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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

MR. WILSON,  
CABINET OFFICE

1987 SURVEY: SOCIAL SECURITY:  
INCOME-RELATED BENEFITS

Thank you for your <sup>minute</sup> ~~letter~~ of 29 September about income related benefits. The Prime Minister would indeed be grateful if the Lord President could hold a meeting to go over the ground and to consider how the various announcements should be handled.

(DAVID NORGROVE)  
30 September 1987

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*Prime Minister*

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From: R T J Wilson  
29 September 1987

MR NORGROVE

*The settlement is as I described to you at the week-end. Content for the Lord President to hold a meeting as at X? JRW*

1987 SURVEY: SOCIAL SECURITY - INCOME-RELATED BENEFITS *29/9*

1. The Prime Minister will today have received a copy of a letter from the Secretary of State for Social Services outlining the agreement which he has reached with the Chief Secretary on income-related benefits in this year's PES.

2. As the letter indicates, Mr Moore faces a difficult timetable. He is convinced that he must begin his statutory consultation with local authorities in the week beginning 12 October before Parliament returns, and announce his final decision in the week beginning 2 November. Information about the proposed new rates may well leak to the press soon after consultations begin and create immediate controversy; so that Mr Moore may well come under pressure to make a statement soon after Parliament resumes. And he will have to make a number of other announcements early in the session, for instance about the freezing of child benefit and the introduction of the new Social Security Bill, which may also lead to controversy. It is also possible that discussions about the Health programme, not yet settled in PES, may lead to difficult decisions which will have to be announced around the time of the Autumn Statement.

X | 3. The Lord President thinks that in the circumstances it would be wise to hold a small meeting at an early date of Ministers and business managers - himself, Mr Moore, the Chief Secretary, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip - to go over the ground and consider how these announcements should be handled. Unless the Prime Minister wishes to take the meeting, he would propose to chair it himself. I would be grateful if you would let me know whether she would be content with this.

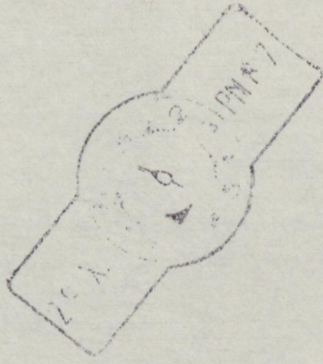
*JRW*  
R T J WILSON

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