



**C/O Central Buildings
Oldham Street
Manchester
M11 1JQ
Tel: 0161 236 9321
Fax: 0161 237 5359
www.getfair.org.uk**

Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
Westminster
London
SW1A 2AA

12 March 2009

Dear Prime Minister

We greatly appreciated your full reply to our letter of 19th November, in which we called for a large-scale and ambitious Economic Recovery Plan at the time of your Autumn Statement. As a coalition, we remain committed to working together to bring about a fairer society. We support your shared concern to protect the more vulnerable in our society during the economic recession. At the same time it is imperative that structural weaknesses are addressed that led to one in five living in poverty during the last ten years of relative prosperity. Get Fair is campaigning for measures to ensure affordable housing, decent incomes and fair access to services, without discrimination.

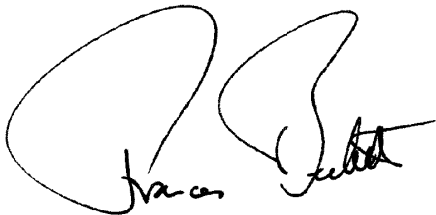
Those organisations supporting the Get Fair campaign will take forward some of the specific issues and points raised in your letter of 19th December with the respective Ministers and government departments. Our collective concern is that in seeking to protect the more vulnerable in turbulent times the conditionality of the welfare reforms proposed by the government will be counter-productive and further alienates those living in poverty. At the same time we are fearful that the rise in unemployment and heightened tensions at the loss of "British jobs" may lead to intimidation or isolation of some vulnerable workers in lower paid jobs.

In addressing the long-term challenges, we support the ambition to end child poverty by 2020, although we remain concerned that a new legal duty will not be sufficient without greater levels of investment to deliver that target. Indeed for sustainable eradication of child poverty, you made clear the long-term challenge is the delivery of high quality public services. Fair access to quality public services is key to ending poverty for all. Poor services reinforce poverty. There should be no 'desert areas' or

excluded groups. Public services should reach out to those most in need in order to ensure that inequalities are narrowed.

We recognise the importance you place on education and social mobility in the recent white paper. We recognise also the considerable range of initiatives and immediate support you have introduced to help deal with the recession. The depth and breadth of the Get Fair coalition provides a ready-made source of experience and expertise to help better understand the causes of poverty and what it means to be poor. We would welcome the opportunity to meet you and discuss further the issues of conditionality, the protection of the more vulnerable workers and access to quality public services. In particular, how to take forward changes that are effective in the short term but also address the long-term challenges to bring an end to poverty in the UK.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fran Beckett', written in a cursive style.

Fran Beckett OBE
Chair
Get Fair
www.getfair.org.uk