

PRIME MINISTER 2

INNER CITIES

Sir Jeffrey Sterling came to see me today, with the knowledge of Lord Young, to make some general points about inner city policy:

1. The crucial starting point was to choose three or four key cities, concentrate attention and effort on them so that the Government would have something to show quite early on as a result of its effort. It would be a mistake to try to advance on a broad front; such an approach would simply dilute effort and results.

2. The first task in each area was to decide the nature of the development it was to see; factories in some cases, residential in others, commercial and so on. Once that decision had been made, a critical path could then be devised. It was important to avoid the approach of clearing sites and waiting for something to happen.

3. Results would be disappointing if matters were left to normal departmental processes. Time and effort would be lost in consultation, especially if DOE, in his experience a rather bureaucratic department, were involved. Some form of task force was needed with powers and money to decide what each area needed and then to marshal the resources, both public and private, to that end.

4. In every case, it would be important to tap local civic pride. The local people had to be brought on to the Government's side if development was to be successful.

N.L.W.

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