



9 April 1981

PRIME MINISTER

I have seen your Private Secretary's letter of 1 April about Horace Cutler's proposals for a campaign in defence of the City and a wider review of London government.

Primary legislation would of course be needed to abolish the City or to revise its electoral arrangements. The Local Government Boundary Commission, which is required by the Local Government Act 1972 to review the boundaries of all the London authorities between 1984 and 1989, can propose boundary changes for the City but not its abolition or its amalgamation with a London borough.

Thus abolition of the City is not the simple matter that Horace's letter to you tends to suggest; and a campaign in its defence might be as likely to strengthen as to weaken belief in the possibility of its abolition. But if he judges a pronouncement about the City to be important in the immediate context of the GLC election I am sure that it would be right for you to support him. I agree with you about the wider review; in particular there seems little point in anticipating the Boundary Commission's major exercise starting in 1984.

/ You might care to reply on the lines of the accompanying draft.

MH



*Local gov*

DRAFT LETTER TO SIR HORACE CUTLER

Thank you for your letter of 26 March about the City Corporation.

I agree that abolition of the City Corporation is not to be contemplated; and you may be sure of my support in defending it.

I would not, however, want to be committed to a general review of local government in London, at any rate in advance of the Boundary Commission's statutory review which is due to start in 1984.