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SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND
Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
Whitehall
LONDON
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*REC
31/10*

30 October 1989

Dear Geoffrey,

COMMUNITY CARE WHITE PAPER

David Mellor's letter of ~~19~~^{*Dear*} October and Kenneth Clarke's letter of ~~20~~ October invited comment on specific proposals on community care which are to be covered in the forthcoming White Paper.

As the draft White Paper notes, I intend to publish a separate policy paper setting out the implications of the new arrangements for Northern Ireland. My officials have been in close contact with their counterparts in the Departments of Health and Social Security, and we expect to publish shortly our own paper.

I have no specifically Northern Ireland comment to make on the proposals for Great Britain. The social security system operates in Northern Ireland on a parity basis, and the proposed changes in it will be read across. We shall of course follow the broad political direction which the White Paper sets.

I am, however, concerned about the potential difficulties on cases of preserved entitlement after April 1991. I share Peter Walker's view that should topping-up be agreed we should ensure both that there is legislative provision for topping-up and that the income support limits for those preserved entitlement fairly reflect the charges being made by the independent sector, so that as little use as possible needs to be made of topping-up practice.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, to members of H and E(A) Committees and to Sir Robin Butler.

L. Jones

PM

PB



NAT HEALTH : Expenditure Pt22