



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS

Telephone 01-210 3000

From the Secretary of State for Social Services

Miss Z T S Everest-Phillips
Assistant Private Secretary to the
Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Treasury Chambers
Parliament Street
LONDON
SW1P 3AG

CCSG
1. Mr. Addison
2. RA.

14 March 1988

Dear Zoe,

CENTRAL COUNCIL SPEECH - 18 MARCH

Many thanks for your letter of 14 March enclosing the Chief Secretary's comments on this speech, as also endorsed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

My Secretary of State will be taking all but three of the points in the form proposed. The three points are as follows. The amendment to page 6 second paragraph will be included with the minor change of starting the sentence 'This is why' rather than 'And'. The amendment to page 8, line 10 will be made with 'effectively' substituted for 'comprehensively'. The only substantive change to the Chief Secretary's proposals lies in page 5 second paragraph where, as my Secretary of State has discussed with the Chief Secretary, Number 10 have suggested the original text be amplified to refer to quotations from Mr Frank Field MP in the Catholic Herald. The revised text will read:

WILL REQUEST IF REQUIRED

"If this harsh focus on bad news was inspired, as some contend, by the Labour Party, it is very tempting to see it as a spectacular own goal. Indeed, no lesser figure than Labour's Frank Field has admitted - and I quote "Mrs Thatcher has managed to turn the tables on the Labour Party over the NHS.....[the Opposition] has allowed the Prime Minister to begin determining the next stage of the debate." The result of intensifying public concern about the NHS has been to gain this long sought, but precisely unattainable, acceptance of the need for change.

E.R.

I should be grateful to know by first thing tomorrow (Wednesday) morning if the Chief Secretary wished to press for any further changes. I am copying this letter to Paul Gray at No 10.

yours sincerely,
Geoffrey Podger

G J F PODGER
Private Secretary