



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 September 1982

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cc: Cabinet
Co. Gen. PM.

Dear Willie, *cc (87) 40th mtg*

At the meeting of the Cabinet on 29 July I asked each Minister in charge of a Department to arrange for the preparation of a report on a "forward look" at the Department's programmes for the next five years, and to send me the reports not later than Friday 24 December 1982.

It may help colleagues if I set out what I had in mind in making this request. My hope was that this exercise would provide each Minister with material drawn from the ideas and experience of his Department on which he could consider what plans and proposals to suggest as an input into our collective thinking, not only about the commitments to be fulfilled and major decisions likely to be required during the rest of this Parliament, but also about a positive and coherent strategy for the next Parliament. With this in mind I envisaged that the reports should cover:-

- what major commitments with which the Government entered office in 1979 will still remain to be met in the next Parliament;

/ what major

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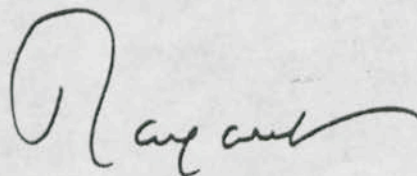
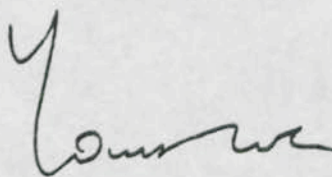
- what major new proposals are in mind to carry forward in the next Parliament initiatives and reforms started in this Parliament (for instance, privatisation proposals);

- what major new initiatives are in contemplation, of a kind which would require significant legislation or structural change, whether in pursuance of the Government's major political objectives or in order to adapt to changing economic and social circumstances.

In each case it would be helpful that the "forward look" should indicate possible timings, and should also indicate expenditure and manpower implications, so far as those can now be foreseen.

Each Minister will want to decide, in consultation with other Ministers within the Department and the Permanent Secretaries, how the work of preparation can best be done in his Department; but I ask each of my colleagues to take a close personal interest in the shape and contents of the eventual report.

I am copying this letter to all members of the Cabinet and Sir Robert Armstrong.



PRIME MINISTER

You suggested that you might write yourself to each Minister reminding them of your request that they prepare a report on a forward look at the Departments programmes for the next five years. I felt that this would have more impact than a letter circulated among Permanent Secretaries, and also that it is more appropriate bearing in mind the political nature of this exercise. I consulted Sir Robert Armstrong and he agreed.

I am therefore attaching a letter to the Home Secretary, copied to the other members of the Cabinet, in the hope that you will be able to sign it before we leave.

F.R.B.

15 September 1982