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25 November 1985

Dear Prime Minister.

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You may remember that, following our first visit to you at Number Ten nearly two years ago, I wrote to you with an account of the public meeting in Kirkby, when the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas visited Merseyside. You kindly wrote back in your own hand, expressing your great concern about the effect of long term unemployment on families and individuals in places like Kirkby. You wrote, "we will think again".

The Commission has now completed its two years' work, and its Report Faith in the City will be published next week. I wanted to share with you my conviction that the Report is a very thorough piece of work; I have been very impressed by the level of commitment of many members of the Commission and of those who did serious pieces of work we

commissioned. We made a substantial number of visits; we have done a lot of listening. Many submissions were made to us. Between us we already shared considerable experience of Urban Priority Areas.

There is a great deal of detailed analysis and recommendation for the Church. And we have raised public policy questions about the confusing and interlocking factors, which make urban life what it is.

I hope and pray that at this time, when there is so much concern about the quality of life both in inner cities and outer urban priority areas, the government may regard this Report as a constructive view, and that it may be of lasting value.

With my best wishes

Yours sincerely

David Liverpool



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Please retype.

Thank you for writing to me about the publication of the report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas. I shall of course read it with great interest.

~~The problems in our inner cities are I know a matter of great concern to you, as they are to me. The Church is already playing a practical role in working to overcome them, and I hope the publication of the report will give that work added force, as well as pointing up issues for public policy.~~

*I don't think that
will do. I believe
it will be highly
critical of govt policy.*

The Right Reverend the Bishop of Liverpool



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Ernie Wright 4.
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13/12.

12 December 1985

Dear Alan

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"FAITH IN THE CITY"

You may like to have a copy of a letter which my Secretary of State has sent to the Bishop of Liverpool in response to a letter from the Bishop commending the above Report to him.

I am copying this letter and attachment also to David Norgrove (No 10), Stephen Boyes-Smith (Home Office) and Andrew Lansley (Office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster).

Yours ever

Leigh

LEIGH LEWIS
Private Secretary



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The Rt Rev David Sheppard
 Bishop of Liverpool
 Church House
 1 Hanover Street
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11 December 1985

David,

Thank you very much for your letter of 30 November about "Faith in the City".

Let me say straightaway that, as you would expect, I will give this report the most careful study. It is an important document and I recognise the amount of work and preparation that has gone into it, and the deep concern for the future of our cities that underlies it. As you will know, I share that concern, as do other members of this Government, and I know that we have as a common objective with the Church of England making our cities better places in which to live and work, and more prosperous and happier places as a result.

On that, and on many other points of detail in the report, there is common ground between us and I do not want to exaggerate those areas in which my views and that of the report diverge. Some are, in any event, matters of balance and judgement which I accept were for the authors of the report to decide.

A / disagree with
 Where I do depart from the report, however, is in its view of the way forward. As the report rightly observes, for many of those in our inner cities, choice is minimal at best and usually non-existent. That is why I believe that we must seek many of the solutions to the problems which the report identifies not in further concentration of power and authority in the hands of Government - whether it be central or local, - but in moves to enable people, particularly in our inner cities, to have more control over their own lives and in particular a greater ability to create for themselves and their families the kind of conditions which they so evidently want. In part, that means measures positively to encourage wealth creation, entrepreneurship and individual enterprise within the Inner City. In part it means giving individuals access to the education and training which they need in order to make the most of their talents and to improve their employment prospects.

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None of this is to pretend that the solutions to the problems are easy. Nor is it to pretend that it is easy for many of the individuals in our inner cities themselves to fashion lasting solutions to their immediate problems. But I do believe that there is no lasting solution to be found in yet more Government, in increased public expenditure on so many fronts, in yet more controls, and in yet more submerging of individual choice within a corporate framework.

That said I will, of course, be studying the Report and its conclusions further, in the constructive manner which you would expect me to adopt.

*Yours
H. D. D.*