

PROFESSOR GRIFFITHS

cc John O'Sullivan
Carolyn Sinclair

I do not know whether you saw the attached piece in Atticus on Sunday.

This definitive statement was produced by Bernard and cleared by the Prime Minister. I think it is quite a good exposition of her views but would not wish for it merely to be restricted to the gossip column of the Sunday Times. I know that Robert Jackson is proposing to write a letter defending the Prime Minister's statement and I have sent him a copy of this. I also have it in mind as a possible theme for the Party Conference speech.

JW
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JOHN WHITTINGDALE

13.7.88

THE SUNDAY TIMES 10 JULY 1988



Atticus has secured a definitive statement from the prime minister's office on the meaning of her controversial comment recently that "there is no such thing as society". As opposition leaders now regularly quote it in support of their view that she is anti-social, its terms will be closely noted. This is the authorised Downing Street statement:

"All too often the ills of this country are passed off as those of society. Similarly, when action is required, society is called upon to act. But society as such does not exist except as a concept. Society is made up of people. It is people who have duties and beliefs and resolve. It is people who get things done. She prefers to think in terms of the acts of individuals and families as the real sinews of society rather than of society as an abstract concept. Her approach to society reflects her fundamental belief in personal responsibility and choice. To leave things to 'society' is to run away from the real decisions, practical responsibility and effective action."

Let the debate proceed.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

13th July, 1988

Dear Robert,

Further to my letter of 11th July, I enclose a copy of a piece which appeared in Atticus in the Sunday Times last week.

The definitive statement was given to them by Bernard Ingham and approved by the Prime Minister. If you are going to do any more on this subject, I thought you should be aware of this.

Yours,

John

JOHN WHITTINGDALE

Robert Jackson, Esq MP