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(File)

Edward,

This is fine as far as it goes - but NIO are still

not being very political about this. I know Alex had intended to speak to them

(and may have done so already). Given the Prime Minister's

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SECRETARY OF STATE  
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The Rt Hon Antony Newton OBE MP  
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known to see a Queen's Speech acceptable to the U.K. - which may be vitally important - we had better watch him carefully.

3/ July 1996

*[Signature]*  
s/s Mark

*[Signature]*

The letter doesn't give NI specific legislation - perhaps deliberately. But we have a word about position which I'm not fully up to speed? (Edward) 8/8

APPLICATION OF LEGISLATION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Thank you for your letter of 17 July about the Northern Ireland involvement in the Government's Bill Programme. The purpose of this letter is to answer the points you raised and to fulfil my undertaking to provide you with an update of the detailed analysis provided under cover of my letter of 26 June.

Subject to some final questions on the appropriate legislative route, all but two Bills in the main programme do extend in part or in whole to Northern Ireland. The Civil Procedures and Courts Bill and the Local Government and Rating Bill, as I explained in my letter of 26 June, would not be appropriate for extension to Northern Ireland.

You asked in particular whether the Education Bill could be extended to Northern Ireland. The Bill will apply to Northern Ireland insofar as it will provide for the regulation of National Vocation Qualifications (NVQs) by the Curriculum and Qualification Authority and, depending on decisions to be taken, may also extend to Northern Ireland in respect of the Authority's powers for General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs). Some of the other elements are not relevant to Northern Ireland and others, like careers education are already in place there.





I hope that the Identity Cards Bill can be extended directly to Northern Ireland but my officials are considering this with their Home Office counterparts and other interested parties. It may be necessary to consider other routes if direct extension proves too difficult.

Of the five Bills in the second (uncontroversial) tranche, two will be applied to Northern Ireland: the Hong Kong (Finance and Trade), and the Industrial Tribunal Bills. Of the third tranche (those suitable for advance drafting) six of the seven Bills will be extended to Northern Ireland. It was originally thought that all seven of the latter could be extended to Northern Ireland but one, Primary Care, will not now apply. Health is, of course in Northern Ireland terms, a transferred matter on which we have a considerable body of separate legislation. I have however agreed that if, following a consultation exercise on primary care in Northern Ireland, it is decided that legislation is required it will be enacted by separate Order in Council.

I am happy to go on providing regular updates to this analysis if it will prove helpful to you. You will also be aware that at the start of each Parliamentary term, I write to the leaders of all the Northern Ireland parties and the Opposition Spokemen advising them of details of the forthcoming Northern Ireland legislative programme. That letter (a hidden copy of which goes to Murdo McLean) covers Orders in Council as well as the Northern Ireland involvement in the forthcoming Government Bill Programme. I aim to provide as much detail as I can in that letter so that all





the parties are aware of our intentions in respect of legislation and of the effort we put in to ensure we use the most appropriate and efficient route in each case. You may find it helpful if I make it clear in that letter that I am also sending you a copy. If you wish I will ensure that you<sup>are</sup> so mentioned in the next letter (to go out after the Queen's Speech).

I am copying this letter to Robert Cranborne, Alistair Goodlad and Thomas Strathclyde, to Sir Robin Butler and First Parliamentary Counsel.

Janet  
Paddy

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