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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

ELIZABETH HOUSE, YORK ROAD, LONDON SE1 7PH

TELEPHONE 01-928 9222

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

10 August 1984

Dear Willie,

EDUCATION IN LONDON

At the Prime Minister's meeting on 2 August, I was invited to consider the timing of an announcement of the decision to hold the first elections to the new ILEA in May 1986.

When we announced that the term of office of existing GLC members was to be extended to April 1986, we left open whether they would also continue as members of the ILEA. The announcement will need to confirm this, and to explain the arrangement for the existing ILEA members to continue in office until May 1986, as well as covering the date of first and subsequent elections. I enclose a draft, which draws on the one attached to the paper by officials circulated for your meeting on 24 July.

As for timing, the only advantage of an early announcement is that it would reduce the opportunity for leaks. There is no pressure or operational need for an early announcement, and a statement shortly after the start of the Recess would seem discourteous. Remaining silent until the Commons have resumed, on the other hand, while courteous to the House, would become increasingly implausible at a time when it was known that the Bill was being finalised. I understand that Patrick Jenkin is addressing the AMA in late September: it would no doubt be helpful if he is able by then to answer questions on the timing of elections. An announcement in the middle of the month would become entangled with the GLC by-elections on 20 September. For these reasons I incline to favour an announcement soon after the main holiday season, in early September.

The Rt Hon Viscount Whitelaw
Lord President of the Council
68 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AT

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I should be grateful for comments on the timing and the draft text of the announcement.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Leon Brittan, Patrick Jenkin, Peter Rees, Michael Havers, Irwin Bellwin, and John Selwyn Gummer, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours -
/Kear.

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DRAFT STATEMENT

The Government has concluded that the first direct elections to the authority which will succeed the ILEA should be held in May 1986 to coincide with the London Borough elections. We propose that the new corporate body which is to take over the functions of the ILEA from 1 April 1986 should be established, like the new joint boards, on 1 September 1985 in order to prepare the budget and fix the precept for 1986-87 and make other necessary preparations. From its establishment until the elections in May 1986, the new body would be composed of the present members of the ILEA, (who will, of course, also continue to constitute the existing authority as a special committee of the GLC until 1 April 1986). Later elections would coincide with those for the Borough Councils.

Unlike other services for which the GLC has a responsibility, the functions exercised by the ILEA will be exercised by a single directly elected body. The new authority will differ from the existing ILEA only in the method by which it is constituted. In these circumstances it is appropriate to place responsibility on the existing members of the ILEA to plan for the transfer of staff and property to the new authority and to prepare the budget and fix the precept for the first year of the new authority. This provides the best guarantee for continuity of administration and a smooth transition to the new arrangements and is consistent with the Government's decision to enable GLC members, including those who are members of the ILEA, to continue to perform their functions until 1 April 1986.

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2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

20 August 1984
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Dear Janet

EDUCATION IN LONDON

My Secretary of State has seen a copy of Sir Keith Joseph's letter of 10 August to the Lord President about the timing of the announcement of the decision to hold the first elections to the new ILEA in May 1986.

He agrees with Sir Keith that an early announcement should be made but feels that it might be sensible to wait until after the GLC by-elections on 20 September as the decision not to hold the elections in October 1985 may attract criticism.

He does not, however, feel strongly about this, and would therefore accept that an announcement be made in early September if others preferred it.

He has no comments on the draft statement. I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, the Chief Secretary, The Attorney General, Mr Gummer and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever

Ala

A H DAVIS
Private Secretary

Janet Lewis Jones.



Minister of State

Department of Employment
 Caxton House Tothill Street London SW1H 9NF
 Telephone Direct Line 01-213.....6670.....
 Switchboard 01-213 3000

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph Bt MP
 Secretary of State for Education
 and Science
 Department of Education and Science
 Elizabeth House
 York Road
 LONDON SE1

*upon
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 25/8*

20 August 1984

Dear Sir Keith,

EDUCATION IN LONDON

Thank you for the copy of your letter of 10 August to Willie Whitelaw.

Would it not be sensible to remind people of the fact that it was Parliament which decided that the GLC's life should be extended as the best way of preparing for its abolition? It would also seem to be worthwhile reminding the Press that the Government proposed that ILEA should be directly elected. To claim credit for this would seem to be helpful in presentation.

As to the question of timing, should not Patrick Jenkin's speech to the AMA coincide with the announcement by your Department? Any earlier statement would be bound to become an issue in the Livingston by-elections.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Lord Whitelaw, Leon Brittan, Patrick Jenkin, Peter Rees, Michael Havers and Irwin Bellwin, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Cowper

JOHN SELWYN GUMMER

(Dictated by the Minister
 and signed in his absence)

will request if required

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PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

25 August 1984

Dear Keith

AS
25/8/84

EDUCATION IN LONDON

Thank you for your letter of 10 August about the announcement of the decision to hold the first elections to the new ILEA in May 1986. I have also seen the letters of 20 August from John Gummer and from Patrick Jenkin's Private Secretary.

I am quite content with the draft text of the statement enclosed with your letter. As to timing, I agree with Patrick Jenkin and John Gummer that we should wait until after the GLC by-elections on 20 September. I feel sure that even an announcement made early in the month, as you suggest, would be seized upon as an election issue and would therefore attract disproportionate criticism.

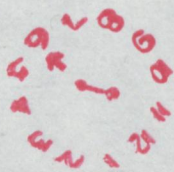
I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Leon Brittan, Patrick Jenkin, Peter Rees, Michael Havers, Irwin Bellwin and John Gummer, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

G. Smith
L. M. H.

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph Bt MP

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Education: ILGA Pt 4



18 AUG 1984

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u/s



QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

28 August 1984

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N 29/8.

EDUCATION IN LONDON

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 10 August to Willie Whitelaw. I am content with what you propose, but there is one small complication.

The ordinary day of local elections in 1986 is the first Thursday in May, 1 May 1986. This is also the last day of the Passover. The Board of Deputies of British Jews made representations that the elections should be moved to 8 May to avoid religious difficulties. David Mellor had some correspondence with Irwin Bellwin and Michael Ancram about the problem. (The letters were not copied to you because at that stage we were not thinking in terms of ILEA elections in May 1986). It was agreed that, subject to the views of the local authority associations, the date should be moved. We have now consulted the local authority associations in England and Wales and they were all content. I understand that George Younger is content to go the same way in Scotland. So the necessary provisions will be included in the Representation of the People Bill which is being prepared for introduction early next Session.

No formal announcement has yet been made, and we were not planning to make one until Parliament reassembles. I do not think this affects what you propose for the ILEA announcement, but it is important in my view that the two issues are kept separate. I therefore agree that, as you propose, the ILEA announcement should refer only to the month, and not the actual day, of the elections. If we are asked what the day will be the line should be that my Department is considering moving the ordinary day of election for all local authorities which have elections in 1986 from 1 to 8 May to avoid the Passover.

I am copying this letter to recipients of yours and to George Younger.

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Lm

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph, Bt, MP

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EDUCATION: ILEA P4

