

Prime Minister (1)



PRIME MINISTER

*Do you agree that the Education Minister
should speak at the Party Conference on
- phrasing the lines proposed at X in para 10?
- coffee
- objection*

*CWR
9/60*

1. The Education Departments have carried out two PARs, one dealing with the schools and the other with higher education. Copies are attached. Together they review over the next ten years most of our policies and programmes and a substantial proportion of our total expenditure.

2. As a result proposals for a new strategy for education for the coming decade in five major areas were put before the Home and Social Affairs Committee on 4 October. Keith Joseph, as Chairman, has asked us to report to you the Committee's conclusions on this new strategy.

3. First, nursery education for the under-fives should be expanded; over a period of ten years we should systematically provide places up to a limit of 90 per cent of four-year-olds and 50 per cent of three-year-olds, mainly half-time and in nursery classes attached to primary schools. These figures are based on the recommendations in Plowden. The programme would be implemented flexibly, but priority would be given to meeting the needs of children in deprived areas.

4. Second, we must try to improve the quality of the teaching profession in England and Wales by implementing two of the recommendations in the James Report: (i) by requiring that probationary teachers in the first year of service have better professional supervision and some continued training; (ii) by providing that by 1981, teachers should have inservice training up to the equivalent of one term in seven years.

4a. For Scotland we are proposing a smaller level of improvement in inservice training, and the training of secondary teachers is being reviewed in the light of recommendations made by the General Teaching Council. It is proposed also to improve the quality of education in the schools by increasing the employment of teacher auxiliaries and the expenditure on books and equipment.



5. Third, we should have a steady programme to replace or improve poor secondary school buildings. Our primary school improvement programme makes both economic and educational sense, and has been very attractive politically.
6. Fourth, in England and Wales we are prepared to moderate the level of teacher recruitment and consequently the growth of the teaching force and the improvement of staffing standards. If the present level of recruitment were maintained, it would be possible, on top of providing the teachers for nursery expansion and for the replacement of those released for first-year and inservice training, to provide by 1981 for a fifteen per cent improvement on the 1971 staffing standards within the schools. This would mean about 540,000 teachers by 1981. We propose to limit this to a ten per cent improvement (510,000 teachers in 1981) or, notionally an annual rate of improvement of one per cent. This will not be popular with the teachers or the training college interests, but may find some support among the employing local authorities. In England and Wales we are prepared to face reductions on this scale (but not beyond) as a means of helping to off-set the extra cost of our other proposals.
- 6a. In Scotland it is proposed to stabilise the size of the teaching force. A decision to limit the number of primary teachers from 1975/76 has been announced and the intake of students is being restricted from this year. We intend to limit the number of secondary teachers from 1975/76 by restricting intake to training accordingly.
7. Fifth, the expansion in the number of full-time higher education students should be moderated to 750,000 by 1981 in place of the 800,000 originally proposed. In deciding this we have borne in mind not only the problems of graduate employment but also the need to make further off-setting saving in the cost of the proposals as a whole.
8. As regards costs the effect within the first period up to 1976-1977 will be almost entirely redistributive; virtually no extra resources are called for. Thereafter there would be a substantial re-direction of policies but the growth rate in educational expenditure over the decade as a whole would not exceed that for the PESC period. Essentially, therefore, the strategy we are proposing entails a reallocation of resources to reflect changed priorities. Politically,



a new statement of Government policy in education is needed; the educational world and informed opinion is expecting one. We should take the opportunity of The Queen's Speech to announce our broad intentions and accompany this as soon as possible with a White Paper.

9. The Home and Social Affairs Committee thought that consideration should be given to the need for a further study of some wider issues affecting strategy in the longer term; these might include the problem of truancy, the curriculum for non-academic pupils, and the shaping of attitudes among young people. These are important yet difficult topics which will need some time to study. The Committee also wished Education Ministers to discuss further with other interested departments the balance of arts and science places in higher education and to present proposals for a possible loans scheme for postgraduate students. This will be done.

10. We recognise that, until the public expenditure implications have been finally cleared, no details of this new strategy can be announced in public. But we believe it will be both desirable and possible, at the forthcoming Party Conference, to indicate that the Government have new and positive proposals in mind particularly in nursery education, which will be announced soon. May we proceed accordingly?

11. We have agreed this minute with Peter Thomas and have sent copies to Keith Joseph, who was in the chair at the meeting, to the other members of the Home and Social Affairs Committee, to Peter Carrington, Jim Prior and Burke Trend.

M.T. G.C.
M.T. & G.C.

9 October 1972

Typed by alan!

MESSAGE NO 6
BLACKPOOL TO DOWNING STREET
11 OCTOBER 1972

FOR CHRISTOPHER ROBERTS FROM ALAN SIMCOCK

*plm/brake para
cc: Home, Joseph
H. Soc. Of
Inf. Ind. Off
let OK
Chancellor*

9 out

THE PRIME MINISTER HAS SEEN THE JOINT MINUTE FROM THE SECRETARIES OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND AND EDUCATION AND SCIENCE ABOUT THE PAR ON EDUCATION. SUBJECT TO THE AGREEMENT OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER HE AGREES THAT MRS THATCHER MAY SPEAK ACCORDINGLY AT THE PARTY CONFERENCE.

IN PARAGRAPH NINE OF THE MINUTE REFERENCE IS MADE TO A FURTHER REVIEW OF SOME WIDER ISSUES AFFECTING STRATEGY IN THE LONGER TERM THESE MIGHT INCLUDE THE PROBLEM OF TRUANCY, THE CURRICULUM FOR NON-ACADEMIC PUPILS, AND THE SHAPING OF ATTITUDES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

~~XXXXXXXX~~ THIS IS THE SECTION WHICH JOHN MAINE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT LAST NIGHT. IT APPARENTLY SPRINGS FROM THE CPRS BRIEF ON THE PAR. THE CPRS HAD HOWEVER INTENDED IT TO DEAL WITH RATHER MORE FUNDAMENTAL POINTS OF WHICH THE ITEMS CITED WERE MERELY SOME OF THE RESULTS. THEY ARE THEREFORE ANXIOUS THAT IN ANY APPROVAL THE PRIME MINISTER GIVES TO THIS COURSE ~~SHOULD~~ GUIDANCE SHOULD BE GIVEN TO AVOID ANY TENDENCY TO CONCENTRATE SIMPLY ON THE ITEMS LISTED. I HAVE NOT TAKEN THIS UP WITH THE PRIMEMINISTER LARGELY BECAUSE OF LACK OF TIME BUT ALSO BECAUSE I SUSPECTED SOME IN-FIGHTING OF WHICH I WAS NOT FULLY AWARE. IF YOU THINK IT NECESSARY I WILL GO BACK TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON THIS, BUT IT SEEMED TO ME THAT FOR PRESENT PURPOSES THE AGREEMENT TO THE LINES OF THE CONFERENCE SPEECH WAS WHAT MATTERED, AND THAT THE PRECISE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FURTHER STUDY COULD WELL WAIT A PROPER CONSIDERATION AFTER THE CONFERENCE.

MESSAGE ENDS



10, Downing Street.

Whitehall.

11 October, 1972

The Prime Minister has seen the minute which your Secretary of State and the Secretary of State for Scotland sent to him on 9 October about the PAR on education. Provided that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has no objection, the Prime Minister agrees that a statement on the lines of that suggested in the penultimate paragraph of the minute should be made at the Party Conference.

I am sending copies of this minute to the Private Secretaries to the other members of the Home and Social Affairs Committee, to Bailey (H.M. Treasury), Andrew (Ministry of Defence), Hepburn (Ministry of Agriculture), Lord Rothschild (CPRS) and Norbury (Cabinet Office).

(SGD) C.W. ROBERTS

P.H. Halsey, Esq., M.V.O.,
Department of Education and Science.