

INNER CITIES

A propos of our discussion this morning there are one or two quotes which suggest that the tide is beginning to turn, as well as being potentially useful for speeches and in the House.

"Since 1982 there has been a 63% increase in our expenditure in real terms, and an increase in staff of 2,500 people. What we have to accept is that all this extra expenditure and all this extra growth did not result in more or better services."

Mr. Tony Dykes, leader of Camden Council,
Hampstead & Highgate Express, 11 September 1987

"We are seen as bureaucratic, inefficient, unresponsive and paternalistic by many of those people who are most dependent on what we provide."

Mrs Margaret Hodge, New Statesman, 18 September 1987

"We've tended to act as politicians in a rather theoretical domain, protesting about cuts instead of examining what we actually provide."

Ibid

"We must improve the quality of local council services. We must become more consumer-orientated. Individuals know best what they want, not town hall politicians or trade unionists.

"For instance, tenants genuinely know a lot about how their estates should be run. A council really has no right to decide whether a family should have an extra bedroom or not. It should be up to the people concerned. And if they together choose to run their estates themselves, they should have the freedom and our support to do so.

Ibid.

D.N.

David Norgrove

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