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Prime Minister  
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PRIME MINISTER

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: LONG TERM STRATEGY

Last year I was invited by E Committee to discuss with colleagues directly concerned certain implications of the long-term strategy for local government (E(81) 22nd Meeting, Conclusion 3). That discussion was deferred pending the outcome of the work done in Merseyside after the riots, and the thought we have been giving to more immediate issues affecting local government. As I reported at Cabinet today, I chaired a private and informal meeting yesterday which was attended by Keith Joseph, Michael Heseltine, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, David Howell, Norman Fowler, Leon Brittan and Tom King.

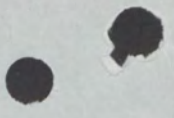
X | Although considerable doubts were expressed in our discussion about the wisdom of proceeding with large-scale local government re-organisation, it was agreed that we should consider within Departments the implications of such a step as regards the role of the Metropolitan authorities, and that Michael Heseltine, having the primary responsibility in this field, should take the lead and report his conclusions urgently.

I am sending copies of this minute to those who attended my meeting, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

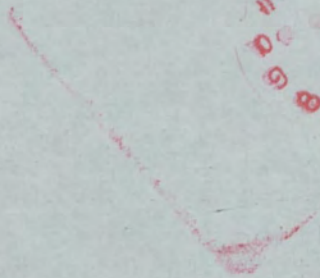
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4 February 1982

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

5 February 1982

Dear John,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT : LONG TERM STRATEGY

The Prime Minister has seen the Home Secretary's minute of 4 February 1982 and she is content that matters should now be carried forward in the way agreed at the meeting which Mr Whitelaw held on 3 February.

I am sending copies of this letter to Imogan Wilde (Department of Education and Science), David Edmonds (Department of the Environment), Muir Russell (Scottish Office), John Craig (Welsh Office), Anthony Mayer (Department of Transport), David Clark (Department of Health and Social Security), Terry Mathews (Treasury), Lester Hicks (Department of the Environment), and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

Alan White

John Halliday Esq.,  
Home Office.

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AK



Prime Minister (2)

cc AD  
Local Gov

MUS 10/2 10 February 1982

*MS*

Prime Minister

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: LONG TERM STRATEGY

The Home Secretary has copied to me his minute of 4 February to you.

I am arranging for my officials, in consultation with those in the other Departments concerned, to prepare a paper setting out the implications of reorganising local government in the metropolitan areas. I want this to be a rapid survey of the practical problems involved, including those of time-scale, and to be completed in about a month. This should present us with a basis for decisions on our next steps.

I am copying this to the Home Secretary and to those who received copies of his minute.

*MS*

for MH

(Dictated by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence)



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