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## SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETING WITH SDLP

The Secretary of State, Rt Hon Humphrey Atkins MP, met a delegation from the SDLP today to discuss their paper on Poverty in Northern Ireland and their economic proposals.

Mr Atkins said that these papers showed that the SDLP shared his perception of the main problems of Northern Ireland and that to a very large extent they had the same aims and objectives as himself for the development of the economy although there were differences - in some cases only of degree - in how to achieve those aims.

The Secretary of State pointed to the realities of current financial constraints and to the importance of deciding how to allocate funds in the best possible way. The Government's policy is to concentrate upon creating the right conditions within which private enterprise and initiative can flourish.

The SDLP left with the Secretary of State a paper on cross-border co-operation which they wish to discuss at a future meeting with him. He said that thereafter he would want to report to his Cabinet colleagues on this series of discussions.