

CONFIDENTIAL

CF/

For meeting folder  
next week.

CC M.O  
①



Prime Minister

Agree his approach - for  
Environment and DTI - to  
Merseyside?

MES 27/6

Prime Minister

MERSEYSIDE

I wrote to you on 16 June about my role and responsibilities on Merseyside, and you have arranged a meeting with myself and other colleagues on 29 June. I have now had discussions with my officials, including the Director of the Merseyside Task Force, and am planning to visit the area on 8 July. It may be helpful if I explain in more detail the arrangements that I propose for the future.

As I said in my earlier note, the events of July 1981, necessitated direct and personal intervention by a Cabinet Minister. The Task Force was set up primarily to support that initiative, and a great deal of constructive work has been got underway. Clearly that work has to be carried forward and there can be no question of disengaging from Merseyside. The scope and activities of the Task Force were, however, constrained by the resources immediately available and the work on Merseyside has been shared with the DOE Regional Office in Manchester.

I believe that the arrangements should now be set on a more permanent basis and I propose that the Task Force should assume responsibility for all this Department's main programme work on

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Merseyside and should handle the Department's relations with all the local authorities in the area. This development, while maintaining the distinctive role of the Task Force in processing new initiatives and major projects, will give it a more solid base and the authority it needs to do business with the various local authorities and other agencies involved. By establishing this permanent Departmental presence on Merseyside we confirm the Government's commitment to dealing with the problems of the area and can be seen to be building on the work already done over the past two years. We move from the experimental phase to the longer-term development.

I believe that these arrangements, carefully presented, will be well received by responsible opinion on Merseyside and will overcome the uncertainty about the future of the Task Force. They will also enable us to address the needs of the area as a whole rather than be led into sterile confrontation with the new Left-wing dominated City Council. For this reason I do not propose, at this stage at least, to revive the "Partnership Committee" with the City and County Councils which has not met for the past two years. I propose to see how the situation develops over the next few months before deciding whether to institute new consultative arrangements. Meanwhile the Department's Merseyside Office will concentrate on developing the Partnership programme and working with local authorities, private developers and voluntary organisations.

I will certainly need to visit the area from time to time and my Ministerial colleagues in DOE will also be making visits to help maintain progress and resolve difficulties on



the spot. I think it is very important that other Departmental Ministers should also continue to visit the area, and consider how their programmes can contribute to tackling the problems of Merseyside, since these should not be seen as exclusively the responsibility of this Department. In particular, I hope that Cecil Parkinson will feel able to follow up the proposal (which was taking shape before the Election) to set up a similar office on Merseyside to promote his Department's programmes and other initiatives on Merseyside, including work on small firms, innovation and IT. The two Departmental teams could occupy joint offices and work closely together, thus retaining the interdepartmental character of the Task Force.

If both Departments were able to announce these new arrangements concurrently, it would certainly confound the critics who have doubted our continuing concern for the area and would provide a very positive approach for the future. So far as my own Department is concerned, I would propose - if you agree - to announce the setting up of our Merseyside office in the course of my visit on 8 July.

I am copying this minute to Cecil Parkinson, Michael Heseltine, and Tom King, and also to Sir Robert Armstrong.

PJ

PJ

27 June 1983

~~Local Govt:~~

~~Relations between central  
local Govt Pt. 15~~

1983

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27 Jun, 1983

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the fact that I think it very important that the  
this should also continue to yield the same  
the main objective can contribute to the growth of  
the system, since there should not be seen as a  
responsibility of the central government. I hope that  
local government will feel able to take the necessary  
measures to ensure that the central government and  
other agencies are involved, including work on staff  
innovation and the use of local government resources could  
help ensure that work closer together, thus retaining the  
independent character of the local government.

If both departments were to be involved in the  
the same way, I think it would be a very good  
thing and have a number of advantages concerning the  
and would provide a very positive impact for the future. So  
for every one of the central government, please discuss - in  
you case - to announce the results of our respective office  
in the course of my visit to you.

I am copying this letter to the  
relevant departments, and I hope you will find it interesting.

DRAFT STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The Times' leading article today "It took a riot" contains a serious and damaging mis-statement. It says "Policy for the inner areas is to be played down". This is just not true. Inner city issues are serious enough to demand the concern and attention of senior Ministers. I intend to implement the Conservative Manifesto commitment which reads "We shall encourage greater opportunity for all those who live in our inner cities, including our ethnic minorities ... We shall continue to give priority to the areas most in need". That will be my policy. *and my personal commitment.*

As to my responsibilities for Merseyside (also referred to by The Times) I intend to visit the area soon to meet local authority leaders and others to discuss future action.

*give the date*

*Agreed by the PM*

Later *Date might be 8 July*

*So better say "soon"*

*I put pressure on them to bring the date forward.*

*MMS 77/6*

gno  
Prime Minister (2)MS 15/7  
mf

PRIME MINISTER

MERSEYSIDE

Patrick Jenkin minuted you on 15 June about his future role and responsibilities on Merseyside.

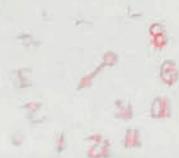
2. I note Patrick's decision to keep the Task Force in being. In our Manifesto we said that the lessons of our Merseyside initiatives would now be applied in other urban areas and I hope that the Task Force can provide us with an early assessment of what those lessons should be.

3. Indeed one of the things the Task Force was set up to do was to prepare a report on the impact of Government policies on Merseyside and the lessons that could be drawn. Originally it was hoped that that report would take about a year to write, but I understand that it is still awaited although in course of preparation, I hope that Patrick will be able to let myself and other colleagues see this report before this year's discussions on public expenditure get fully under way. This will enable us to consider the options for expenditure on Merseyside and other urban areas in a properly informed way.

4. I am copying this to Willie Whitelaw, Leon Brittan, Nigel Lawson, Cecil Parkinson, Norman Tebbit and John Biffen.

R  
PETER REES

Rayard Policy: Liverpool 2 p13



5 JUL 1983

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Prime Minister (2) CC/NO

We should discuss Trade and C.P. and M.W. + T.K. MF



Prime Minister  
MERSEYSIDE

Agree with this change of emphasis?  
MS 15/6

15 June 1983

You asked for a note on how I see my role and responsibilities on Merseyside.

I intend to continue to take a personal interest in the problems of Liverpool and Merseyside. The scale of the problems in the area are such that I think this is essential.

I do not, however, think that my personal presence in the area needs to be as frequent as that of my predecessors or my involvement as intensive. After the 1981 riots a swift, direct and personal intervention by a Cabinet Minister was necessary to give a lead and to start pulling things round. Since then, the Merseyside Task Force has been established. In partnership with the private sector and the local authorities this has laid useful foundations for a range of programmes and initiatives designed to help stimulate the local economy and to improve the environment and living conditions in the most deprived areas.

I intend to continue the Task Force in being. This is, however, only one of a number of Government initiatives on Merseyside, some of which are the responsibility of other Departments. These should now be drawn together and taken forward through a more permanent Departmental presence on Merseyside. Both my Department and the Department of Trade and Industry are moving in this direction; I understand that DTI is considering the possibility of establishing an office on Merseyside to promote their programmes. If this happens I will obviously want to ensure with Cecil Parkinson that the efforts of our respective Departments are co-ordinated to maximum effect.

These are my initial thoughts; I intend to visit the area soon to meet leaders of the local authorities and local industry and commerce to find out how they see developments over the next few months. I will, of course, keep you and colleagues informed.

I am copying this to Willie Whitelaw, Leon Brittan, Nigel Lawson, Cecil Parkinson, Norman Tebbit and John Biffen.

PJ MS

PJ arrayed for 10.15 on 29 June  
P/Dy a P/Trans  
Have not got MS minute. C.

asked DUE to send these copies

MS 16/6

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