



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

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28 March 1980

*Dear Nick, M1*

Mr Carlisle is due to meet the Prime Minister next Tuesday for a discussion about the ILEA.

The Secretary of State hopes that the Prime Minister will find the enclosed background paper on ILEA helpful.

*Yours ever,  
Robert Green*

R J GREEN  
Private Secretary



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## THE BAKER REPORT ON THE ILEA - BACKGROUND NOTE

### 1. The Baker Report recommends:-

1. Each inner London Borough should be responsible for nursery, primary and secondary schools, special education, youth and leisure services, Adult Education Institutions and FE colleges within its boundaries.
2. A Joint Committee of all 12 Boroughs to administer the 5 inner London Polytechnics and specialist colleges of national status.
3. A joint review, in which all 12 Boroughs would take a continuing part, of all non-advanced further education courses in Inner London, to eliminate unnecessary duplication.

### 2. These recommendations stem from the following criticisms of ILEA in the Report:-

2.1. Because the ILEA consists of the GLC councillors for the inner London Boroughs and a nominee from each Borough Council (and the City), the Authority is not directly democratically accountable, and education issues tend to feature only minimally in either GLC or Borough elections.

2.2. ILEA's income derives from a precept on the inner London Boroughs which they cannot readily challenge.

2.3. Unit costs in ILEA are substantially higher than the national average and it is doubtful whether they can be justified by inner London's special characteristics.

2.4. GCE 'O' and 'A' level results per 1000 secondary school children are below national average: ILEA has the highest proportion of children leaving school without any qualifications.

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2.5. A centralised educational service is less likely to be responsive to local needs.

3. Although these criticisms are valid, they do not tell the whole story:- for example, the statement that unit costs of school pupils are higher does not take account either of the inner London salary weighting for teachers, or of ILEA's attempts to meet the special needs of the metropolis, including the high proportion of immigrants and deprivation generally.

4. It is inherent in the Baker Report's recommendations that each borough is of itself of sufficient size to be an LEA. Unfortunately, the figures on which this premise is based are three years out of date and take no account of more recent and much lower population projections. Seven of the twelve boroughs would be smaller than the present smallest English authority, and would find it very difficult to provide the present range of services.

5. The Baker Report accepts the need for the continuation of a rate equalisation scheme but makes no analysis of how such a scheme would operate and how it would affect borough autonomy.

6. No real thought appears to have been given to the likely savings or increases in expenditure and bureaucracy which would result from the setting up of twelve new education authorities and two Joint Committees.

7. The proposals for higher education are not based on any clear analysis of how the joint arrangements would operate in practice. A Joint Committee would not be likely to provide a very effective means of administration and would be liable to the same criticisms of democratic accountability as is the present ILEA.

8. ILEA has a large and influential Inspectorate and advisory service; the preservation of which, if desirable for the benefit of twelve individual boroughs, could lead to complex administrative arrangements which would restrict borough autonomy.

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9. In addition the Report gives no detailed consideration to alternative solutions to the criticisms of ILEA. It does not examine whether adoption of the Marshall Report's recommendations might provide an effective way forward, and it does not assess the likely public reaction to the proposal to disband ILEA.

10. In view of the very firm views held by Sir Horace Cutler and other of our leading supporters in London about the future of ILEA, it is necessary that the Government should respond in some way. However, the educational, financial and political consequences will need careful consideration before any decision is reached.

MARK CARLISLE  
28 March 1980

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