

CONFIDENTIAL

MR NORGROVE

5 March 1986

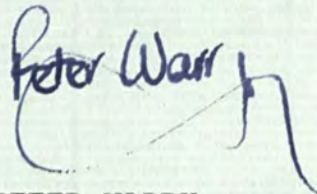
TEACHERS' PAY

The loss of 320,000 pupil days last week is gravely damaging to Scottish education. Nevertheless, there are 900,000 pupils in Scotland so the disruption only represents 7% of the total amount of teaching in any one week.

The cost is not all one way either. The unions are unlikely to be able to sustain this level of action on a permanent basis nor are the LEAs likely to be able to remain indifferent to the extent they have so far.

There are already some encouraging signs. A month ago the Scottish Office thought less than two thirds of the number of examiners required would be forthcoming. Now this total has suddenly risen to 75%. Given a little more time, particularly for the impact of the ACAS settlement to be felt in Scotland, it is just possible that more realistic attitudes may begin to emerge.

We would prefer to delay a decision on an inquiry, but it is vital that no decisions are announced in Scotland this week. This would be the one sure way of sabotaging the CLEA/ST discussions and the ACAS talks before they even start.



PETER WARRY

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Cabinet Folder.

PRIME MINISTER

TEACHERS' PAY ENQUIRY

I understand that you have asked for the names of sensible people who might sit on a Teachers' enquiry.

As members I suggest:

Ralph Harris (if he would do it);

← Christopher Foster (who will shortly take up an important post at BT, is well known in the local authority world, and was a great help on the Rates Green Paper);

Laurie Norcross (who is headmaster of Highbury Grove School, and in the tradition of Rhodes Boyson);

(Fred Crawford (who would be extremely tough, and would read the fine print carefully). (*Grammar school educated.*))

I gather that the enquiry - if it happens - will start in Scotland, and will need a Chairman with Scottish connections. I cannot think of anyone who fits that bill: Hamish Orr-Ewing is a walking disaster on educational issues, and Alan Peacock (who would have been the obvious choice) is preoccupied with the BBC.

Could you compromise with a Scottish name? If so, Michael McCrum would be ideal. True, he has been headmaster of independent,* rather than maintained schools. But he could be balanced by members such as Laurie Norcross, from the maintained sector. As Master of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, he is eminently respectable - and he is a tough administrator with high standards.

I hope that these will be some use - and that the teachers' enquiry will not be allowed to obscure the need for fundamental, structural change in education.

DLW

* Tonbridge and Eton

pp Oliver Letwin

5 March 1986

withdrawn from
PM's box on NW's instruction
& DRN's agreement

MA 43/86.

PRIME MINISTER

TEACHERS' PAY

Apparently, a provisional settlement of the teachers' pay dispute reached today, the NUT aside. There are as yet very few details, but so far as the DES can see, the settlement involves a fudge on whether the teachers will go back to normal working.

Sir Keith Joseph will be able to report to MISC 122 on this tomorrow morning.

David Norgrove

3 March 1986

cc B/UP

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MR NORGROVE

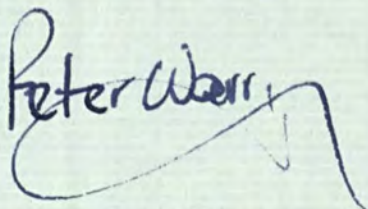
3 March 1986

TEACHERS' PAY

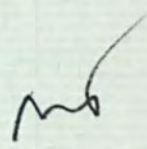
It seems impossible to devise terms for an enquiry that will be sufficiently acceptable to the unions to bring about an end to the current disruption, yet sufficiently robust to actually achieve 'better education'. We therefore continue to believe that the ACAS talks represent the best solution in the immediate future, and that an enquiry could be positively damaging.

Nevertheless, if an enquiry is pursued, DES will need to decide whether to announce the terms of the enquiry and the membership by fiat and therefore risk getting them turned down out of hand, or whether to negotiate with the unions and risk another Houghton.

The proposed membership seems strongly biased towards current or former labour party members and to representatives of the 'corporate state'. (Three of the five industrialists are personnel managers - exactly the wrong sort of people). The number of existing local government/teaching/academic establishment representatives could also be greatly reduced. As positive proposals Lords Harris, Keith, Chapple and Baroness Cox, Professors Yamey, Bauer, Minford and Foster, industrialist Sir Ian Morrow and John McIntosh for private schools, could all be considered.



PETER WARRY



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