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MR ADDISON

Sir Robin Ibbs has asked me to send the enclosed minute to you this evening so that the Prime Minister might know that it is around before they meet tomorrow - even though she may not have had chance to read it.

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IAN B BEESLEY  
5 November 1985

Pamie Minister

I suggest that this proposal should be considered as part of the review of inner city spending and priorities on which you are holding a meeting next week.

IBS

5/4





KC3:PM1/11

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

URBAN POLICY

Eighteen months ago Patrick Jenkin and Peter Rees commissioned a scrutiny of Urban Policy. Its main recommendation was that the efforts of DOE (through the Urban Programme) the MSC (the Community Programme) and the DTI (regional assistance) needed to be better coordinated and targeted.

I remain concerned that the implementation of its findings is too little and too slow. My advice to you then was that the only way to bring a proper managerial approach to bear is to take these responsibilities out of the hands of rival Departments and give them to an executive agency with the single-minded purpose of urban renewal. The City Action Teams are a partial and compromise response. They rely heavily on bureaucratic co-ordination and are unlikely to make significant improvement rapidly in delivering existing policies and expenditure to the people in inner cities. They cannot have the same stature or incentive to produce results as those who are personally visible as the men and women who have the job of improving the situation in a specific locality.

A better way would be a small agency, answering to a forceful Minister who could give it substantial attention. The Agency should have a full-time Director and a team of city Agents who would take responsibility for the execution of all relevant Government programmes in their respective areas.

The Agents might in some areas want to hire professional teams, as Nigel Broackes did in the London Docklands, to oversee physical redevelopment. In other areas they might want to operate primarily through voluntary or charitable agencies for the distribution of small grants to 'social' projects.

The need for progress is urgent. I believe that strong political leadership will be needed to keep the initiative and that the scrutiny proposals for an agency are a ready base on which to act.

I am copying this to Sir Robert Armstrong.

ROBIN IBBS  
November 1985



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SR10:PM31/10

*a minute, not paper  
weekdays, not  
16/11/85*

PRIME MINISTER

I thought you would like to see the published version of our report on Implementation and the New Notes for Guidance on scrutinies. All the indications are that departments are now taking the process of implementation a great deal more seriously as a result of this study. I shall be reporting to you on progress in the course of the year in April 1986.

ROBIN IBBS  
November 1985