

**Merseyside Task Force**

Graeme House Derby Square Liverpool L2 7SU

Telephone 051-227 4111 ext

*M. Russey*  
*JH6/ai*

*From the Director*

A.J. Stocks Esq.,  
Chief Executive  
Liverpool City Council

Your reference

Our reference MTF/9/15

Date 2nd November 1984

*Dear Mr Stocks,*

LIVERPOOL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME - NEW SPORTS CENTRES

1. I refer to our meetings and correspondence on this subject and particularly to your letters of 27th September and 3rd October.
2. The Secretary of State has now considered your application for Urban Programme assistance towards the cost of three new sports halls and I am able to convey his formal approval for Urban Programme grant purposes for capital expenditure on these projects as set out below:-

	1984/85	1985/86
	(£000)	(£000)
Speke	530	276
Walton Hall Park	570	286
Long Lane Garston	500	247
	1,600	809

This approval is issued under the normal conditions of the Urban Programme.

3. Your Council also sought Urban Programme support for the revenue costs arising from the anticipated operating deficit of these three sports halls estimated at £411,000. The Secretary of State is prepared in principle to accept up to 100% of the deficit in 1985/86 and up to 50% of the deficit in 1986/87 as eligible for Urban Programme support. We will however expect to be provided with data on the actual levels of deficits incurred and on the usage made of the facilities before meeting any claims for such expenditure.
4. The Secretary of State has reached his decision on the merits of the specific proposals before him, but has expressed his concern about the lack of a consensus between us on the overall shape of the Liverpool Partnership Programme. In his letter of 29th June to the Leader of the Council he expressed the hope that "we can develop an effective and constructive partnership to tackle the needs of the people of

*39/11*

Liverpool". To date there has been little evidence on the part of your Council that they are prepared to proceed on that basis.

5. The Secretary of State has further noted the current expenditure implications of these and other schemes which the City propose to implement this year. These have implications for the City's overall financial position this year and in 1985/86.

6. In the course of the discussions earlier this year the Secretary of State emphasised the need for the Council to take action to reduce its current expenditure budget. A number of measures was canvassed - for example in the joint report prepared by officials - which would enable the City to achieve better value for money in service provision. The City's proposals to take on additional burdens make it even more important that these possibilities should be vigorously pursued. There has so far been no indication of the urgent positive action which the situation demands.

7. The Secretary of State will be grateful if you would draw this letter to the attention of your Council, making clear his concerns and ensuring that they consider the implications. Because of the importance of the issues raised, the Secretary of State has decided to make public the contents of this letter.

D.C. RENSHAW

Hidden copies to:

PS/Secretary of State  
PS/Mr Baker  
PS/Sir George Moseley  
Mr Heiser  
Mr Delafons  
Mr Sorensen  
Mr Owen  
Mr McDonald  
Mr Hobson ✓  
Mr Morrison  
Mr Bunce  
Mr Ramsay  
Mrs E. Jones, COI

# CASH WAR ROUND 2!

**Exclusive**

By Peter Phelps

**ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY** Patrick Jenkin today launched a savage attack on Labour-run Liverpool council.

He warned that a new budget crisis could mean rate rises of up to 100 per cent. next year.

A clearly furious Mr. Jenkin accused hard left Militant Tendency extremists of trying to smash the system and renewed his threat of bringing commissioners in to run the city.

He said in an exclusive interview with the Echo that Labour chiefs had made no effort to cut costs and were either gagging Town Hall officials or keeping them in the dark about vital spending plans.

Mr. Jenkins said the city's direct labour organisation was a scandal.

He claimed a wall of silence had crippled the government's so-called "partnership" funding arrangement with Liverpool.

His onslaught came as a letter from the Department of the Environment's Liverpool-based Task Force was delivered to council chief executive Mr. Alfred Stocks this afternoon.

## Smash

It gave the go-ahead for three city sports centres—and contained a veiled attack on the lack of co-operation between Whitehall and Town Hall.

"These are extreme Militant Tendency socialists who have no intention whatever of working the system," he said.

"They are out to smash the system and they have made it clear that is their objective.

Road to disaster—  
Page 4

## Jenkin slams 'militant wreckers'

## Cakes firm on the brink

By Colin Wright,  
Industrial Correspondent

BAKERY group Cubbon Cakes of Liverpool sent out an S.O.S. to the business world today as it teetered on the brink of closure.

The high-class Old Swan confectionery firm, which employs around 100 staff, is appealing for cash backing after going into voluntary liquidation.

Accountants were at the bakery this morning and managing director Vernon Cubbon was due to address the workforce later today.

## Refused

The company chief was refusing to talk about his firm's plight, but local Bakers' Union officials confirmed that only a cash injection could save the business, which runs a dozen shops.

"The company is in trouble, but the situation is not hopeless if a backer can be found," said union regional secretary Eddie Pritchard.

"A liquidator has not yet been appointed and the company can still be rescued by someone who is brave enough to assist it.

"We are telling our members to bend over backwards to assist the company in every way."

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BY FAX - Mr Jenkin  
Sof S.

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## Press Notice

EMBARGO: NOT FOR PUBLICATION OR BROADCAST BEFORE 1400 HOURS, FRIDAY 2 NOVEMBER. NO APPROACHES SHOULD BE MADE BEFORE THAT TIME TO ANYONE OTHER THAN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

FAX TO: MR. D. RENSHAW,  
c/o S/S Rm. N10/05, HARSHAM ST.  
01-212 4333  
FROM: PHILIP AYLETT,  
COI, MANCHESTER

NW235/84

2 November 1984

### STATEMENT BY ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY

Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment, today announced approval of the building of three sports halls in Liverpool under the Government's Urban Programme.

He said; "These will make a very valuable contribution to the life of the city and underline once again the Government's clear commitment to its regeneration.

"I could not let the occasion pass, however, without drawing the Council's attention to two major concerns.

"First, in my letter to the Council's Leader of 29th June, about the 1984/85 budget, I urged the council to enter into proper partnership with my Department in developing the Urban Programme. In my view this means the Council entering into a dialogue with my Department to agree the objectives and direction of the partnership and from that a detailed programme. It is only with such co-operation that we can make real progress with the City's problems.

"Second, these sports halls will place an additional revenue burden on the Council in 1985/86 and beyond. I made no secret in commenting on the council's budget for the current year that it gave the City no more than a breathing space. If the Council was to put its affairs on a sound financial footing it had to take firm action to improve the efficiency and economy of its service provision, along with wider measures such as the sale of City Centre freeholds. Without such action the financial problems would continue to pile up. I have yet to see any evidence that the Council has grasped this message and it is my clear duty in sanctioning further expenditure to draw it once again to their attention."

More . . . .

# On the road to disaster

## Minister's warning to city's militant rulers

LIVERPOOL is heading for financial disaster next year and cannot be saved again by Government handouts or shuffling the cards.

That is the heart of the grim message today from Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin.

Speaking exclusively to the Echo, the man who had a briefing

been ignored.

He claimed the £20 million partnership programme for projects funded 75 per cent by Government under urban aid was being used and in danger of

Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin talks exclusively to Peter Phelps, the Echo's Local Government Editor.

He said: "These are absolutely straight urban programme commitments which in the ordinary course of events we would wish to support — although

city again makes it very difficult.

"Projects are put up by the voluntary bodies only to find that so bent are the council on the 'municipal solution' —



Patrick Jenkin... grim message

THE U.S. N awarded a of dollar contract head Corp sub develop and be submarine-I nuclear missi officials said. The Navy is ing eight Tri-marines and plans to build

### Not bee dismiss

COAL BOAR relations dir Geoff Kirk, sen nite leave, he out about his agony". "But I been dismis neither h sack

measures suggested in June's joint Town Hall-Whitehall report had

were announced by the council without proper consultation.

they were. If we are going to continue to run an inner city partnership in Liverpool they have got to come in and play their part in a proper, decent way as every other partnership authority does.

"We have partnership arrangements with other left wing councils... where the minister concerned is able to have a perfectly effective relationship and officials have a good relationship with the authority. In Liverpool this simply doesn't exist. "We never seem to be able to get the information in the form we want. The officers aren't briefed or if they are they are not given the authority to disclose the information.

### Behave

"Projects — as this one was — are announced prematurely in advance of any decision being taken. This isn't the way to behave. "In many cases the officers simply don't know what's happening. They aren't told. The business of the council is being handled by a few of the leading councillors.

"The basis of a proper partnership is regular contact at official level. It's a process that hardly happens in Liverpool. Things come forward with a great lurch before absolutely any information has been given to us at all."

Mr. Jenkin added: "The virtual breakdown of relationships between the voluntary bodies and the city coun-

cil again makes it very difficult. "Projects are put up by the voluntary bodies only to find that so bent are the council on the 'municipal solution' —

ing they demand is automatically to be given.

"Is that partnership in any meaningful sense at all?" asked Mr. Jenkin.



"I don't see how we can go on trying to run a normal partnership if the other partner goes on behaving like that."

Mr. Jenkin was also highly critical of the concentration of resources in Labour's 17 city crisis areas.

"I am very unhappy about what I call the total municipal solution," he said. "They are totally turning their backs on housing co-

operatives. "Tony Byrne (council finance chief) keeps on saying he is not against bringing in the private sector.

"They point to one or two examples hanging over from the previous administration but when it comes to the question of doing a second Minister Court with the building next door to it — no way.

"They were asked by Wimpey a year ago to do a deal on Speke Hall Road flats. Minister Court was a derelict tenement block successfully refurbished by

environment, and facilities for small firms.

"They don't put anything forward for that at all. It's unbalanced and it simply doesn't fit in with the objectives we are able to agree with every other partnership authority."

But the most worrying question for Mr. Jenkin is next year's budget.



This year Labour claimed victory in their budget battle with Whitehall insisting it had won special aid from Mr. Jenkin worth £20 million when the environment chief said the total was no more than £2.5 million.

The threatened huge rate rise was reduced to 17 per cent. But Mr. Jenkin warned at the time that Liverpool was storing up trouble for the future unless costs were pruned and suggested a package of economy measures including making the refuse collection, the direct labour organisation and other services more effi-

cient. "There is considerable scope for savings in the way the council spends its money."

city areas when so much of the inner city regeneration has to be directed to other aspects like improvement of the

ing is in the order of \$25 million," said Mr. Jenkin.

"Therefore, they are going to go into next year — unless some very drastic steps are taken — with a substantial deficit.

"The law requires that deficit shall be added to the budget for next year and that the rate shall be sufficient to cover both. They have done nothing to seek to trim their spending to meet the requirements of a reasonable budget.

"If absolutely nothing is done the people of Liverpool may face 100 per cent rate rises simply to balance the books.

"One would have thought that a council of responsible men and women seeing this coming would have been doing something about it."

"These are extreme Militant Tendency socialists who have no intention whatever of working the system.

Mr. Jenkin repeated his earlier charges that street cleaning in Liverpool cost four times as much as in Sheffield, that environmental health cost two and a half times more per head than in the average metropolitan district — that the city spent 50 per cent more on waste collection and 30 per cent more on social services.

"Liverpool appears to have done nothing to deal with the longer term financial problems it faces.

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