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Pure Numbers 2
to see: Ian
sure this is right.
N.C.U.

18.12

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

Sir Robert Armstrong GCB CVO

Ref. A087/3621

18 December 1987

Dear Terry,

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Inner Cities

I thought it would be helpful to record the outcome of our meeting this afternoon with Brian Hayes, Robin Butler and Richard Wilson to discuss the future of the Cabinet Office Inner Cities Unit and of Eric Sorensen in the light of the impending announcement of Mr Clarke's new responsibilities for the co-ordination of Government action on inner cities and for their presentation.

We agreed that the Unit should remain in the Cabinet Office, at least for the next six months (before when its future would need to be reviewed) to serve Ministers collectively, and Mr Clarke in particular in his role of assisting the Prime Minister on Inner Cities matters. This arrangement would serve to demonstrate that Mr Clarke's new responsibilities did not fall to him in his capacity as a Department of Trade and Industry Minister. Brian Hayes said that he was sure that this would be acceptable to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

On personnel, we agreed that Eric Sorensen should continue to head the Unit for the time being, and probably until the summer, when he would return to a good Grade 3 post in the Department of the Environment (possibly water privatisation). We would hope that he could then be replaced by another Grade 3 in the DOE; if this plan were not in the event possible, Sorensen would be replaced by a Grade 3 from another Government Department with interests in Inner Cities issues, either as a direct exchange for Mr Sorensen, or as part of a triangular move. Andrew Lean would also remain in the Unit for the time being, and an additional Grade 7 from the Department of Trade and Industry would be added to it. The possibility of further

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Sir Terence Heiser KCB

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expansion of the Unit, involving secondment from, for example, the Department of Employment, should be considered: there would be considerable advantage in the Unit being staffed from as many as possible of the Departments concerned with inner cities, not just from the Departments of the Environment and of Trade and Industry. You said that you would now fill the vacant Grade 3 post heading the Inner Cities Directorate in your Department.

Finally, we agreed that the Number 10 announcement should be amended by the deletion of the word "other" in the second line to make clear that Mr Clarke was not undertaking his new responsibilities in his capacity as a Department of Trade and Industry Minister, and that Number 10 should be briefed to say that the Inner Cities Unit would remain in the Cabinet Office, led by Mr Sorensen, with staff drawn from a number of Departments with responsibility for aspects of inner cities policies.

I am sending copies of this letter to Brian Hayes and Nigel Wicks.

Yours ever

Robert Armstrong