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PRIME MINISTER

This minute from Mark Carlisle asks for a private and informal word about the future of ILEA.

Mr. Carlisle is worried about the politics of all of this, not surprisingly, and wants to find out how strongly you feel about the future of ILEA. His own inclination at present is not to go nearly as far as Horace Cutler would like. In particular, he does not want to make an immediate statement of principle saying that ILEA should be broken up and he does not accept Horace Cutler's view that it would be a good thing in electoral terms to put a Bill through the House next year, just before the GLC elections.

Mr. Carlisle's preferred course would be the orthodox one of setting up a Ministerial committee - perhaps even a MISC group - which would commission an interdepartmental official study, whose object would be to fill in all the gaps in the Baker Report. He is, I think, a little worried that you might regard this as too cautious an approach.

The Baker Report is undoubtedly superficial and incomplete. It has been attacked from several different quarters, notably by the polytechnics and the churches. It does not provide a sound foundation for immediate action, and further work is vital if decisions are to be taken in better knowledge of their possible effects. But the technical problems are if anything less than the political ones, given the strength of feeling that exists in the GLC, and it is this that Mr. Carlisle really wants to talk about.

The DES have done a certain amount of work in analysing the deficiencies in the Baker Report and I think it might be helpful to have some idea of their views on paper before you meet Mr. Carlisle. He would, of course, rather report his views on the political issues to you orally.

/Are you

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Are you content to meet Mr. Carlisle, on the basis of a short note analysing the main findings of Baker and the main areas which it did not cover adequately?

MS

Yes sir.

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PRIME MINISTER

INNER LONDON EDUCATION AUTHORITY

The future of the Inner London Education Authority has been a matter of concern to us both. The Committee which I set up under the Chairmanship of Kenneth Baker recommended that ILEA should be broken up and the responsibility for education vested in the individual boroughs.

I do not myself think that the Baker report takes us very much further towards deciding what action if any we should take. There are complicated political, financial and educational aspects which need careful scrutiny. I understand you have had a brief opportunity to read the report: I would be grateful to have an informal word with you about ILEA before the matter is taken any further.

M.C.

MARK CARLISLE
24 March 1980

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