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MR SORENSEN

Thank you for a sight of the Inner Cities document. My first comment is that I think we need to define this imprecise term "inner city" at some point. It bedevils a lot of my work and I would like to get it clarified in this authoritative document.

I suggest the following spatchcocked into the foreword as follows:

FOREWORD

"Inner cities" is a relatively new term which conjures up an image of a run down urban environment. It covers parts of relatively small towns as well as large cities and circumstances ranging from areas which have seen better days to depressing examples of crime-ridden dereliction. The decay is not necessarily related to the age of the property. But the social and environmental problems are invariably interlinked. And there is a common need to generate new hope and provide encouragement.

It is precisely to help the people living in these areas to find new hope and a new future that the Government's Inner Cities programme is directed. This booklet shows what is being achieved in partnership with the people to live down the inner city image and create a new, lively environment in which to prosper.

There is, of course, nothing new in the problems facing parts of our towns and cities. Throughout history they have risen and declined. Some have responded to new markets and technologies. Others have declined by clinging to outdated ways or by letting opportunities pass them by. Their problems have often been made worse by misguided planning and development carried out with good intentions but bad results.

To reverse the decline three things are needed:

- i. a strong economy and successive years of growth;
- ii. local leadership and the involvement of private enterprise;  
and
- iii. encouragement and support by central and local government for individual initiatives and a readiness to remove obstacles to success.

This booklet shows there is no lack of enterprise or willingness to improve our towns and cities. Thousands of people are putting their time, effort and money into improving them. Local and national companies are recruiting and investing to take advantage of what the inner cities have to offer. Developers are seizing

the opportunity to transform rundown inner city sites which were eyesores.

Government is helping those who rise to the opportunities. We are acting through Urban Development Corporations to remove dereliction and clear the ground for development in older industrial areas. Training helps people to compete for jobs. Radical change to promote choice in housing and education is giving tenants and parents more of a stake in their homes and schools.

This booklet describes how consumers, tenants, parents and those seeking business or development opportunities are forming a partnership with Government to make our cities better places in which to live, work and invest. I commend it to everyone who shares my belief that our cities are more than great assets and historical centres; on their success turns Britain's vitality and future prosperity."

#### OTHER POINTS

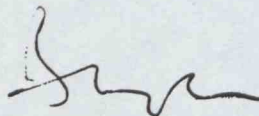
My second point is that talking about challenge frankly switches the media off. I would much prefer to see Section A headed "Seizing the Opportunities".

Third, I think the presentation could usefully be sharpened up with the following slightly adjusted structure:

- The legacy of the past.
- What people (including industry and commerce) want in our inner cities.
- How things can be changed and why now presents a real opportunity.
- What the Government is doing to help:
  - the developer
  - industry, commerce and shops - ie the entrepreneur
  - planning and environment
  - housing
  - education and culture
  - crime.

Fourth, I think we must bring together at the end, in the clearest possible tabular form the services which Government is offering. One of the problems is the complexity of institutions, terms and services. Our aim must be to clarify all this in an easy-to-read-and-understand section. As of now, it all seems a bit of a jumble to me, though of course things always look simpler when displayed in type.

Finally, nothing is going to be more telling in illustrating our positive points than before and after pictures - eg Merseyside river front subsequently covered by garden festival site or the acres of dereliction on which the Prime Minister stood by Teesside which I hope are now a mass of bulldozers etc. Some wonderful things are being done to smarten up our inner cities and if there is one objective we should have in mind through this publication it is to show visually what can be done in partnership to make inner cities an inspiring instead of a depressing term.



**BERNARD INGHAM**  
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