

PRIME MINISTERINNER CITIES - PRESENTATION

I have been asked to put in a note, preparatory to tomorrow's meeting, on the presentational aspects of the Inner Cities exercise.

The most important issue at this stage in the development of the initiative is for Ministers to be satisfied about the nature and strength of the product they propose to offer the country on March 7.

In my view we are once again in danger of putting the cart before the horse, as we did over "The Next Steps". This brings the risk of an anti-climax, or worse, when the eventual announcements are made.

In the case of inner cities this risk is all the more acute since the media tend to judge the value of Government action by the amount of "new money" the Government is putting in. (This underlines the importance in the booklet of stressing the pump priming nature of Government funding to encourage and multiply private sector funding.)

Consequently, the success of the Inner Cities exercise will depend on:

- i. the range of action announced on the day;
- ii. the argumentation of the Government's case in the booklet itself - and all the pretty pictures in the world will not hide any lack of substance; and
- iii. the clarity with which the myriad of Government schemes and assistance is presented since once again one of the complaints is the bewildering nature of the 57 varieties of Government help.

ACTION

Media reaction will be heavily conditioned by the presentation of the action being announced or contemplated. This means that three things are crucial:

- the range and extent of the action;
- the press notice which brings this together in eg a 10-point action programme, supplemented by a few telling quotes from you;

- your opening presentation which should be crisp and to the point and take in:
  - i. the Government's philosophy about inner city regeneration;
  - ii. the action it proposes;
  - iii. its longer term aims.

We have the makings - but no more than that - of a reasonable action programme provided we pour everything currently known to be available, and preferably more than that, into the March 7 pot. I am sure that in the absence of any significant new money, we cannot afford the luxury of holding some things back for subsequent announcement.

We must also avoid the risk, inherent in the current product, of damagingly skewing presentation towards the "Safer Cities" crime initiative. It is vital that the Government is seen to be advancing positively along a broad front.

Consequently, I believe that we need to beef up the March 7 announcement with the following mix: \_\_\_\_\_

- City grant
- English Estates action
- New Roads
- Two more UDCs
- Two new City Action teams
- Encouragement for LAs to sell surplus land
- Extension of DTI enterprise initiative
- More help through Small Firms Service
- City Technology Colleges - we need another
- MSC targetting
- Hartley Booth's Elevelco initiative (as a major example of private sector response)
- plus any other positive measures we can lay our hands on.

I am convinced that it simply will not do to leave the Elevelco announcement until later. Priming the pump for private sector involvement is a key element of inner city policy and any package without such a development will attract adverse comment.

We have a ready vehicle for subsequent, smaller local or regional announcements to give an impression of continuing action in Kenneth Clarke's projected road shows, starting March 23.

ARGUMENT

I am sure that a substantial amount of work has yet to be done on the text, but one of the deficiencies I immediately identify is the lack of comprehensive feel for life in the inner cities. For example, improving the cultural life and sporting facilities are ignored. Yet both are an important part, along with beautification or "greening", of making inner cities a better place in which to live and work. Moreover, John Smith, chairman of Liverpool AFC and the Sports Council, believes sport has a big part to play in improving inner cities.

The package would be greatly improved if we could point to new action in culture and sport, even if we were only able to say that the Government was entering into talks with the Arts Council and the Sports Council on the contribution of the arts and sport to the development of inner city life.

Another thing that is missing is a more comprehensive rehearsal of private sector involvement in inner cities through eg Business in the Community, Phoenix Trust, etc.

It is one thing to have a map of Government action, as we have in the target areas map. But colour coding should surely also bring out how Government interest has multiplied private sector investment in those target areas. Given the amount of private sector activity, especially in the Midlands and the North, this could greatly strengthen the document.

Finally, it will be a legitimate question from the media - which we must anticipate and ideally swell the action programme with the answer/s - as to what all the Government's schemes for the unemployed - eg Community Programmes - have done, are doing and are going to do for inner cities. A great deal has already been done to improve the environment and the Government should take credit for it.

It is all the more important that the booklet does so in view of your well known concern about litter, graffiti and general untidiness.

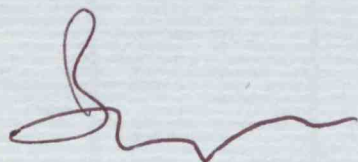
CONCLUSION

In short, your concern at tomorrow's meeting should be to insist that the machine:

- i. gets together the most convincing, comprehensive and wide-ranging action programme for announcement on March 7;

- ii. ensure that this comprehensive approach is fully reflected in the booklet;
- iii. priority is given, once the product for sale on March 7 is settled, to the clarity of presentation in the form of your opening statement and press notice;
- iv. clarifying the purpose of the subsequent road shows to take the message to the regions and demonstrate continuing action with local or regional examples.

I attach at Annex I a proposed media programme for March 7 for your endorsement.



**BERNARD INGHAM**  
9 February 1988

ANNEX IACTION FOR CITIES - MEDIA PROGRAMME

Subject to your approval (and I would be grateful if you would tick each point) the following arrangements are being made:

1. Venue: Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre.
2. Date: 11.00am, Monday 7 March 1988.
3. Written Answer so organised as to permit 11am launch, which is vital for local and regional media.
4. You need to decide who should join you on the platform in addition to the Home Secretary, Mr Ridley, Mr Fowler and Mr Clarke. I assume you would only require Mr Clarke from DTI. But you will need to consider whether also to invite Mr Baker and Mr Channon whose programmes are involved. I suggest the ruling factor should be whether they have anything new to announce.
5. I assume you would like me to conduct the press conference; call the questioners and close it after, say, 45 minutes.
6. A number of Ministers, with the main announcements to make, will need to say a few words. You will need nearer the time to decide the order. It will, however, be crucial that they should give only brief statements of a few minutes each; otherwise the occasion will get out of hand and little time will be left for questions.
7. I think it important that each Minister with major announcements should separately brief his own specialist correspondents - eg home affairs, transport, industrial correspondents - in order to achieve maximum impact. It will only be possible at the grand press conference to get over the essentials.
8. It will be important that Hartley Booth organises a separate Elevelco press conference, if you agree this announcement should be made at the same time.
9. We propose to put out a general invitation to the home and overseas press, radio and television and to permit radio and television to record and film and if necessary transmit live.

10. So far as staging is concerned, I strongly advise you to eschew glitter. We propose a bold but simple "Action for Cities" logo backdrop, with display panels of what is being done in inner cities at the side of the conference hall.
11. I would like you to do subsequent radio and television interviews; you will maximise the air time given to the subject.
12. I suggest that the Chancellor of the Duchy should take follow up interviews - eg Newsnight, World Tonight and Today the following day - covering the broad sweep of inner cities policy.
13. I suggest individual Ministers making the more important announcements should make themselves available for interview as required, and especially to local radio.
14. We ought to identify all press notices, in addition to the main summary, with a unifying "Action for Cities" logo.
15. We must ensure that the COI's regional directors are fully briefed so that we can maximise coverage and understanding in the regions.
16. If individual Ministers are planning trips out of London that day - as Mr Ridley (Liverpool) and Mr Fowler (Birmingham) apparently are - you should encourage them to make the national initiative relevant to the regions they are visiting, and take advantage of regional radio and television.

Content?

BERNARD INGHAM  
9 February 1988

MR GRAY

FROM: J B Wright

DATE: 10 February 1988

MR SORENSEN

cc Mr Ingham

**ACTION FOR CITIES: MAIN NEWS RELEASE**

As promised - first try. I hope it reflects what Bernard said. Clearly words will change, but the structure is the sort we need for maximum impact on the media.

2. I have had another go at the main text of the "Action for Cities" document (enclosed but not to Bernard). This now reads well. But the more we can tighten it, the better. If you let me have the next revised text, I'll have yet another hunt for spare fat and lurking jargon.

3. By 2 this afternoon I hope to let you have sketches of the proposed stage layout for the news conference together with an artist's impression of the display layout for the rear of the auditorium. These may be useful for the meeting with the Prime Minister.

John

J B WRIGHT  
Head of Information

DRAFT

ACTION FOR CITIES

NEWS RELEASE

PRIME MINISTER LAUNCHES 12 GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR  
INNER CITIES

Private firms step in with major help

The Prime Minister today launched 12 initiatives to help put new life into Britain's cities. They include measures to boost development and employment, prepare people for new jobs and - in a scheme unique in Europe - make major cities safer to live in.

The Prime Minister also announced [private sector measures].

The Prime Minister said: "Britain's future prosperity turns on the success of her cities. We are determined to create the climate for this success by encouraging people to rise to the many opportunities now presented by our expanding economy."

The 12 initiatives

Measures announced by the Prime Minister were

- a campaign to cut crime and fear of it in 20 inner-city areas - first programme of its kind in Europe
- two more Urban Development Corporations - one in Sheffield's Lower Don Valley, the other on Merseyside
- a new type of grant - City Grant - to encourage private investment in inner cities



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- further steps to encourage local authorities to sell surplus and vacant land and help businesses and developers use sites now lying idle
- more incentives to help inner-city residents to train and compete for new jobs
- expansion of the Enterprise Initiative - a national scheme aimed at cities which help smaller firms boost performance
- new no-nonsense help for businesses starting up - English Estates working with private companies to provide specially-managed workshops with a range of facilities
- new help from the Small Firms Service - in new offices in inner cities with specially-trained staff
- new centres in inner cities to help adults tackle their literacy and numeracy problems using modern computer aids
- new inner-city road schemes - 120 major schemes worth some £600 million which will benefit inner cities are at present under construction or planned
- two more City Action Teams - in Nottingham and Leeds - to co-ordinate action aimed at boosting business confidence and development; this makes seven in all
- a new Enterprise Zone for Sunderland to encourage development by cutting red tape in the planning process.

**Private sector boost**

Commenting on the [private sector measures], the Prime Minister said: "[quote followed by further details of the measures]".



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CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-270 0431

Bernard Ingham Esq  
The Prime Minister's Press Secretary  
10 Downing Street

*Dear Bernard,*

INNER CITIES DOCUMENT: HANDLING OF ANNOUNCEMENT

We spoke yesterday and this morning about the need for decisions on what exactly will happen on 7 March.

I discussed this with Richard Wilson, Jean Caines, Adrian Moorey and John Wright earlier this week and I have arranged to meet the Chief Information Officers from the relevant Departments (DTI, Environment, Employment, Home Office) on Monday 8 February, 3.30pm.

I should be very grateful for your guidance on the likely decisions on the following points:

- (a) the Churchill Auditorium at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre has been booked. As you know it can easily accommodate 200 or more plus TV cameras and so on;
- (b) which Ministers will join the Prime Minister on the platform? Mr Hurd, Mr Ridley, Mr Fowler and Mr Clarke seem to be obvious choices;
- (c) How is the press conference to be conducted?
- (d) Who is in the audience? We felt at the meeting earlier this week that the audience should be confined to the media and not include leading businessmen. We felt that in addition to the national press Departments might wish to invite their own specialist correspondents and there could be some foreign press interest. Who should be invited? And do you agree that the audience should be limited?
- (e) Form of press conference: do you agree that there should be an "Action for Cities" backdrop with a good logo and display boards showing Government programmes in action? Should there be music and an audio visual? We felt that a good backdrop and displays were what was required.

- no*  
*the*
- (f) Does the Prime Minister give follow-up interviews immediately after the press conference with, for example, BBC and ITN News and radio?
- (g) Does Mr Clarke give the main follow-up interviews? How are such interviews to be split between Mr Clarke and the other Ministers? Should there be any Ministerial effort in the regions on the day?
- (h) At present it is proposed that there is a press-pack with the inner cities document. This would include details of the specific announcements being made on 7 March e.g. Safer Cities, City Grant, two more UDCs. I presume from your discussion with Brian Mower that Home Office have it in mind to have a separate press conference after the Prime Minister's. But Jean Caines, for example, is not proposing a separate press conference for Mr Ridley. Instead it is possible that immediately after the QEII press conference Mr Ridley will go to Liverpool and Mr Trippier to Sheffield. Is it to be left to Departments what they do on 7 March?
- (j) I understand from Hartley Booth, who has talked to you, that he had it in mind to announce the private sector initiative Elevenco on the same day, possibly associated with the QE press conference. Would it be better if this were announced on 8 March as the first follow-on announcement.
- yes*
- (k) Is a separate briefing given to leading businessmen (and local authority leaders) on 7 March or do we rely on the Kenneth Clarke roadshows (starting 23 March in Manchester) to promote policies and opportunities to a wider audience?

I would find it very helpful to quickly run through these points with you, and with Paul Gray, before Monday afternoon.

Things will be a little easier when the press officer is appointed. I know you talked to Neville Taylor about progress (or lack of it) yesterday.

I am copying this to Paul Gray

*Yours ever,*  
*Ken*

K E C SORENSEN  
4 February 1988

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*File SH*  
*CCBG*

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

21 January 1988

*Dear Peter,*

DATE FOR INNER CITIES LAUNCH

*BC/11*  
As promised in my separate letter earlier today, I am now writing concerning the date for the launch of the 'Action for Cities' document. Wednesday 2 March will not be possible for the Prime Minister and, following our earlier conversation, I am writing to confirm the date of Monday 7 March. I understand that the QEII Conference Centre has been booked for this date.

The Prime Minister is keen that this date does not become generally known and I should be grateful if you and other recipients of this letter could keep the information on a need-to-know basis.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Philip Mawer (Home Office), Nicholas Wilson (Department of Employment), Roger Bright (Department of the Environment), Alison Brimelow (Department of Trade and Industry), Roy Griffins (Department of Transport), Jill Rutter (Chief Secretary's Office) and to Richard Wilson, Eric Sorenson and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

*Yes,*  
*Paul.*

PAUL GRAY

Peter Smith, Esq.,  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office

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*SH*

PRIME MINISTER

DATE FOR INNER CITIES LAUNCH

It was agreed at this afternoon's meeting the target date should be Wednesday 2 March.

You will however be involved with the NATO Summit on 2-3 March. Assuming Fridays are ruled out, and <sup>given</sup> the tight timetable for preparing the document, this suggests the effective choice is between Tuesday 1 March and Monday 7 March.

1 March would maximise the distance from the Budget. But it would not be an easy day for you given Question Time and the possibility of having to rearrange Cabinet for that morning.

7 March would take the launch closer to the Budget but would be a full eight days away from it. Your diary looks a lot better for that day.

I have checked that both Mr Clarke and Mr Ridley are free on both dates.

Would you be content with 7 March?

*Yes not*

*AGG.*

Paul Gray

20 January 1988

SLHARW