

From ALAN GREENGROSS  
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9 April 1984

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, FRS., MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
Westminster, S.W.1

*Dear Prime Minister*

Following the publication of the 'Paving' Bill I thought I should write to you to let you know the feelings of the Conservative Group at the GLC.

A number of Conservative Members here have written to The Times expressing their considerable concern at the 'constitutional' implications of that Bill. In their letter they say that whilst they personally abhor the policies of the present administration at County Hall they cannot support the replacement of a directly elected Labour Council by a nominated Conservative Council. Whilst at this time I would have much preferred there to have been no public expression from Members of the Group, I have to admit that I can well understand the anger felt by my colleagues.

As you will know, although there are differences between us as to how we should proceed after abolition, the Conservative Group here (with the odd exception) has remained solidly in public endorsement of the Government's commitment to restructuring. The fact that such unanimity does not stretch to the abolition of elections in the 'Paving' Bill itself is an indication of how passionately Members here feel about that particular issue.

At a time when the Government have undertaken a fundamental restructuring of local government in London, my fear is that the constitutional arguments against the 'Paving' Bill (which after all are not a specific part of our Manifesto commitment) will so muddy the water that it will make your Government's job more difficult in seeking to get the solution right to run London-wide services properly.

My personal feeling is that much of the heat that has been generated over this issue is indeed as a result of the fact that no agreed formula yet exists for running London after the transitional period. All the many talks that I have had recently convince me that solutions do exist - totally consistent with the broad Manifesto commitment - that would unite not merely my Group here at County Hall



but the Boroughs and Members of Parliament as well.

I can only add once again that I am anxious to work in any way I can to achieve that end. Individual Members of Government have been more than generous over the past year in the time they have always spared me. Might this be the moment to bring together a broader group to study the inter-action of the Government's commitment and the Party's interests?

Yours

Alan