

26 June 1997

STRICTLY PERSONAL

Dear John,

The Prime Minister's decision regarding the Liverpool See

I really must express my considerable dismay on learning that the Prime Minister has asked for more names to be considered. I can only surmise that your own personal influence has been too strong.

It was clear that the Commission was content with the names it had to consider and it was equally clear that the first name came through very strongly. The ratio of votes at the end led none of us to believe that there was any question concerning the capabilities of both men doing a good job.

Furthermore, there is always the element of risk and faith attached to any selection of names. No one can be absolutely sure that a Commission will not make the occasional mistake but the Prime Minister (who is not present at the Commission) must rely on the judgement that comes from its Chairman who offers to the Prime Minister his view concerning the two names given.

In short, I regret what has happened but accept that the Commission will have to meet again to begin its work afresh. I must ask - through you - to have a private meeting with the Prime Minister when we meet, to discuss this. I don't expect anyone else to be with us when we do so.

Yours sincerely,



ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY



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