malcolm Rifkind will feel able to participate. There could of course be no question of additional funding.

I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of yours.

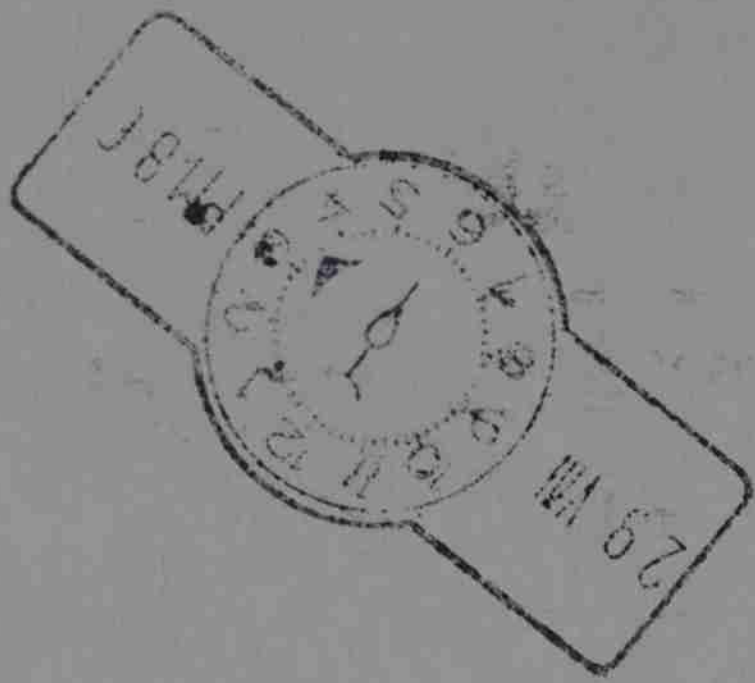
Yours sincerely,

M. Magrath (Private Secretary)

for PETER BROOKE

(Approved by the Minister of State and signed in his absence)

NAS DETROIT  
AIDS  
8/18



CUBB



Y SWYDDFA GYMREIG  
GWYDYR HOUSE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2ER  
Tel. 01-233 3000 (Switsfwrdd)  
01-233 8545 (Llinell Union)

WELSH OFFICE  
GWYDYR HOUSE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2ER  
Tel. 01-233 3000 (Switchboard)  
01-233 8545 (Direct Line)

ODDI WRTH YSGRIFENNYDD  
PREIFAT YSGRIFENNYDD  
GWLADOL CYMRU

*NBPM at this stage*

FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY  
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR WALES

29 August 1986

*From Mr Laurance.*

**AIDS - PUBLIC EDUCATION**

You will have seen my Secretary of State's letter of 28 August and will be aware that it had not been circulated. I apologise for the oversight to you and to recipients of this letter who are now receiving the letter of 28 August.

*ATTACHED*

/ Copies go to the Prime Minister, members of H, members of the Ministerial Committee on Aids and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Your sincerely*

*K L Dallimore*

K L DALLIMORE

A Laurance Esq  
Principal Private Secretary  
Secretary of State for Social Services



Y SWYDDFA GYMREIG  
GWYDYR HOUSE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2ER  
Tel. 01-233 3000 (Switsfwrdd)  
01-233 6106 (Llinell Union)

*Oddi wrth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru*



WELSH OFFICE *PM*  
GWYDYR HOUSE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2ER  
Tel. 01-233 3000 (Switchboard)  
01-233 6106 (Direct Line)

*From The Secretary of State for Wales*

The Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards MP

*28* August 1986

*Dear Secretary of State,*

AIDS - PUBLIC EDUCATION

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 21 August to Willie Whitelaw concerning the above. I agree with your view about the need to step up considerably our public education campaign.

I have no comment to make about the material from which you propose to select further newspaper advertisements other than to ask that we be given an opportunity to agree the precise form of words you plan to use and that perhaps the advertisements should be attributed to all four Health Departments.

I am afraid that I have a number of reservations about your proposals for a national leaflet drop. I entirely agree that we need to get the message home and I accept that our campaign so far has attracted criticism of its lack of explicitness but (as I understand the COI have advised) the danger of offence is significantly increased if material is put through people's doors, thus giving them no choice but to receive it. I understand the COI also warn about the sensitivities of religious and ethnic minorities, as well, obviously, as the sensitivities of every parent about the exposure of their children to material which many will find offensive.

It is because of considerations of this kind that I have taken the first steps in Wales to mount an extensive and specific campaign while at the same time distancing my Department from its contents. I have authorised the appointment of an AIDS Co-ordinator for Wales who will work under the auspices of the Health Education Advisory Committee (Wales). His function, under the supervision of HEAC(W), will be to co-ordinate and direct the dissemination of information and to set up a network of volunteers, working with the health authorities, to ensure that the message gets home to all sectors of the community in a form which best meets the circumstances and sensitivities of each sector. That seems to me to be a better approach than the somewhat hit or miss effect of a national leaflet drop.

*/If we*

The Rt Hon Norman Fowler  
Department of Health and Social Security  
Alexander Fleming House  
Elephant & Castle  
LONDON  
SE1 6BY



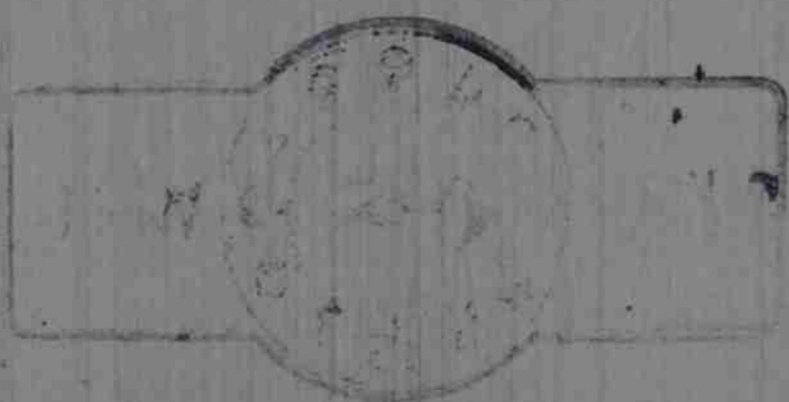
If we decide collectively that the idea of a leaflet drop should be pursued, I would prefer to await the outcome of a pilot exercise before we take a final decision. I have to say, very regrettably, that I would find it extremely difficult to make a financial contribution since my PES provision under this heading is already fully committed. The best that I could offer would be to pay for the Welsh version of the leaflet which would have to issue in Wales.

My doubts are not about the need for an increasingly intensive campaign but whether your proposals are the most effective way of carrying it forward.

Yours sincerely

R. C. Williams

(Approved by the Secretary  
of State and signed in his  
absence)



*COBGA*



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE  
ELIZABETH HOUSE YORK ROAD LONDON SE1 7PH  
TELEPHONE 01-934 9000

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The Rt Hon Norman Fowler MP  
Secretary of State for Social Services  
Alexander Fleming House  
Elephant and Castle  
SE1

*MBJM administrative*

28<sup>th</sup> August 1986

*Mr Munman,*

**AIDS - PUBLIC EDUCATION**

I share your concern about the increase in the number of AIDS cases and of those becoming infected with HIV - Human Immuno-deficiency Virus. I also agree that we should step up our public education campaign, and should aim particularly at getting the message across to young people.

Clearly we must maintain the newspaper advertising campaign, and try to make it more effective. I agree that we need to do more, and I entirely support your proposal for an AIDS Leaflet to be delivered to every household in the UK. I look forward to seeing the draft text.

I am copying this letter to other members of H Committee, the Ministerial Committee on AIDS, to the Prime Minister and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*[Handwritten signature]*

*[Handwritten signature]*

