



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

23 December 1983

*Dear John*

Many thanks for your letter of 28 November and the stimulating suggestion you make of 'a new Beveridge'. I am sure that you will, as always, produce an original and highly readable report which will be of great value to us. I understand that Nigel Lawson and Norman Fowler would be glad to let you have reasonable access to official material in their Departments.

I shall await your conclusions eagerly. It will be wonderful to have an independent report of such high academic standing.

I should also be pleased to meet you and Ralph Harris and Hugh Thomas in the New Year to discuss the project.

*Yours ever*  
*Roy Jenkins*  
—

The Lord Vaizey.

*JVF*

21 December 1983

MR BARCLAY

JOHN VAIZEY

GR

Please type letter to Lord Vaizey as at X-X  
for PM's sig

Done  
2/12

I have cleared the question of access with the Chancellor and the DHSS, but both are keen to make it clear that the Vaizey project would be an entirely independent venture. I suggest a reply on the following lines:

X "Many thanks for your letter of 28 November and the stimulating suggestion you make of 'a new Beveridge'. I am sure that you will, as always, produce an original and highly readable report which will be of great value to us. I understand that Nigel Lawson and Norman Fowler would be glad to let you have reasonable access to official material in their Departments.

"Your enquiry will, of course, be entirely independent of Government, although I for one will be eager to read your conclusions.

"I should also be pleased to meet you and Ralph Harris and Hugh Thomas in the New Year to discuss the project."

X I have also spoken to John Vaizey and told him to approach the Private Offices of Lawson and Fowler when he needs information, in order to keep the enquiry as low-profile as possible.

Would you like to fix up the suggested meeting?

FERDINAND MOUNT

fm



Personal & Confidential.



The attached note is not, I hope, a  
betrayal of what you told me. Yours truly

With the Compliments

of

ADAM RIDLEY

Special Adviser

See the Ch's approval is given  
subject to "outsider" conditions!

Treasury Chambers,  
Parliament Street,  
S.W.1.

AR 9/12.

Mr Ridley

Tom Mount. Asst of Min  
9/12

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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FROM: ADAM RIDLEY  
6 December 1983

E.12 LTPE

CHANCELLOR

LORD VAIZEY AND THE FUTURE OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Ferdy Mount rang me yesterday evening to seek informally your view on the following proposition.

2. Lord Vaizey has suggested to the Prime Minister that he might be able to make a useful contribution to the debate about the future of these two programmes, no doubt seeing himself to some extent as doing a "Beveridge" 35 years after. The Prime Minister, with the support of the No 10 Policy Unit, is inclined to think that there is no harm in letting him do so - it would mean that there was one more outside voice raising the issues, who is not directly associated with the Cabinet or the Government. To that end it will, of course, be necessary to ensure him reasonable access to official statistics and information, provided of course that it is not confidential or otherwise embarrassing. I think it is intended that if you and other key colleagues like Mr Fowler are happy with the idea, Andrew Turnbull should write to a few Departments asking that Lord Vaizey be given reasonable access and assistance - though at some kind of arms length.

3. Mr Mount would like to know soon whether you are content with this proposition. My own reaction is to approve the idea in principle, but to ask one or two practical questions which you may want to satisfy yourself about before you say yes. First, Vaizey is a slightly difficult figure these days, and one can never be quite sure what will be the outcome of something he is involved in. [Lady Young warned me at some length earlier in the year of the difficulties which he caused in the House of Lords on their special committee on unemployment.] There is, equally, always the risk of odd things going wrong in the search for data and approaches he may make to Departments, though I would have thought that the risks here are relatively small. Finally, one wants to make sure that the output of his work comes to the Prime Minister, you and other Ministers responsible in the first instance, and is in no way likely to leak elsewhere. Ferdy tells me that that is the present intention; but if so, we should obviously underline it.



PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

4. If you could let me know your views in the next day or two, I think that would help No 10 greatly.

*AN*

A N RIDLEY