

*Prime Minister*

PRIME MINISTER

*Yes mt*

*Conner?*

*July 1982*

There are some ticklish policy choices looming in education with large political implications. I am particularly glad, therefore, that Cecil Parkinson and Peter Cropper have proposed to allocate Oliver Letwin, who is just joining the Research Department, to the education desk.

2 You know his parents, Shirley and Bill Letwin: Oliver, after a brilliant career at Cambridge, has just come back from a year at Princeton. He is a particularly mature as well as intelligent young man.

3 The first work on which I wish to deploy him is connected with:

- a a dispute about research results on standards in comprehensive schools;
- b policy in connection with vouchers;
- c options as a result of Rothschild; and
- d questions relating to examination criteria and whether to merge or just to harmonise 'O' and CSE examinations.

4 On each of these subjects Stuart Sexton will continue to help but he is busy - and very useful - and I shall value the mind of Oliver Letwin in addition.

5 Oliver can be most effectively used if he can sit in at some meetings and can see some Departmental papers. To secure this his position would need to be formalised as explained below.

6 Oliver will be employed by the Research Department. He would be appointed as Special Adviser to me on an unpaid and part-time basis. I would look to him for expert advice in the areas indicated above and other areas from time to time. He would have access at my discretion to some official papers in these areas and would attend some Departmental meetings.

7 May I have your permission to appoint Oliver Letwin as Special Adviser on this basis?

*Yes mt*

8 I am copying this to Cecil Parkinson.

*KJ*