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PRIME MINISTER

To note. A meeting on the administrative and legislative burdens of small firms has been arranged for 24 July

AT 10/7

MS

Earlier this year I wrote to tell you that as part of my determination to improve awareness in local communities of small businesses and of the many advisory services available to them, I proposed to stage a Local Enterprise Week.

2. I am now delighted to be able to tell you that the Week, which actually ran to ten days in mid-June, was a resounding success. At very little cost, apart from official time, our Information Division, in conjunction with our Small Firms Division, persuaded over 350 Local Enterprise Agencies, Local Authorities and other organisations to stage conferences, seminars, exhibitions and other events to support the Week, and there was excellent media coverage, especially in the regions, where we achieved well over 200 separate mentions. I managed five television appearances, no less than 17 different radio stories during the Week, and there were in addition many local radio interviews and phone-in programmes with our Small Firms Centre Managers. The response was almost entirely favourable and I encountered very little criticism, even in the mining areas of the North East.

3. I visited over 70 different organisations during the Week and was greatly encouraged by the level of activity generated by Local Enterprise Week. I am therefore proposing to stage a similar event next year, probably in early June, and I should, of course, be delighted if you could find the time to be actively involved.

4. Finally, I know Bernard Ingham has had some problems with our Information Division in the recent past. I am sure he will be pleased to hear that I have been impressed by their enthusiasm and support throughout in the planning and execution of Enterprise Week.

D.T.

9 July 1984

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10 JUL 1984