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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

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From the Secretary of State for Social Services

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Peter Smith Esq
Private Secretary to
The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Department of Trade and Industry
1-19 Victoria Street
LONDON
SW1H 0ET

3 March 1988

Dear Peter

ACTION FOR CITIES DOCUMENT

Thank you for your letter of 23 February. I am grateful for the opportunity to comment on the draft of 'Action For Cities', and am sorry not to have been able to meet your deadline. We have no comments on the substance of the document, but one on presentation.

with request if required

For reasons which my Secretary of State understands and accepts the document says nothing about DHSS programmes. That is entirely explicable in terms of the main thrust of the policy, which is that the key to improvement of life in the inner cities lies in measures to promote economic and environmental regeneration there; and in our emphasis on the role of the private sector, in helping to bring this about. The inclusion in the document of some aspects of social policy may nevertheless draw attention to the absence of anything about DHSS programmes and provoke unfavourable comment. To forestall that, we must be ready to emphasise in presenting the document that its main purpose is to focus on economic regeneration as the key to improvement; that it does not therefore aim to provide a comprehensive catalogue of Government activity in the inner cities; and that some substantial areas of activity are not therefore covered including the important contribution of the health and social services in providing support for those who need it.

I am copying this to private secretaries to other members of E(UP), to Trevor Woolley and to Eric Sorensen.

*Yours sincerely
Rod Clark*

ROD CLARK
Private Secretary