

D. R.
PRIME MINISTER

Meeting with Bishop and Archbishop of Liverpool

Mr. Jenkin will be attending this meeting, and can report on the discussions he had with the Bishops the previous evening on Liverpool.

In addition to Liverpool questions, the Bishops may raise the mining strike, and if they don't, perhaps you should. The two of them are trustees of a hardship fund for striking miners. In addition, Bishop Warlock is a signatory of the statement issued yesterday by the Catholic Bishops on the coal strike. This displays either astonishing ignorance or naivety, and you may feel the time has come for some straight talking on the real issues.

See Annex D
1 The Catholic Bishops refer to "the apparent unwillingness of either side to negotiate a settlement". //

- what about NCB's offer on pay, investment, job guarantees and early retirement benefits?
- what about NCB's willingness to look again at the 6 March proposals, to put the 5 pits back through the review procedure, and, after the strike, to work on an update of Plan for Coal?
- what about the NCB's willingness to negotiate and reach a settlement with NACODS on issues central to the dispute?
- what about Mr. Scargill's boast that he hasn't moved an inch since the start of the strike?
- is it not the case that the ending of negotiations has done more to break the deadlock than anything else?

/ - why

- why do the Bishops refer so disparagingly to "this creeping return, as it's called"? Are 6,000 new faces merely a drift back?
- is it not the NUM whose attitude is the total antithesis of his statement that "we've got to adjust to a new age"?
- haven't the Government and NCB done more ^{than ever before} through early retirement provisions and the establishment of NCB Enterprises, to cushion the impact of pit closures?

AT

14 November, 1984.

CONFIDENTIAL



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My ref:

Your ref:

14 November 1984

Dear Andrew

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE BISHOP AND ARCHBISHOP OF
LIVERPOOL 15 NOVEMBER

/ My Secretary of State met the Bishop and Archbishop of Liverpool
yesterday evening, in preparation for the Prime Minister's
meeting with them on 15 November. I enclose at Annex A a brief
note of the main points that they raised and which they expect
to touch on in their meeting with the Prime Minister.

/ My Secretary of State assumes that the Prime Minister will
mainly want to listen to what the Bishop and Archbishop have
to say, but at Annex B is a short note of the key points she
might make. The first of those is the way the City Council
is behaving, and my Secretary of State is minuting the Prime
Minister separately about the latest position. Annex C.

/ I am also enclosing, in case the Prime Minister wants to scan
through it, an update of the background briefing that we provided
for previous meetings between the Prime Minister and the two
Bishops.

Yours etc

Alan Davis

ALAN DAVIS
Private Secretary

Andrew Turnbull Esq

MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE BISHOP AND ARCHBISHOP OF LIVERPOOL, 13 NOVEMBER 1984

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS RAISED

Following up the Garden Festival

The Bishops referred to the encouraging atmosphere in Liverpool following the Garden Festival - what they referred to as 'post Festival Liverpool'. They expressed gratitude for the Secretary of State's announcement about the Festival site. The Festival had provided a major boost to hope and belief, although people still felt very frustrated. There was a strange contrast between these hopeful signs and the road to disaster that the City Council seemed determined to follow. People increasingly felt that the Council had to be bypassed.

One of the most hopeful signs was the 'Michaelmas Group' - a Group of leading businessmen brought together by the Bishops to build on the post-Festival spirit. They were developing ideas which would attract private investment. There was an encouraging level of involvement and commitment - the Group were looking forward from the old role of Liverpool to new development, tourism and ways of improving the City's image. The Group had no confidence in the City Council, and therefore needed guidance from Government about the way in which they should develop. The Secretary of State said that he would be willing to meet the Group to discuss this - they might like to consider the establishment of a development association as a promotional body for Merseyside, similar to bodies established in other parts of the country.

Liverpool's attitude to the voluntary sector

The Bishops expressed concern about Liverpool Council's attempts to take over the voluntary sector in Liverpool. Some voluntary sector leaders believed that the Council's attitude would lead to a halving of the voluntary sector over the next five years, with consequent loss of real community involvement and leadership. The leading Liverpool Councillors seemed unwilling - and in some cases unable - to recognise this.

Liverpool Housing

The Secretary of State explained the impasse that had been reached on Liverpool's housing expenditure allocation for 1985/6. The Council were refusing to speak to the Department until the Secretary of State confirmed his 'promise' to provide a £130m allocation. No such promise had been made. The Bishops said that they believed some new local authority housing for rent was needed as part of the strategy to tackle Liverpool's housing problems, but if the Council would not co-operate then clearly the Government would have to use other agencies.

Manpower Services Commission

The Bishop expressed concern about the future of MSC programmes,

particularly in the light of what had happened on Mode B schemes. Greater emphasis was being placed on 'output measurement', and if the measure was the proportion of trainees who went on to full time jobs this would pose major problems for areas like Liverpool. The effect would be a concentration of MSC resources in the areas where jobs were most available, rather than in areas where unemployment was highest. MSC programmes must be viewed in terms of providing useful opportunities for the unemployed as well as providing training for jobs.

Liverpool's Race Relations Unit

The Bishops expressed concern about the tensions that had been created by Liverpool's decision to appoint the local Labour Party's nominee to head the Race Relations Unit, rather than other candidates who were regarded as much better qualified by all impartial observers and the black community itself. The Government might welcome the split that this had caused within the Council and between the Council leadership and the unions. NALGO had blacked the post and the threat of an all-out strike remained. But Liverpool's action was very damaging to the efforts being made to encourage black leadership and involvement.

A H DAVIS
Private Secretary
14 November 1984

BY FAX

Mr Ballard, PS / 506 S
Room N16/05

Prime Minister's meeting with the Bishop and Archbishop of Liverpool

Points to make

1. The Government remains deeply concerned about the actions and attitudes of Liverpool City Council. Blinkered and expensive municipal solutions wrong and impractical.
2. Government will continue to do all it can to help deal with problems.
3. Very conscious of the strains being imposed on local society (e.g. by the Council's unwillingness to consult community groups, its attitude to the voluntary sector, its recent handling of the appointment of Samson Bond as principal race relations officer etc). How do the Bishops see the picture?
4. Have the bishops views about developing the roles of other agencies in Liverpool - churches, community and voluntary groups, or public sector bodies such as the Housing Corporation and Merseyside Development Corporation?
5. Are any lessons beginning to emerge from the Archbishop of Canterbury's inner city commission, of which the Bishop is a member?
6. Have the Bishops any up-to-date feel about the risks and possible causes of disturbances?



MEETING WITH ARCHBISHOP AND BISHOP

ARCHBISHOP OF LIVERPOOL (RC)

Most Reverend Derek John Horford Warlock (64)

Archbishop of Liverpool since 1976. Educated St Edmunds College, Ware, Herts and ordained RC priest 1944. Private Secretary to Archbishop of Westminster 1945-64. Bishop of Portsmouth 1965-76. Member of the Synod Council 1976-77 and of the Holy See's Council and Committee for the Family from 1977-83. English delegate to the International Synod of Bishops 1974, 77, 80 and 83.

BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL

Rt Reverend David Stuart Sheppard (55) Bishop of Liverpool since 1975. Educated Sherborne; Cambridge (MA) Ridley Hall Theological College. County cricketer with Sussex 1947-62 (Captain 1953). Played 22 times for England 1950-63 (Captain 1954). Warden Mayflower Family Centre Canning Town 1957-69 Bishop Suffragan of Woolwich 1969-75

MEETING WITH BISHOPS

The Prime Minister will recall meeting the Bishop and Archbishop of Liverpool on 1 February this year for a private discussion about Merseyside, and briefly during her visit to Liverpool on 2 October.

The Bishop ^{on 1 February} referred to people in the inner-city parishes who felt alienated, had little part in deciding their own destiny, and who felt also that unemployment was permanent and would not be eased by national efforts. The Bishop himself said that Government schemes such as Y^TS and the Community Programme were dwarfed by the scale of the problem.

The Archbishop expressed his dismay that the City Council were taking over housing plans being developed on a self help basis. He also praised the County Council as an able and unifying force which people did not wish to see abolished. Joint Boards involving district councils would find it hard to rise above sectarian interests.

In response the Prime Minister expressed concern:

about the doctrinaire nature of the City Council's decisions and said that support for the County was really a measure of the city's failure to take a proper lead in the area;

added that even if Merseyside had to live with unemployment for the foreseeable future much could and should be done to improve the physical environment.

The Bishop later wrote a personal letter to the Secretary of State and described movingly the plight of parishioners facing long term unemployment. He described also a week-end forum held in February when the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas visited Merseyside. The forum stressed again:

the financial and social problems of unemployment;

the problems of funding voluntary bodies;

the effects on those left behind of the 'mobility of the self confident';

the need to press harder for industry to invest in Merseyside the need, (despite industry's reduced requirement for manpower) for people to be able to contribute to society and to receive a reasonable wage for it.