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From the Private Secretary

29 July 1986

INNER CITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

The Prime Minister this morning discussed with your Secretary of State his minute of 28 July about the proposed inner city schools initiative. Professor Brian Griffiths was also present.

The Prime Minister welcomed the initiative warmly. In discussion it was agreed that it was most important to include the word "technological" or "technical" in the title of the schools, in order to keep pressure for a strong technical element in the curriculum. It would also be worthwhile to place 5 or 6 of them in less deprived areas, in order to provide a "control" for the experiment and to give some of them a better start to show what they could do. The proposal should be launched before the Party Conference, to an education audience.

It was agreed that your Secretary of State would need to clear his lines with the Chief Secretary. A meeting of a small group of colleagues should be held in September to discuss the proposal.

Mr. Baker mentioned to the Prime Minister ideas for changing the status of polytechnics and for giving students a total amount of money to cover both maintenance and tuition (which might be a mixture of loans and grants) which would go with them to the institution they attended. The Prime Minister expressed interest in both these ideas. She also suggested that it might be useful at some stage for her to host a dinner for a group of Vice Chancellors.

Mr. Baker also mentioned that he was considering a proposal under which part of any extra money to be provided for teachers' pay would be paid over as specific grant only when conditions had been satisfied.

The Prime Minister discussed with Mr. Baker his letter to Michael Alison of 17 July about the decision to withdraw approval from the architecture courses at

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Huddersfield Polytechnic and North East London Polytechnic. Your Secretary of State undertook to look again at this question in the light of the Prime Minister's disquiet about the decision.

(DAVID NORGROVE)

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