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*From the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service*

Sir Robert Armstrong GCB CVO

Ref. A084/3389

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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Review of Housing Policy

You will remember that at the meeting of the Cabinet on 8 November 1984 the Prime Minister, summing up the discussion of housing expenditure, said

"The Cabinet's discussion had revealed a number of unsatisfactory features in present housing policy, which should be reviewed. she would give thought to how this might best be arranged."

2. The Prime Minister has decided that in the first instance this review of housing policy should be undertaken by an informal group of senior officials from the housing departments, the Treasury, the Department of Health and Social Security, the Office of the Minister without Portfolio, and the Policy Unit at 10 Downing Street, under Cabinet Office chairmanship, and has asked me to make arrangements accordingly.

3. I am asking Mr P L Gregson to chair the group, and I should be grateful if you and each of the other Ministers to whom I am sending copies of this minute would, by 31 December 1984, nominate a senior official to serve as a member.

4. The Prime Minister has asked that the group should report to Ministers by 31 March 1985. She envisages that the report would be considered in the first instance by a group of the Ministers directly concerned under her chairmanship.

5. I am sending copies of this minute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Social Services, and the Minister without Portfolio.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

18 December 1984

Housing : Policy : Pt 4

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*From the Private Secretary*

MR RICHARD HATFIELD

Sir Robert Armstrong minuted Robin Butler on 18 December about the Review of Housing Policy. This is simply to record that Mr Redwood has nominated Mr Christopher Monckton to serve on Mr Gregson's group.

Tim Flesher

21 December 1984

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Ref. A084/3399

MR BUTLER

Review of Housing Policy

Thank you for your minute of 26 November.

--- 2. I attach a copy of a minute which I have now sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment, with copies to other Ministers concerned.

3. I should be grateful if you would nominate a member of the Policy Unit to serve on Mr Gregson's group.

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ROBERT ARMSTRONG

18 December 1984

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Review of Housing Policy

The Prime Minister agreed with you today that Mr Gregson should be asked to take the lead in the group to review housing policy, following the Cabinet's discussion on public expenditure.

14 December 1984

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

REVIEW OF HOUSING POLICY

The Prime Minister was grateful for your minute of 23 November containing proposals for the way in which the review of housing policy might be carried out.

The Prime Minister is inclined to approach this question on a less formal basis than that proposed in your minute. She does not think that a special MISC group or unit is needed at present. She would prefer that there was an informal arrangement under which the housing departments, DHSS, the Policy Unit and the Office of the Minister without Portfolio should get together to determine the main lines of policy. The Treasury would no doubt also wish to be involved at this stage.

*FRS*

26 November 1984

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

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19 November 1984

HOUSING POLICY

You may like to be aware of a point which emerged from a meeting which the Prime Minister had with Lord Young last week. She said that, following Cabinet's discussion, she was anxious to see a thorough review of housing policy, though she had not yet formed a view on how this should best be done. Lord Young said he had a number of ideas, particularly on improvement grants. The Prime Minister encouraged him to put these points to your Secretary of State and Mr. Gow.

I am copying this letter to Leigh Lewis (Office of the Minister Without Portfolio) and to Paul Britton (Mr. Gow's Office).

ANDREW TURNBULL

John Ballard, Esq.,  
Department of the Environment.

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