



*Presentation*

CONFIDENTIAL

PS/Secretary of State

- cc PS/Ministers
- PS/Sir Brian Hayes
- PS/Sir Anthony Rawlinson
- Mr Liesner
- Mr Williams Inf
- Mr Whittingdale

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY PRESENTATION

1. Attached are two notes:
  - a note on "presentation" prepared by the Prime Minister's press secretary (Flag A);
  - a note (Flag B) of a Ministerial meeting, under Lord Whitelaw's chairmanship, which considered the paper at Flag A.
2. As a result of Lord Whitelaw's meeting, an official group, chaired by the No 10 press secretary, has been set up. Its members are the Directors of Information of the Treasury, DHSS, DOE, D/Employment, Home Office and DTI, Lord Young's unit, the Chief Whip's office and the No 10 policy unit are also represented. The group will meet regularly to review the presentation of social and economic policies. The overall objective is to try to ensure that the Government gets credit, where it is due, for social policy achievements.
3. I attended the first meeting of this group last night. The main points made were:
  - yet another "presentation" initiative would be a waste of time without real commitment by Ministers;
  - there were limits to what could be achieved by presentation. It had to be recognised that some social policy successes, in the Government's terms (such as council house sales) were regarded by a large group of people as damaging the capacity for State provision of services to the most needy;
  - an effective social policy had to be underpinned by successful economic and industrial policies. "Caring" was not enough; it had got to be paid for;



CONFIDENTIAL

- the Government had hitherto not got its public expenditure message across at all successfully.

4. Next steps are for the Departments concerned to put together a list of major Ministerial engagements and Departmental activities in the period January - March 1985. I am doing this in consultation with you. This will then be fed into Lord Whitelaw's group. After the next meeting of that group, I shall be able to form a clearer view of what precisely this Department can contribute to this exercise. At the very least, we will, it is clear, need to coordinate Ministerial speeches rather more than we do at present.

CB

COLETTE BOWE  
Hd/Information  
Rm 736 1/V  
215 4282

6 December 1984